

# OKINAWA

# 1945

written by:



# U.S. Marines

# VOLUME

# 3

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## PREFACE

This volume of, OKINAWA-1945, as well as the other three volumes printed earlier, contain primarily the accounts of Marines from the 6th Marine Division during the battle for Okinawa in 1945. It will be apparent to the reader however other articles are also included to point out the differences in perspectives from the stand-point of the Okinawan civilians, the Japanese officers and enlisted men. Since some of the Marines with our Division were veterans (Old Salts) of other battles in the South Pacific, the diary of Ben Love, Australian trooper was included so as to get a glimpse of jungle and mountain fighting on New Guinea, during December and January of 1942. Major Bernard Green, (KIA-Okinawa) was a member of the 6th and although he did not take part in the New Guinea battle, the environment in which he fought prior to his joining our Division was similar. Some accounts covering Felilue, Guam and Saipan are also included.

After reading one of the previous volumes, Col. Jack Shine, USMC (Ret.) reminded me "there is no such thing as a former Marine." I certainly agree...the word "former" has been eliminated from the title page of Volume 3.

My sincere thanks go to all of the contributing authors and the Volumes of OKINAWA-1945 will be placed in the Personal Papers Archives at the USMC Historical Center, Washington, DC. and the Military Library at Okinawa. In addition, the assistance I received from Amy Cantin Cohen, USMC Historical Center was appreciated very much. Special thanks go to Bill Pierce, Wpns Co, 29th Marines who furnished me with many of the monographs included in this volume.

Kenneth J. Long  
I/3/29/6  
February, 1997

### LEST WE FORGET

Fifty years have passed. September 2, 1995 closes the final chapter on the greatest conflict in our world's history. The flower of our youth passed into obscurity. Thousands upon thousands, in endless columns, marched into eternity. They never grew old, never aged into maturity, never to father a future generation. In their youthful exuberance they were destined never to feel the developing infirmities of age. Yes, their passing from our scene was generally quick and sudden. Their youthful brilliance illuminated our world but for a moment and then, as quickly, faded. And in the darkness of their passing, over these 50 years, our river of tears has ebbed and flowed. The mothers and fathers, the wives and sweethearts, the sisters and brothers and all the countless friends and comrades have swelled the torrent of our grief. The price we have paid can never be measured. For every experienced loss there are countless other losses. It has been said, "It is easy to die, but it is never easy for those of us left behind".

The chimes of our clocks continue to whisper the gentle message: A generation is winding down. Our freedom, our honor and our dignity is the legacy our fallen comrades have left to us.

Frank H. Haigler MD  
L/3/22

## Good Fortune

The United States Marine Corps made possible my ownership of something that can never be taken from me. It was not a gift. The price was high. This possession is a lifetime membership in an exclusive fraternity. The requirements to belong have been met by only a comparatively few men.

Only a small number of Americans have experienced war up close. Even in time of war, fewer than two out of twenty members of our Country's armed forces are ever close enough to an enemy that they hear the sounds of shots fired in anger. Only one in twenty soldiers or Marines has heard a bullet crack as it went by, has dug a foxhole while under fire or spent a night in one in the rain. These men are front line fighters, men who occupy stations of great peril, twenty four hours a day, sometimes for weeks at a time. Periodically, they may have to leave places of relative safety to advance against an armed enemy who is trying to kill them. These are the men who win wars.

No one who has not been exposed to it can understand the wretched conditions of ground combat: the grinding fear; the discomfort, exhaustion, lack of sleep and pain; the filth and stench; the wrenching sense of loss at the death of a comrade. Men who have endured these experiences together form a bond with each other.

C. Rose, a journalist from North Carolina, describes that bond in these words:

"Combat creates a true brotherhood with the most exclusive membership rules in the world.

There's no way to cheat on membership requirements. And the ones who are in can instantly sense someone who isn't."

That brotherhood has probably been around since time began. Shakespeare ascribes these words to King Henry V, spoken in the year 1415, on the night before the battle of Agincourt:

"We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;  
For he today that sheds his blood with me  
Shall be my brother ----  
And gentlemen in England, now abed,  
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here;  
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks  
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day."

It might seem strange that I feel fortunate, although I was wounded during the battle, that I was one who fought as a Marine rifleman during the fighting for the island of Okinawa, who "saw the elephant" and became a member of the "band of brothers".

On patriotic occasions when the bands play and the Flag goes by, my head is held high. Today, when I see members of the armed forces, I get a feeling, not of smugness, but of satisfaction. My dues are paid. For it was my good fortune that I once had the opportunity to fight the good fight -- "on Saint Crispin's day".

James S. White  
G/29/6 1945

Lemuel Cornick Shepherd, Jr.  
General, United States Marine Corps  
20th Commandant Of The Marine Corps

General Shepherd was born on February 10, 1896 in Norfolk Virginia; graduated from the Virginia Military Institute and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps, April 11, 1917. He reported for active duty on May 19 at the Marine Barracks, Port Royal, South Carolina.

Less than a month later, he sailed for France as a member of the 5th Regiment, among the first elements of the American Expeditionary Force. He served in defensive sectors in the vicinity of Verdun and participated in the Aisne-Marne offensive (Chateau-Thierry). He was twice wounded at Belleau Wood, in June 1918. He returned to the 5th Marines in August 1918, and saw action in the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne (Champagne) offensive where he was wounded for the third time.

For his gallantry in action at Belleau Wood, Lieutenant Shepherd received the Army Distinguished Service Cross, the Navy Cross and the French Croix De Guerre. He was also cited in the General Orders of the 2nd Infantry Division, American Expeditionary Force.

After duty with the Army Of Occupation in Germany, Captain Shepherd returned home in July 1919. In September, he returned to France for duty to help prepare relief maps of the battlefields over which the 4th Marine Brigade had fought.

Upon his return to the United States, in December, 1920, he became aid-de-camp to the Commandant, United States Marine Corps and an aid at the White House. In July, 1922, he commanded a select company of Marines at the Brazilian Exposition in Rio De Janerio.

In June, 1923, he became commanding officer, Marine Detachment, USS Idaho. This tour was followed by duty at Marine Barracks, Norfolk, Virginia, as Commanding Officer, Sea School. In April, 1927, Captain Shepherd sailed for expeditionary duty with the 3rd Marine Brigade in Tientsin and Shanghai, China.

He returned to the United States in 1929 and attended the field officers course, Marine Corps Schools. He was then assigned overseas again, this time on detached duty, with the Garde D'Haiti for four years as a district and department commander. Following withdrawal of the Marines from Haiti in 1934, Major Shepherd was assigned to the Marine Barracks, Washington D.C., as executive officer and registrar, Marine Corps Institute.

Promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in 1936, he was assigned to the Naval War College at Newport, Rhode Island. He graduated in May 1937 and became Commanding Officer, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine

Regiment, part of the newly formed Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic. This force was being extensively used in developing amphibious tactics and techniques.

In June 1939, he was assigned to the staff, Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, Virginia where he served as director, Correspondence school, chief of tactical section: officer in charge of the candidates class and assistant commandant.

In March, 1942 four months after the United States entered World War II, Colonel Shepherd took command of the 9th Marine Regiment. He organized, trained and took this unit overseas as part of the 3rd Marine Division.

He was appointed to Flag Rank in July, 1943 on Guadalcanal and became Assistant Division Commander, 1st Marine Division. In this capacity, he participated in the Cape Gloucester operation on New Britain from December, 1943 through March 1944. He received a Legion of Merit for superior service in command of the operations in the Borgan Bay area.

In May, 1944, he assumed command of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade and led this unit in the invasion and subsequent recapture of Guam during July and August 1944. For distinguished leadership during this period, he received his first Distinguished Service Medal and was promoted to Major General.

After organizing the 6th Marine Division from the Brigade, Major General Shepherd commanded it throughout the Okinawa campaign and subsequently took the Division to Tsingtao, China. There, October 25 1945, he received the surrender of the Japanese forces in that area.

For exceptionally meritorious service as Commanding General, 6th Marine Division in the assault and occupation of Okinawa (April 1 to June 21, 1945) he received a gold star in lieu of a second distinguished Service Medal.

Several months later, he returned to the United States and in March, 1946 organized the Troop Training Command, Amphibious Forces, Atlantic Fleet at Little Creek, Virginia. He was ordered to duty as Assistant to the Commandant and Chief of Staff, Marine Corps Headquarters, November 1, 1946. He remained there until April, 1949, when he was assigned as the Commandant, Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, Virginia, until June, 1950.

When the Korean War erupted, General Shepherd was in command of the First Marine Force Pacific, headquartered at Pearl Harbor.

In this capacity he participated in the landing at Inchon and the evacuation of our forces from Hungnam following the withdrawal from the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea during December, 1950. He was appointed Commandant of the Marine Corps by the President of the United States, January 1, 1952.



During the General's four year appointment as the 20th Commandant of the Marine Corps, he initiated many programs increasing military proficiency in the Corps. He was the first Commandant to become a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and upon his retirement, January 1, 1956, he received a third Distinguished Service Medal.

Two months after his retirement, General Shepherd was recalled to active duty and appointed chairman of the Inter-American Defence Board. During the three and a half years of service with this international organization, General Shepherd, by his leadership and diplomacy, made substantial contributions toward plans for the defence of the continent and the promotion of military solidarity among the military forces of the republics of this hemisphere.

General Shepherd relinquished his duties with the Inter-American Defence Board, September 15, 1959.

In 1968, General Shepherd and his wife, Virginia, settled in La Jolla, California where he lived until his death on August, 6, 1990.

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[Note: Following is the Staff of Headquarters, 6th Marine Division during the battle for Okinawa:

- CG ----MajGen Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr.
- ADC----BrigGen William T. Clement
- CofS---Col John C. McQueen
- G-1----Maj Addison B. Overstreet
- G-2----Lt Col Thomas E. Williams
- G-3----Lt Col Victor A. Krulak
- G-4----Lt Col August Larson (to 16 May)  
          Lt Col Wayne H. Adams (from 17 May)]

## MY BELOVED COUSIN \*

by Colonel Joseph B. Ruth Jr., USMCR (Ret.)  
[written: April, 1996]

Sherman Barington Ruth Jr. was born on December 29, 1921 in Gloucester, Massachusetts. The son of a seafaring family, the last of the Ruth family to have gone to sea had been our grandfather, Joseph B. Ruth, who was both owner and captain of the Mary F. Ruth, a fishing vessel. Sherm's father was a very successful ship chandler on Gloucester's waterfront. When not in school or playing baseball, Sherm would make deliveries for his father in a little motor skiff. Sherm's father called him "Skip", short for Skipper, a common nickname on Gloucester's waterfront.

Sherm excelled academically throughout his schooling. A good athlete, he played second base at Gloucester High School for four years. He was elected captain of the team his senior year. His academic achievement won him election to the National Honor Society. (The NHS Chapter is now named in his honor). As with all male students at Gloucester High School, Sherm was a member of the Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC). (Membership was mandatory. Sherm was a platoon sergeant his junior year and captain in his senior year.

Tragedy struck the family in April 1938. [His] father had decided to add oil distribution for the fishing fleet and while servicing the first customer, the fishing vessel, Jackie B, there was an explosion in which three persons, including Sherm's 38 year old father, were killed. Two years later his mother died of tuberculosis. So together with his young sister Virginia (Sis), he went to a foster home in Gloucester.

In his senior year in high school Sherm was elected vice-president of the class of 1939. The 1939 yearbook showed he was voted "Most dependable boy", "Boy most likely to succeed in the future", and he was the runner-up as "Most popular boy".

In September 1939 Sherm matriculated at Bowdoin College in Maine. He continued playing baseball while in college. His military career started on May 6, 1941 when he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps Reserve while still in college. In February 1943 he attended boot camp at Parris Island South Carolina. Upon graduation he was assigned to the Officers Candidate School (OCS) at Quantico, Virginia. After successfully completing OCS in June 1943, he was commissioned a second lieutenant and was transferred to the 29th Reserve Officers Class (ROC) at Quantico. (A fellow officer in the 29th ROC was Tyrone Power, the movie actor). At the conclusion of the 29th ROC, he was transferred to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, where he joined the 31st Replacement Battalion as a battalion officer. On May 13, 1944, Sherm joined the 3d Battalion, 29th Marines (Reinforced). He was assigned to Company "G" in June 1944 as a platoon leader. In July, the Regiment was moved to Camp Elliott, California.

August 1944 found the 29th Regiment embarked on board the USS General C.G. Morton, destination . . . . Guadalcanal! In September 1944 the Regiment, a part of the 1st Provisional

Marine Brigade, was designated as one of the infantry regiments in the new 6th Marine Division. In December 1944 Sherm was promoted to First Lieutenant. On Christmas eve he wrote a "V-Mail" letter to my parents in Gloucester, MA, ending the letter with "God bless the Marines, love, Sherm."

It was mid-afternoon on Love Day- April 1, 1945 (Easter Sunday), a bright clear day on Okinawa Shima when the 29th Marines, as part of the 6th Marine Division, landed on the Green Beaches on the left of the invasion force. The landing was virtually unopposed, considering the bloody confrontation experienced at Tarawa, Saipan, Guam and Iwo Jima. The Regiment was immediately deployed defensively around Yontan Airfield, which had been secured earlier in the day by elements of the 4th and 22nd Marines. Operation Iceberg was off to a good start, and it would prove to be the last battle of the war. Sherm landed with his platoon.

On April 4th, the Regiment was ordered to seek out and destroy the enemy on the Motobu Peninsula. (The 3d Battalion, 29th Marines made contact with a sizeable enemy force commanded by a Colonel Udo.) Coming out of reserve on 7 April the 29th Regiment, in three columns, headed north onto the Motobu Peninsula. The 3d Battalion was in the center. All three battalions met only light and uncoordinated resistance - the enemy troops concentrating on guerilla-type tactics. The first main contact with Colonel Udo's force came on 10 April by both the 1st and 3d Battalions. The 2d Battalion was busy capturing the midget-submarine base on the northeast coast.

Colonel Udo had wisely selected Mt. Yae Take, the high ground, to position his troops. The area also offered 360 degree observation. The artillery and naval guns were in position and looking down the throats of the advancing Marines.

In appreciation of the situation faced by the Regiment, General Shepherd, the Division Commander, sent in two battalions of the 4th Marines to assist in taking the peninsula. A coordinated attack on the 14th was successful with the 3d Battalion, 29th Marines attached. Resistance was fierce with one battalion commander killed and several company commanders wounded. The attack resumed on the next day as the 3d Battalion 29th, attached to the 4th Marines, drove up the approaches to Mt. Yae Take. The remainder of the 29th enveloped the Yae Take position.

In the fighting on 16 April, when a commander of a flanking platoon was mortally wounded, Sherm, showing great initiative and aggressiveness, reorganized this platoon with his own and continued the attack. This action made it possible for the entire battalion to advance. For his performance he was awarded the Silver Star Medal.

The Marines reached the northern coast of Motobu on 20 April but scattered fighting continued in the mountainous terrain. For all practical purposes that part of Okinawa, north of the landing beaches, was considered secured. Not so the balance of the island, many more Marines would fall before the battles' end. Of the total battle deaths of 3,494, roughly 50% (1,656) were members of the 6th Marine Division. Additionally, 50% of those wounded

were 6th Division Marines.

The hard-fought battle continued ever increasingly personalized by the losses - not only other Marines, but of close friends. One of the most clever enemy defensive positions was the "triangular" formed by Sugar Loaf Hill, Half Moon Hill and the Horseshoe to the southeast. These three locations in turn, protected the Shuri Castle area which housed the headquarters of the Japanese High Command.

On 15 May the 29th was attacking Half Moon Hill against fierce and determined opposition. When the company commander became a casualty, Sherm took over as CO, reorganized the Company and continued the attack. The company turned back repeated vicious attempts to retake the position. His men attested that Sherm would move along the line checking on and reassuring them in complete disregard of his own safety. His courage and professionalism inspired his troops. This was classic leadership in the Marine tradition.

Sherm's luck finally ran out when he was cut down by enemy incoming. Though suffering leg and arm wounds, Sherm refused evacuation until he could brief his relief on the situation. Two days later he died of wounds. While recommended for the Navy Cross, Sherm was instead awarded a Gold Star in lieu of his second Silver Star Medal.

Sherm's grave is today in the National Cemetery on Oahu. He left a widow, an infant son and a young sister. His 23 years of life saw much hurt, yet he was always up for the sadness and the increased responsibility it brought. In every facet of his life he gave his all - hence the loving son and brother, the hard-working, student, the impressive athlete, the true leader, the good Marine, and now longer in jest, the beloved cousin. "Semper Fi" Babe.

\* An expression we used toward one another, in jest.

-----JBR-----

NOTE: The battle continued and then on 21 June organized enemy resistance ceased. The curtain descended on the final battle of World War II. On 6 August, the Enola Gay dropped the "atom bomb", not only signaling the end of World War II, but the opening of a door to an unknown future. [JBR]

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Addendum: Kenneth J. Long, 1/3/29/6

1. Most Marines recieved nicknames from other Marines in their unit. Sherman Barington Ruth Jr. was stamped with the name "Babe" because of his interest in baseball and because of his last name. The name was given to him at Camp Lejeune and stayed with him until he was Killed In Action (DOW) on Half Moon Hill.

2. 1st Lt John Stone, 1/3/29/6, a friend of Babe wrote the following: "----He was beautifully tuned to life usually carrying about a broad smile and an easy manner. He was well-liked by his men, as well as being highly regarded by his fellow officers for his intelligence and devotion to duty." Information on Babe can be found in Vol.4, Okinawa-1945, Marine Corps Historical Center, in an article: On An Azimuth Of Death, by John P. Stone.



1st Lt. Sherman Barington Ruth Jr., born: December 29, 1921. died: May 17, 1945. 1st Lt. Ruth died of wounds he received while Company Commander of "G" Company, 29th Marines on Half Moon Hill, Okinawa Shima. Lt Ruth, received two Silver Star Medals for his actions on Okinawa.

My Campaign on Okinawa  
(A darker side)  
by Declan F. Klingenhagen  
D/2/29

April 1, 1945 was L Day. I was in the shore party of the 22nd Marines, Sixth Marine Division and landed with the 5th wave on the beach at Okinawa at the beginning of our invasion to wrest Okinawa from the Japanese. We landed earlier than we were scheduled--there was no Jap opposition on the beach. The first night on Okinawa saw me manning a 50 caliber machine gun on the northern perimeter of the beach. We did not expect any enemy activity because our advancing front line Marines had reached their 5th day objective by 3:00PM of that first day. We were apprehensive though, because the Japs could sneak in on our north side and attack us. It was a quiet night without activity.

Shore party duty for our group was unloading cargo ships and standing watch on supply dumps. Unloading ships included unloading trucks and DUKWS at the supply dumps and riding shot gun on DUKWS to protect them from any stray Jap attacks when we went to ships off the shore to receive the supplies. Occasionally, when a DUKW was floating beside a ship, supplies would slip out of nets as they were lowered to the DUKW and you had to be sure to be out of the way to avoid getting hurt. Also loads could shift as the DUKW maneuvered and, if you were not careful, you could get hurt. I lost my left little finger nail that way. Guarding dumps was not exciting; however, Jap bombers occasionally dropped down over us almost silently and flew on to drop their bombs on our ammunition dumps. We worried that those bombs might drop on us. We did not know how they knew which dumps were ammo dumps--but they knew.

Kamikaze planes were coming in constantly putting the beach and ships on Condition Red. Condition Red was preceded by Condition Yellow which meant all friendly aircraft was supposed to get out of the sky. When Condition Red occurred, the sky became filled with tracers and anti-aircraft fire. When we huddled beneath our shelter halves the debris from the anti-aircraft shell explosions often bounced off the tents. Once during Condition Yellow, a Navy pilot did not make it to his carrier or to an airfield before Condition Red was sounded. He was still in the air and wanted to be recognized a friendly to avoid being shot down. He flew his plane low in front of about a dozen LSTs berthed side by side along the beach. It did not work. Every LST in line opened up on the plane and it went down and crashed at the end of the line.

The only damage to me while in the shore party, other than the lost fingernail, was cutting and almost losing the tip of my index finger when opening a C-Ration can.

On May 1st I was transferred to D Company, 2nd Battalion, 29th Marine Regiment which was resting at the time after a month

campaign helping clear the northern two-thirds of the island. I was assigned to a machine gun squad. We were in an area back of the front lines where every evening around 6:00PM Pistol Pete (a Jap artillery piece fired every 5 minutes for about an half hour traversing from west to east. We would get into foxholes and worry about being hit. Other than scaring us, Pistol Pete did not hurt us much or do much damage. The Japs occasionally during the day fired what we called a Box Car. It was a huge bomb that lumbered through the air with a screaming sound. It was so slow and obvious, that anyone could hear and see it and get out of its way. I never heard of anyone getting hurt by it. It just hit and made a huge bomb crater. During part of this time we had heavy rains which caused so much mud our shoes would get stuck. When stuck, no one could get his feet out of the mud without help. Everyone put his feet in burlap bags. The bags broke the suction of the mud and we could walk wearing them.

On May 15, early in the morning, my squad was told we were going up to behind the front lines to help mop up Japs who had infiltrated during the night. On the way up there we saw stark evidence of previous days fighting. [K and L Companies of the 22nd Marines had crossed the Asa Kawa River on or about 9 May] About half way there we passed a bayoneted dead Jap body on it's back on the ground with the right arm across the forehead. There was an American bayonet on the ground above the head. The Jap could not have been more than 14 years old. I thought to myself, "he was only a youngster", (big deal, I was just turning 19 years old myself). I learned later that the Jap Army had conscripted Okinawans from 12 years old. Not far from the dead Jap kid, I saw a pair of legs leaning nonchalantly against a low stone wall. The torso from the waist up was lying on the other side of the wall. A longitudinal split half of an artillery shell was laying nearby. Later as we approached a big hill (which I later learned was Sugar Loaf Hill), we were walking in a long ditch with foxholes spaced every so often. Some of the foxholes had dead Marines in them. We went half way up the big hill and I sat down and took off my pack to rest. No one had told me that mopping up Japs was off and assisting the 22nd Marines during the fifth assault of Sugar Loaf was on. We were in the middle of the fiercest fighting to occur on Okinawa. I did not know that just over the crest of the hill (about 15 yards away) the Japs were counter attacking. I found out pretty fast. After a moments rest, I and a buddy were told to man a machine gun about 30 yards away near the other side of the hill. We headed for the gun but never got to it. A mortar and hand grenade barrage interrupted our trek about half way there and pinned us down. I was in a foxhole for I do not know how long. During that time a grenade went off in front of my face and blew my helmet to the back of my head. I did not get a scratch and I grabbed the helmet and reset it. I do not know if I had been unconscious for any length of time I looked over at the machine gun we were headed for and saw two dead Marines by it and thought that it's a good thing we couldn't get there- its well exposed and, if we get there, we will be two more dead Marines. During this time my platoon leader, a

First Lieutenant, was a few yards behind me giving everyone encouragement. Suddenly I heard a "poof" behind me. I turned around and saw that the Lt was killed instantly by a direct mortar hit and the body was a black hulk. A little later a Marine ahead of me began calling for a corpsman (I found out later the corpsmen were all dead or wounded). The Marine finally gave up calling and crawled to the rear of the hill. As he passed me, I saw that his right foot up to the middle of the calf had been blown off.

I expected the Japs to come over the top of the hill in a Banzai attack. I put my bayonet on my rifle and was holding the rifle ready for the attack. After awhile things quieted down. A little later I heard a Marine ahead of me yell "We can't hold". I went to the back of the hill to pass the word along, but nobody was there. Everybody had left. I went back to my foxhole and yelled ahead, "fall back"-- which they did---four Marines, (one wounded being helped by three others). We went back down to the bottom of the hill. When we reached the bottom, one of the Marines headed along the base of the hill about 10 yards to help a wounded Marine lying on the ground. I followed him to help out. The Marine squatted to help the wounded Marine and, as I came up behind him, he fell back dead at my feet with a bullet hole in the center of his chest. Since I was upright, all I could think of was that I was next. I took off heading for the cover of a disabled tank. As I left, one of the other Marines yelled, asking me to leave my rifle with him, which I did (instinct-Boot Camp training-told me not to give up my rifle and part of my mind was asking why he gave up his, but he needed it and I could not refuse).

I ran to the disabled tank which had a shell crater next to it. As I slid into the crater I grabbed an M-1 rifle lying there (which made me feel better about giving up my rifle). When I got into the crater I saw three other Marines there. I looked at the top of Sugar Loaf and saw Japs moving back and forth at the top of it. I looked at the rifle I had and saw that it was very muddy. I loaded the magazine and threw the bolt home--except it did not go all the way home. The rifle was so muddy the bolt did not seat. I lowered the rifle and kicked the bolt home with my foot and it seated. Since the rifle was so muddy, I was afraid to aim and fire it--I was afraid the bore was clogged with mud and would explode in my face. I held the rifle away from me, turned the bolt area away from my face and fired. It fired O.K.. I then had to kick the bolt home again and then fired at the Japs on Sugar Loaf. Each time I fired, I had to kick the bolt home.

The three other Marines and I decided we would get out of there. We huddled behind the tank and decided that we would head back to a ridge behind Sugar Loaf one at a time leaving according to the book---by what we learned in training--at 5 second intervals.

The first man left. Five seconds later the second man left. Five seconds later the third man left. I was the last man and as I



noticed the regularity of leaving of the other three, I quickly decided that, if a Jap were watching, by the time I left, he would be counting 5 seconds also, so I counted 3 and took off. As I ran across the field heading for the ridge, I saw stones and dirt kick up to the front and right of me. At the same time I heard the dit, dit, dit...of a Jap Nambu machine gun. I ran faster and came upon a ditch, dove into it and began crawling along it. It headed in the same direction I was going toward the ridge. All of a sudden I could not move. I discovered that I was jammed in place in a narrowing section of the ditch. I was wearing two water canteens on the sides of my hips and they were jamming me in place. ( always after that, I wore one of my canteens on the back of my hip). As I left the ditch I rounded the edge of an embankment and found one of the other Marines. He kept going across a rising field heading straight for the ridge. Three-fourths of the way he fell down wounded and started crawling for the ridge. I saw four shell craters around the side of the field, so I went from crater to crater and got to the ridge at the same time as the wounded Marine. I helped him over the top of the ridge. He was wounded in the buttock and seemed to be otherwise all right. The ridge was where my company was digging in and a couple of Marines came over to help the wounded man and relieved me. I settled down and rested and found out there was not much to do. I noticed a lot of machine guns in various stages of disassembly in the field and gathered enough parts to assemble three working machine guns which I put up on top of the ridge to help form a defense line. While I was gathering the parts, my company Captain told me that, while I was on the field, I was subject to Jap mortar fire. I continued anyway. As I put the guns in place on the ridge, Machine gun squads took them over. I stayed with the third one as part of it's squad. While assembling the machine guns, the Marine who borrowed my rifle got safely back and came to me to return my rifle.

That evening we were relieved from the front lines (I found out later that we lost--dead and wounded, two-thirds of the platoon to which my squad was attached during the fighting on Sugar Loaf that day).

We returned to the rear pretty much along the same route we used to come. We again passed the dead Jap kid and the nonchalant legs. We had two nights rest. The first night I was in a foxhole in an open field. During the night, the Japs sent in shells that exploded above the ground. We heard shrapnel fall around us most of the night. The second night a lot of us tried to sleep in a Jap hillside burial tomb (the tombs were concrete rooms placed in the face of a hill and contained urns filled with the bones of the dead). We went there because the tombs served as bunkers for protection from artillery shelling. There were a lot of us in the tomb and it became so hot, musty, sweaty and smelly that a few of us moved outside of the tomb to its courtyard and slept there, in spite of the fact we might be subject to shell fire. We had no casualties and the next day we

went back up to the front. On the way, my squad got pinned down by Jap machine gun fire and we waited in a ditch until we would get the word to continue. During the wait, we heard a rustling in the group and suddenly one of the group threw his rifle away and began crying and crawling back towards the rear. A few of us retrieved the rifle and stripped it down according to the book, and threw the parts in all directions. A First sergeant arrived soon after. He assessed the situation, talked on a walkie talkie and then had each of us in turn run from the cover of an adjacent shell hole across an open field. We zig-zagged across the field to a hill where other Marines were assembled.

We settled down for the night on that hill. The hill was near Sugar Loaf and was part of the front line but not under attack. We worked out a watch schedule for the night. I offered to take the first watch in the evening and the last watch in the morning. My offer was accepted and I stood my evening watch. It got very dark and when there were no more flares overhead, I had to be careful because my eyes did tricks on me. I would think I saw movement ahead where the Japs might be, but when I concentrated carefully I realized there was none. I completed my watch, was relieved, curled up near a wall and fell asleep. I woke up early the next morning and went to talk to my buddies. They were surprised---we had a heavy mortar barrage rained in on us most of the night and I slept through it, apparently without moving a muscle--my buddies thought I was dead. When they were satisfied they were not seeing a ghost, I stood my morning watch. During my sleep, I must have been exhausted from the day's activities or from all the concentration during my evening watch.

My company made the eleventh assault on Sugar Loaf and for some reason my Sergeant did not include me in the initial assault (maybe because my first front line close combat was during the fiercest fighting up to then). The eleventh assault turned out to be the final one. The company got to the top and at the same time neutralized the enemy held caves on the forward slope. Then I was sent up to help secure the hill.

Enroute to the hill I passed the body of a dead Jap. The body was badly damaged by grenades. The chest was blown open and maggots were all over it. I later heard that the body was in a spot where Marines periodically during the night had thrown grenades to discourage infiltrators.

As I climbed Sugar Loaf to my position (which turned out to be just over the top of the hill on the forward slope), I passed a dead Marine whose body was mostly covered with earth from shell explosions. The only portion showing were his feet with his shoes on. He was one of those who wore his dog tags in the laces of his field shoes and as I passed I read the name on the tags. It was the same name (a common one) as a seminarian upper classman I knew two years previously. The man I knew had left the seminary before I did and had also joined the Marine Corps.

When I got to my position, I helped fire at Japs in far caves. While I did, I saw a tank at the base of the hill under fire from Jap artillery. A round exploded about 20 feet left of the tank. When that happened, the tank went into reverse and moved backwards. When it was about 25 feet back, a second round exploded right where the tank had been. A little later I saw a shriveled up old Jap man being flushed out of a cave near the bottom of the hill by 5 Marines. The man stood there obviously scared to death. The 5 Marines surrounded the man in a circle and each Marine had a 45 automatic pistol pointed at the Jap. It struck me that if the Jap twitched or even sneezed, the 5 Marines probably would have shot themselves up; however, nothing happened and two Marines took the Jap to the rear.

We were relieved from the hill and front lines that day and sent back to the rear for a weeks rest. After the week, we went closer to the front lines. On May 31 we camped in the east side of the city of Naha. Nearby was a dead Jap who had been burned to a crisp by a flamethrower. The body stank so much we had to cover it with dirt before we could settle in for the night. The next morning we went up to the front lines east of Naha. We were on a hill providing cover for some of our tanks which were advancing along the bottom of the hill. We were watching for Japs who might attack the tanks with Molotov Cocktails. We were to shoot the Japs before they got to a tank. While watching the area around the tanks I was wounded in my left calf and on portions of my back by a Jap mortar round exploding about 10 feet behind me. I was carrying a spare machine gun barrel at the time, gave it to a buddy and hobbled back to our battalion aid station, stopping at the wrong one on the way. When I got to our aid station, they took care of me. Later that day I was evacuated to a hospital ship and eventually to a hospital on Guam. A young Marine replacement newly arrived from the States who had just joined our squad was wounded by the same mortar round that hit me. He was hit severely all across his chest from the waist to his neck---so much so that it was hard to believe he would survive (I learned later that he lived, but the damage was so severe that he went back to the States).

While in the hospital on Guam, I received the Purple Heart for my wounds received in action. Upon discharge from the hospital, I was returned to my Division (which was based on Guam) and about ten days later received orders stateside for Officers training. Those orders had been following me all over the Pacific.

So ended my battle campaign on Okinawa (my only battle campaign) and my duty with the Sixth Marine Division.

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First Lt. Roger W. Jamieson  
Fox Company - 2nd Battalion  
22nd Marines  
6th Marine Division

Okinawa - 1945



"THE VERY ACTUAL DAY I REQUESTED TRANSFER OUT OF HEADQUARTERS BATTALION, SIXTH MARINE DIV. AND WAS TRANSFERRED TO THE 22ND REGIMENT SILL BUGS ME. I HAVE NO ACTUAL RECORD OF IT, JUST MY RECOLLECTION THAT IT WAS MAY 12, ON OKINAWA. NONE OF THE ACCOUNTS I HAVE AGREES WITH ME EXPLICITLY.

PART OF MY RECALL HAS TO DO WITH MY REMEMBERING THAT MY FATHER LATER SENT TO ME A COPY OF AN ARTICLE (FROM EITHER TIME OR NEWSWEEK) ABOUT THE FIRST NIGHT WE TOOK SUGAR LOAF AND I HAVE THOUGHT THAT IT SAID MAY 12, WHICH AFTER MIDNIGHT WOULD BECOME MAY 13.

I HAD WRITTEN A LETTER TO MY FATHER WHILE IN A HOSPITAL ON GUAM TO ALLAY HIS FEARS AND THE ANXIETY ALL PARENTS HAVE WHEN NOTIFIED THEIR SON WAS WOUNDED. I ASKED THEM TO KEEP IT CONFIDENTIAL BUT DAD SHOWED THE LETTER TO A JOHN POLLITT WHO THOUGHT IT WOULD BE GOOD TO SHOW IT TO JOE GOOTTER, AND ON AND ON. I WAS PISSED OFF AT THIS, BUT NOBODY ELSE SEEMED TO MIND. JOE DID HAM IT UP A BIT BUT I CAN'T BE TOO CRITICAL OF HIS ACCURACY SINCE MOST OF IT CAME FROM MY OWN LETTER.

ON GUAM, DURING THE ASSAULT, WE HAD ONLY TWO REGIMENTS IN THE FIRST PROVISIONAL BRIGADE. I WAS ASSIGNED TO HEADQUARTERS COMMUNICATIONS AS A CODING OFFICER AND, AFTER A FEW DAYS FOLLOWING D-DAY THERE, OUR ELECTRIC CODING MACHINES (ECM'S) WERE BROUGHT ASHORE FOR OUR USE. THIS WAS EXCITING ONLY TO THE EXTENT THAT WE HAD TO TAPE A HAND GRENADE TO EACH ECM SO THAT, IN THE EVENT OF A JAPANESE OVERRUN WE COULD PULL THE PIN, DUCK, AND HOPE THE MACHINE WAS DESTROYED. NONE OF THESE PINS HAD TO BE PULLED, PLUS I NEVER ENCODED OR DECODED ANYTHING ON GUAM DUE TO BEING CALLED UP BY OUR COMMANDING GENERAL, LEMUEL C. SHEPHERD, BEING ASSIGNED AS HIS PERSONAL LIASON OFFICER TO THE ARMY 77TH DIVISION, WHICH WAS IN RESERVE, MAJOR GENERAL BRUCE COMMANDING. I TOLD OUR G-1 (MAJOR OVERSTREET, PERSONNEL OFFICER) THAT I WANTED THE ASSIGNMENT, BUT WHY ME? HE SAID YOUR'E AN ATHLETE AND YOUR'E FAST....

ALTHOUGH I WAS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR WINNING ANY BATTLES ON GUAM, PROBABLY BECAUSE THE BRIGADE MADE IT UNNECESSARY FOR THE 77H TO BE DEPLOYED, I FOUND THE DUTY SATISFYING SINCE I DID GET A FEELING THAT I WAS DOING SOMETHING POSITIVE. I WAS ON CALL AROUND THE CLOCK FOR APPROXIMATELY TWO WEEKS OR, IN OTHER WORDS, UNTIL ABOUT AUGUST 3RD, AT WHICH POINT MOPPING UP STARTED AND I WAS THEN ASSIGNED TO LIASON WITH THE THIRD MARINE DIVISION. DURING THE ABOVE MENTIONED TWO WEEKS I ATE AND SLEPT EITHER AT BRIGADE OR THE 77TH COMMAND POSTS, WHEREVER I WAS. EACH GENERAL WOULD SEND A RUNNER FOR ME, SOMETIMES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, AND OFF I WOULD GO TO THE OTHER HEADQUARTERS. THERE WAS MORE DARK THAN DAYLIGHT DUTY SINCE OUR ENEMY SEEMED TO LIKE TO CHARGE AFTER HAPPY HOUR. ON A COUPLE OF OCCASIONS, AT NIGHT, WHEN I WAS NEAR THE BATTLE LINES, I HAD TO HIT THE DECK AND CREEP AND CRAWL FORWARD UNTIL THINGS SETTLED DOWN.

I WAS SENT TO 3RD MARINE DIV. JUST ONCE AND WAS THEN HOSPITALIZED FOR DENGUE FEVER (ALSO CALLED BREAKBONE FEVER). THIS, PLUS SOME JUNGLE ROT I GOT SEVERAL DAYS AFTER THE GUAM LANDING BECAUSE OF NO CHANCE TO WASH, SHAVE, AND CHANGE CLOTHES, CONSTITUTED MY SUFFERINGS ON GUAM.

BY CHANCE I BUMPED INTO A PATERSONIAN AT THE 77TH HQ., WHICH WAS A BREAK BECAUSE HE WAS A LT. IN CHARGE OF A PHOTOGRAPHY UNIT CONSISTING OF HIM PLUS A SERGEANT AND A CORPORAL AND THEY HAD BETTER CHOW THAN WE DID AT HEADQUARTERS. HE WAS MARVIN PIKE, A SPORTS REPORTER ON THE PATTERSON MORNING CALL, AND HE KNEW ME BECAUSE HE HAD OFTEN COVERED THE CHEVROLET RED SOXS. I HAVE A PICTURE OF HIM AND ME ON GUAM. HE WANTED TO SEND A PICTURE STORY ON ME TO THE CALL FROM GUAM, BUT I PERSUADED HIM NOT TO DO IT. MY FEELING WAS THAT THERE ARE TOO MANY REAL HEROES, MANY OF THEM DEAD, GETTING NOTHING FOR THEIR EFFORTS. THE NEWSPAPERS BACK HOME WERE FULL OF JERKS GETTING PUBLICITY FOR NOTHING, EATING THREE SQUARES A DAY, AND SLEEPING IN CLEAN SHEETS AT NIGHT.

SO MUCH FOR GUAM...WE WENT BACK TO OUR FORWARD TRAINING BASE ON GUADALCANAL AFTER THE GUAM BATTLE, AND GOT READY TO GO ON THE NEXT ONE, WHICH BECAME OKINAWA. BEFORE WE LEFT IN MARCH 1945 I MADE FIRST LT., WHICH HAD LITTLE BEARING ON MY ABILITY OR MY ASSIGNMENT ( I WAS BACK DOING CRYPTOGRAPHY) OTHER THAN I WAS CONSIDERED SATISFACTORY ON MY FITNESS REPORT AND MY NUMBER (028435) CAME UP.

OUR LANDING ON OKINAWA OCCURRED ON APRIL 1, 1945, WHICH WAS BOTH EASTER SUNDAY AND APRIL FOOL'S DAY, PROBABLY SIGNALLING SOME KIND OF IRONY. THIS TIME I WAS ON THE SIXTH WAVE BUT THERE WAS NONE OF THE EXCITEMENT EXPERIENCED AT GUAM. THERE WERE JUST A FEW CASUALTIES IN THE WHOLE 6TH DIVISION THE FIRST DAY; WE TURNED NORTH, WHICH WAS OUR PRIMARY ASSIGNMENT AND BY APRIL 22 WE HAD SECURED THE NORTHERN HALF OF THE ISLAND WITHOUT SUFFERING HEAVY CASUALTIES.

THE ONE THING I EXPERIENCED ON THE NORTHERN END WAS FLEAS! THEY WERE IN EVERY CAVE, EVERY HOUSE...ALL OVER. WE FINALLY GOT SOME FLEA POWDER AND WERE ABLE TO DISINFECT OUR CLOTHING. WHEN THEY GOT IN YOUR BELT AREA THEY COULD DRIVE YOU CRAZY. WE STAYED UP NORTH UNTIL EARLY MAY AT WHICH TIME WE SWAPPED PLACES WITH THE 27TH ARMY DIVISION, WHICH HAD BEEN BADLY MAULED, SUFFERING FROM POOR COMBAT EFFICIENCY. DOWN SOUTH WITH THE 6TH MARINE DIV. WAS THE FIRST MARINE DIV. AN OFFENSIVE ASSAULT HAD BEEN STARTED AND THE DAYS OF LIGHT CASUALTIES WERE OVER. MY JOB IN CODING INCLUDED TRAVEL BY JEEP FROM THE 6TH DIV. HQ. MAINLY TO THE THREE REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS; I WOULD OFTEN SEE THE JEEP AMBULANCES, ONE AFTER THE OTHER, CARRYING MARINE BODIES BACK FROM THE FRONT; THEY WERE DEPOSITED ON RACKS WITH THEIR FEET STICKING OUT OF THE BACK OF THE JEEPS, THEIR PITIFUL BODIES BOUNCING UP AND DOWN. AFTER MANY DAYS OF SEEING THIS I SIMPLY DECIDED I DIDN'T LIKE MY COMPARATIVELY SAFE DUTY ANY MORE AND THAT I WANTED TO DO MORE.

ON MAY 13 I CAME BACK FROM MY MESSENGER RUN, WENT TO MY TENT, LAY ON MY COT, AND THOUGHT ABOUT IT. AFTER ABOUT TEN MINUTES I WENT TO SEE MAJOR OVERSTREET AND TOLD HIM I WANTED LINE DUTY. HE ARGUED WITH ME AND CUSSED ME OUT A BIT, BUT I TOLD HIM IF I WEREN'T TRANSFERRED I'D GO ANYWAY. THIS MADE HIM REALLY MAD BUT WE KEPT TALKING AND HE FINALLY AGREED TO A TRANSFER. THE MAIN ISSUE HERE WAS REALLY WAS THAT THOSE NOT AT THE FRONT USUALLY DIDN'T LIKE TO FEEL THAT THEY WEREN'T REALLY CONTRIBUTING; WHEN A BUCK LIKE ME CAME ALONG YELLING ANY SUGGESTION LIKE THAT, IT WAS SOMETHING THAT TODAY WOULD BE CONSIDERED 'POLITICALLY INCORRECT'. I SEE BY OUR DIVISION HISTORY THAT MAJOR OVERSTREET RECEIVED A LEGION OF MERIT AND A GOLD STAR IN LIEU OF SECOND BRONZE STAR APPARENTLY WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF A PURPLE HEART....

I WAS TAKEN TO THE 22ND MARINE REGIMENT, SENT TO 2ND BATTALION, ASSIGNED TO 'F' COMPANY, AND WAS GIVEN 25 BUCK PRIVATES AND A SECOND LIEUTENANT. I WAS TOLD TO DISPERSE THEM IN A DESIGNATED AREA, HAVE THEM ALL DIG IN, BE READY TO MOVE OUT IN THE MORNING. BEFORE DARK WE WERE ALL DUG IN. THIS WAS THE FIRST FOXHOLE AND THE FIRST NIGHT OF COMBAT FOR THE 25 MEN AND THE SECOND LT. THOUGH I KNEW THINGS WERE ROUGH OUT THERE, AND I KNEW WE'D BE THERE SOON, IT DIDN'T OCCUR TO ME THAT IT COULD BE (AND IT BECAME) THE LAST NIGHT OF COMBAT FOR ALL OF THEM. THESE KIDS WERE AT THIS POINT IN THE MARINE CORPS FOR 8 WEEKS, FRESH OUT OF BOOT CAMP. THE 2ND LT. SAID HE WAS IN THE CORPS ONLY 6 MONTHS, TWO-THIRDS OF THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN OFFICER TRAINING AT QUANTICO, VA. I HAD NO POSSIBLE CHANCE TO LEARN MUCH ABOUT THEM, NOT EVEN THEIR NAMES, BUT I TALKED TO THEM AT LENGTH; IN EFFECT TOLD THEM TO LOOK TO ME FOR INSTRUCTIONS WHEREVER WE WERE. I HAD NO SERGEANT, NO CORPORAL. WE GOT INTO OUR FOXHOLES AND DIDN'T GET TO SLEEP.

AT ABOUT 2130 HOURS (9:30 P.M.) A RUNNER CAME UP AND SAID THE COMPANY COMMANDER WANTED TO SEE ME RIGHT AWAY. I DON'T REMEMBER THE COMPANY COMMANDER'S NAME OR RANK (NOTE: PROBABLY CAPT. JOHN C. DEAL JR.) BUT LT. COL. WOODHOUSE, THE BATTALION C.O., WAS THERE WITH HIM. WOODHOUSE AND I KNEW EACH OTHER, AND HE ASKED ME THE STATUS OF MY TROOPS. I TOLD HIM THEY WERE ALL JUST STRAIGHT OUT OF BOOT CAMP EXCEPT THE 2ND LT., WHO WAS JUST OUT OF OCS. HE SAID I HATE TO HAVE TO DO THIS, BUT I'M SENDING YOU RIGHT NOW UP TO OUR FRONT; WE'RE AT A PLACE CALLED 'SUGAR LOAF HILL'. A TRACTOR WILL BE HERE SOON; PUT YOUR MEN ON IT AND REPORT TO MY EXECUTIVE OFFICER, MAJOR COURTNEY, WHEN YOU GET THERE. I NEVER SAW OR HEARD FROM WOODHOUSE AGAIN...HE WAS LATER KILLED IN ACTION.

MY RECOLLECTION IS THAT WE REACHED THE SUGAR LOAF AT ABOUT 2230; WE UNLOADED THE TRACTOR NEAR THE BASE OF THE HILL (MAINLY CRATES OF HAND GRENADES AND .30 CALIBER AMMUNITION), WHERE COURTNEY TOLD MY MEN TO SPREAD OUT AND HIT THE DECK. HE TOOK ME AND THE 2ND LT. OVER TO WHERE A COUPLE OF OTHER MARINES WERE, ONE OF WHOM WAS 1ST LT. PESELY (WIA). IT WAS DETERMINED THAT PESELY WAS SENIOR TO ME AND WAS NOMINALLY

SECOND IN COMMAND. COURTNEY EXPLAINED TO ALL OF US THAT HE WANTED TO TAKE THE HILL SINCE HE FELT OUR POSITION AT THE BASE OF IT WOULD BE WORSE THAN IF WE WERE ON THE HILL. THAT THE JAPS WOULD HAVE THE HIGH GROUND AND WE WOULD BE EXPOSED TO ALL KINDS OF FIRE ESPECIALLY AFTER SUNUP. HE WANTED US TO GET THE GRENADES AND THE AMMO PART WAY UP THE HILL FIRST SO THAT IT WOULD BE MORE ACCESSIBLE TO US THAN HAVING TO GO ALL THE WAY DOWN TO THE BOTTOM WHEN IT WAS NEEDED. ALSO, IF THE JAPS PULLED A FLANKER AND OVERRAN OUR SUPPLIES, WE WOULD BE IN SERIOUS TROUBLE, SO WE ALL DROPPED THE WEAPONS WE WERE CARRYING. I WAS CARRYING A .30 CAL. CARBINE, A VERY LIGHT RIFLE AND SMALLER WHEN COMPARED TO AN M1. WE SPENT MAYBE A HALF HOUR IN LUGGING TWO CRATES AT A TIME UP THE HILL ABOUT 15 OR 20 YARDS. WHEN THIS WAS DONE, HE ORDERED EVERYBODY TO SPREAD OUT AROUND THE BASE OF THE HILL. STANDING UP HE THEN YELLED IN A LOUD VOICE, "LET'S TAKE THE GOD DAMN HILL!" HE STEPPED FORWARD, AND I WILL NEVER FORGET HOW ALL OF THE REST OF US, ALL TOGETHER...AS IF A WHISTLE HAD BEEN BLOWN TO SIGNAL THE START OF A GAME, STEPPED OUT AND FOLLOWED HIM AS HE LED US UP THE HILL. BETWEEN ME AND MY 26 MEN, THERE WERE ABOUT 50 OF US THAT WENT UP THAT HILL. VERY FEW OF US WOULD EVER COME DOWN....

WE PROCEEDED ON FOOT ABOUT HALFWAY UP THE HILL WHEN COURTNEY YELLED, "HIT THE DECK!" THE JAPS WERE AT THE CREST OF THE HILL THROWING GRENADES DOWN AT US. WE HAD ALL PICKED UP AS MANY HAND GRENADES AS WE COULD CARRY, AND WE RETALIATED AS WE CREPT UP THE HILL. THE JAPS DISAPPEARED FROM THE CREST AS WE STARTED THROWING GRENADES AND CONTINUED TO CLAW OUR WAY UP THE HILL. AT THIS POINT IT APPEARED WE HAD THE HILL AND WERE WINNING. THERE WERE SOME JAPS ON THE FORWARD SLOPE BECAUSE WE WERE CATCHING SOME GRENADES THROWN AT US FROM CLOSE UP.

THEN...SEVERAL THINGS HAPPENED IN FAIRLY RAPID ORDER. FIRST, ONE OF MY KIDS, NEXT TO ME AT MY LEFT, FUMBLER A GRENADE AFTER HE HAD PULLED THE PIN, AND MY NOSE DUG A HOLE IN THE GROUND AS I WITNESSED THIS. THE GRENADE EXPLODED AND APPARENTLY NO ONE WAS HIT. I GOT UP, WENT OVER TO THE KID, GAVE HIM A KICK ON THE RUMP WITH THE SIDE OF MY FOOT AND THEN PROCEEDED TO GIVE HIM A QUICK LESSON ON HOW TO THROW A GRENADE. I TOLD HIM HOW TO HOLD IT, HOW TO PULL THE PIN, HOW LONG TO HOLD IT AFTER PULLING THE PIN, HOW TO THROW IT, TOGETHER WITH A PERSONAL DEMONSTRATION. THIS WAS BOOT CAMP ON A BITTERLY FOUGHT FOR HILL, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BATTLE...!

I ORDERED THE KID TO THROW ONE, AND HE DID OKAY. ALTHOUGH I HAD EARLIER BACK AT THE COMPANY COMMAND POST BEFORE WE SACKED IN, EMPHATICALLY INSTRUCTED EVERYBODY TO CALL ME "JAMIESON" AND NOT "LIEUTENANT". THE LIABILITY OF A BOOT ON THE HILL SAID, AS I CRAWLED AWAY, "THANKS LIEUTENANT!" I IMMEDIATELY REPLIED..."SHUT UP!" ALTHOUGH MY ACTIONS IN THIS SCENARIO WERE CALLED FOR UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES (AGAIN, TODAY IT IS POLITICALLY INCORRECT), I HAVE NEVER FELT GOOD ABOUT THE FACT THAT I MADE IT OFF THAT DAMN HILL, BUT THIS KID DIED WITH A



BOOT IN HIS RUMP FROM ME, AND THE LAST COMMUNICATION HE HAD WITH ANYBODY BEFORE HE DIED, WAS TO "SHUT UP"!

AT THAT TIME, THOUGH I NEVER GAVE THAT A THOUGHT. MOMENTS LATER, A SHELL (MOST LIKELY A MORTAR) DROPPED TO MY RIGHT, AND IT HIT THE KID ON MY RIGHT. HE STARTED SCREAMING AND I CREPT OVER TO HIM. HE APPARENTLY HAD BEEN HIT IN THE AREA OF THE LEFT SHOULDER. I YELLED FOR A CORPSMAN, BUT NONE EVER SHOWED, THOUGH WE HAD GONE UP THE HILL WITH TWO OF THEM. SO I PICKED UP THE KID IN A FIREMAN'S CARRY WITH HIM YELLING, "DON'T LIEUTENANT, YOU'LL GET KILLED"! I IMMEDIATELY ISSUED MY SECOND ORDER OF THE NIGHT..."SHUT UP"!

I SHIFTED THE WOUNDED MARINE TO MY LEFT SHOULDER BEFORE I STARTED DOWN THE HILL WITH HIM. AS I DID, I SAW MAJOR COURTNEY GO DOWN. AT THE TIME IT LOOKED AS THOUGH HE HAD TRIPPED OR SLIPPED. LATER I LEARNED THAT A MORTAR SHELL HAD GONE OFF ALMOST AT HIS FEET, INSTANTLY KILLING HIM. I CARRIED THE MARINE DOWNHILL TO WHAT WAS MORE OR LESS A LEDGE, LAID HIM DOWN, AND A CORPSMAN APPEARED AND CAME OVER QUICKLY. HE BANDAGED HIM, GAVE ME A COUPLE OF BANDAGES TO FINISH THE JOB, AND TOOK OFF TO ANSWER YET ANOTHER CALL. HE, ALONG WITH THE OTHER CORPSMAN THAT NIGHT, WERE BOTH LATER KILLED THAT NIGHT.

I WAS JUST FINISHING TYING UP THE WOUNDED KID WHEN SOMETHING HIT US. I HAD BEEN LYING ON MY RIGHT ARM WITH THE KID'S LEGS AND BODY UNDERNEATH IT WHILE TYING THE BANDAGE STRINGS. THIS BLAST PICKED ME UP AND MY FACE HIT THE GROUND ABOUT WHERE MY FEET HAD BEEN! THE KID WAS SCREAMING AGAIN, AND HE WAS BLEEDING VERY BADLY. THIS SHELL MUST HAVE HIT BETWEEN HIM AND THE SMALL CORAL WALL WE WERE LYING NEXT TO. HE CAUGHT MOST OF THE BLAST. SOME OTHER WOUNDED MARINES, LYING NEARBY, BUT APPARENTLY NOT HIT BY THIS EXPLOSION, THREW ME A FEW BANDAGES, BUT THEY WERE NOT ADEQUATE TO STEM THE BLEEDING FROM MY WOUNDED MARINE. I LOOKED FOR HIS DOG TAGS AND COULDN'T FIND ANY. I ASKED HIM TO QUIET DOWN AND LISTEN TO ME. I ASKED HIM FOR HIS NAME AND HOME ADDRESS, WHICH I WROTE DOWN AND PLACED INSIDE HIS HELMET. HE WAS YELLING AND SCREAMING FOR HIS MOTHER, AND I TOLD HIM I WAS GOING TO GO SEE ABOUT A TRACTOR THAT WAS COMING UP, SO HE COULD BE TAKEN BACK TO A FIELD HOSPITAL WHERE HE'D BE ALRIGHT.

I FOUND LT. PESELY ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HILL, NEAR WHERE WE HAD STARTED UP THE HILL. HE WAS BEHIND OUR RADIO IN SORT OF AN INDIVIDUAL DUGOUT. I TOLD HIM I HAD A BADLY WOUNDED KID AND ASKED IF THERE WOULD BE ANY TRACTORS COMING UP. HE SAID THERE WOULD BE NOTHING COMING TILL MORNING, AND THEN TOLD ME THAT THE MAJOR WAS DEAD. AT THIS POINT I REALIZED THAT MY RIGHT ARM WAS BLEEDING AND THAT I COULD HARDLY MOVE IT. I BANDAGED IT AS BEST AS I COULD. PESELY TOLD ME TO SPREAD THE MEN ALONG THE REVERSE SLOPE AND ALSO SEND SOME AROUND THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE HILL TO PROTECT THAT FLANK. I FOUND MY 2ND LT., GAVE HIM FIVE OR SIX MEN, AND ASSIGNED HIM TO THE RIGHT FLANK WITH ORDERS TO HOLD. IT WAS NOW PUSHING AROUND 0200.

THE REST OF THE NIGHT WAS A CONSTANT ROUND OF FIRST QUIET, THEN ENEMY BOMBARDMENT, THEN FLARES LIGHTING UP THE SKIES, MOST FIRED FROM OUR SHIPS OFF SHORE. USUALLY THE FLARES SHOWED JAPS RUNNING TOWARD US AND RUNNING BACK WHEN OUR MACHINE GUNS OPENED UP ALONG WITH BAR'S, RIFLE FIRE, ETC. THEN IT GOT QUIET AGAIN. THERE WAS RAIN ( IT SEEMED TO ALWAYS RAIN ON OKINAWA) BUT I DON'T RECALL BEING WET OR COLD. DOES THE ADRENALINE RUNNING THROUGH ONES BRAIN TAKE CARE OF THOSE DISCOMFORTS ALSO?

ABOUT 0330 ONE OF OUR GUYS AT OR NEAR THE TOP OF THE HILL YELLED, "HERE THEY COME!!! THERE MUST BE A HUNDRED OF THEM!!" AT FIRST I THOUGHT HE MEANT ANOTHER ATTACK, BUT INSTEAD BEHIND US CAME WHAT TURNED OUT TO BE ABOUT 35 MARINES ON FOOT TRUDGING TOWARD US. THEY CAME UP THE HILL COCKY AS ONE CAN BE AS THOUGH THEY WERE GOING TO SHOW US HOW IT SHOULD BE DONE. WHAT A SURPRISE AWAITED THEM! ONE MACHINE GUN SQUAD SET UP RIGHT NEAR THE FOXHOLE I WAS IN AT THE TIME AND WAS JUST GETTING READY TO FIRE WHEN A SHELL HIT DIRECTLY ON THEM AND WIPED OUT THE ENTIRE TEAM. THE BOMBARDMENT STOPPED, THE FLARES WENT UP, AND THE JAPS CAME RUNNING. OUR GUYS SENT THEM RUNNING BACK (THAT IS, THE JAPS WHO WERE LUCKY). I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY OF THEM WERE KILLED THAT NIGHT BUT IT WAS A LOT. THEN IT GOT QUIET AGAIN. SEVERAL TIMES I WENT TO PESELY WHO WAS ON THE RADIO WITH WOODHOUSE BACK IN H.Q. HE WAS IN TOUCH WITH THE C.O. MOST OF THE NIGHT. FOR ONE THING, WHEN THE BOMBARDMENT STOPPED, PESELY COULD THEN REQUEST FLARES. I HAD ASKED HIM TO DO THIS IN CASE THE JAPS CHANGED THEIR APPROACH ROUTE TO THE HILL.

AT ABOUT 0550 I HEARD A YELL, WHICH WAS PROBABLY PESELY. HE WAS ORDERING EVERYBODY TO GET OFF THE HILL. A TRACTOR HAD MADE IT UP TO THE FOOT OF THE HILL AND LOOKING DOWN I SAW SOME MARINES RUNNING TOWARD IT. I GOT UP AND HEADED DOWNHILL TO THE TRACTOR ALSO. I MADE IT TO THE RAMP, GOT ON, AND THE RAMP WENT UP A FEW MINUTES LATER. THE TRACTOR PULLED OUT WITH ABOUT 9 OF US, ALL OF US WOUNDED...NO MORE, NO LESS.

WE WERE TRANSPORTED TO AN AID STATION IN THE REAR WHERE THERE WERE DOCTORS IN ATTENDANCE. WE WERE EXAMINED FROM THE STAND-POINT OF BEING TAKEN CARE OF RIGHT THERE LOCALLY, OR FLOWN TO GUAM WHERE OUR DIVISION REAR ECHELON WAS IN THE PROCESS OF SETTING UP CAMP THERE FOR US TO RETURN TO AFTER THE BATTLE WAS OVER. I WAS EXAMINED BY A DR. JAMIESON (SAME NAME AS (MINE) WHO WAS FROM BUFFALO, N.Y. HE AND I HAD GOTTEN TO KNOW EACH OTHER WHEN WE WERE TOGETHER ABOARD THE SAME TRANSPORT SHIP EN ROUTE TO OKINAWA. HE PUT ME ON THE PLANE FOR GUAM, WHICH LEFT OKINAWA ON JUNE THE 16TH. IT WAS A LARGE ONE, A C-54, FOUR-ENGINE TRANSPORT AND THE LARGEST WE HAD BACK THEN. IT BECAME A WORKHORSE FOR MOST OF THE WAR. ON THE PLANE THERE WERE SOME ARMY NURSES, WHO SPENT MOST OF THEIR TIME TALKING AND TENDING TO THE WOUNDED. THEY SPENT MOST OF THE TIME WITH THE SERIOUSLY WOUNDED MEN, AND NONE OF US SEEMED TO MIND. IN FACT WE KNEW IT SHOULD BE THAT WAY. MOST DID NOT FEEL LIKE

TALKING TO EACH OTHER AND THE FLIGHT, ALTHOUGH IT WAS MY FIRST, BECAME ACTUALLY BORING.

ON GUAM WE WERE PUT INTO A NAVAL HOSPITAL AND ON THE SECOND DAY I HAD A RUCKUS WITH ONE OF THE DOCTORS, A LT. COMMANDER, WHO CRITICIZED THE FACT THAT I HAD BEEN FLOWN THERE SINCE MY WOUND WASN'T THAT SERIOUS. I TOLD HIM HE COULD BLOW IT OUT HIS ASS AND SAID THAT I DIDN'T BUY THE TICKET. ALSO, MY ARM WAS STILL STIFF AND IT HURT AND WHAT ABOUT THAT DOC? HE DID NOTHING AND TWO DAYS LATER I WAS RELEASED AND SENT TO WHAT WAS CALLED THE CASUALTY BATTALION TO AWAIT FURTHER ORDERS. TWO DAYS LATER, MY ARM WAS SWOLLEN AND IT HURT MORE THAN AT FIRST. I WENT BACK TO THE HOSPITAL FOR EXAMINATION AND THE SAME DAMN DOC BECAME MY DOC AGAIN, OR AT LEAST TRIED TO. I TOLD HIM 'I DIDN'T WANT HIS OPINION AND WE STARTED CUSSING OUR EACH OTHER REAL GOOD. THIS CAUSED ANOTHER DOCTOR, A CAPTAIN, TO COME OVER TO SEE WHAT WAS GOING ON. THE FIRST DOC SAID I WAS BEING TROUBLESOME AND THE CAPTAIN THEN ASKED ME WHAT WAS MY PROBLEM? I POINTED OUT TO THE FIRST DOC AND SAID, "HE IS THE PROBLEM". I THEN EXPLAINED THE EXCHANGES I HAD HAD IT WITH THE DOCTOR AND THAT I HAD NO CONFIDENCE WHATSOEVER IN HIM. I JUST WANTED SOMEONE TO SEE WHAT WAS WRONG WITH MY BADLY SWOLLEN ARM.

WITH THAT THE CAPTAIN TOOK OVER AND SURE ENOUGH, FOUND THAT THE ARM WAS INFECTED. HE FIGURED OUT THAT SOME SHRAPNEL MIGHT STILL BE IN THE ARM, SO HE STUCK A NEEDLE IN THERE PROBING AROUND. HE THEN PULLED OUT WHAT LOOKED LIKE A 1/2 INCH PIECE OF METAL. THEN HE TREATED THE ARM, BANDAGED IT AND I HEADED BACK TO THE CASUALTY COMPANY. ON MAY 31 I WAS TOLD I HAD A CHOICE OF GOING BACK TO THE 6TH DIVISION OR JOINING REAR ECH-ELON ON GUAM. I CHOSE THE 'STRIKING SIXTH' ON OKINAWA AND SHIPPED OUT FOR THERE ON JUNE 10. THE SHIP THAT TOOK US THERE WAS A MERCHANT MARINE SHIP, THE S.S. FAIRLAND. WE REACHED OKINAWA ON JUNE THE 16TH.

ON JUNE 17, AT THE 6TH MARINE DIV. H.Q., I WAS SENT TO GOOD 'OL MAJOR OVERSTREET. ALSO THERE WAS LT. COL. ELBY D. MARTIN JR. (DIVISION COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER) WHO TOLD ME I DIDN'T HAVE TO GO BACK TO THE FRONT WITH THE 22ND. AND THAT HE COULD PUT ME BACK IN COMMUNICATIONS. BUT I TOLD HIM I WANTED TO GO BACK TO THE 22ND, THAT THEY MUST STILL NEED OFFICERS THERE. HE SAID, "YOU REALLY WANT IT, DON'T YOU?" I SIMPLY SAID, "YES!"

AT THIS TIME I WAS IN KHAKI WITH NO EQUIPMENT. NOT TOO GOOD FOR FRONT LINE DUTY. I WAS ABLE TO GET A HELMET AND WAS TOLD I COULD GET A WEAPON AND SOME DUNGAREES AT A SUPPLY DUMP NEAR THE FRONT LINES. A JEEP PULLING ONE OF THOSE LITTLE TRAILERS WAS PULLING OUT WITH FOUR GUYS SO I HITCHED A RIDE WITH THEM. I RODE ON THE TRAILER AND WE HEADED SOUTH TOWARD THE 2ND BATTALION, 22ND. WE PASSED ONE SPOT ON A DIRT ROAD WHERE WE ALL HAD TO DUCK A JAP SNIPER. SHORTLY AFTER WE HAD TO STOP BECAUSE A LARGE BOULDER WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD. AS WE

WERE GETTING OUT OF THE JEEP AND TRAILER TO SEE IF WE COULD MOVE THE BOULDER A MORTAR ROUND HIT US. IT WAS PROBABLY A KNEE MORTAR. THE ROUND HIT FOUR OF US. THE BIGGEST GUY WHO WAS ABOUT 6'3" OR SO AND 200 PLUS WAS MIRACULOUSLY UN-WOUNDED. HE WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO GOT OUT OF THE JEEP WITH HIS WEAPON. TWO GUYS WERE SLIGHTLY WOUNDED, AND I HAD JUST A LITTLE STINGER ON THE TOP OF MY LEFT SHOULDER. ONE GUY WAS HIT ON THE RIGHT FOREARM AND WAS BLEEDING BADLY. I THEN ASKED THE BIG GUY IF HE WOULD TRY TO GET BACK TO A FIELD HOSPITAL WE HAD PASSED ON THE ROAD; THIS WAS ABOUT A HALF MILE OR SO BACK THE WAY WE HAD COME. HE SHOOK HIS HEAD NO. I SAID, O.K. THEN LEND ME YOUR RIFLE AND I'LL GO, BUT HE WOULDN'T DO THAT EITHER.

WE HAD ALL JUMPED INTO A DITCH ON THE RIGHT HAND SIDE OF THE ROAD SINCE WE APPARENTLY FIGURED IT OUT THAT THE SHOT HAD COME FROM THE LEFT. I DON'T KNOW WHY WE FIGURED THAT, BUT I SOON FOUND OUT THAT WE WERE WRONG. I STARTED TO CREEP AND CRAWL AND WENT ABOUT 20 YARDS WHEN SOMETHING HIT US AGAIN. AS BEST AS I COULD TELL ANOTHER MORTAR ROUND OR SHELL HAD MISSED ME BUT IT HIT THE SIDE OF THE DITCH EXPLODING WITH A ROAR AND SHOWERING US WITH METAL, DIRT AND CORAL. SOME METAL AND CORAL GOT ME IN THE RIGHT SHOULDER BLADE AREA AND FLATTENED ME TO THE GROUND. I THEN HEARD SOME HEAVY FEET COME TRAMPING UP AND HERE COMES THE GUY WITH THE BAD WOUND IN HIS FOREARM RUNNING LIKE ALL GET OUT. A SHOT WHISTLED PAST US! IT DIDN'T TAKE A GREAT DECISION FOR ME TO GET UP AND FOLLOW THE RUNNING MARINE. WE BOTH REACHED THE AID STATION WHERE THE CORPSMAN TORE OUR SHIRTS OFF, GAVE US EACH TWO SYRETTES OF MORPHINE, AND TREATED THE WOUNDS.

WHILE THIS WAS BEING DONE, I TOLD THEM ABOUT THE OTHER TWO WOUNDED MEN. A COUPLE OF CORPSMAN TOOK OFF AND WENT OUT AFTER THE WOUNDED MEN. TWO MARINES WERE WITH THEM AND THEY FLUSHED OUT THE SNIPER AND THE CORPSMEN WERE ABLE TO TREAT THE TWO WOUNDED MEN ON THE SPOT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BIG GUY BUT HE WAS DAMN LUCKY. THIS WAS PROBABLY AROUND MEZADO RIDGE FROM WHAT I CAN FIGURE OUT. I WAS PUT ON A TRACTOR AND TAKEN TO DIVISION H.Q. WHERE I HAD A BRIEF VISIT WITH ME OLD PALS IN THE CODING SECTION. ONE OF THEM BROKE OUT A BOTTLE OF BOURBON AND I PROCEEDED TO SWALLOW MUCH OF IT. THAT WASN'T TOO SMART AS WITH THE BOOZE AND THE MORPHINE WORKING TOGETHER I WASN'T EXACTLY PUTTING TWO AND TWO TOGETHER.

THAT NIGHT I WAS ON A COT IN A BUNKER PROTECTED ABOVE BY A PILE OF SANDBAGS ALONG WITH MANY OTHER WOUNDED. I DIDN'T SLEEP ALL NIGHT, CHAIN-SMOKED CIGARETTES ALL NIGHT LONG, WHICH I GUESS IS THE RESULT OF THE MORPHINE/BOURBON PARTY PLUS MY OWN ADRENALIN. THE NEXT DAY, THE 18TH OF JUNE, I WAS PUT ON A HOSPITAL SHIP, THE U.S.S. RESCUE AND WE SAILED FOR GUAM THE NEXT DAY. WE REACHED GUAM ON 23 JUNE AND I WAS PUT IN A NAVY HOSPITAL, BASE 18. WHILE THERE, I FOUND MY SECOND LIEUTENANT FROM SUGAR LOAF...THE TENTH MAN.

HE TOLD ME THAT HE HAD HEARD THE ORDERS TO LEAVE THE HILL BUT HE COULDN'T GET UP. HE HEARD THE TRACTOR PULL OUT AND WITHIN A FEW MINUTES THE JAPS WERE RUNNING ALL OVER THE PLACE ON TOP OF THE HILL. HE WAS LYING FACE DOWN IN A DITCH AND LAY VERY STILL ATTEMPTING TO PRETEND THAT HE WAS DEAD. IT WORKED! WHEN ALL THE JAP NOISE SUBSIDED AND HE THOUGHT THAT MAYBE THEY WEREN'T CLOSE BY, HE STARTED TO CRAWL OR DRAG HIMSELF. IT WAS EXTREMELY PAINFUL AS HE WAS SEVERELY WOUNDED IN THE LEFT SHOULDER AREA. HE'D STOP IF HE HEARD ANY NOISE AT ALL. AFTER SEVERAL HOURS OF CRAWLING AND DRAGGING HIMSELF HE CRAWLED INTO THE 2ND BATTALION FORWARD COMMAND POST. THEY ASKED HIM WHERE HE HAD COME FROM, AND HE TOLD THEM SUGAR LOAF HILL. THEY WERE ALL SHOCKED, AS SUGAR LOAF HILL WAS THREE MILES AWAY! HE THEN ASKED ME WHAT HAPPENED TO ME AND I FILLED HIM IN. I DO WISH THAT I COULD REMEMBER HIS NAME. (NOTE: TWO 2ND LT.'S OF F COMPANY SHOW AS BEING WIA. 1. MYRON L. MOORE AND WILLIAM L. HATSELL).

SOME THINGS I RECALL AS I WRITE THESE MEMOIRS ARE THAT WHEN I WAS ON THE S.S. FAIRLAND I BUMPED INTO A GRAMMAR SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL FRIEND, BUTCH GUELICH, WHO HAD WASHED OUT OF MARINE OCS. I LEFT BASE 18 ON JULY 4, BUT NOT BEFORE I WAS ABLE TO LOOK UP TWO FORMER MUHLENBERG MEN. CHUCK GARRETTSON, WHO HAD BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN GETTING ME INTO THE COLLEGE AND CHUCK BURRELL WHO WAS ONE CLASS BEHIND ME AND WHO ALSO HAD WASHED OUT OF MARINE OCS. WE USED TO TAKE PART IN A ROUSING GAME OF WATER POLO, THE WOUNDED AGAINST THE NURSES. I THINK THE NURSES BEAT US EVERY GAME.

LT. COL. MARTIN RECEIVED THE LEGION OF MERIT AND NO PURPLE HEART.

THE DIVISION HISTORY, STARTING ON PAGE 110, PUTS MAJOR COURTNEY'S ATTACK AS HAPPENING ON MAY 14 AND IT STATES 26 MEN TOOK PART. ALL DISPATCHED BY COL. WOODHOUSE, AND ARRIVING WITH AMMO AND RATIONS AS DUSK WAS GATHERING. IT HAD COURTNEY SAYING A FEW THINGS, BUT I NEVER DID HEAR HIM SAY WHAT IS QUOTED IN THE HISTORY BOOK. SO MUCH FOR HISTORY. IT ALSO STATES THAT WHEN MORNING CAME ONLY 15 SURVIVED OUT OF THE 46. A CORPORAL WHO WAS ONE OF COURTNEY'S LITTLE BAND STAYED ON AND FOUGHT THAT MORNING. HIS NAME IS RUSTY GOLAR, BUT IF ONE IS NOT THERE IN PERSON HE CANNOT COMMENT ON HIS ACTIONS.

\* \* \* \* \*

Okinawa--May, 1945  
by Lt. David J. Curtin  
L/3/22/8

It was mid-May-1945 and the 22nd Marines were catching hell on the Sugar Loaf-Horseshoe-Half Moon Hill complex just north of Naha. We had just come off Half Moon Hill and I found myself with a bad facial tic, which was probably caused more by a serious bout with Bell's Palsy 18 months earlier at Quantico than any war-related trauma. My skipper sent me back to battalion sick bay for a good eight hours of sleep...but that was not to be on one particular night back of the lines.

Several hours after dark a bunch of suicide Nips scaled the steep sea wall to the west of our position and were marauding about in the headquarters area, bayonetting our guys who were sleeping in those ubiquitous cave-like tombs (concrete, conical tombs built into the sides of hills) wherein the Okinawans buried their dead in huge vases. The Japs would set up a racket and as the Marines came crawling out of those little square entry holes in the tombs the Japs would stick 'em.

The doctor in charge of the field hospital was doctor John Tuthill from New Hampshire. He had received an urgent call for plasma from an area of tombs some 200 yards or so away. He needed some kind of escort to get him to where the wounded were, so they woke me up with a wild tale of "Nips are crawling all over the place". Here we were in a safe spot, and I am supposedly getting my first nights sleep in days, and with my head still groggy from sleep, I am shockingly awake. We were some 500 yards behind the lines and now we are attacked! Just what the doctor ordered....

At first I did not believe the story of "wild Nips running amuck". "Rear echelon types were always prone to exaggerate anyway", I thought. So as the brave front-line combat officer I was happy to fill the request to help the doctor on his mission of mercy. A Corpsman had offered to lend me his Tommy Gun for the trip into no man's land, but I declined with a sneer. I had my trusty old .45 Colt revolver. What else did I need? And believe it or not, I knew there were only three shells in the magazine! What a colossal bone-head not to have taken that Thompson. Later on I often wondered how in the heck that Corpsman ever got his hands on a Tommy Gun...We were always scrambling to come up with one, when on the lines.

The doctor and I set out and within 25 yards of our starting place, I knew this was no matter of hysteria. We came across two Marines in a foxhole who bellowed at us for being out there in the dark. They had just killed a Nip who had been sneaking up on them! We continued on our way, briskly you might say, with the doctor in the lead, since he knew the area and the destination we were headed for.

Suddenly, two Japs rose up out of no where and shuffled toward us with bayonets fixed! A flare had just gone off and that dull yellow light in the sky made them all too visible. We both dropped to the ground, dropping the plasma boxes, and in that horrifying moment of pure terror, I managed to blast away at them with two shots from my old .45 pistol at point blank range....no more than 10 or 12 feet! Down went the two enemy soldiers and so did I, figuring that the doc and I were about to get stuck like pigs or shot to pieces. The two Japs, and doc and I lay there and waited for something to happen...Nothing! Suddenly the doc was up and quickly gathering up plasma boxes as though nothing had ever happened.

I couldn't believe it but I followed the doctor's lead and soon we were high-tailing it across the field toward the other tombs with me yelling at the top of my lungs for other Marines all around us not to shoot us down. We made the tombs and the doc went to work as though he was in the States in some kind of clean operating room. He never said a word about our near brush with death. I spent the rest of the night quivering and wondering if I had killed those two Nips or just wounded them badly. At Day break I retraced our steps back to the little night time battle scene to gloat a little and I found nothing! No killers, No blood, no sign that anything had happened there....except that the grass was still flattened where all four of us had flopped.

Had I completely missed both those guys at ten feet? It must have been the muzzle blast that caused them to drop to the deck, but I was supposedly an expert with the .45! That gun puts out a sheet of flame and an ear-shattering explosion even when you're behind the muzzle. But I do think the .45 saved us.

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Lt Curtin's Note: My story was picked up later on, after the event, by Stars and Stripes, the Army newspaper. They had fun at my expense. The big, bad Marine who couldn't hit a barn at 12 feet! If I missed them I do hope they spent the rest of their lives on Mt Fuji surrounded by beautiful dolls from Kyoto. I am not really mad at those people to this day, as they were only doing their job, like we did ours. I seriously doubt they survived though as there could be no way back to their lines [other than] passing thru some very blood-thirsty and extremely angry Marines.

Discipline And Duty  
Marine Corps Life: 1943-1946  
by Bill Pierce, Wpns Co/29th

Parris Island, S.C.

The USMC recruit depot, Parris Island, is in Beaufort county and is approximately four-miles long and three-miles wide. It is surrounded by Port Royal Harbor, The Beaufort and Broad Rivers, and includes the waterways of Archer's, Ballast and Ribbon Creeks.

The depot consists of about 8,000 acres of land, of which approximately 4,400 acres are suitable for the training and maintenance of the base. Parris Island, for the most part, rests only a few feet above sea level. It has an elevation of 21 feet above sea level on Horse Island near the causeway and in the vicinity of the Third Recruit Training Battalion, physical training field.

Parris Island occasionally receives several inches of snowfall and has had rare ice storms. It is more renowned for its insects, humidity and heat. In contrast, Beaufort County enjoys a mild average temperature of 65 degrees and has an annual average precipitation of about 49 inches of rain. This figure has been exceeded because of hurricanes and severe rain and wind storms that have lashed the base.

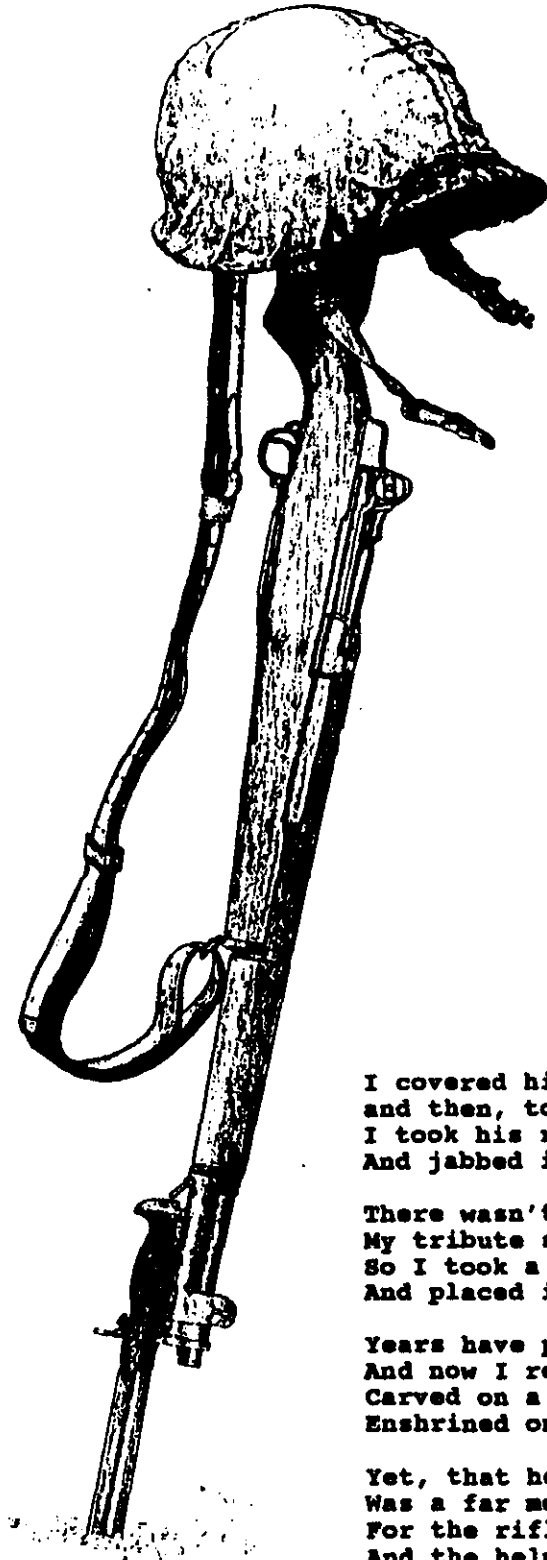
Parris Island is a refuge for sea and animal life, which for the most part is protected on the base. For example, nearby waterways abound with a variety of sea life, including sharks that have been caught from the Post docks.

Far more dangerous but seldom found are rabid animals and poisonous snakes. They include the rarely encountered and very poisonous coral snake, copperhead and the more present and dangerous cottonmouth water moccasin and eastern diamondback rattlesnake. These poisonous reptiles are mostly found on the depot golf course, at Page Field and Elliott's and Niver's Beaches. They have even been killed within the confines of the main station itself. The largest recorded rattlesnake was run over and then killed near the Argon Trailer Park in 1981. It's length was seven feet.

The depot is also inhabited by alligators which have been known to venture onto the golf course and visit training areas. Other wildlife include: rabbits, deer, otter, squirrels, raccoons, the Eastern Brown Pelican, egrets and other species of wild birds. Parris Island's wild and domestic plants, trees and shrubs are as varied as the animal life. The base is not only historic, but is one of the most beautiful posts of the Marine Corps. (from: Where It All Begins; Eurgene Alvarez)

Note: After reading the above it is easily understood why the USMC picked Parris Island as a training Base, as the Island is





I covered him up with a poncho  
and then, to be sure he'd be found,  
I took his rifle and bayonet  
And jabbed it into the ground.

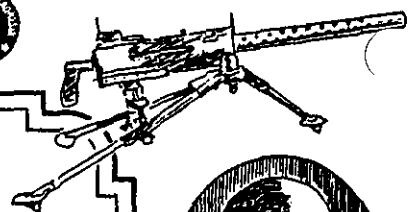
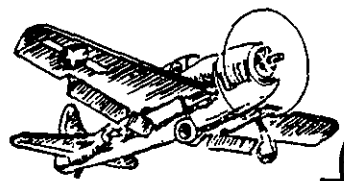
There wasn't much more that I could do.  
My tribute seemed a trifle  
So I took a battered helmet  
And placed it on the rifle.

Years have passed since that fateful night  
And now I read his name  
Carved on a marble mounment,  
Enshrined on a Roll of Fame.

Yet, that helmet on a rifle  
Was a far more fitting shrine  
For the rifle was my brother's,  
And the helmet? It was mine.

*R. A. Gannon*

*EDWARD R. BOLAN*  
1937

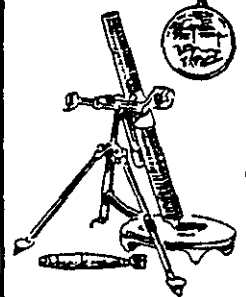
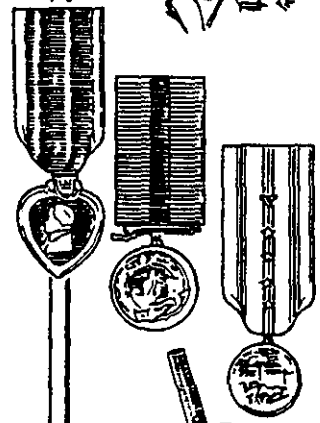


# THE MARINES' HYMN

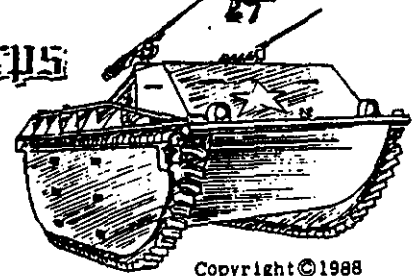
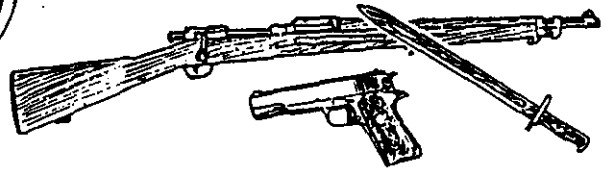
From the Halls of Montezuma  
 To the shores of Tripoli,  
 We fight our country's battles  
 In the air, on land, and sea.  
 First to fight for right and freedom  
 And to keep our honor clean,  
 We are proud to claim the title  
 Of United States Marines.

Our flag's unfurl'd to every breeze  
 From dawn to setting sun;  
 We have fought in every clime and place  
 Where we could take a gun.  
 In the snow of far-off northern lands  
 And in sunny tropic scenes,  
 You will find us always on the job -  
 The United States Marines.

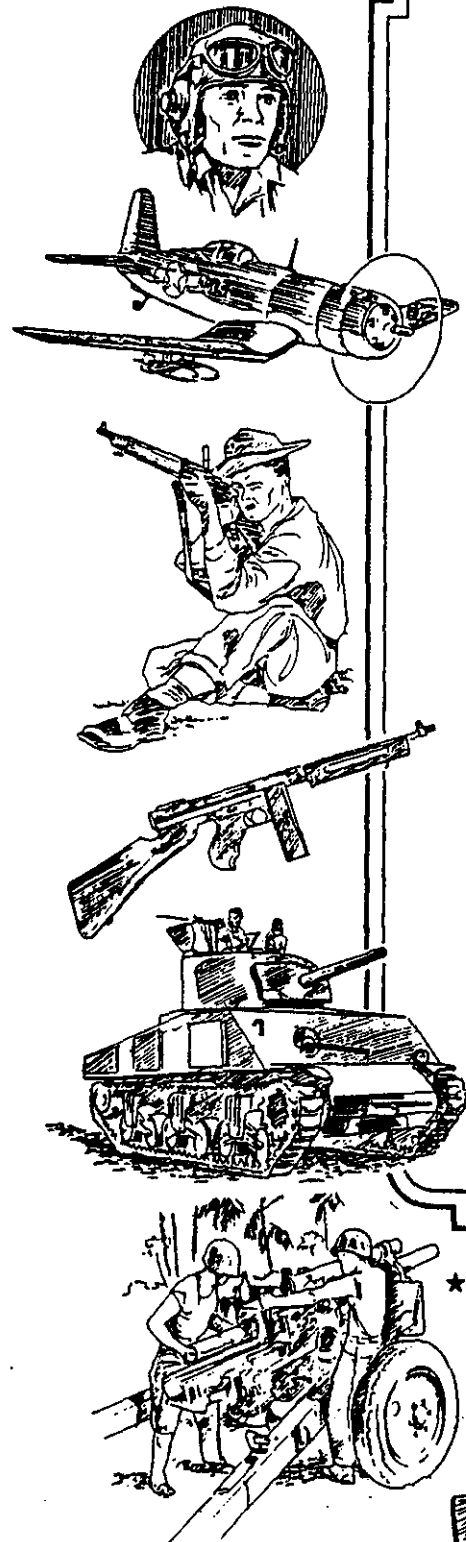
Here's health to you and to our Corps  
 Which we are proud to serve;  
 In many a strife we've fought for life  
 And never lost our nerve.  
 If the Army and the Navy  
 Ever look on heaven's scenes,  
 They will find the streets are guarded  
 By "United States Marines"!



## United States Marine Corps



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Mike A. Masters





11/43

*BILL PIERCE*

unfit for Human Habitation and only wild animals and creatures can live there!

### Parris Island Reflections

"Awn Op Reep....Reep Fawya Lef....!"

Exit civilian...Enter Boot

Let the other guy die for his country, you live for yours.

"You'llllll be sorreeeee!"

Sign at Parris Island "Heads", Enlisted men...the other one? ...

"Women and Officers".

Yours is not to question!

I'm a yardbird from Yemasee,

I called my piece a gun you see,  
so woe is me, wo-ho is me".

So here's to Parris Island,

the land that God forgot,

Where the sand is fourteen inches deep

and the sun is scorching hot.

(to the tune of "My Darling Clementine")

I'm a yardbird

I'm a yardbird

I'm a yardbird til I die,

but I'd rather be a yardbird

than a f----- up D.I.

Line'em up and squeeze'em off!

Sighting, breathing, elevation, trigger squeeze and calibration.

Graduation...36 go to FMF, 8 to Aviation, 2 to Radar School, 4 to

Motor Transport, 3 to Sea School, 2 to Quartermaster, 1 to Pay

School, 2 to Field Music and 3 to become Cooks.

### "You'll be Sorry"!

The day dawned sunny, clear and beautiful. It was April one, 1945 and also Easter Sunday. Our thoughts were with loved ones at home on this religious day. We also wondered what was on the smoke filled hazy beach in the distant void across the water.

My Marine Corps life started in April of 1943, and of course living on the east coast I was destined for infamous Parris Island. It had the same reputation that Devils Island Held.

There is nothing I can add to this monologue that will be different than the Marine boots that preceded me or that came after I did. We marched in the Carolina sun with pith helmets hiding our recently denuded skulls. Knock that helmet off while maneuvering your rifle and may the Lord help you! Needles in the arms, two at the same time, and drilling, rifle range, spit and polish and rifle cleaning. I cleaned mine one time with some steel wool, It was an old rifle and I could not get that damned rust or built in dark spots off the thing. Of course there could be no evidence left that I used steel wool, so I cleaned it thoroughly...I thought. "What the hell is this Pierce"!?, was what the D.I. asked with his eyes only two inches from my still untanned white virginal face. I forget my punishment but never ever again did I use steel wool to clean anything. I also found

out what they meant by, "You'll be sorreee"!

I rode the "Black Stallion", which is the Parris Island stove which had to be set at I believe 500 degrees. I used steel wool to shine the surface and it was permitted. I woke up outside with 5 or 6 other Jarheads who had also fainted from hanging over the black thing from shining it's already shining surface.

Today the Boots graduate in dress blues and carry no rifle. I watched several recent graduations and they just do not hold the same fascination that mine did. That pride...pith helmets, boondockers all of us in our herringbone suits, rifles shining... and that band!...Oh!, that music!...Today, the shiver runs all over me when I hear those famous Marine Songs. Nothing in the world equals that. It wells up in pride and escapes in tears. "Should one hide the tears"? You think. Why? All the other former Marines have dimmed eyes along with yours.

We received a 10 day leave from Parris Island and a ticket on the soot filled railroad home. I think I had 12 hanging metal bars on my uniform. I put them on for everything you could think of. Hell, if they would have issued one for the game of Monopoly I would have worn it. I hate those pictures today and have cut the bottoms off these pictures...I think in shame. After 10 days of fooling around, girls and all in my Dad's Chevrolet, I traveled to my next duty station, which was the Naval Ammunition Depot, Hingham, Mass. I have never been able to ascertain how the Marine Corps splits up Boot Camp Graduates and assigns them to far flung places all over the United States. I believe 5 of us went to Hingham...many to the Cherry Point Air Station in N.C.. We had heard they needed radio operators and tail gunners badly, due to the high loss of our planes in the South Pacific. Some went to Quantico, others to Camp Lejeune, N.C.. Anyhow, off I went to find out what awaited me at a Naval Depot, in a place I never heard of. The train stopped at Boston, Mass, namely South Station and a Marine Corps bus took us to the main gate.

Talk about a Boot! Here I was, just out of Parris Island and dressed to the teeth in my fresh starched khaki shirt, pants and cap. The entire base was dressed in dress green pants, and kahaki shirts, no ties! I stood out like a yellow light in a black room. I was told quickly the appropriate dress code at Hingham, was not what I was wearing. I could not wait to get out of the damned things and hoped no one would see me, or at least as few as possible. It was like carrying a sign that says: "I am a boot!".

Gear stowed, a locker stuffed with my gear, which was mostly clothing and bunk assigned me, which was done with the aid of the duty corporal of the guard I found myself in an upper bunk. I had no idea who bunked beneath me. In the Corps, those seasoned, or at a base longer than a fresh arrival always grabbed a lower bunk. Easier to make up, dress, sit on, and, get in and out of. A double wooden locker separated the next double bunk. A rough

guezza would put some 30 bunks in the wooden barracks, all upper and lower. Not one single item was either on display or out of place. The neatness of the room was immediately indelibly pressed into my brain forever.

My bunkmate was a Marine by the name of "Whitey" Hayman. I was very lucky in that Whitey was a Marine's Marine. He was very neat, orderly, sharp as a tack and easily understood when he pointed out, "this is the way we do it". Whitey was a horse Marine, there being 20 or so horse's on the depot. My entire time there, the odor of "horse" never let me for a second. I don't care how often Whitey washed his clothes, the horse remained. Whitey would go into combat with me on Okinawa and was wounded at Sugar Loaf Hill, but was assigned to the 22nd Marine Reg't., while I would eventually end up in the 29th Marine Reg't.. We were all "Hingham Marines" as we would always call ourselves whenever we could get together on Guadalcanal and the island of Guam.

I became a Marine at Hingham. My dress improved. The tin medals went into the trash. A beautiful sharp visor cap replaced the old, so called "piss cutter", the little triangular, hated cap issued to us and to Marines to this day. A Reising Sub Machine Gun was issued to me and hung with all the other Reising's at the foot of the bed posts. We buckled the strap through the iron bar to prevent accidentally knocking off the gun (I can call it a gun as it is not a rifle) to the floor. It was a terrible weapon, and fared very poorly in combat on the canal and other Pacific hell holes. Drilling with the damned things was almost impossible, and to march with it on your shoulder or other close order drills, it became a stupid disorderly function. We missed the M-1 as a drill weapon. We did get an .03 for duty as pall bearers or in firing at the cemetery when some poor soul of a Marine, or his remains were returned for burial in his hometown. We buried many in the 8 months of duty I had in New England.

Duty was a five hour watch, not the usual four that Marine and Navy units usually hold to. Summer time was not too bad walking a post a good 5 miles out into the depot woods. Mounds of grass covered concrete vaults, stowed with naval ammunition of all sorts, dotted 10 square miles of the depot. Horse Marines and jeep patrols covered the fence area, and walking Marines covered various areas called "post 6", "post 10" and the like. I had post 6 and never changed it in eight months except for temporary duty to a jeep. The temporary duty did not last long, as each time, I would screw up either a challenge with an officer or destroy a jeep tire in the snow by driving over a hidden rail road track! Oh well, that's the way it goes. Duty was one day on watch and one day off. Between the liberty and the watch, our average per night sleep must have been 4 hours or so.

At Hingham, I met Dom Spitale, Marty Sokoloff, Leo O'Brien and Ski Kalinowski. Leo had a set of dress blues and for the first and only time of my Marine life, he let me borrow his and I got

and only time of my Marine life, he let me borrow his and I got to feel like a real live Marine! I still thank Leo to this day. We still meet and write each other, some 47 years later. Only Leo left us by volunteering for air duty. He was sent to Cherry point and spent the rest of his war in the rear of an SBD dive bomber as a tail gunner. He spent a year or two in the Pacific and was assigned, after the war, to Teintsin, China, and returned unharmed. Both Leo (on a sax) and I (on a piano) would take over the band at the local USO clubs and other servicemen would join un for a jam session. I guess it sounded good... I do know it was loud! I played by ear, having never taken a lesson. You have to hear what note you strike to be able to sense where your next note will be struck. I think I guessed correctly only half the time!

We cleaned barracks guard rooms, inspected cars leaving the base, put up the Flag, took down the Flag, caught mess duty once for 30 days and got no liberty. The base was short handed, so to get home you had to pay someone. I did manage a 72 hour pass once, but I paid for it by double guard duty. We attended a lot of weapon instructional sessions. At times we had 5 weapons apart in front of us, and we were told to put them together...blindfolded! After awhile you could sense a part by touch, or when the instructor was not looking, one of us would stick a part in the others hand, or nudge it to his knee. We did stick together, we Marines.

Liberty was the towns of Quincy, Dorchester, Boston and Nantasket Beach. The New England people were marvelous to all servicemen and many a Sunday dinner was in one of their homes. They would pick 3 or 4 up and drop us back off after dinner. We always hoped they had beautiful daughters for us to meet, but usually our luck was not that good.

After a wild ride on Whitey's horse one day, the damned animal going berserk with me aboard, I swore I would never get on another horse as long as I lived. I didn't. That animal went over 2 miles into the woods, with me hanging on the pommel, feet out of the stirrups, hat gone and my head missing tree limbs by inches. All Whitey could do later was laugh, along with the other Horse Marines who hooted and derided me for riding like an indian. Indian Hell...I just wanted to survive!

While there, Ski was notified his brother was killed as a member of the U.S. Army, in combat in Europe. He took it terribly hard, and we helped him with all we could think of by our closeness to each other and by taking care of him when he was so damn drunk he couldn't walk. Don't worry about Ski though, as later on in this story you will see that no finer Marine ever was in the Corps than my buddy Ski.

Another incident of note is Dom Spitale, when he was about to go on guard duty. He was in a jeep as assistant driver and they wore a .45 cal. pistol. The pistols would be placed on a table

in the guard room with the slide back, which opened the pistol and a full clip of .45 ammo beside the weapon. You picked up the .45, let the slide forward, pulled the trigger for safety and then loaded the clip. Dom, picked up the .45, loaded the clip, let the slide forward, which now put a round into the chamber and pulled the trigger! The result was a loud bang...and I mean a loud one! The shot went through the guard wall, crossed a hallway, entered the movie theater where I sat with about 100 or more watching some damned movie with Gary Cooper in it. A small black dot lodged the silver movie screen, after travelling 3 feet or so over everyone's head. Where Gary Cooper had stood on the screen, a small bullet hole moved over poor Gary's body from right to left and back! Dom was thrown in the brig. The guard is now in the brig! That's a switch most unusual. He was given 20 days bread and water. The brig was in the guard room so Dom was behind bars, but available for us to sneak food to or talk with whenever we could without being seen. He came out of that brig the best fed Marine on the damned base! He gained weight in the brig! Man, Marines do stick together!

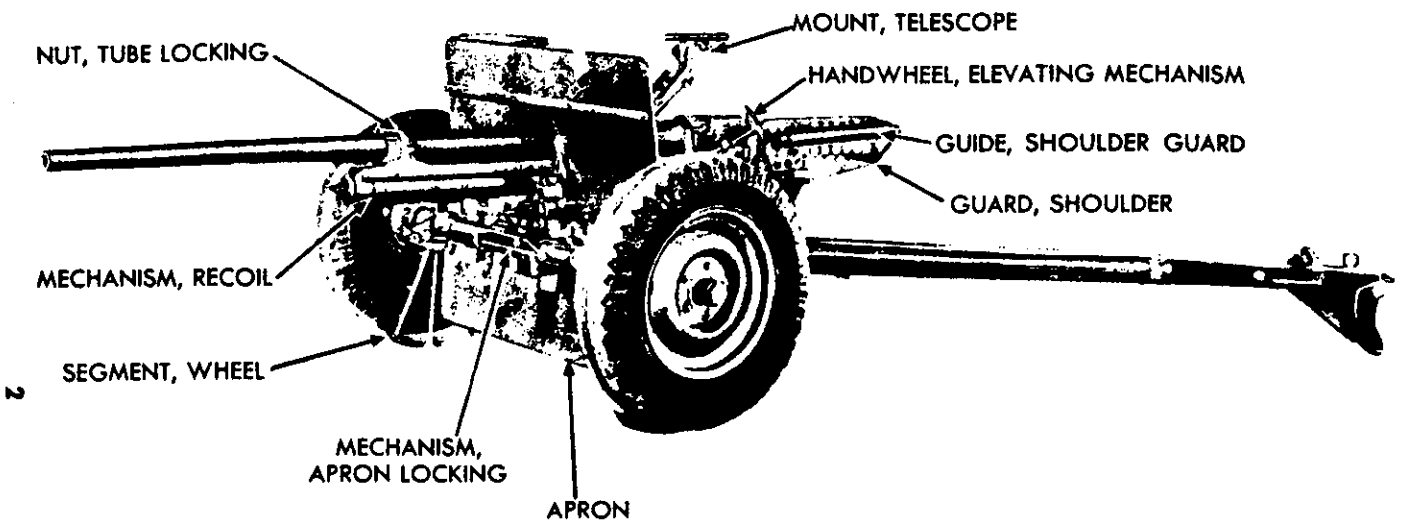
Our orders came in April of 1944 to embark for Camp Lejeune, N.C.. We were driven to South Street Station, placed in rail Pullman Cars and sent on our way. Another great buddy, Bob Henn joined us. I cannot locate Bob to this day and wish that I could. Ski, Marty and Dom went with us, along with 8 or more Hingham Marines. The cars were quite nice, we being assigned two to a Pullman room. I remember one thing...we never ran out of booze that entire trip.

#### The 29th Marine Regiment

Historical Note: The 1st Battalion 29th, had landed with the 2nd and 4th Marine Divisions on the island of Saipan. They distinguished themselves at Mt. Tapotchau, walking through the prone 27th Army Division who had refused to advance. Later on in this story, we will run into the 27th Army Division again, on Okinawa. We will find that they did not improve with age, or another commander. The Marines took the heights and kept advancing. The Army General Smith was relieved by the Marine Corps General "Howling Mad" Smith. Needless to say this created a row in the Army and the floor in the House in Congress, etc.. The order stood though and the Army General, never returned to combat to lead any other troops in WW II. We now formed the 2nd and the 3rd battalions of the regiment. The 29th was the last Marine Regiment formed during the war and received intense training before assignment overseas. They fired more ammo on the rifle range, set up to shoot at moving targets, night firing, etc. The Marines who formed the two battalions were camped at a place called Tent City, 4 to 6 men to a tent. Tent city is still there today at Camp Lejeune but is now concrete buildings. Each building has the letters "TC" painted on the building along with the building Number, ie, "TC 14". Some things never die, especially in the Corps.

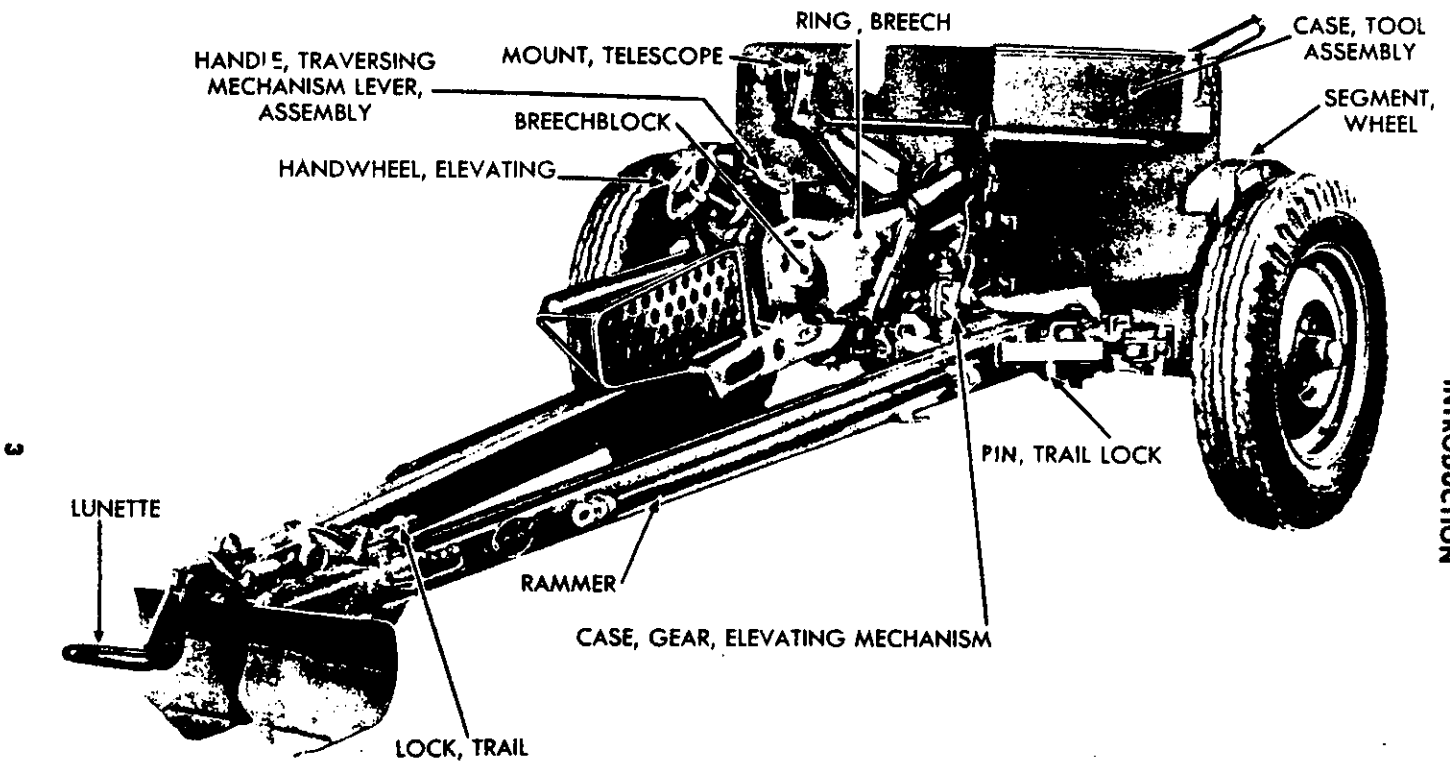
For reasons I have never learned, we Marines from Hingham were





RA PD 49956

Figure 1 — 37-mm Gun M3A1 and Carriage M4A1 — Firing Position



RA PD 69588

Figure 2 — 37-mm Gun M3A1 and Carriage M4A1 — Traveling Position

assigned to the Weapons Company of the Regiment. I presumed our varied training at Hingham, with all kinds of small arms had something to do with it. It was here we met friends for life; Jack Dempsey from Cleveland, Ohio, and Howie "Georgie Boy" George. We are friends to this day and see each other whenever possible. Howie would go into combat with me as a foxhole buddy. Jack would be in another platoon, the 3rd, but constantly in touch. Ski, Marty and Dom, along with Howie and I would become part of the 2nd platoon. Each platoon was 30 men or so with a Platoon Sgt., and a Lieutenant commanding the platoon.

The Weapons Company consisted of tanks which were of the type where there were no turrets. A 105mm gun rested in the tank body, thus the tank was "open". Four 37mm's, a small wheeled anti-tank gun firing high explosive shells, armor piercing shells and canister shells. The canister consisted of 500 small ball-bearing type pellets and could turn a wave of Japanese into chopped meat if fired into a close group of them. Machine guns, which were air cooled, .30 cal. and 50 cal. and some bazooka's made up the rest of the armament of the Company.

We were allowed to select the weapon we would like to be assigned to and that was easy if one used the process of elimination. My brother Matt, was in the U.S. Army Ordinance and had always warned me of what the inside of a tank would be like when a shell bounced around in there 50 or more times. Also we all knew the problems on Guadalcanal of a Jap tossing or dropping a grenade from a palm tree into the open back of a 75mm half-track. The Marines had opted to get rid of all the half-tracks as they proved not up to the task. Machine gunners rate of casualty was also well known to us. The Nips would always go after the Machine guns and heavy mortar attacks were always directed towards them.

We noticed the 37mm's were pulled by 4x4 trucks, so that did it! "Oh boy", we thought... "No more hiking"! What a surprise we were in for. All of the Hingham boys selected duty on the 37's and Ski was assigned to driving the truck. Actually we all would get turns at driving, some were more proficient at handling the truck than others, such as myself. We trained on the gun without firing for a good week or more. Bore sighted the barrel and switched positions so all would know each others duties in the event of a casualty in crew.

We were taken to the range at a later date and fired at tanks pulled along a path with cables. For some reason or other I got quite good at firing the gun and could put tracer shots, armor piercing shells, right into the tank. They usually hit and careened into the air. The duty was hot, sweaty and thorough. Liberty, once in awhile consisted of busing over to the USO Club, a wooden building with no air conditioning, and 15 or so girls to dance with. To wait in line for a dance could be over one hour, as there were 100's of Marines trying their luck. As far as I know their luck was lousy. We did get over to Wilmington, N.C.

once and that proved a dud. There was nothing to do but drink. The USO Club in Jacksonville is still there to this day.

One little trick we used to do was to cut holes in a watermelon and fill it with cheap rot gut moonshine, readily available and always around the Hill Billy Marines, who were part of our outfit. We would then proceed to eat the watermelon. Needless to say watermelon fights would take place and before long our place was a shambles of pits, rinds and crushed melon. Juice ran from our hair to our toes and the tent and everything in it was in shambles. When we sobered up we self-policed our tent area, and no one told us to clean things up as I had no idea where anyone in authority was...probably all were on liberty somewhere in those pinelands. If anyone could find any girl out there he should have been assigned to our reconnaissance company.

On one weekend we selected a small sailing boat which was available to Marines for so called recreation on the base. Off went four idiots, knowing nothing about sailing, off the sandy beach into the bay. Without making the story long, it was also not long before all four Jarheads were in the drink, hanging onto the upside down small sailboat. We managed to get it upright and I sailed it ashore, as I had the only so called experience, having gone to my parents lake house in Pennsylvania during y childhood. I do not ever recall being on a sailboat but I bluffed my way into command and got us ashore. My great friend, Sgt. Ski, laughs with me to this day when we relate that story.

In a few days we embarked on Pullman troop cars and entrained for points west. Destination was Camp Pendelton, Calif.. The train ride was awful! Huge billowing clouds of black soot filling the cars. The heads (bathrooms to you civilians reading this) were the most disgraceful, dirty, filthy, infested and infected crap houses I had ever seen. We did stop inroute at various transit restaurants, why those people would put up with those dirty, hundreds of Marines I will never know. I suppose the Gov't chit for the troops to be fed was the motivation.

#### Camp Pendelton, Calif.

Outside of getting our quarters, which were long wooden barracks, our weapons from the yards nearby, all we really did was prepare everything for export. Our 29th Regiment was assigned an identification marker which was a round white circle with your company letter within the circle. We [Weapons Company] had a dark green letter "W" within the white circle. This was painted on every truck, gun, box, but no Marines. We had to stencil every single piece of clothing possible, even our undies (called skivvies in Marine lingo) with our name. We were given an ink pad and a small stamp with our name on it. We stamped all we owned, even the insides of our shoes! We had no idea why all this fuss was made, and every sergeant supervised us to make sure it was done. We later found out that in the event you were blown to pieces (nice thought) perhaps they would find a part of you with your name on it. How nice!

We cosmoline [a material used as a lubricant and used to prevent rust on metal surfaces] everything, boxed it, crated it and loaded all we could aboard our 4x4 trucks (four wheels total). During evenings we drove all the material to the waiting ships at the piers located in the city. To me, the ships were the largest damned things I had ever seen. They looked beautiful to me lit up and all, I enjoy seeing a ship with lights on at night, as I did all my life having worked in the steamship industry. The ships seemed to me to be all dressed up. We worked like dogs unloading all the damned stuff a Marine Company needs, owns or has commandeered for himself.

One evening we goofed off and got one of the drivers, a Marine, off one of the trucks to drop us outside the Navy gate and pick us up on his next run. We found a bar nearby and no questions were asked. They did ask me for my I.D. card. Because I was always asked, a borrowed I.D. always got me a beer or so. We were lucky we were never caught. Being on liberty in Marine fatigues (work clothing) is not thought of highly by Marine authorities. We got away with it, but if we had been caught, we would have peeled onions on board ship for the rest of the war!

#### We Sail For Points Unknown

We hauled our young determined bodies up the long gangplank, sea bags which to me weighed a ton over one shoulder, an M-1 rifle slung over the other and a helmet that seemed to always get canted too much over one eye or ear. We descended ladders (stairs) to our new home down in the ship's depths and it seemed we went down forever. They simply counted us off about 30 or so Marines, to a square steel floor and walled compartment. This was a cheap cruise and we had no porthole! The bunks were four high and for some reason my count was the upper one. If you ever fell out you would be killed, or at least have your bones broken. I slept with both hands holding onto the canvas, so called mattress. A piece of canvas roped to the railings. I slept on deck as often as possible.

The ship had a number but I cannot recall it. The ship was named the USS General Morton and the Navy assigned a number in the 1000's to liberty ships and were mass produced so the peons like me could get to a war! They were called APA's and the number was painted on the bow. I heard the ship leave port and we could not go topside. I guess because we would be in the way of the sailors doing the required things to get the ship into the convoy. We later went topside in a long line, so we could then go back down again to the mess hall. The chow was good and you could eat all you wanted if you cared to get back in the line. None of us did so as it was so damn long. No wonder we left the service and said..."No more lines...I'll never stand in a line again"! For many years, I stayed true to my words.

Our group found places on the deck to sleep, which was not easy as Marines lay every place there was a space. Some of us slept on "I" beams or deck covers, or inside gun mounts. The next day

was beautiful and I was thrilled to see the ocean, the waves now slight, and the flying fish. I looked for the convoy of ships...nowhere...we were alone! It is hard to believe but we did sail alone. I think it was because we had broken the Japanese code long ago and knew where the Japanese ships were...whatever...it did give us a nervous feeling as all of us were inexperienced in the ways of the sea...even though we were called Marines...soldiers of the sea!

We cleaned our rifles all day long. If not a rifle the machine guns. If not the machine guns, your K-Bar knife, some sharpened it on the steel deck till they could actually shave with the thing. We test fired the machine guns out over the ocean and did receive some training on handling a 20mm anti-aircraft gun. The 20mm was fun except for one thing. I had the damndest time lifting the fully loaded magazine up to the gun. I used a knee to swing the huge canister of ammo up to the loading point and hoped no one noticed it was at my absolute lifting weight limit. Some of our muscled guys swung them up like a carton of Christmas bulbs. Not me...I busted my gut lifting them!

It was June of 1944 when we sailed and the battle of Saipan in the Mariana Islands was underway, our 1st Battalion, 29th was there and we got word that we were on the way to get into the battle. Some of the troops there were reportedly shot up badly or needed rest and relief. In due time our ship approached Saipan and great anticipation ran amongst us as to...hey...combat...a guy could get killed!

Then the word was passed that the island was so full of disease from the dead...the sickly...etc. that we would not land. The island was declared secured and our ship set sail across the blue Pacific for God only knew where. It turned out we were aimed at the island of Guadalcanal. The battle for the canal was long since over with, so someone in higher echelons figured since it is full of jungles, has no buildings, is loaded with all kinds of malaria, bugs, tropical rains and squalls, that it would be ideal for a bunch of dumb ass Marines to train there. All training areas for Marines are first scouted to see if human life can prevail within the area under consideration. When they find out no one can possibly live there, they declare...this is the place...put the camp here!

#### Guadalcanal...Island Of Ghosts

More days at sea, which by now were boring, brought us eventually to anchor off of the canal. Surrounding islands loomed out of the waters and it was incredibly beautiful to behold. One thought of Tahiti, or Hawaii, or some movie you had seen with Esther Williams swimming around the palm trees. We anchored and from the ships rail, crowded with the craning necks of the Marines, one could see the breakers breaking on the white sandy beach. A Misty rain started and we were ordered to embark into US Army Ducks, which were small truck-like vehicles that could

move on water and also wheeled for land use. Later on in the war, they got rid of all of them as they proved to be unstable and completely unsafe as they swamped in any kind of running sea.

Down the rope ladders to the waiting DUKWS. A very difficult climb. Anyone thinks going down those damned ladders is easy try it with the ship rolling, with full packs and gear, helmets, rifles...you name it! We made it to shore safely and were directed to an area about 100 yards from the beach. We were told to make camp here, so we bedded down still wet from the misting rain, for what was a lousy nights sleep. All one could hear were the jungle birds and noises I had never heard in my life. I knew the Japs were going to attack us, yet there were no Japanese seen on the island for at least a year or more. The only one's we were to see were long dead, their skeletons rising from their shallow sandy graves.

We actually made camp where we first disembarked. Tents were pitched, road areas staked off, trucks parked in the area, all lined up, tanks in their area, and the good old mess hall set up in a large tent. For weeks the tents for us stayed, but a wooden mess hall with canvas sides was erected. One lousy job we got was the desire for our captain to have all the pathways between the tents and the officers area layered with gravel. We shoveled more damned loads into trucks than the WPA did during the depression. We raised hell with one Sarge whose name was Bender. We called him "goony bird" Bender because he had been on Midway Island for months. The recreation there was counting the goony bird population that inhabited the island.

The "Goony Bird" Sarge had four of us shoveling at the same time in 110 degree heat. We constantly hit each other with shovel edges or the beach gravel. I got pissed and told the Sarge to rest two and shovel the other two. He put me on EPD immediately which is extra police duty. I had to fill the water truck for a month. Believe me, I gave that SOB a wide birth after that. He was definitely coo-coo. Actually, when we got to Okinawa, he was relieved and sent home after only 10 days or so. He kept ordering us to attack that hill and attack that house and attack my ass...the SOB was cracked and the sooner he got to the States the better.

We were to spend 10 months or more on the Island. Advantages were the great swimming. Abundant shells could be gathered and all of us must have a had sack of shells. After a few months we threw them all back in the ocean. We had movies, but had to drive a good 5 miles to get there. Our loony Lt. Col., whose name was Victor J. Bleasdale, was a nut on having us button our shirts

to the collar, wear hats at all times, button our cuffs down to the wrists, tuck our pants into our socks etc. as this cuts down the amount of skin a mosquito can bite...Is he kidding? they would get you when you slept with your feet and arms out. They got all of us. Not one Marine left that Island who did not have

some form of Malaria later on, or later in their lives. While on sickness, we contracted huge bulbous pimples under our arms, between our legs, etc.. These were painted with a purple solution. Everything was painted purple, even if you had a splinter! Some got encephalitis, which is the swelling of your genitals. Few got it and they all were sent home. We took atabrine tablets daily. The rumor factory had it that it made you sterile, so we threw them away. They fixed that quickly by having a Corpsman stand at the mess hall entrance and throw the tablet down your throat. We all eventually turned a yellow color which was the color of the atabrine tablet. I guess it prevented malaria...I really do not know.

We trained hard. Most of our training was with the 2nd Battalion [29th Marines] as we were in the 2nd platoon, so our support would go to them if they requested additional or special firepower. We met great Marines and made many close friends with those wonderful warriors. The 2nd lost a tremendous number of men on Sugar Loaf Hill...but that story later.

One of the training procedures was roaring in with the truck...jumping off...unhooking the 37...roll it into action, load and fire! They timed us. Funny...we never did that once in combat! It was all a total waste of time. We did get to fire over our infantry advancing and they forced our shots to be closer...and closer over the heads of our advancing friends. We were scared stiff to pull the trigger in the even one fell short. Our aim was fantastic and we could put shell after shell into bunkers built for our training. Some of our high explosive would hit and not explode. One Marine came by our gun and asked for an empty 37 canister. We said, "sure, take all you want". We must have had hundreds laying around the gun. He took one with him and we found out later he had found an unexploded H.E. shell, thought it was an armor piercing round. He sat in the tent and put the shell into the canister and hit it with his entrenching tool. The result was he blew off his legs and testicles. Naturally an investigation ensued, but it never did get to faulting us. Extra training went into shell identification and still accidents galore happened all the time.

#### There Is A Rebel In Every Boy

Whenever we got a chance, we would pile into Ski's truck and head down to the Sea Bee Base at the end of the island. Their chow and unbelievable ice cream and their hospitality to Marines who they respected, was fantastic. Likewise we respected them.

While at that end of the island, we examined the Japanese ships that had been purposely run aground during the Guadalcanal battle. In that manner, the troops who were aboard the ship got ashore before our planes or naval gun fire could put them on the bottom of ship laden "Iron Bottom Sound". So many ships, both Jap and ours were sunk there during the battle in that area that henceforth the name "Iron Bottom", stuck forever. Near the ship, now rusting and forlorn was an old Japanese burial ground.

Bulldozers had scraped a coconut grove down 3 feet and pushed into the ground hundreds upon hundreds of dead Japanese soldiers. We found ourselves walking among the dead and suddenly realized we were actually walking on skulls! Needless to say, we all got to hell out of there. Island of ghosts...Yes!

After the war, I ran into a Soldier who had been at the Canal, A member of the Americale Division. They came ashore to relieve the battle weary, sick Marines and did see action against the die hard Nips at this end of the island. He told me a story I never forgot. He mentioned a Lt. of the Division got the idea to pour aviation gas on the rotting corpses, whose odor and smell was revolting to all, in order to expedite the burial. The gas went on and over all the Nips and then the Lt. said; "Stand back"! He lit a match to throw it onto the gas laden corpses and he was never seen again! He expired right at that instant, burnt to a crisp by the fumes of the highly octaned aviation gas! He joined the Japanese in their burial ground.

We usually washed our Weapons Co. trucks in a very shallow but wide river, the name of which escapes me. It could have been the Lunga. A large sign a 100 yards up the river exclaimed to all: "No Military Personnel Beyond This Point"! It was put there to prevent us from going up to rape and molest the black women and babies! Are you kidding? They were the ugliest, half naked things you ever did see. If looking at them and their dangling belt high tits got one aroused...God only help him! Not knowing why, this one time we decided, like any bored Marine, to go sight seeing. Up the river we went! The driver was me and along went Ski, Ziggy and I believe Howie. After a mile or so the truck entered a cliff area and natives waved down at the unaccustomed sight of a military truck on their highway...The river. We waved back, and down went the truck! The natives had dug a swimming hole! The hood disappeared and ole Willy was pumping away at the gas pedal to salvage the now sputtering engine. Water was flying off the fan and I just had that sinking (good choice of a word) feeling that this was not going too good. We had it! The Damned truck sputtered out and now the four of us were in serious trouble unless we could get out of here undetected. Ski volunteered to go back for a tow truck and he rapidly marched off down the river. In a couple of hours it started to get real dark and we all decided to march back down to civilization. We had no weapons with us and suspected that either die hard remaining Japs, and there still, or the natives, would cut our young throats. We set off and a little bit further down the river we could see tow headlights coming toward us. It is the Captain of our Company...Peepsight! Ski is with him and a Sgt.. The Captain screams, shouting; "Who in hell is in charge here"? Meekly I answer, "I am...Sir". The Captain talked on, "Abandoning government property...your under arrest...Sgt....lock him up"!

We were loaded into the crowded jeep somehow, taken back up to the truck where ski was let to guard it. Ski turned out to be



the hero by saying he noticed one of our trucks missing and that we should look for it where last seen...in the river getting washed! My good old buddy...The captain loved Ski...he could do no wrong, but old Billy Boy was now in deep doo doo! I was taken to my tent under guard, all Marines oogling and asking each other..."What happened"? I got shaving gear, toothbrush and, under armed guard was taken to the Division brig.

The brig was a large quonset hut type building and I was given a bunk in a separate room with two other Jarheads in there for some reason or other. My thoughts ran...can't be too bad...I can live here easily. The next morning I was ordered to shower, shave and dress for a court martial. Driven to Col. Victor Bleasdale's wooden hut of a building I was ushered in and brought before, what to us was God. I stood at attention when he read a bunch of stuff on me and I was sure only the electric chair could save me from being hung! The result was I was sentenced to 5 days bread and water. That is the worst sentence you can receive because during the 5 days, you do not eat a thing but the bread and water. Any other sentence, such as 10 days or 15 days, they must feed you three square meals every third day. In my case I was condemned to starvation on "Ghost Island". Maybe I wouldn't survive and I'd join the Japanese in their death pit. The other 3 Marines got 30 days police duty (street cleaners, etc.) and since I was in charge, I got leveled.

I had thought the prison to be adequate and I had no idea that behind the door at the end of the temporary quarters they had held me in, lay the real prison! I was driven back, ushered through that door and a sight hit me which I will never ever forget. It was a courtyard, with a high wire fence and along the fencing were dog pens! Yes, dog pens, they had built with 2x4's, for the framework and covered the frame with canvas. Each pen had a canvas roof, sides and a chicken wire framed gate which was hinged at the top. The gate was opened and you crouched to enter the approximate 4 1/2 foot high prison. You sat on a couple of pieces of wood nailed together on 4 small blocks. That was thoughtful of them as they did not want our little behinds hurt by the sand! We were allowed to take off our jackets but trousers remained as well as socks and boots. It is hard for me to say what the heat was inside those boxes but if the heat outside was 100 to 120 degrees, what could it have been? They delivered one canteen of water and three pieces of white bread for each of my three daily meals. A gourmet restaurant it wasn't. An old gunny had told me not to eat the white part but only the crust. In this way supposedly, the white part of the bread could not form into a concrete ball in my belly. The guy next door to me was a young Marine and he was starving and we contrived to dig under the 2x4 between us. This being done I slid him all of the white bread for his brown crust. Two days later they took him on a cot to sick bay and I never saw him again. I often wonder if he survived later on, ie the combat on Okinawa. We showered daily, shaved, got led back from the head and sat in our cribs all day long. Each evening you had to make

up one of these God forsaken wooden cots that Einstein couldn't assemble. They opened your cell gate, placed the cot inside and you slept with your head outside the canvas prison, as it was too short a prison pen to allow a 6 foot cot inside, lengthwise.

Great buddies of mine braved their own court martials by slipping Milky Ways, or some kind of candy thru or over the fence to me. If it was chocolate, I ended up licking the paper and perhaps even ate the paper I was so damn hungry.

After five days, "The Bridge On The River Kwai", opened up and let me free. I got back by jeep to the tent area and it was completely empty, the Company was out somewhere, maybe someone was trying for a marathon hike or some other torture, so the place was empty. I sauntered into the mess hall and a friend I knew as a cook set down for me the best bowl of chicken soup I ever tasted. Man that was good. Half way thru the soup a voice barks, "what the hell are you doin' here...Marine"! It's our bastard Lt. and he now orders me to an examination at sick bay, which is our company corpsman, not a hospital. I wander off, find a corpsman, get examined and go to the tent. I fell asleep and my buddies now returned, wake me up so I could hear their horror story and I tell them mine.

Mine you know...but theirs? Someone gets the brilliant idea to build an obstacle course in the jungles of the Canal. It is hard to believe isn't it? The Company was told to leave all their weapons in their tents and when they got to the jump off point they were given old .03 rifles, cords for a sling, and told to start running down this path. They proceed to tell me, "Tomorrow they are going to do it again! They looked awful, muddy, tired, sweaty...just awful.

The next day they take us out there and I go off number 15 or so. You would think that just out of the jail, 15 lbs. or so loss in weight (hell, I only weighed 140 lbs. to start with) that one would be excused. Not the Marine Corps...nope...not the Corps. The path twists and there is a pool with 5 Marines up to their necks in mud. I leap over them. Another pool. I skirt it. It just seemed no matter what I encountered, I got around or over it and sometimes even swinging on ropes that others had slithered off into the awaiting muck that sucked them tight! I ran, I leaped, I jumped. Getting to the end was a good mile run by the jeep wide road, all the way to the start. Cpls. and Sgt's. were stationed along the way to see you don't crawl off into the jungle and hide. On the road had to be 14 to 20 Marines all panting, sitting there, muddy, sweaty...you name it. Along comes me...old golden boy...nice clean outfit, shiny weapon and not puffing. Every guy lying there was a tried and true Chesterfield or Lucky smoker. (we preferred camels but they were sparse to come by) I got back first. Hoo-ray...I won...I thought. To greet me is, guess who? The rat bastard Lt. of ours! "Where'd you hide...goof-off? No answer from me. He had one..."Run it again" I took off again and did the same heroics except for two

things: I rubbed dirt, sand and mud all over me when no one was looking and I sat on the road with the other "exhausted" Jarheads and acted just like they did. Live and learn they say.

While on the Canal we had a Navy ammunition ship blow up. The noise was heard for miles, we had to be 10 miles from the point of the explosion. A wind of high speed whipped throughout our tent area. We knew something blew and only learned later on it was an ammo ship. At the last reunion I attended, (8/25/92, Pigeon Forge, Tenn., 6th Marine Division) I met a Marine, Jack Trudeau, who told me he was only one of two guys that survived in a squad of 50 Marines. He tells me they were brought out to a pier on the Canal and were to be taken aboard an ammo ship to help unload it. The Sgt. told Jack and one other Marine to stay ashore as guards for the vehicles that brought them to the pier. The 48, including the Sarge went out to the ammo ship. They vanished along with all sailors, officers and the parts and pieces of that doomed ship. He mentioned to me also that he was given, with the other Marine, the task of getting all the personal effects from the sea bags of the dead Marines, to send home to their loved ones. Hell of a Story!

Yes, it was an Island of Ghosts. More lives were lost in training and accidents than you can believe. There are several Marines who died on their cots by a bullet coming thru the tent ceiling! Some ass hole would go off into the jungle for target shooting and the over carry would end up on a down angle for some poor slob of a Marine! Semper fi.

#### A Grand Farewell

We had been there a good six months, so far, and boredom was fast winning the battle with us.

We formed a company football team so we could challenge other companies for the championship. The team consisted of seven men, no equipment and was called "touch" football. They had to be kidding. We had more bruises, bloody noses and countless black and blue marks...more than on a real football team. I played quarter back. I guess it came from my ability to throw a baseball. Signals in the huddle went this way: "we run right on signal three...all of you bums block to the left"! Anyhow we won a couple of games and lost the championship game with "A" Company, 1st Battalion, by a disputed call. Ski, Howie, Jack and Dom, were all part of the team and they all seemed to thrive on slamming into a fellow Marine and pushing him, blocking him...everything short of biting!

At one point there were numerous fist fights within the Company. The officers let the fights go as they must have thought, "its just simply Marines working off their tensions". One day Dominic, the "Coco-Head", was working over Ziggy Zelenak. Zig was pretty small compared to Spitale so I said to him, "Pick on someone your own size". Why I said that I will never know as Spitale outweighed me by 30 pounds. Anyhow, he challenged me to

step outside. Out we went to a cleared area, stripped off the shirt and were ready to go at it. An immediate ring of Marines squared around us. I would think the entire 2000 men were assembled within two minutes of the challenge. My cornermen advised me to get the first shot in on him...so out I went, right hand cocked. I think it got half way to his head, when I woke up face down on the sand. He hit me with his left hand. He was a southpaw! He gave me some trouble, as his arms were as long as a gorilla. He really was a "Dead End" kid and although from upstate New York, you would swear he came from Brooklyn. We punched each other around and then, one of our guys in my corner, as I passed by told me to duck more and work on his gut. I followed the instructions to the letter, as anything was better than bleeding to death. It worked to a tee as he smoked a lot and was not in shape like I was. As a runner in school, I guess I could run 10 miles and not breathe heavy. Anyhow, down he went. He said as he got to his knees, "I give up...I give up...that's it!", and on his knees backhanded me across the nose. I bled like a pig. The intense hatred I felt at that point made me into some kind of a mad man. I punched in machine gun staccato. Down he went again and this time he crawled away...beaten! My guys mobbed me, got me cleaned, towled me, watered me...and congratulations were everywhere. The outcome was, my nose never stopped bleeding for two days. I finally went to a doctor and was hospitalized immediately. They got it stopped somehow but to this day my nose is slightly out of kilter! I still see old "Coco Head" to this day and believe me, his nickname was perfect for him. You will attest to that when I relate further on in this story of what happens to Dom, when on Okinawa.

We got orders to start packing and all packing was to be combat ready. All useless stuff went on the ship first and went deep into the holds of the gray Navy transports. The immediate weaponry went on last. Of course the most important of all, we, the Marines, went on after everything else. The transports were loaded with material of all sorts on their decks.

We had, at one time months ago, placed a used and empty carboy in a hole in our tent area. A carboy is a huge bottle and today they are used to make gardens inside a bottle. I believe acid was originally shipped in these bottles...we did wash them out pretty good. One of the Hill Billy cooks supplied one of our Alabama guys named Graham with all the yeast, raisins, etc. This would mold in the ground and form some kind of alcohol which we all hoped would get us drunk and mercifully not kill us. We dug it up one night and passed out this liquid that came out of the bottle as thick as milk! We drank out of the canteen cup and before I got even half-way down the cup, I recall two guys holding me and chanting...one...two...three... and heaved me into my cot! I was gone...drunk...out of it...man, did that stuff hit us. I never knew what else happened, but when I awoke, the tent was in shambles and all Marines gone to who knows where, except for our own six guys. They were all on their backs, asleep...and

drunk as hound dogs! It was a good party while it lasted, which for me was 10 minutes!

We loaded the ship...pulled anchor and drifted past silent, beautiful, green palm tree laden islands to a place...God only knows where...we don't.

This time we had company. There had to be 30 ships surrounding us. Destroyers, transports and LST's all braking waves at their bows...the destroyers darting around like moths around a light. Blinking lights, a complete mystery to those of us that knew Morse Code, blinked incessantly at each other. We were off!

Goodbye, Old Island Of Ghosts...there had to be someplace better! If only we knew!

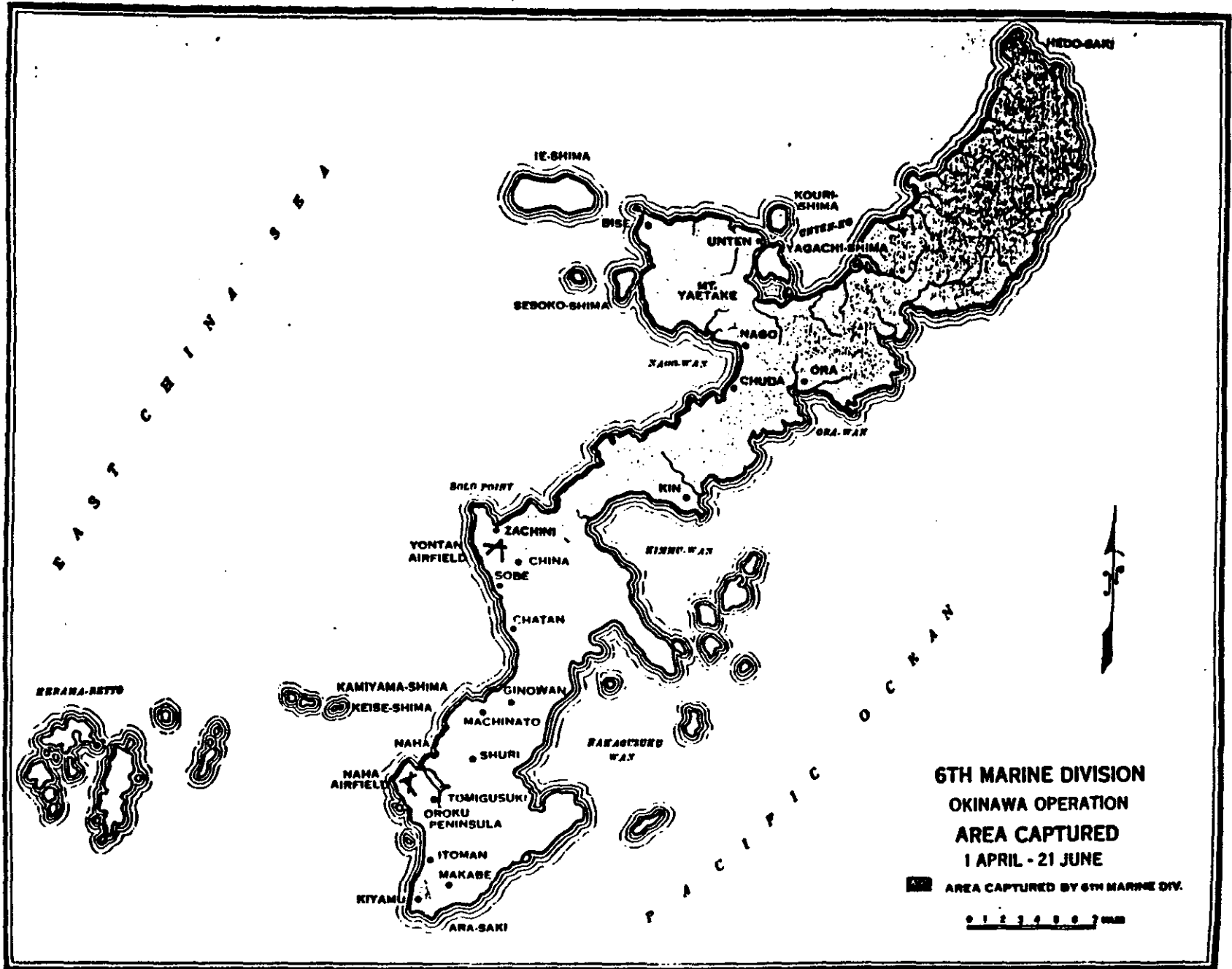
#### Okinawa Shima

The gray painted transport ship, the APA Clymer, plowed its way across the awe inspiring blue colored ocean. I had never seen such a blue as the Pacific. If you sail the Atlantic, the ocean is a gray color. The Pacific is as blue as the sky.

Our quarters were the typical 5 bunks or so high and cramped to say the least. We did try to sleep on deck as often as possible, for the air, and just to get away from the damned crowded area. We owned only what we took aboard. Seabags were packed and left at the Canal and we all wondered if we would ever see the faithful stuffed seabag again. We went aboard with double packs full of clothes, shaving gear, personal possessions and that was it. Time on the ship was spent sharpening knives on the steel deck as well as bayonets, gambling and just loafing. Today's Marines chip paint when aboard, but we watched the sailors do that after they were piped by the shrill pipe the boatswain blew. The familiar cry..."Now hear this...all Marines go to their quarters...or...clean and sweep down fore and aft", would stay in our memories forever and was blasted to us from the ship's loudspeakers. We did do a little training on the ship's 20mm anti-aircraft guns, I now being able to lift the damned ammo tins. I must have gained strength and weight with all the navy beans for breakfast, I know I, and plenty of others gained plenty of air!

We stopped at an Island called Mog Mog in the Ulithi Island group. This was a staging area for the Navy and ships of all kinds covered the ocean as far as the eye could see. You wondered how anyone could ever declare war against us if they had only viewed that mass of naval might arrayed there. They took the Marines ashore for 2 cans of beer (warm) and softball games, etc. Most of the time, fights broke out with the sailors and Marines. Certain types seemed to be always gunning for the other services, Army or Sailors and start a fight with them. They were always broken up quickly by the MP's or SP's that were on the Island mainly for that purpose.

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TO  
THE 29TH MARINES

3,512 LANDED ON OKINAWA  
APRIL 1, 1945  
2,821 FELL IN 82 DAYS  
THE HIGHEST PRICE EVER PAID  
BY A U.S. MARINE CORPS REGIMENT  
IN A SINGLE BATTLE

*ὦ ξεῖν', ἄγγελον Λακεδαιμονίοις, ὅτι τῆδε  
κείμεθα τοῖς κείνων ῥήμασι πειθόμενοι.*

Go tell the Spartans, thou who passest by,  
That here, obedient to their laws, we lie.

—SIMONIDES AT THERMOPYLAE

Back aboard we pulled anchor in the morning and then joined the convoy enroute to...none of knew where. We had not been told yet where we were to be landed. Of course were all apprehensive and wanted to find out, shortly they would satisfy any questions we had relating to our coming combat. We saw one aircraft carrier anchored in the lagoon and it was shot to pieces. I think it was the Franklin, but I do not recall. I do know we found it had to understand how it was still afloat. The damage was enormous. A Japanese Kamikaze had hit it and hundreds of sailors were killed. It is difficult to dig a fox hole of any size in a steel deck. Our Navy did take enormous punishment during the war, especially in the campaign which was coming. Due mostly to Kamikaze planes. [at that time however they were referred to as suicide planes] The Battle for Okinawa resulted in more deaths to the Navy, than Army or the Marines suffered on land. No where during the entire war did that ever take place but on Okinawa. So fierce were the suicide idiots that dove on our ships, if they missed the one they aimed at, they overcarried into the next ship which was floating nearby. Many times they were small LST's and loss of life was severe. At one point in the battle, a hospital ship was actually kamikazed and wounded Marines, now in comfortable beds, Nurses and other medical personnel were killed. Even the hospitals were not safe.

We were finally briefed that Okinawa was our destination and maps were broken out to show us the location with regards to Japan. We looked closely and it seemed we were only 100 yards from the Jap homeland. We were more than that of course, but we were destined to be the first units to land in the Japanese homeland, which Okinawa is considered to be part of. Iwo Jima, is not considered Japanese home soil but are outer islands. A group of islands made up Okinawa, and some of them were to be "neutralized" before we landed. In some cases Army units were to land on some of the smaller islands and the Navy would seal off others by shelling or just by surrounding them.

We were told there were snakes on the Island. The Habu snake could kill you. That snake was 7 or 8 feet long and deadly. "don't worry," they said, "only one Marine in 10,000 will be bitten", funny, we had a company of 200 men and one of our men was bitten. He got to an aid station within 3 minutes. He lost two fingers of his hand where the snake's fangs had left it's mark. The Okinawans used human excrement to fertilize their garden. "Do not eat the daisies", we were told. Hell, we ate every chicken, pig, cabbage, or whatever we found. I do not recall anyone of us getting sick or suffering from eating these bacteria laden foods. I think we were by now immune to anything, liquid or solid that man could consume.

The Island was loaded with Japanese, and the operation would take about a month. It took 82 days. There were more Japs there than they ever figured. Another faulty intelligence job in the Pacific Area. Our submarines had sunk some transports that were destined for Okinawa and on one was the crack 44th Inf. Div. of



the Japanese Army. Only one battalion was already on Okinawa, so 2/3 of them died when the transports were blown by torpedoes and sunk. Thank God, that would have been even more of us killed. You can't kill one of the bastards without some poor American kid getting hurt somehow or other. We may kill 5 of them, but they would kill one of us...as we did.

Our rifles, guns, tanks, trucks, everything was gone over and tuned to a degree of high efficiency. We must have cleaned rifles and machine guns 20 times during the 30 days or so we were aboard those sweaty, rotten transports.

As I said at the start of this story..."The day dawned bright, clear and beautiful. It was like a warm spring day in the States, as a comparison. It was Easter Sunday, April 1, 1945, a date that no one would ever forget who took part in the operation. We attended Mass, received Communion and lay below to wait for our call to the boats. Like Marines of the era's in the past, we would await the call..."Away all boats"!

We were given ammo for the rifles and told to take all we wanted. I carried an M-1 rifle so I took only one bandolier. My memory tells me the bandolier must have had 10 clips of pre-loaded ammo, so I had plenty. We did not have any grenades as it was felt to many accidents happen with grenades and we could get all we wanted on the beach. We never did see a case lay around for us, and luckily we never did need them. We were given the useless gas mask and were ordered to carry it with us. I slung it over my shoulder, cursing that I had to now carry something else. Packs were full of the same things all Marines carried, socks, skivvies, one more set of utility clothing and some K-rations. The blanket was wrapped in a shelter half and rounded over the top part. A poncho and personal things we carried in the attached bottom pack. A K-Bar knife, sharpened so it could cut the hair on your arm and a bayonet, were added to the cartridge belt as well as more ammo, first aid kit in a sealed olive green rectangular can which was clipped to the belt, and two canteens of water. I would say we had 60 pounds or so to climb down the ship's rope ladders to the bobbing little landing craft waiting for us.

Our Weapons Company was summoned over the speaker. A chill, or some kind of feeling swept over me. My throat was already dry and all of us looked at each other with wide, apprehensive eyes. There were no jokes told...nothing...we just plodded up out of the womb of the ship and took our place in our platoons assembly area. We had to wait until we saw the ship's crane, there were many, all working and lifting various materials of war out of the storage area where they were lashed below decks. Truck drivers waited for trucks to show up. Jeeps, tanks and of course our faithful 37mm guns were anxiously awaited. Swarms of green clad Marines, wearing camouflaged helmets that one could always identify a Marine by, climbed over the railing and down the ropes to their small landing craft. A sailor in his life vest and gray

WEAPONS CO.  
29TH REG'T.

OICINAWA  
APRIL ONE, 1945  
EASTER SUNDAY

OUR TANK  
HERE AND  
CAMP

ME, OVER WING



045

helmet was at the craft's helm.

We saw our 37mm and watched it swing over the rail to a landing craft floating with its idling diesel alongside the ship. We were all given a belt to add above the cartridge belt. It was a life belt and contained two carbon dioxide cylinders, and could be inflated and used for a flotation device, if needed. If one fell in the water and had the sense, he was to squeeze the CO<sub>2</sub> and hopefully it would go off and fill the rubber ring around your waist. There was no way to test the thing, so you had better know how to swim! We leaned over the rail, saw the 37 go into the little craft below and we started down the ropes. Always clinging to the vertical part of the rope, as in that manner the Jarhead above you didn't step on your hand...Forget it. Some did it...some didn't. Rifles clunked, gear slipped...Hell, we looked like a bunch of boots just out on maneuvers for the day at Parris Island. We managed somehow and those first down held the rope ladders firmly for us above so we could ease down. Once down, the sound of the diesel was louder and it made any talking between us difficult. I never did get seasick, although I sure came close a few times. I found the trip to shore in the landing craft sickening though. We moved off of the ship's side and into the small circle of craft maneuvering near the ship and that put you in the trail of all the craft; the smell of the diesel fumes made many a Marine sick. Whenever I rode in the back of a bus in later years, I would always think back to that smell...acrid and gut wrenching.

We shortly headed for the smoke filled shoreline that seemed to be 1/2 mile or so from the ships. Explosions from ships shelling the shore could be seen and smokey black fires from some installation ashore rose in the air. The island really and truly could not be seen. We were heading for the unknown. You thought..."where's the beach?"..."are we in the right place?"..."are there Japs waiting?"..."will we be killed?" The landing craft was moving pretty fast and soon we could see a beachline with hundreds of small craft which had landed ahead of us all over the place. We finally heard throttling by the Navy Coxswain and the boat ground to a halt. The front ramp dropped and we began to push the 37mm, loaded on the landing craft so the snout pointed at the enemy (what else) and we were about to set our feet on Japanese soil!

Forget it. We pushed the gun off into almost 3 feet of water. We cursed the Navy, the Coxswain who upped the ramp and pulled to hell away from the now stranded Marines. We were on a coral sandbar a good 100 yards from shore. If the Japs had artillery or mortars zeroed in on that bar, we would not be here to tell this story. We were soaking wet. We hailed a Marine Alligator, which is a treaded type of craft and he came over to give us a hand. He must have unloaded some troops and was heading back to the ship for another load, but God bless him, he picked us up. We got the 37 up his ramp with tremendous physical effort on the part of all 8 or so of us. I recall Cpl. Reilly, from Chicago

Going  
North up  
PICKED UP  
ANY MACHINE  
WALKING  
TO  
GET  
AT  
EVERY  
PLACE



MARK  
BRESNAN  
(CIR)  
GUNNY HANK  
STEVENSON (W)  
WITH  
TOMMY GUN

100

saying he'd shoot that Navy SOB if he ever sees him again.

The Alligator driver and his machine gunner took off the side covers to their motors and believe me, the heat from the motors dried us out before we hit the sand. Down went the ramp...we said thanks...and Semper fi...and rolled our little wheeled gun down and onto the sandy beach. We pushed it to a low rise in the beach about 40 yards or so away and rested there with a group of other men we found from our outfit. All units were scattered. We never did see another 37 near us. Two of our tanks were nearby, but a third had been landed on a coral reef similar to the one we were landed on. That tank slid sideways into the ocean and all one could see was this tank at a 45 degree angle, two-thirds of it under water. I learned only recently, meeting a fellow Weapons Company Marine, at our reunions that the tank was left there. They never did get it out. We ended up giving clothing to many of the tank men, as theirs was wet, cut, or ruined coming to shore. They swam in or waded, and all packs, and in a lot of cases, their weapons were gone with the tank.

Officers and sergeants ordered us to various places and we were told to dig in for the night. It seems the Japs did not fire very much at us. They allowed us to land and were saving it all for a rainy day! (were they ever) No one was hit, killed or wounded whatsoever, in the area we were in. The units assigned to take the airfield, Yontan, took it in hours. It was supposed to take 5 days of fighting. [The 4th Marines took Yontan Airfield] We dug into the sand, doubled up with another Marine and ate a K-ration. We landed on the beach during the afternoon of 1 April. Darkness came and the sky became a 4th of July that you could not forget the rest of your life. Tracers lit the sky and crossed by the 1000's. I never saw a plane that first night or even heard one, but they sure did shoot up the sky.

In the morning we found one of our men, Bob Pethick, dead in his foxhole. He was in the hole alone and I thought he had been hit with an expended bullet or a piece shrapnel from the Navy guns. It turned out he was stabbed to death! We never did find out how it happened. The belief is; A Marine killed him. He carried a .38 pearl handled revolver his father had sent to him and we think someone wanted the pistol. They killed him for it. Bob was a quiet young man and would not hurt a fly. We of course were stunned, but we preferred to believe a Jap killed him. When I visited the cemetery some 85 days later or so, I found Bob in grave #3. He certainly died rather early in the battle for that Island.

We spent the next few days getting outfits together. Word was heard that the enemy did not exist. He vanished somewhere. Don't worry, we would find him sooner or later. The battle plan put Marines landing and turning left, north, and the Army landing and turning right, south. [The First Marine Division went east and cut the Island in two] After 10 days or so the Army found

notoriously brutal spot was the belt line, where the tightness of your belt seemed to attract most of these miserable creatures. We were all liberally sprinkled with this powder until it looked like we walked through a flour mill.

At night and at exactly 7:00 PM we were shelled by some obstinate Japanese gun crew that was dug into some cave up in the mountainous section ahead of us. The area was known as Motobu Peninsula, and a high mountain, called Mt. Yaetake controlled a view of all the Marines advancing. Japs had the road zeroed in pretty well, so we pulled off the roads into woodlands. The Jap artillery would let 4 or 5 rounds go and then stop...they probably rolled the gun back into the cave and hid.

We dug in near Mt. Yaetake, and Marines began the attack up the steep wooded, rocky sides. The Japs were well dug in and vicious close in fighting was in order. We were in a small valley and when we first pulled into position, we took some sniper fire from the hills on our left. Our Lt. Fleming, fled in his jeep to the south, like he was going for ammo...we never learned why he left, unless he thought the Japs were after him and his jeep. Thank God we had a Sgt. John Emmett, from Buffalo, N.Y., who was tremendous. He was easy going, intelligent, well liked and when he did something, it was right. We loved him, and hated Fleming. Sgt. Emmett, directed us to open up on the hills with rifle fire and that ended the firing at us. No one was hit fortunately. We strung out the 37's in a line across the valley, loaded them with canister and set up trip flares in front of us. That night the flares went off and in the glare of the parachute which was shot up when the wire was tripped, the field lit up with at least 50 bodies coming toward us. We blasted away with the machine guns and 37's till the word to cease fire was passed. In the morning we went out into the field to investigate and found we had killed 30 or 40 women and old men. Amongst them were 4 or 5 Jap soldiers. The soldiers had used the civilians as shields. It happened again the next night and the order to fire was issued immediately...you could not take a chance.

We had one Marine, Bob Lannon, from Boston, Mass., and his new hobby was collecting gold. He would go to the dead Japanese and with his large K-Bar knife, cut out the gold fillings, and teeth. The Japanese seemed to love gold teeth.

We moved up a mile or so and Lt. O'Brien, a fine Marine and great guy, scouted the road ahead with Cpl. Al Storey, one heck of a nice guy, and his jeep driver. Many a vehicle had passed up that same road they were on and yet, their jeep was blown up by a mine. We think a Jap sneaked out between vehicles as they passed, waiting for a long gap between jeeps and trucks and planted a small mine. It blew Lt. O'Brien out of the jeep and he was wounded. Al Storey was killed. A tattoo on Sgt. Major Ski's arm today has the word "Storey" below a USMC emblem. We lost a fine Marine that day and it saddened and shocked us as Al and Lt. O.B. (as we called him) were popular men.

We placed all our trucks in a field and dug in around the perimeter, the 37's were still hooked to the trucks in case we had to move up to the front. For the first time in a long time we were behind all the lines and actually in the rear. Graham, Ziggy, and I, dug a hole just off the main road. It rose about 3 feet off the road and to our back was a dirt wall, about 6 feet high. We placed our rifles against the cliff wall at our heads and lay down with our feet toward the road. I was on the left, Graham in the middle and Zig on the right. We ate C rations that night and threw the tin cans over our feet down toward the roadbed. I left my M-1 in the truck and had grabbed a carbine. We had picked up all kinds of rifles, BAR's, etc., that were either discarded or dropped by wounded Marines. As long as you did not have to carry the damned extra weapons, they came in handy.

We stayed awake a long time and finally elected to sleep, with no one on watch,..."what the hell...we were behind the lines and Marines were all around us". Later that night I felt my right arm move and as I propped up on my elbows, I saw a carbine rifle in front of me, aimed to the left. I looked quickly down the barrel and there, about 4 feet away was a Jap soldier on his hands and knees creeping toward us. The gold star on his helmet I can see today, clearly. Old Graham shot him 3 times with only his right hand on the rifle! The Jap dropped and moaned. I grabbed my carbine which was propped up against the wall and opened up on the Jap with about 10 shots out of the clip of 15! I was so damned nervous I just kept pulling and pulling the trigger. The Jap had a bayonet, grenade and no rifle. We never slept a wink that night and all I could hear were all of our teeth chattering. We got up at daylight and examined the enemy soldier. We had seen plenty of them dead along the way north, so it was not too shocking. We had blown half his head off, so the sight was not that beautiful to behold. I picked up the large tin he had, carried by a leather strap over his shoulder. It should have been full of rice. It was full of money. It flew all over the place when I emptied it. I still have some of it. What in hell he hoped to spend it on, one can only speculate. I knew there were no Mc Donalds or Wendy's on the Island.

Our chicken shit Lt. came down and inquired as to "What in hell was all that firing here last night"? He had dug in only about 10 yards or so further up the hill, in the middle of all of us, of course. When we pointed out the dead Jap that had sneaked into our area, I saw his face go white and his mouth fall open. He stammered...looked...then walked slowly back to his hole. Scared the shit out of him and we loved it! I inquired of Graham. How did he ever notice that Jap? He said he heard the C ration cans rattle and waited a little, then his head appeared from the roadway. The jeep drivers wanted to know who in the hell was firing last night as the windshields were all shot up. It was me, I guess, as 9 out of 10 bullets went wild. I don't really know. All I know is we never did say it was us that did

the shooting.

We patrolled a lot into the wilds, the hills were all around us, but it was turning out all the Japs were up on that damned Mt. Yaetake. On one patrol we came across a family of Okinawans sitting by their home. Cpl. Reilly claimed the man sitting there was a Jap soldier posing as an Okinawan. We all said "no" as he appeared to be too young. With that, Reilly, pulled out his 45 and shot the boy in the head. We were stunned. The family went crazy over the boys body.. Reilly just shrugged and said, "lets go". We hated that bastard forever and in actuality we should have reported the incident. Being young ass Marines in combat for the first time, who thinks of doing that. We just knew one thing...Reilly was off limits to us...we spurned him...avoided him...and spread the word around that he was "loco".

Our great B.S. Col. Victor Bleasdale was relieved of command of the 29th Marine Regiment. General Shepherd asked why the 29th wasn't advancing up a certain hill, or hills, along Mt. Yaetake. He said he had men out rounding up the small Okinawan mules that wandered around here and there. Shepherd answered: "I'll tell you where there are plenty of mules...and they all have two legs. Get those Marines in the H.Q. and Weapons Company and move up...and P.S., your relieved of command". Shepherd put Col. Bill Whaling in charge. Whaling was an old Raider Marine from the Guadalcanal days and although I never did meet him, I know he was liked and did a fine job. At least in tactics, he knew a two legged mule from a four.

One of our sergeants, Sgt. Bender was sent back, either to the States or a Hospital. All he kept saying was: "move up, attack...let go...attack"! He was stationed on Midway Island during the Battle of Midway and we think he became just like the famous "Gooney Birds" that frequented that barren, hot Island. He was a gooney bird. He was on the Island too long. We never saw old Bender again.

We were pulled into the hills and loaded up with 5 gallon cans of water. If you ever carried a full 5 gallon can of water or gas, you know how much it weighs. Your arms hung down to your knees and your back broke. Think of us going up hills, down ravines, rocks, stream beds etc.. Some of us had boxes of grenades which, which I ended up with and these things were almost impossible to carry. It went on one shoulder and the wooden box bit into my shoulder til the bone felt numb. We stumbled up, encountering many wounded Marines coming down. Most could walk, some crawled. We got to some of them, but most just wanted to get down to the bottom of the hill where secure positions out of enemy fire could be found. One kid was shot clean as a whistle through the knee cap, and he walked! I asked him if he was O.K., and he said: "Million dollar wound Gyrene, million dollars"! In Marine lingo that meant a trip home, or hospital, or at least out of this God forsaken killing area. Some got fooled and after a couple of weeks hospitalization, they found themselves back on the lines.



During this time we had heard the great journalist Ernie Pyle was on the Island. He did hook up with the Marines for awhile and some of our guys got interviewed and their names and units were sent back to the States via his stories. He went with the Army, [77th Division, Ernie Pyle, was killed on 18 April 1945] to an island called Ie Shima, which was very close to Okinawa. The 77th was to land there and take care of the 300 or so Japs who were on that island. He was in a jeep that received some machine gun fire from up ahead and those in the jeep jumped out and ran to the side of the road for cover. Ernie was with them and then curiosity got to him. He raised his head for a look at where the harassing fire was coming from and the bullet hit him right between the eyes. This event made headlines across the United States, and when we heard of it, we were saddened, as he genuinely loved Marines. I think Ernie loved the G.I. [soldier] better as he had slogged across Italy with many an outfit. This was his first time in the Pacific theater of war. It would be his last. The 77th took over a week there and were criticized for what should have been only a 3 day operation.

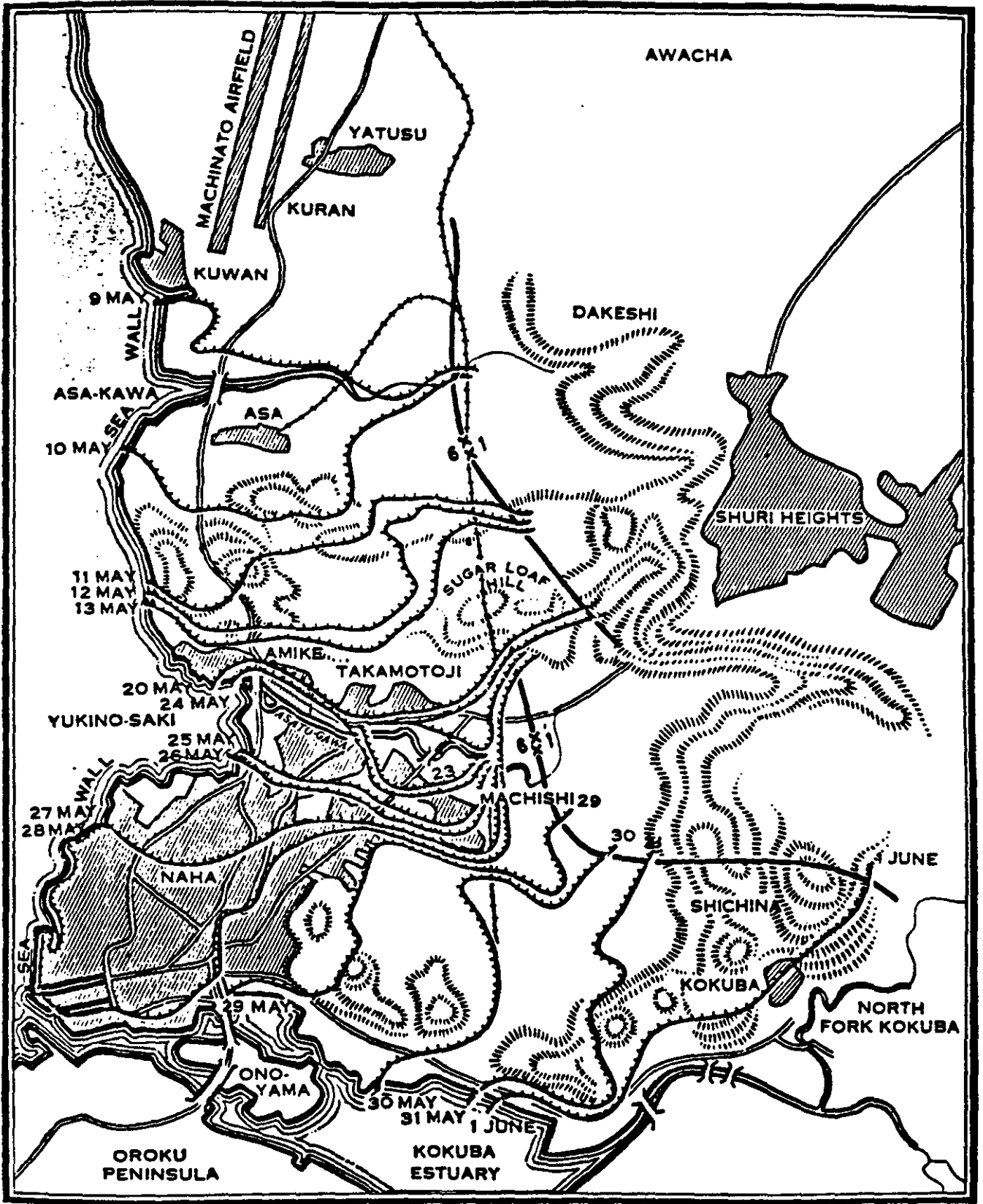
On 14 April, word was passed all long the lines that President Roosevelt had died. I think it would have been the 13th in the States, but on Okinawa it was the 14th. An overall pall of sadness swept the lines and all companies. Fighting still went on but those called upon to do so did it with a heavy heart. FDR's son, Jimmy was a Marine and was in the Raiders. The President's love of the Corps was certain. His death was talked about for many days thereafter.

One day we were summoned to our Company Head Quarters. Our gun crew was selected to perform a task dreamed up by old "Peep Sight", our captain. The gun I mentioned earlier, that was opening up at 7:00 P.M., was suspected of being in a cave on the side of this cliff. His idea was to go up the opposite hill with a 37 and take out the cave, gun, and the crew behind it. We drove as far as we could with the gun and then manhandled it through the brush to the foot of this monster hill. We looked up and knew ~~someone was nutz~~. That damned hill was like a "Mt. Suribachi"! We used ropes, and we sweat bruised shinbones, helmets bouncing off our heads, rifles coming unslung and banging into all parts of our bodies. We cursed old Petrie every inch of the way. There were about 8 of us and the Sergeant so all of us were needed at every point of the ascent. We were on some kind of goat path and several times we came to a point where only one wheel would fit on the path. We all knew, that was it. "Lets all go back down", "Screw it", nope... We were ordered down the sides of the hill, so four of us passed the rubber tired wheel by hand. We went forward while the other the other one stayed on the path. We finally reached a rise at the top by using trees and attaching our ropes to the trees above, then it was...haul, haul, haul! We got up to the top and found it was all loose rock and shale. Orders came to dig in for the night, as it was now getting dark and we wanted to secure ourselves at this position.

Dig in? How?..it was all rocks. We just piled them up in front. We braced the gun with rocks so it would not roll down the hill or come loose somehow and run over us. We slept miserably, as our mattress was the rocks on the ground. No sense moving one away. Under it was another one, only sharper. Day dawned, and we used binoculars to look at the hill we were to do our work on. We noticed small figures of men, two thirds up the side of the rocky hill. They are Marines! Hell, we can't fire now as they are moving all over the caves...throwing grenades and firing into them. I am sure they killed every Jap who was in that gun crew, because later on I found photos of the gun. It was a big son of a gun alright. Dead Japs were all over the ground around it. Well, we just rolled the gun down the hill toward the Marines, as that side of the hill was not too vertical. Nice idea Captain, but what a waste of time and muscle!

We were waiting for our trucks to come through the roadway and I noticed something on the ground. It was a wooden trigger housing from a BAR rifle. What a prize. When we got back, we immediately put the new piece into the BAR and man! We had an automatic quite different than we were issued. I tell this story because that mechanism I put on the BAR probably saved my life...but that's later.

On one patrol, quite a long one which lasted all day, we reached the ocean. It was truly a beautiful sight. Okinawa is a very beautiful island and one could think of Hawaii to form a similar island type in your mind. There was an old metal ship that looked like an old flat barge rusting on the beach. Down we went for a look. We asked Sgt. Emmett if we couldn't all go in for a quick swim as the water was enticing and we were of course filthy. We had never showered once so far. In 82 days I can tell you now, I never did see a shower. The rain was our shower. We set up a couple of lookouts and stripped down, and away we went. Some of us dove off the old barge. I recall the water as tepid and the swim was thoroughly enjoyed. We hiked ourselves back to our company site reported in and crept into foxholes after a quick K or C ration, and secured ourselves for the night. During the night we found Sgt. Emmett moaning. It had rained considerably that evening, so we crawled from under makeshift tents, or ponchos (waterproof, square, canvas like material which was similar to a tablecloth. It had a hole in the middle for your head to fit thru) and went over to him. Luckily we were behind the lines and in a little cove which was quite secluded. He told us his eyes were on fire. We soaked rags, or toweling and simply bathed his eyes with cold water all night long. He was not much better in the morning and still suffered. By now he was blind. He could not even open his eyes. The only thing we could think of was that he had been bitten by a jelly fish. We got him to our corpsman, who jeeped him to the Division Hospital some miles down the road. He returned to us about 4 days later and was fine, but I don't think he ever forgot that swim on Okinawa.



We patrolled a lot and occasionally would see a Jap. The distance would be a good 200 or 300 yards and no matter how carefully we aimed our shots, I never saw one hit...they sure as hell took off fast though. We would patrol down to the area they were in but never found anyone. By now a lot of us had Jap sweaters to keep us warm at night. You would never want their shoes though as they were a thong and looked like slippers.

One night they sent Ski to get ammo. He asked me to ride shotgun for him, so off we went in his 4 x 4 down the coast road to the ammo dump some 4 or 5 miles away. It was dark, he had no lights and it was raining slightly. I don't know how in hell he saw the road to this day, I didn't. At one point he braked sharply and said, "Billy boy, those boards in that bridge are wrong for this truck...we need to fix them". We hopped out and adjusted the planks which spanned a gap in a dynamited concrete bridge and drove over them. To say I was ready to bail out of the truck instantly is putting it mildly. We made sure to make a mental note of where the bridge was and checked it carefully on the way back. We careened down the dark road at breakneck speed. Ski was a hell of a good driver but his shotgun rider was still wishing he had a parachute! We loaded the ammo and with Gods help, we made it back. A ride I will never forget.

The Mt. Yaetake Battle was over. Our Cpl. Richard Bush, won a Medal Of Honor on the mountain. He was wounded while leading a grenade attack. Making his way to the aid station, he lay there on the ground and a Nip grenade bounced in amongst the wounded lying there waiting to be treated. Without hesitation, he rolled onto the grenade, smothering it and saving all those around him from either additional injury or death. He was wounded severely by the explosion, but survived somehow. He is alive today.

At that point in time we thought the battle for Okinawa was over for us and we would be heading out, in fact we were told to get all of our gear packed, which we did. We had been up north for 20 days or so and had secured what amounted to 1/2 of the Island. The Army meanwhile had only gone one mile in 21 days while attacking southward. Then it came!...We were not leaving at all! The Sixth Division moved into the southern lines. The Navy ships were taking a terrible beating from the suicide planes and the only way to really stop them was to secure the island completely. The way the Army was progressing, the result would be many ships lost and more casualties.

#### We Move Into The South

With all gear packed our Division, tanks, trucks, jeeps and all rolling equipment moved onto the road and headed back down where we came from...south. Someone, and to this day I think it was the Sea Bees, had put signs up all along the road. On our side of the road were signs that said: War...Blood...Mud...Dirt...Japs ... Bullets...Hell...etc. On the other side of the road were the following: USO...Hot doughnuts...Warm beds...Coffee...Nurses...

Clean clothes...etc. The US Army 27th Division was trekking north and whenever we stopped, they would receive rocks, C ration cans, bullets or anything else we could throw at them. They cringed in their trucks from the bombardments. We hated the 27th from Saipan, and now this. Us relieving them? We were really teed off.

At one point in the road we saw a huge sign that read something like this: 2167th Laundry Battalion, In the Field, where at least 1000 or so fresh clean pants and shirts were drying on lines! We had lived in two sets of clothing and by now they were filthy and rotting...and stunk out loud. What a shock to see a laundry outfit. It was hard for us to believe that. Another thing that got us was to see an Army platoon marching along and one man was carrying on his back, an apparatus and we couldn't figure out what it was. Finally someone told us that it was a coffee urn. A large metal container for their coffee! To us Marines, our love of the Army fell to a rock bottom low!

We were called to guard one of the airfields and I think it was Yontan, but it could have been Kadena. Word had been received that some suicide planes were coming in that night. Enemy parachutists! We ringed the field, dug in and waited. We got one plane that landed that night and before the Jap plane had stopped 9000 bullets must have hit it. The next day, close examination showed only the pilot aboard and he was riddled. He thought the field was still their's. We moved off, but a suicide group did land some nights later and they managed to blow up some of our planes before they were completely wiped out to the man. [It is believed, these events took place in early or the middle part of April, 1945]

We now lost track of every other platoon in our outfit. We became scattered as front line units from the 29th Marines would ask for tanks, 37's, machine guns etc... and off we'd go. Our section usually hooked up to the 2nd Bn., 29th, and slogged along with them, they in front and we were in the rear with our trucks and guns. At one point we had stopped along the road and we all dismounted and began to heat up some coffee in old C ration tins, alongside the trucks. It was wet, miserable and cold. Along came rats ass Lt. Fleming, screaming and shouting that he did not give the order to make coffee, and kicked over all the hot coffee onto the ground. He made a lot of points with us. By now he was solidly hated and we avoided him or stayed a good distance out of his sight. We would fix his ass a little later, but it took a little time.

We spent a couple of weeks firing into hills, caves and moving constantly. The fighting was tough, as the Japs had dug in on every hill in the south, and made us pay for every yard of advance. My good friend and the Marine I fought on the Canal was hit on 15 May. Dom had advanced over a wall with several Marines and after advancing somewhat, the man in front of him, James

Albano, was hit and killed. The Jap machine gun opened up on Dom and another Marine, Dom was hit. A bullet passed into his right temple and exited from the left temple. Someone said; "Dom...you're hit"! He did not even know it, but blood streamed down the side of his face. Dom is alive today and he told me the following story.

He felt an incredible flush of heat and tore off his blouse, cartridge belt and whatever. He then ran back toward the lines in the rear, bullets kicking up and flying past him. He was without a blouse or helmet or any equipment but pants and shoes. He got back to a group of Marines and they put him on a stretcher and took him to an aid station. He had passed out and after a quick examination by a doctor, they placed him in the dead pile. Now one could be alive with a bullet through his skull...only Dominic was...No wonder his nickname was "Coco-Head". In tearing off his clothing, his dog tags went with them but somehow or other someone saw him moving and they gave him some plasma. He was trucked, boated and lifted to a hospital ship off shore.

Some six months later, he finally remembers who he is. The left side of his face and head are double the size of a normal face and swollen purple. The exiting of a bullet is always the most damaging part of a wound. When he tells them he is Dom Spitale of the USMC, the doctors then ask..."Then what in hell are you doing in an Army Hospital"? He was listed as missing in action (MIA) for all these months, his family thinking he was dead. He is sent to Phila., Naval Hospital and spends a year there. He married, raised a family, worked all his life in a furniture factory. He is fine today but a tumor has been found in his skull. The pain he suffers now is terrible and pills are the only way he can get some sleep. That he is not in perfect health is evident when you are with Dom. He forgets or is somewhat unstable. Oh yes...his disability pension?...A big 30% from the good old U.S. Gov't. He served so well! Hard to believe.

#### Sugar Loaf Hill

We moved up to the so called, Sugar Loaf Hill area. [Lt.Col. Horatio C. Woodhouse, Jr., Bn CO of 2nd Bn, 22 Marines, coined the name Sugar Loaf Hill, about the middle of May, 1945. He was KIA on May 30.] The American forces were now drawn up across the island in a line from east to west. On the east were two Army Divisions, and the 1st Marine Division and on the west coast above Naha, the island's capital city, was ours, the 6th Marine Division. This defensive position was to be known as the Naha-Shuri line. Shuri was the old Okinawan castle high up on a fortress type hill. It's control of our battle area was pivotal in the battle. [Shuri Castle was in the 1st Marine Division's zone of action] Sugar Loaf was given it's name by the virtue of the white color and squared off hill top. It was triangulated by Horseshoe Hill and Half Moon or Crescent Hill. The latter two hills were slightly behind [south] of Sugar Loaf and easily supported any defense of that hill line. Sugar loaf became the most bitter battle of the Pacific war.

All of the hills were connected and were honeycombed with caves and tunnels. The caves were bombed, rocketed and mortared...yet...they were still there! Our Major Henry Courtney, of the 22nd Marines led an attack up Sugar Loaf with some 46 men. They stormed over the hill throwing as many grenades as they could. A Jap grenade landed at Courtney's feet and he was mortally wounded. He was awarded the Medal Of Honor. Of the 46 men who went up in the initial attack on that lousy hill, only 15 came down.

Rusty Golar, one of the 46 was still up there. He set up a machine gun. He used up all of the ammo, swiveling the gun while on one knee from side to side as he was attacked. He and two other men were all that was left. Ammo carriers who tried to come up were all killed or wounded. Rusty, drew his pistol...emptied it. He threw the pistol at the enemy, scurried about and picked up grenades on the ground and threw all of them over the hill towards the enemy. The grenades gave out. He picked up a BAR and fired it til it jammed. He finally picked up a wounded Marine to take him down the hill when a sniper's bullet slammed into Rusty. He put the man down...sat down...slowly tipped his camouflaged helmet down over his eyes and died. He died on the same day Dominic was shot through the head. Rusty received a Navy Cross. There is no question in our minds that a Medal Of Honor should have gone to him.

It is not my job here in this little story to tell the entire history of Sugar Loaf Hill. The courage of many who attacked it are numerous. The casualties are also. The 22nd was decimated by repeated attacks. The 29th Marines took over and they too were almost put out of the war by the number of killed and wounded they suffered. Replacements were killed one hour or less after joining a platoon or company.

We tried to support those going up those lousy hills with our fire but we came under severe mortar and machine gun fire. At times we abandoned our 37's and ran and dove into foxholes, burrowing down like moles. We dug in for the night, got our guns moved back and dug in again. A tremendous artillery barrage by the Japanese took place. They had more artillery on Okinawa than any other island in the entire Pacific war...and they knew how to use it. Our area was showered with shells. We could hear them coming just like in the movies. I had on a small tan rope rosary that my mother had sent to me. I still have that rosary. I prayed. I said the Hail Mary 50 times or more. Howie George, who I still see to this day, remembers the Hail Mary, even though he was not a Catholic. One shell hit so close that Howie and I were lifted 6 inches or more off the ground and dropped back down! In the morning, we found holes all over the place, yet not one single man was wounded or killed. It was not our time. Our luck was with us.

On another occasion I dug in with Howie, I looked up and a

parachute flare was descending. It had gone off high overhead and was swinging to and fro slowly, sideways and downward. I said to Howie: "That damned thing is going to land right in our hole"! "Nahhh, no way", he responded. Within a half a minute or less the glowing flare hovered over us, then found it's way right down on top of us. We yelled..."Bailing out", so we would not be shot by other Marines and rolled out of the hole. One good thing about it. We slept on parachute silk for the next week or so.

The debris of war was everywhere, ammo boxes, bricks, dead Japs, stretchers, etc.. Some Jap grenades lay there and had not gone off! Occasionally an Okinawan civilian would be found or would wander around the area and someone would have to take them to the rear. They were a pathetic, dirty and forlorn looking people. They suffered 125,000 deaths in that battle. That is more than the atom bomb killed. The ironic thing is, the Okinawan people had no weapons in their homes, or an army and didn't know what war was...they know now.

George Murphy was a Lt. in the 29th Marines, an ex Notre Dame all American in football. He had a Marine under his arm, taking him down the hill when the Nips shot him in the back. He placed the man on the ground, turned to the Japs, pulled out his pistol and emptied it toward the enemy in an act of defiance. He then fell dead.

How many of these cases can be related here? There simply are too many to tell in the pages of this history. The 4th Marine Regiment was sent up to relieve the 29th and it was done extremely well. Not one Marine left his hole til a 4th Marine man got in it. The 29th deserved a rest as they were completely shot up. It is in the USMC records for all to read, that the 29th Marines suffered more casualties than any other regiment in the Marine Corps History. Shuri Castle was in the Army zone of action, yet the 1st Marine Division slanted over and took the castle. The Army bitched and ranted, but we took it and that cut out the supporting fire the Japs pointed down onto Sugar Loaf. With the Shuri line broken,...the drive into the capital city [Naha] was to begin.

The rains came...and they came...and more rain. If you study history you will always find that it rains after battles. Probably because of concussion or noise, or whatever. Now we slogged. Trucks became mired in deep mud. Tanks with treads, made little headway. Amtracks (treaded boat and land vehicles) were shelled and stayed where they were, stuck in the mud. Tanks were used all the time as rescue vehicles for the wounded, who were placed on top of the tanks. Those tanks with the flame throwing capability were fantastic. We loved them and they took a lot of incoming, but stood their ground and advanced to burn the Japs out of their caves. The smell of death was all over the island. Bugs, flies and maggots were everywhere. It was amazing that we could sit down on the ground, soaking wet and open a ration can and begin to eat. You were so wet that it did not



matter. At least our clothing was being washed...finally.

Newer type rations were distributed to us, and they were called 10 in 1 rations. "10", because one box was to feed 10 men, "1" because the box should feed the 10 men for 1 day. The cans of bacon were the size of our present day coffee cans at the super market. The bacon was so packed in the can, that K-Bar knives were used to pry the bacon out. I still love the melted cheese on the bacon and some crackers. Man was that good. Those rations were great and hungry fighting men welcomed the change from our miserable diet.

We were eating one day and I noticed an arm sticking out of the ground near Ski. I told him about it and he just shrugged and said: "so what...you move and some other bastards arm will be there...or leg...screw it"! He continued to eat ignoring the decomposed arm inches away. We were immune. Nothing fazed us anymore. Bobby Henn, a fine Marine and a 37mm gunner, ate with socks on his hands. His hands were so scabby and scarred from numerous scrapes and cuts that black flies by the 100's set on the scabs in an annoying way; in fact, if you did not keep a free hand waving all the time, the flies would light on your forkful and you would be eating "flies a la mode".

We kept moving up and the shattered city was now in our hands. Jap snipers were all over the place, so scattered patrols were in constant demand. Caves which had been blown up were blown up again. The Nips could sneak from one cave to another in lateral tunnels dug three and four levels below the ground. I loved the carbine (short .30 cal. rifle) for the reason that you could fire it into a cave one handed without standing full in front of the cave opening. Firing from aside could save your life if some slant-eye was aiming at you from within. Hundreds of grenades, white phosphorous and flame throwers were used all the time.

A bank in Naha was blown to get at the vault. I don't know why, as what in hell could you do with Jap money. After the explosion, millions of "monopoly" type dollars flew all over the place. We were millionaires! Worthless, stinking, Okinawan and Jap money!

That evening a call came in from the Recon Company, they were going on a scouting mission and wanted two 37's to accompany them. We heard but tried to look the other way so our gun would not be selected. No such luck. Our gun was selected along with another one. I forget who was on the other gun.

#### May 29th...And A Purple Heart!

We left at dusk by truck and went as far as we could over the torn and bombed city. We were actually going to go up in front of the front lines. It sounds pretty simple, but it was not too easily done. We had to haul, and pull, and use old logs to cross streams, but we did it. The Recon group that was with us, probably 24 men or so, and a lieutenant in charge, were an

unbelievable group. They carried nambu [Japanese] machine guns. They said they liked them! They were motley but it was evident they were very well trained and looked like they could sniff their way into the night, which was now coming up fast. We crossed open ground, well spread out. We came to a group of buildings, concrete and were probably factories of some sort. We entered and were told to set up a 37 on each side of the buildings. We had canister with us, as well as H.E. and the Lt. told us to keep the canister handy, in case a group of Japs charged us.

Marines went to the roof, others to the windows. Howie, Graham and I took a window on the right side of the factory, while other Marines took back windows and doors. We were now in our "Alamo"! That night the Lt. called in white phosphorous on an island facing us which was connected by a concrete causeway. We were right on the waterfront and old Jap ships were sunk here and there against the cement or brick wall and in the water. The Recon Company job was to determine how many Nips were on that island. The Lt. cautioned us to stay down as a white phosphorous shell was on the way. We heard the high pitched scream from behind us and thanked God it was not a short round. It blew up a good 300 yards over the island. The Lt. called for adjustments and another shell came whooshing over. We hugged the dirty, dusty floor and crouched in the bags of wheat or grain.

"Right on"! The Lt. called for a full volley and shells by the dozens screamed onto the island. The phosphorous lit up the black night and with white flashes of exploding white heat, enveloped the entire island. You wondered if anyone could live through that. They did. Two Recon Marines, with only their .45 pistols, now got ready to swim over to that island. We admired their guts as it sure took courage to do something like that. They silently left and we all waited tensely for their return. We talked in whispers and tried once in awhile to nap off against the window wall. Sitting up, rifle at the ready, we heard them return and they reported the island was crawling with Nips. Those two brave men never got any medals or recognition for that great example of Marine guts but I sure wish they would have. Perhaps my words will suffice to honor those two men.

May 29th dawned bright and clear and we were alerted to watch the island. I took a place in the window (stupid ass that I was) with Graham. I grabbed the BAR. This is the BAR with the Colt mechanism I found, so long ago, on the northern end of the Island. Someone yelled..."Nips on the bridge"!...and with that we saw two Nips, their brown rumps showing just over the curbing. They were crawling along the concrete and brick causeway bridge from the island. We began firing. Bullets flew off the bridge sides and concrete chips flew everywhere. I was firing full automatic with the BAR when it jammed. "Damned thing"! I turned to slam the bolt open to eject the jammed cartridge and that is when I was hit.

A bullet hit me in the back of the neck. The force of a bullet is such that the experience, at least to me, was like a real strong karate chop to the neck area. The next sensation was heat. No wonder poor Dominic's body felt all that heat surge through him. I slid to the floor and put my hand up to my neck and it came away full of the nicest red blood you ever did see. The Corpsman, Hepler, started across the open doorway but I waved him back. You could see bullets kicking up in the grain and across the floor of the building. The Nip machine guns were raking the hell out of us, and one of the Jarheads they got was me!

I broke open one of those first aid kits you carried for years on your cartridge belt and wondered if you would ever use one. I sat there holding the white bandage to my neck. Three other Marines were hit and all were Recon guys. One was shot through his wrist and the bullet clipped his "family jewels". When he was being bandaged, he dropped his pants and said: "to hell with the wrist Doc...lets look at this thing"! He was O.K. though, only touched by the bullet. Graham had a look on his face I never forgot. He had a 100 yard stare and just sat there looking at me. You would have thought he got hit and not me. Howie did all he could for me and joined in the firing back at where we thought the machine gun fire had originated. Later in life, I knew the bullet that got me came from that damned island.

After a few minutes I found I could hardly turn my neck. I knew I was only nicked but there was enough blood to fill a bucket. The numbness was setting in from the back to all sides. I turned to and fro like a robot. Finally they got the four of us together that were wounded. I was the only Weapons Company man hit, the others being Recon guys. Since all of us could walk or run, A driver and rifleman were to get us to hell out the back, across 200 yards of muddy, open ground, through the rubble of the bombed out city, and to an aid station.

We ran out of the back toward our lines and covered about 100 yards of the open field, when the noise of an airplane in a dive made us look up. A Corsair was diving at us and those winking yellow and red flames at his wings were bullets! He was firing at us...we dove into the mud. He roared over us, missing us completely but mud all around us flew up from the striking bullets. Sitting up, I noticed him in a sharp bank to the left. The S.O.B was coming over again. We hightailed it out of there as fast as young legs could go in gooey, slimy mud and made it to a small building and hid there. He went by without shooting and flew farther south. He had to think us Japs. We were in muddy uniforms, running toward our lines and he was 1000 feet high or so. I was glad for once a Marine was a lousy shot.

We were trucked to an aid station about 1/2 mile away. We got out and a Corpsman looked us over. No doctor was present. I saw Marines lying on stretchers with shrapnel wounds covering their backs. Men with bullets in arms, legs...all over! My thoughts

went; what in hell am I doing here?...I can walk...I can talk...I am really O.K.

Trucks took us further north to a hospital and we crawled off the truck, most of the Marines were helped off. By then I didn't care if I had help or not. A doctor sat me down and said; "Son, that's a real lucky wound...1/2 inch or so and it would have hit your spinal chord...you'd be paralyzed...or you would have choked to death"! He cleaned the wound and then a strange smell hit me. I did not know it then, but he used chloroform to knock me out. Nice trick...and it worked. I woke up in the morning on a cot inside a huge tent holding about 100 cots or so, this was the so called hospital.

Suffering Marines with incredible wounds surrounded me. One showed me his rifle which was hit in the wooden stock, the bullet plowed through the stock and ricocheted through his cheek and out again. Another had his helmet with him. It had a hole 1/4 of an inch over the front rim, dead center. The bullet went inside, then left and around the helmet and blew out the right side. The Marine had red welted scars all around his head. Some lay face down from back wounds, others face up, with arms broken and hanging from a makeshift pole. Bottles of all sorts hung on the bedside hospital racks. The place was a zoo. I felt disgusted with myself...hell, I wasn't wounded...I was scratched!

After two days of this I simply walked out. I never told anyone I was leaving...I just left! I hopped on a 6-by (truck) and headed south. The truck was loaded with rifles which were just thrown in the back any which way. I asked the driver what he was doing and he answered that he was on the way to the Division Armory. Those rifles were discarded and picked up on the old battlefields. Evidently thrown away or dropped by killed or wounded Marines.

He dropped me off and I found some of our tank guys in an area. They were busy shelling away at the enemy. After telling them my "hero" story they pointed me to a range of hills and said the 37's were over there. It was a mile away. I hiked over and lo and behold there were my guys! I was ushered into captain Petrie's tent and had to show and tell all about the wound. He told me he had almost been shot while a Marine in China. Who cared? I was hit...he wasn't.

I found Howie, who was ecstatic at seeing me. He figured I would go home, or to a ship, but never back on the lines. Old Willy fooled 'em all. The Corpsman took a look at me and changed the dressing which was taped to the back of my neck. He warned me to keep it clean and told me to see him every day for a dressing change. It never happened. I never did see him as we went one way and H.Q. went another. We never once went into battle as a company. Weapons Company was always assigned to a battle area, depending on the weapons requested by the requesting unit.

About 8 brown paper wrapped packages were given to me with other mail. It was amazing that the Corps "Mail-Men" could get the mail out to the scattered Marines. I never did know how that was done. Anyhow, they were from my fantastic Mother. Inside was almost always the same thing. Home made chocolate chip cookies that were always crumbled up in transit...really just a box of crumbs as few solid pieces remained in the battered box. They were always tied with twine and although the outside looked good...God help what was in there. Along with the cookies, well wrapped with our local Long Island newspaper, (it was quite enjoyable to read about the war we were in) was a jar of cherries. My Mom, would dump the cherry juice out and fill the jar with rye whiskey. If you never saw Marines get drunk on cherries, you should have seen us. I was always popular when Mom's goodies arrived. Howie, Ski, Jack and I drank many a damned good belt of booze every once in awhile. I had to give most of it away as it was impossible to carry a glass jar around with me.

In a couple of days we moved through shattered Naha. The City was a pile of bricks and concrete. Very few buildings still stood but our truck made it's way to a new Bailey Bridge over the island we had been shot from. I could still see the building we were in. Howie had told me, the Japs blew up the causeway bridge with bombs evidently attached to themselves and as the Japs went skyward, the concrete bridge went downwards. It canted at a 45 degree angle into the Naha Harbor.

We seemed to ride back and forth for a day, as no one could place us where we were supposed to go. We passed a certain corner Quite often and on the corner was a house with the roof and no sides. Bodies were piled like cordwood six or seven high arranged in triangles. We thought they were Japs until the truck stopped in it's convoy and we looked into the house from the trucks. They were Marines! We were stunned, lay us out, but don't pile us up! We were sick...Damned Grave Registration "body rats"! They were like vultures, always looking for death.

They, whoever they are, got us into a range of hills and we were told by old yellow ass, Lt. Fleming, to get the 37's up on one of the hills. Mort Cooper drove us up the small narrow road which ascended the side of the hill. It went up only 1/4 of the way and we realized that the haul to the top would be work. We limbered up, got the ropes and started climbing and pulling the 37 up the incline. It took all afternoon and it was not till almost dusk that we set up the 37.

We rolled the gun in front of a good sized hole which we learned was an old anti-aircraft and searchlight pit the Japs had dug there. Another 37 went to the right a good 60 or 70 yards. In the middle, Rudy Martin, set up a .50 cal machine gun on a tripod. The view was great. We could see a good size ridge line across a valley that had smaller hills, the tops of which came up only 1/2 way to ours. If any Japs were there, we were looking

down on them.

We slept in the searchlight pit, after assigning lookouts for the night. Nothing happened except trigger happy Marines were firing across the valley into...God knows what. The Next morning, Rudy spotted Japs on the small hills, they were moving around so we opened up with the .50 caliber. He did great! We saw some drop and most ran like hell into caves all over the top and on the other side. Then bullets zinged around us so we left Rudy and jumped back down into the pit. Bullets snapped overhead so we knew this position would be unhealthy. The Japs were still alive and firing at us from the caves to our front. We were hooked to one of those small "crank the phone", brown leather boxes used then, so firing assignments were called to us. We put hundreds of shots into the caves across the valley. There were many times we were forced to lie flat as bullets snapped and clanged off the 37mm protective shield. Amazingly we never had a round hit a tire. To raise up and shoot, you were dead! We would load lying down, traverse where we thought we were going to fire and pulled the trigger blindly, (A one foot wooden, thin bat) never knowing if we hit something or not, but we lived.

A Lieutenant, in pretty clean utilities, showed up one morning. He sat with us and had coffee. We asked him what was up. He was out of a hospital for a wound and was now heading back to find "his boys" involved down below in the valley, attacking the hills were firing on. I wish I would have gotten his name. He was so friendly, quite a guy, smiling and down to earth. His men had to love him, unlike the rat we served under. The Lt. rose to go, wearing a .45 cal. pistol stuck in the back of his belt and, thanked us for the java. We wished him luck and watched him descend to find his men. It was later on, a day or so, when we were told he was killed. I never forgot him, and I had wished he would have had more regard for the Japanese snipers. As he left the hill, he was walking upright and carefree, like nothing could ever harm him.

We were fighting on a place called Oroku Peninsula. We had made an amphibious landing around Naha to land Marines and take the ridge line we were on. We were told we were up against the die hards, the Jap Naval Troops and their Marines. I believed it. The dead Japs we saw were as large as we were. They were easily 6 feet tall. Handpicked men of that height, went to the Naval Forces in their army.

We all suffered occasional malaria "sweats" and slept fitfully when they occurred. I had them, Howie, we all did. Poor Howie was having foot problems too. His feet were scarred and blisters covered them. His socks would be bloody when he took them off. He rinsed his socks in drinking water and put them back on, as we only had two pair. Our clothing was rotting and I wore an Army jacket I had found somewhere. Some of us were in khaki dress shirts...buttons were gone...pants torn...jackets ripped, what a sorry looking bunch of Gyrenes.

Fleming came up to check us one afternoon and told Howie to go back down the hill to our H.Q., about 1/2 mile away. Howie said, "Lt...my feet can't take it...you are always sending me...send someone else"! "Look George", he scowled, "get your ass moving...Now"! Howie put it to him, "Lt...screw you...if you try to send me, I swear I'll kill you...and I mean it"! Fleming was stunned, and stammered, "I'll court martial you and have your ass"! "Lieutenant, you see these feet", Howie said, taking off his socks, "when the corpsman and doctors report that you sent me as a runner with these feet...it will be your ass, not mine"! Fleming scowled and left. He never once bothered us up on that hill again. He did come up into the searchlight pit once with Lt. Mc Keever, to show him our setup. While we were up under the gun lying down from Nip firing, we heard him say to Mc Keever, "Now careful Mac...there's snipers around here". That S.O.B., how the hell would he know. We never saw him get up out of that pit once to see where our gun was. Our Sgt. did, but he never once did.

One of our men was killed by a Jap firing through a blanket they had hung over a cave entrance which they were using as a foxhole, another was killed in our tank when a defective shell blew up in the breech. Jap mortars killed another when a round intended for us on the hill hit men dug in below. My close buddy, Jack Dempsey, was hit in the head. He was running along a ridge line to another position and a machine gun put four bullets through his little green utility cap. The bullets creased his skull leaving ugly welts. God was with him. My belief is, if he had his helmet on he would be dead today. He went blind for 5 days or so and then rejoined us. The story on me, when I received my wound, was that I was hit bad. The story on Jack was, he was hit in the head. Anyone hit in the head is dead, except Dominic...and now Jack Dempsey! Our platoon was getting lucky.

One morning we saw a tank/infantry attack start out on our left. The tanks fired their machine guns on the road to set off mines planted there and we did see several mines go off. Japs ran out and swarmed onto the tank as Marines shot them off. The tank plodded on, and Marines were right behind it. A loud explosion went off from a hill in front of the tank, black smoke coming from a Jap gun dug into the lower part of the ridge. A large brown cloud of dirt rose from beside the tank and out of the cloud came a black object spinning end over end. It was the shell! The Japs had fired so low a trajectory that the shell ricocheted off the ground and spun out. We watched fascinated, pointing out the shell to one another and traced it's flight right toward us! It soared high in the air directly to our hill. We dove, jumped, ran and fell into the pit! If it had landed in the damned pit we would all have been blown to hell and back! It soared 40 feet or so over us and exploded down the hill with a loud booming sound and clouds of dirt and junk seen from all explosions. Our luck was still with the dirty old "weapons guys"!

One morning the "crank-em-up" phone rang. It was a Major or a Colonel, I forget which and they wanted one of us to get our ass over to where they were. They were over on the next hill to our left, behind where the tank attack had come from. My buddies all said, "Billy, you go...you can move real good"! I took off at a quick run, darting down paths worn in on the side of the hill opposite from the Japs. They won't get "old Willie", I figured as I trucked along. I found the officers in a similar pit to ours, well equipped with massive telescopes of all kinds. I reported who I was and told them, someone had summoned a 37mm man to come over. A major led me to a scope and told me that a Jap mortar crew comes out of a cave every 1/2 hour and fires at our troops attacking. He asked me to look through the eyepiece of a large round scope. I saw a Jap looking back at me, so large in the scope view I could see his gold tooth! I felt like I could touch him, as he had to be within reach of me. They told me to go back to the crew, load up with H.E. and when they called, let that Jap and his friends have both barrels...so to speak.

I ran back like a scared rabbit and told Cpl. Bobby Henn about it and he told me to load and he'd get 'em. I pointed out to him where I thought the Jap cave was and we waited. The phone rang. "The Nips got the gun out and we want you guys to fire away"! We let loose one round and the phone rang. The Major said, "What in the hell are you shooting at. You are 30 yards over the cave and 40 to the right. Bring it down and over...for chris sake"! During the run back and forth you can lose track of a landscape quite easily and it happened to me evidently. Bobby traversed over and down, he fired one. The phone rang, "Still a little bit off". We adjusted and Bobby let one go. I loaded, he fired. The phone rang again, "right on...right on...fire all you got...you already got some...they are moving as fast as they can to get back in that cave...go get 'em"! We must have rapid fired a good 20 rounds. The phone rings and the major said, "One hell of a job Marines, you blew the S.O.B's to kingdom come. You got at least 10 of them...beautiful...great job"! We felt great.

We had gone down the hill 20 times to meet Mort Cooper's truck that brought us up ammo, water, rations etc. The haul back up was tough and we fell many times resulting in skinned knees, elbows and knuckles. We wore a kangaroo type pouch, your head went in the middle and a pocket hung on your back and chest. You could load into that equipment about 20, 37mm shells or so. Mort would back down the narrow road he came up on as it appeared much to narrow to turn a truck. We were busy unloading and catching our breath, as it was warm, and we were sweating like hell. Suddenly a huge explosion filled the air and looking downhill, from where we had just come, we saw a tremendous cloud of black smoke rising from the roadway. A 4x4 truck was spinning 50 to 60 feet in the air in the center of the enormous cloud of black smoke! Out of the smoke we saw Mort Coopers body hurtling end over end. The truck crashed to earth and bounded and bounced all over the place. We watched in agonizing suspense as Mort crashed to earth. "Oh God...it's Mort...he hit a mine...oh my God"! We



poured down the hill like ants with me leading. I got to Mort seconds ahead of the other 8 or 9 Marines and he was on his back. He was not moaning and almost looked asleep.. Arms were flung out and legs spread. The only thing different from sleep was the trembling that swept his body. By then "Hep", our Corpsman, had arrived and I said, "Hep...he's moving...he's alive...do something"! Hep, hardly audible, his voice cracking said, "No...he's dead...that concussion...he's gone"! Fleming, our Lt. had arrived and knelt over Mort...I saw him cry and for the first time I almost liked the bastard.

We all choked on tears, as Mort was loved. A real character from the south; Alabama I believe. I watched silently as Fleming cut his dog tag, leaving one around his neck for Grave Registration. That dog tag is nailed into your forehead with a 10 penny nail! We got up, stumbled back up the hill, smoke still billowing all around us. The truck was a massive wreck and lay on it's side, wheels spinning as if it still lived. Like it's driver...it was gone.

Mort had driven up that damned road 20 times to deliver us our daily needs. We were on that stinking ridge line a week or so. He always backed down the road. This time he decided he could turn the truck around with a little bit of effort. As he backed off the road, he hit a buried mine, which had to be the size of an artillery shell. That was it. One small unknowing act and another Marine was never to see another sun or taste the things in life that were left for we the living.

One afternoon I noticed, about 500 yards away, several Japs crawling along the top of a small cliff. Below were 3 or 4 Marines resting against the cliff wall. We all consulted one another as to whether or not we could pick them off from our position. If our shot was in error, ie to low, we could easily kill the Marines. We just watched and tried waving to them with caps, or rags, to get their attention. They never did see us. God was with them as the Japs crawled right by them. I truly believe the Japs did not know they were down there, as one grenade would have done the job. The Marines were not aware of the Japs crawling along above them.

Those ridges cost us plenty. The battle for Oroku Peninsula could be a classic study for someone. Marines against enemy Marines, ridges, shells, mortars and death! It was all over the place. My dear friend Cpl. Warren Ford was in a squad of four men. All carried tommy guns as they were H.Q. Company men and their command post was almost penetrated during the battle for Guam, was not about to be swarmed over by charging Japs again. They were in the 22nd Regiment, a fine bunch of Marines who had seen a lot of combat over the last year or so. Roi-Namur, Enewitock, Guam... and now, Okinawa. Of Warren's four men, two (Clampitt and Cunningham) won Silver Stars, and one (Dugan) the Navy Cross. When Warren and Clampitt were placing Dugan on a stretcher, a mortar landed nearby and killed Clampitt. The

explosion blew Warren's helmet off, shrapnel cutting into his ear and head. He put the helmet on, staggered to a Corpsman, who bandaged it up. He then dragged the wounded down the hill. He never received a Purple Heart due to stupidity in paperwork. That happened a lot to us and it is a shame that today, the rolls of honor are missing the names of many a Marine hero.

Warren told me a story once of a Major showing up at H.Q.. The Major was impeccably clad in brand new starched utilities and carried a carbine that shined. "Just want to get me some Japs", he growled. He was assigned to Warren and some Marines who were to flush out some Nips from caves on a nearby hill. They went up the hill, scattering around the caves. One Marine came running downhill, probably after throwing a grenade into a cave. The Major fired at him and killed the Marine! A Sgt. grabbed the carbine and threw it end over end as far as he could. "Major...you better get your ass off this hill as quick as you can", he shouted, "or this bayonet will be in your F'N guts"! The Major squirmed down the hill, saying nothing, and disappeared. He was off of an Aircraft Carrier, or Battleship and had come ashore..."To get some action". He sure got some...one dead Marine!

We were pulled off the ridge as Marines had taken the hills in front of us. We pulled into a bowl-like area and placed tanks and trucks all around us, which were scattered, so as not more than one could be hit if a casual shell or whatever landed amongst us. We got placed on "swamp duty". The area was marshlands and the tall grass was loaded with trapped Japs. We had to fan out, advance across the weeds and "bang", there would be a shot and one dead Jap who had his head sticking up out of a mud hole which he had taken refuge in. We killed plenty of them that way. We had some try to swim for it. It was amazing that expert riflemen could not hit a Nip in the water. The head bobbing, or maybe the poor judgement of distance may have contributed. They swam far out into the ocean; we thought...what the hell...so the ocean will kill him if we couldn't.

One morning we saw 7 or 8 half naked Japs come down a road toward us, waving a white rag on a stick. I do not know who was in charge of us, but he said, "Let the bastards get close, then mow 'em down"! They got 20 yards away and a machine gun which was mounted on a tripod in the roadway, opened up a long burst. The Japs all went down. Some ran and they were hit. Within a minute a jeep roared up and a colonel got out screaming at us..."You stupid bastards!. Do you know how many Japs were watching those guys. Now they'll never come out.. what's your outfit?" We gave it to him and he roared away turning to say..."If I have my way...it'll be you guys going in to get whose ever left...stupid jerks". Well, we felt real humble and cowed at that point and I thought at the time we should not have done that...Then I thought a second later...What would the Japs have done? They are disgusted with anyone that surrenders and their code believes them cowards and traitors. I became to feel like all of

us...screw 'em...a dead Jap is a good one! War had hardened us forever.

The Colonel had gotten to Petrie and Petrie read our butts off, but good. He told us we were to go on perimeter duty and up on the top of a hill, overlooking the Company we went, The Company could sleep in peace because the faithful guard on top, was watching over them. Well, I'll be damned if we didn't end up getting the best part of our duty we ever did have! We set up machine guns and actually could live in pup tents 10 yards behind the guns. "Crank 'em up" radios were hooked up to our wonderful Lieutenant. At night those on our left or right killed 3 Nips a night. By now the battle was all but over and these were stragglers who had hid and were now trying to get somewhere or other. Only they knew.

One night, Howie and I were on duty and I said, "Howie, I see a Jap over there"! He looked and said, "I don't see anyone". I waited awhile and damn if I didn't see that guy crawling from shrub to shrub, some 20 yards away. "Howie...he's out there...see him"? "Billy...there's no Nip there...if you see a stinkin' Nip, for God sake shoot the SOB"! With that I opened up a burst of maybe 10 rounds. Bullets fly out fast from a machine gun.

We always scouted our front and the next morning as each cave, hole or cellars from shelled out homes was checked, there he was...dead as nails. "Son of a bitch, Billy Boy...there was a God damned Nip there. We laugh at this story even to this day. Usually I see him once a year at our Division Reunions. I always picked up pictures from the Nips we killed and this guy had a 1000 stitch belt on him. It's a belt which is given to the soldier by his relatives before he leaves for battle and many of his friends and family each sow one stitch on the belt. It's suppose to bring good luck to the Japanese soldier. These belts were quite a good find and I took his. The damned thing was full of dried blood though and when I looked at it over the years, tucked in my souvenir box, the blood stains were still evident. I sent the thing along with the pictures I had, back to Okinawa where some Japanese or Okinawans were trying to get the things Marines took home with them so they could return them to friends or families.

We had one hole in the ground, (Japanese) that angled down 3 feet and then slanted 90 degrees to allow a Jap to get out of the way if anything dropped down on him. I volunteered this trip (we usually took turns) to jump down with a cocked .45 pistol, land and aim it back down the angle in case any Nip was in there. If he was quick and had a rifle or pistol, the Marine doing this could be dead, unless he was quick draw Wyatt Earp. I slid the .45 slide back and then let it go which loaded the pistol. I got to the edge, jumped down to land in the hole and as I did so the pistol went off. The jarring landing fired the damned thing. The .45 cal bullet hitting between my boondockers. (Marine boots

or shoes) No one was in the cave and I was damn lucky. I could have blown a toe or foot off easily as a .45 carries a lot of weight. My good old buddies only laughed and called me a "stupid ass boot".

We used war dogs up on that perimeter to get into the caves and when one of the dogs was alerted his hair would stand up on it's back. We would call out, "De-Tay-Koy"! In Japanese it means "come on out", of course it just sounds like that, but at this sitting of the story, don't ask me to spell it. A pile of brown rags moved and we had 5 rifles pointed at the heap. A Jap crawls out to us and raised his hands. We got the Nip outside and began to search him with his hands raised in the air. He has nothing on him except on thing. His tits! He was a woman! A Jap army woman! We marched her back and \_\_\_\_\_.

We put out trip flares every night and when they were tripped we knew we had some bastard out there. He couldn't get away from us, so if you were patient, you would get him a little later. When setting up a flare, the wire is put in a cotter pin that looks like a grenade type pin. The wire is then run across to a stake and tied off. This Marine, I do not know now who it was that put the wire on the stake and ran it back to the pin. When he twisted it into the pin, the tension pulled the pin out. We heard the "pop" and up went the parachute and flare. A horrible scream came from the Marine, now writhing on the ground. He had blown 3 fingers off of his hand which had been on top of the grenade. Great training...sometimes I wondered about our so-called fantastic training when you saw all of the stupid accidents. No one ever told us about certain situations.

We got that Gyrene down the hill in a hurry, with a bandage wrapped around his bleeding stump. We never saw him again. I hope he had a successful life with his 7 remaining fingers.

We had so many souvenirs hanging from trees that sailors would inquire of our men below us, "Any souvenirs"? The sailors would be directed up to us and we would sell them canteens, belts pictures and other junk. The price they paid was usually in the form of medicinal brandy; they always had some in the small flasks. We were very popular Marines up there as we must have had 20 or 30 bottles of the stuff.

One night we got half looped. No one ever came up on the ridge to inspect us as they knew were killing Japs every night and day and with the battle over, who in hell wanted anymore action. We got an idea, it was, to go down the hill halfway and rigging up empty C-ration cans on wires. We loaded the cans with small rocks or pebbles. We waited for night to come for our "war" to start. We put a sick in a carbine and pointed it out over our Company below us. With a rapid pull of the stick, the carbine would fire very rapidly and sound very much like a nambu machine gun. We were ready! This was all directed at that yellow lizard Fleming! We threw a couple grenades, fired some rifles and then

let our so called "nambu" go. Of course the "crank-'em-up" rings and it's Fleming. "What in the hell is happening up there"? We told him that a bunch of Nips have charged us and some got behind us. We then rattled the cans so he can hear the noise of the rocks inside and think Japs were on the hill. We are bent over with laughing until we hear and see smoke grenades come up the hill from Flemings area. That SOB threw up grenades at us! He then ducked under a truck and had himself ready to defend his area. Well we were teed off at his actions, but we still loved it. We know we had scared him to death with our "USMC Nambu"! We laugh to this day over the incident of Marines and their well fought "Battle On The Ridge".

Finally, the battle for Okinawa was over. We packed our stuff, ate better, cleaned ourselves in make-shift showers, got clean clothing, shaved and made ready to go to...It was Guam.

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PRIVATE FIRST CLASS GILBERT 'GIB' KANTER

K COMPANY

THIRD BATTALION

TWENTY SECOND MARINE REGIMENT

SIXTH MARINE DIVISION

GUADALCANAL - GUAM - OKINAWA

WOUNDED IN ACTION - GUAM AND OKINAWA

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS GIL "GIB", KANTER  
K COMPANY - 3RD BN., 22ND MARINE REGIMENT  
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I DIDN'T SMOKE, DIDN'T SWEAR AND HAD A 28 INCH WAIST. I WAS EIGHTEEN IN MARCH OF 1944 AND A MEMBER OF K COMPANY, 2ND BN., 22ND MARINE REGIMENT. WE HAD JUST RETURNED FROM COMBAT IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS.

I HAD MET BOB KENNEDY AT PARIS ISLAND AND WE WERE TOGETHER IN TENT CITY, CAMP LEJUNE, N.C. WE WENT OVERSEAS TOGETHER ON THE USS CLAY, STOPPING AT HAWAII. WE JOINED THE 22ND IN THE MARSHALLS AND THEN ON TO THE CANAL. ON GUADALCANAL WE BECAME PART OF K COMPANY, 22ND. OUR PLATOON LEADER WAS LT. REGINALD FINKE, LATER TO DIE IN BATTLE ON OKINAWA, THAT BITTER, TERROR FILLED ISLAND THAT AWAITED US.

GUAM - AN ISLAND, AND PART OF THE UNITED STATES

FINKE WAS GUNG HO, IF THERE EVER WAS A MARINE WHO COULD BE THE PERSONA OF A MARINE, IT WAS HIM. ON GUAM HE VOLUNTEERED FOR EVERY DAMN ASSIGNMENT THAT CAME ALONG. KENNEDY, I RECALL WITH A SAKE BOTTLE IN EVERY POCKET, A FEW IN HIS KNAPSACK AND PROBABLY EVEN ONE IN HIS HELMET, WHO KNOWS? KENNEDY WAS THE LIEUTENANT'S RUNNER. A RUNNER WAS GIVEN THE SAME LIFE SPAN IN COMBAT THAT OUR MACHINE GUNNERS GOT. THREE MINUTES. KENNEDY NEVER STOPPED DOING THINGS. WHEN THE MACHINE GUNS NEEDED AMMO AND ASKED FOR VOLUNTEERS, THERE WAS KENNEDY. I WAS KEPT NEAR FINKE AND DID SOME SCOUTING FOR HIM. OUR RIFLE TEAM WAS CPL. CROUCH, LABINE ASS'T. BAR MAN, AND MILLER, A SIOUX INDIAN OUR BAR MAN.

I DIDN'T KNOW RAINS FIRST NAME. THE DAY HE WAS KILLED, IT WAS GETTING DARK AND WE SHOULD HAVE STOPPED ADVANCING MUCH EARLIER SO WE COULD RECOGNIZE ALL THE TERRAIN IN DETAIL. AHEAD, THERE WERE SUDDEN RIFLE SHOTS, AND SOMEONE CALLED BACK, "RAINS IS HIT!" THEN, "HE'S GONE....HE'S DEAD!" WE STARTED DIGGING IN RIGHT AWAY ON A LITTLE HILL TO OUR FRONT COVERED WITH SOME THICKET OF BUSHES. I DUG A HOLE WITH CPL CROUCH, WHILE LABINE AND MILLER SHARED ANOTHER ONE. MARINE'S WERE TAUGHT TO BUDDY UP WITH ANOTHER IN A FOXHOLE. MADE ONE FEEL MORE SECURE AND ALLOWED THE GUARD, OR WIDE-AWAKE DETAIL, TO GET SOME SLEEP. CROUCH HAD A PICK WITH HIM AND STARTED CHOPPING WHILE I KEPT GUARD. SUDDENLY, OUT OF THE DARK, A JAP CHARGED TOWARD US, WAVING HIS SWORD, BUT CHARGING SILENTLY! HE WAS A JAP CAPTAIN AND HE WAS UPON US QUICKLY! HE SWUNG HIS SWORD DOWN, IT SHINING THERE IN THE DIM LIGHT, FLASHING, ON POOR CROUCH. I HAD MY M1 IN HIS STINKING BELLY AND PULLED

THAT TRIGGER AS FAST AS I COULD. I THINK I EMPTIED THE ENTIRE CLIP INTO THE BASTARD! CROUCH WAS SEVERELY HACKED AND INJURED BADLY. WE GOT HIM BACK OF THE LINES AS BEST AND AS QUICKLY AS WE COULD. FUNNY, BUT OTHER JAPS SHOULD HAVE FOLLOWED THEIR OFFICER AS USUAL, BUT NONE CAME. WE GOT THE FLAME-THROWERS TO SPRAY THE HILL AND BRUSH WHERE THE JAP CAME FROM, AND THEN THEY FOLLOWED THEIR OFFICER. OUT THEY CAME! SCREAMING! ON THEY CAME, SOME AFLAME! WE POURED PLENTY OF LEAD INTO THEM TO THE POINT THAT ONE COULD NOT IDENTIFY ANY SINGULAR JAP THEY KILLED. YOU JUST PULLED FROM TARGET TO TARGET. OUR COMPANY CLERK, PFC BEST I RECALL VIVIDLY SEEING HIM BAYONETING A JAP. WE HAD A FEAR THEN OF SOME JAP ON FIRE JUMPING IN THE HOLE ON TOP OF YOU. THEN WHAT? WHAT A NIGHT THAT WAS. WE STOOD WATCH, BUT WHO COULD SLEEP? THE THREE OF US JUST HELD ON, LABINE, MILLER AND KANTER...THE LOW MEN ON THE TOTEM POLE!

TO THIS DAY, I DO NOT KNOW IF BEST AND MILLER ARE ALIVE. LABINE WHO WAS WITH US SIMPLY DISAPPEARED IN COMBAT, WHILE ON OKI. I THINK MILLER GOT TRANSFERRED TO A COMMUNICATIONS OUTFIT. IT WAS NOT THE GREATEST FEAR I WAS TO HAVE WHILE ON THE ISLAND.

THIS DAY, WE ADVANCED UNTIL TWILIGHT DESCENDED ON US. IT COMES SUDDENLY IN THE JUNGLES AND THE TROPICS. THIS TIME WE STOPPED IN FRONT OF AN OPEN FIELD AND STARTED TO DIG IN. WORD CAME BACK THAT LT. FINKE WANTED SOME SCOUTS TO GO OUT ABOUT 100 YARDS OR SO, SCOUT AROUND, THEN COME BACK. LABINE AND I GOT THE DUTY. LOW MEN ON THE TOTEM POLE, FOR SURE. WE AGED 100 YEARS IN THAT SCOUTING TRIP. IT BECAME PITCH DARK AND AFTER WE HAD SCOUTED AND FOUND NOTHING, WE NOW HAD TO GET BACK TO OUR LINES WHERE ALL THE MARINES WERE DUG IN FACING US. WE ALSO GOT NO PASSWORD SINCE WE WERE OUT SCOUTING WHEN IT WAS ASSIGNED. HERE WE WERE IN ENEMY AREA, AND DID NOT KNOW THE PASSWORD! OUR THOUGHTS RAN...WOULD OUR OWN MEN MOW US DOWN? I KNOW TWO THINGS: ONE, I WAS SWEATING LIKE I NEVER SWEATED IN MY LIFE. 2. MY HAIR ON MY NECK WAS STANDING STRAIGHT UP!

WITH EVERY SINGLE STEP TERROR WAS WITH US. THE SUSPENSE GREW WITH EVERY STEP WE TOOK. WHO WANTS TO GET KILLED IN COMBAT BY YOUR OWN TROOPS? WHAT A WAY TO DIE! WE SHOUTED "SEND UP A FLARE!" NO FLARES WENT UP. THEN WE SHOUTED, "KANTER AND LABINE COMING IN!" THINKING BACK, MAYBE ALL WE COULD DO THEN WAS WHISPER WITH THE NERVOUS THROAT AND DRY TONGUES WE HAD. ANYHOW...WE MADE IT! IT WAS LIKE COMING BACK HOME AFTER A LONG TRIP AWAY. I NEVER EVER ONCE FELT SAFE AGAIN WHILE IN COMBAT, UNTIL THE PLANE LEFT THE GROUND ON OKINAWA WITH THE WOUNDED ON IT.... AND I WAS ONE OF THEM!

WHEN THE ISLAND WAS SECURED WE WENT OFF ON MANY PATROLS, AS JAPS STILL HID ALL OVER THE DARN PLACE. ONE GUY CAME OUT 30 YEARS LATER! AT THAT TIME I BECAME THE BAR MAN. I WEIGHED IN AT 145 LBS. AND WAS 5' 7" TALL. SMALL, FOR CARRYING THE CORPS



HEAVIEST OF RIFLE PLATOON WEAPONS. GUESS THEY DID IT THAT WAY....ALWAYS GIVE TO THE LITTLE GUY. ONE CHAMORRO KID (A GUAMANIAN) WENT OUT ON THE PATROLS WITH US. THIS KID CARRIED A CARBINE. NEVER ASKED HIM IF HE COULD USE IT. THIS KID WAS ALL FOR REVENGE AGAINST THE JAPS. THERE WAS NOT ONE SINGLE GIRL ON THAT ISLAND THAT WAS NOT PREAGNANT. A PRESENT FROM THE JAPS WHO NOW HAVE PRESENTED THEIR EMPEROR WITH A PRESENTL. THEIR DEATHS.

THE KID HAD A HOMEMADE RING, SO I TRADED HIM MY USMC RING FOR HIS. I KEPT THAT RING UNTIL THE DAY I WAS WOUNDED ON OKINAWA. SOMEWHERE ON GUAM THERE IS A CHAMORRO OLD MAN WEARING A MARINE CORPS RING. I WONDER IF HE THINKS OF THE MARINE THAT WENT OFF WEARING HIS.

AN INCIDENT I RECALL HAPPENING WAS WHEN WE WERE RESTING UP ON A HILL AFTER THE BATTLE FOR DROTE PENINSULA. WE LOOKED AT THE BEACH WHERE WE HAD LANDED AND IT LOOKED SERENE AND BEAUTIFUL COMPATED TO THE DAY WE LANDED. SOME SAILORS WERE BUSY LOOKING FOR SOUVENIRS, AS THEY ALWAYS DID. THEY WERE CRAZY FOR THE STUFF COMPARED TO US. SOMEONE GOT THE IDEA TO FIRE ON THEM, YOU KNOW GIVE THEM A SCARE, SOMETHING TO WRITE HOME ABOUT. SHOT AT BY THE JAPS! SOME FIRE WAS PUT OVER THEIR HEADS, AND YOU NEVER HEARD SUCH SCREAMS AND PANIC IN YOUR LIFE! THEY TOOK OFF SCREAMING, AND RUNNING FOR THIER LIVES. WE LAY THEIR IN AGONY WITH LAUGHTER. WELL, WE DID GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO WRITE HOME ABOUT DIDN'T WE?

WE LEFT GUAM ABOARD ONE OF THOSE MERCHANT SHIPS, AND MADE OUR DIRECTION FOR OUR HOME ISLAND OF GUADALCANAL. WE HATED THAT LOUSY SHIP! THEY FED US ONLY TWICE A DAY. THIS AFTER BEING IN COMBAT AND EATING LOUSY RATIONS! ON BOARD WERE APPLES, ORANGES, BANNANS AND OTHER THINGS WE NEVER SAW. THEY WERE VERBOTEN TO THE MARINE MENU. TO GET A TIDBIT OF SOMETHING EXTRA TO EAT, IT COST THE MARINES CAPTURED SWORDS, RIFLES, FLAGS, EQUIPMENT, WHATEVER. I GAVE UP A BAYONET I TREASURED, AND IT GOT ME....ONE APPLE! WE HATED THAT LOUSY RUST BUCKET! NO WONDER WE HATED SAILORS!

#### GUADALCANAL

THE FIRST TIME WE WERE ON THE CANAL, I TOOK UP CIGAR SMOKING. I HAD A BUNCH OF THEM WITH ME ON GUAM, AND ALWAYS HAD A STUB STICKING IN MY MOUTH. I LOOKED LIKE THE CAROON CHARACTER DRAWN BY BILL MAULDIN AND MADE FAMOUS. I RAN OUT OF THEM ON GUAM, BUT ON OKI I TOOK AN ENTIRE BOX WITH ME. I ALWAYS FIGURED I'D SMOKE THEM, AS THEY ARE EASY TO GIVE UP COMPARED TO CIGARETTES. I WAS CORRECT. IN 1986, 42 YEARS LARTER I QUIT. THAT PROVED I WAS RIGHT ALL ALONG IN MY SURMATION.

IN MY LIVING ROOM IS A BLOWN UP PICTURE, ALL FRAMED, OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN, AND IT ALWAYS FACES ME. ALSO ON THE WALL IS A HUGE PICTURE OF A JAP TROOP SHIP THAT WAS BEACHED ON THE

CANAL DURING THE BATTLE. THE SHIP WAS EASILY RECALLED AS IT WAS IN THE TENT AREA OF OUR K COMPANY MARINES. I AM ALWAYS REMINDED OF MY DAYS IN THE PACIFIC WHEN I LOOK UP AT THESE SCENES. I AM PROUD OF THOSE DAY, BUT MORE SO OF THE MEN I SERVED WITH.

I CAN SHUT MY EYES, LEAN BACK AND I CAN SEE THE TENT ON THE STREETS WE HAD LAID OUT. I CAN HEAR TOP SGT. LANGLEY STILL BARKING OUT THE COMMANDS. I SEE THE LISTER BAG (WATER BAG) HANGING THERE AND GUYS ALWAYS AT IT LIKE SUCKLING PIGS AT THEIR MOTHER, FILLING CONSTANTLY EMPTY CANTEENS. WHO KEPT A CANTEEN FULL IN THAT SOARING TROPICAL HEAT? I CAN SEE ALL THE MACHINE GUNNERS CLEANING THEIR WEAPONS. THEY HAD ONLY CLEANED THEM THE DAY BEFORE. ONE OF THEM WAS RAY SCHLINDER, LATER ON WOUNDED ON OKINAWA AND TO BECOME A DEAR FRIEND OF MINE. RAY ALSO HAD OUR HONOR TO HOLD THE OFFICE OF PRISIDENT OF OUR FINE 6TH MARINE DIV. ASS'N. THE MACHINE GUNNERS WERE ONLY ACROSS THE STREET TO US. I HEAR PFC STERL JOHNSON SINGING ONE OF HIS HILL-BILLY TUNES. OUR MESS HALL WAS AT THE END OF THE ROW OF BROWN, SUN-SCORCHED CANVAS TENTS. I SEE THE NATIVES WALKING ALONG THE DIRT ROAD, ALWAYS DUSTY, SMOKING THEIR CONSTANTLY DANGLING CIGARETTES OR PIPES.

I WAS IN 3RD PLATOON, AND LT. FINCKE STILL IN CHARGE. WE HAD WITH US SGT'S. RIGGS, LAPORTE AND A SGT. RENTZ WHO WAS NOT ONE OF MY FAVORITES. ALL MARINES HAVE AN NCO THEY DISLIKE AND THE ONE'S WE LOVE AND WOULD FOLLOW ANYWHERE, AND DID, INTO THE JAWS OF DEATH ITSELF. WE HAD CPL. REX WALDORF AND A MARINE BY THE NAME OF WEBB FROM NEW ENGLAND WHO LIKED ME AND CONSTANTLY LOOKED OUT FOR ME. EXCEPT FOR OUR LIEUTENANT, ALL OF THEM WENT STATESIDE AFTER GUAM. WE NEEDED COMBAT INSTRUCTORS BADLY IN THOSE DAYS. I MISS THEM ALL. THEY ALL WERE EXCELLENT LEADERS...AND REAL MARINES. RENTZ WAS BEAT UP ON THE CANAL, BY FELLOW MARINES, WHO FELT HE WAS OF NOT THE RIGHT METTLE IN COMBAT. I DON'T REMEBER THAT THOUGH.

THERE WAS A CPL. CLEMENS FROM GARY, INDIANA, WHO RIGGS AND RENTZ DID NOT LIKE. ON GUAM, CLEMENS DISAPPEARED. WHEN WE GOT BACK TO THE CANAL HE WAS THERE. WHEN THE TWO SGT'S. WENT TO THE STATES, CLEMENS WAS MADE A SGT. ON THE NORTHERN END OF OKINAWA THE GUY DISAPPEARS AGAIN.. I WAS LYING IN MY HOSPITAL BED ON GUAM WHEN I SEE THIS GUY CLEMENS COME BY. HE WALKS UP TO MY BED AND STARTED TO SPEAK. I ROLLED OVER AND GAVE HIM MY BACK. FOR SOME REASON OR OTHER THIS HAS BOTHERED ME FOR YEARS. I WONDER IF I WERE CORRECT IN WHAT I DID. WAS I PLAYING GOD? HOW CAN I JUDGE WHAT FEAR CAN DO TO THE INSIDES OF A MAN? IF HE SHOWED UP AT A REUNION I AM SURE WE WOULD HAVE A FEW BEERS TOGETHER.

THAT RUSTING JAP SHIP UP ON MY WALL REMINDS ME OF AL RANDALL FROM DETROIT, MICH. WE SWAM AND DOVE OFF THAT FRYING PAN OF A SHIP. THOSE STEEL DECKS WERE RED HOT. AL WAS HIT ON OKINAWA. I HAVE NOT SEEN HIM, BUT HOPE HE BROUGHT INTO THE WORLD A BUNCH OF SWIMMERS LIKE HIM. IF HE DID THEY ARE ALL 40 YEARS

HE WAS REPLACED BY A PFC MIKE PIETRUSIEWICZ. THAT MARINE WAS KILLED A FEW MINUTES LATER. I RECALL HIM, AS THE POOR GUY WAS SICK THE ENTIRE TIME WE WERE ON THE SHIP COMING TO OKINAWA. HE WAS SEASICK THE SECOND HE PUT HIS FOOT ON DECK. SOME GUYS WERE LIKE THAT. I HAVE NEVER SEEN ANYONE ELSE EVER SUFFER AS MUCH AS HE DID ON THAT ROLLING, ROCKING SHIP. ALL OF US FIGURED THAT THIS WILL BE ONE MARINE WHO WILL RELISH LANDING ON THE BEACH. HE WAS SICK IN THE LANDING CRAFT, AND SICK AS HE WALKED ASHORE. A JAP SNIPER PUT MIKE OUT OF HIS MISERY.

ANOTHER MAN THAT STAYS WITH ME IS PFC. BAIN LEAKE JR. FROM TEXAS. HE WAS A BAR MAN AND TOOK GREAT PRIDE IN HIS WEAPON AND LOVED THE THING. BAIN HAD A GENTLE WAY ABOUT HIM. HE REMINDS ME OF C.W. IN THE MANNER OF CHARACTER THERE WAS ABOUT HIM. ON AN L.S.T. (LANDING-SHIP-TANK) ON THE CHINA SEA, IT WAS THE ROUGHEST SEA I HAD EVER EXPERIENCED. I WAS SITTING ON DECK WITH BAIN AND OTHERS, TRYING TO GET SOME AIR. BAIN WAS CLEANING HIS BAR, THAT HE HAD CLEANED ONLY ONE HOUR AGO. FOR SOME REASON OR OTHER I WAS GETTING SEA SICK. I NEVER WAS BEFORE THIS, BUT I COULD NOW SENSE IT. IT HAPPENED FAST. I THREW UP ALL OVER BAIN! I FELT SO BAD, I WANTED TO GO OVERBOARD. BUT BAIN...HE JUST MADE ME FEEL EASY ABOUT IT ALL. "THOSE THINGS HAPPEN GIB...YOU KNOW..IT COULD BE WORSE...LIKE A JAP TORPEDO!" HE JUST STARTED TO CLEAN HIS BELOVED BAR ALL OVER AGAIN.

SOMEWHERE ALONG THE ASA KAWA RIVER, ON THE SOUTH END OF OKINAWA, I SAW BAIN SITTING UNDER A TREE. I GAVE HIM THE THUMBS UP SIGN....NO ANSWER. I STARTED OVER, BUT WAS STOPPED. "HE'S DEAD GIB...!" HE WAS JUST PROPPED UP, SITTING THERE WITH HIS BAR ACROSS HIS LAP. IF THERE WAS EVER A MOMENT IN LIFE THAT I SHOULD HAVE CRACKED UP, THAT WAS IT! I LOOKED UP TO HEAVEN WITH MISTY EYES...IT WAS CLOUDY AND NOT RAINING. ARTILLERY SHELLS WERE TRYING TO FIND US....BUT I SAW BIRDS FLYING AROUND! WHAT A HELL OF A WORLD...WHAT A COMICAL WORLD I THOUGHT. THE BIRDS ARE SMARTER THAN WE ARE!

WHEN WE FIRST HIT THE ISLAND, WE TURNED LEFT, WHICH WAS NORTH SEEKING OUT THE JAPS. IT WAS NOT THE WORST OF COMBAT, JUST A LOT OF PATROLS. WE WENT LOOKING FOR THE HIDING JAPS, AND WE GOT PLENTY OF CIVILIANS IN BETWEEN THE TWO OPPONENTS. WE SHOWED MUCH KINDNESS TO THE OKINAWANS WE FOUND, AND SHOWERED THEM WITH FOOD, WATER, ETC. UNFORTUNATELY, AT NIGHT SOME WERE KILLED BY US, AS THE JAPS PUSHED THEM AHEAD OF THEM TO TRIP FLARES. AT NIGHT, ANYTHING MOVING TO THE FRONT, YOU SHOOT FIRST AND ASK WHO IT IS IN THE MORNING. THOSE GIFTS, AND LITTLE COMFORT WE GAVE TO THE OLD, SICK, MAIMED AND THE SMALL CHILDREN GIVES ME ENDURING COMFORT AND PLEASURE TO ME TO THIS DAY. MARINES ARE SOFT-SHELL CREATURES.

A LITTLE GIRL, WE HAD COME ACROSS, WAS SITTING ON MY LAP. I WAS TRYING TO CALM HER DOWN AS SHE WAS CRYING AND SHAKING LIKE A LEAF. I POINTED TO MYSELF AND SAID, "GIB...GIB!" IT GOT THROUGH SOMEHOW, HERE IN THE MIDDLE OF BATTLE TORN

OKINAWA. SHE POINTED TO HERSELF AND SAID, "MILLET!" IT COULD BE MILL-IT OR MILLIT, BUT IT SOUNDED LIKE HOW YOU CAN SPELL IT. FUNNY ISN'T IT, BUT I HAVE NEVER FORGOTTEN HER NAME. WITH MY HAND I SHOWED HER 5 FINGERS, THEN AGAIN 5, THEN 5 AND THEN 4. I WAS NINETEEN. SHE PUT UP HER TINY, DIRT STAINED FINGERS....SHE SHOWED 5 AND I THOUGHT THAT WAS IT. BUT SHE POKED UP ANOTHER 5 AND THEN A 1. SHE WAS 11 YEARS OLD, BUT LOOKED LIKE SHE SHOULD HAVE BEEN 5 OR 6. SHE WAS SO FRAIL AND TINY. HERE I WAS ONLY 8 YEARS OLDER THAN SHE WAS AND I WAS OUT HERE WITH A RIFLE SENT TO KILL PEOPLE. I PUT HER DOWN EASILY OFF MY LAP TO THE GROUND. I HAD TO LET HER GO AT THAT MOMENT IN THOUGHT. I WONDER TODAY IF SHE IS ALIVE AND WELL. MARRIED? CHILDREN? WHOULS SHE REMEMBER A "GIB", THE WARRIOR FROM ACROSS THE SEA, WHO GAVE HER SOME CHEWINIG GUM?

IT WAS EASY TO HATE THE JAPS. ALL YOU HAD TO DO WAS WATCH THE MOVIE FILM AND SEE WHAT THE DID IN CHINA TO CIVILIANS AND BABIES. THEY CAUGHT BABIES ON THE END OF THEIR BAYONETS! WE GOT SO USED TO SEEING THEM DEAD, THAT WE COULD EAT OUR RAIONS WHILE A DEAD JAP LAY, OR PIECES OF HIM LAY, A FEW FEET AWAY FROM YOU. IT SHOWS HOW HARDENED TO WAR ONE CAN GET. WHEN I SAW THE CIVILIANS IN TATTERED RAGS, SOME BANDAGED AND WOUNDED, I FELT THE AGONY OF THEIR DESPAIR. THEY WERE BEWILDERED AND SOME WERE CRYING. MOST CARRIED OR HAD CHILDREN IN TOW. I KNEW WE WERE ALL THE SAME...EARTH PEOPLE. EVERYONE HAS THEIR ARGUMENT AND WE JUDGE IT, NOT IN WISDOM OR COMPASSION BUT BY OUR HERITAGE. IS THIS THE GUILT OF THE HUMAN RACE? I DON'T KNOW.

AFTER THE ASA KAWA RIVER BATTLE WE KEPT ADVANCING TILL WE CAME TO THE HEAVIEST FORTIFIED LINE ON ALL OF OKINAWA. THE NAHA-SHUR-YONABARU LINE. SUGAR LOAF HILL WAS THE ANCHOR TO THE DEFENSES. THE JAPS HAD YEARS AND YEARS TO DIG THE CAVE DOWN 150' FEET OR MORE AND EQUIP IT LIKE THE INSIDES OF A BATTLESHIP. OM MAY THE 15TH K COMPANY WAS ALREADY UP ON THE HILL. LOTS OF US WERE STREWN AND LYING IN FULL VIEW ALL OVER THE APPROACHES TO THE HILL. SOME THERE FOR DAYS ON END.

I HAD SPENT THE LONG, LONG NIGHT WITH C.W. IN A READY-MADE FOXHOLE. HOPE THAT GUY THAT MADE IT SURVIVED. WE LAY THERE ALL NIGHT PRAYING FOR FLARES, AS WE HAD NO IDEA AS TO WHAT DIRECTION A JAP, OR JAPS COULD COME FROM. DAWN WAS A BLESSING TO US. IN COMBAT, ALL OF US DETEST AND HATE THE NIGHT. NIGHT IS THE EQUALIZER AND FEAR AND ANXIETY TERRORIZES THE SENSES. WE LOOKED AROUND TO SEE WHO WAS STILL LEFT ON THE HILL. MORTARS, GRENADES AND RIFLE WITH MACHINE GUN SPLIT THE NIGHT AIR CONSTANTLY. JUST TO SEE YOU ARE NOT ALONE IS A GREAT FEELING. I LOOKED OUT IN FRONT AND TOOK A PEEK, AND SPOTTED SOME JAP SORT OF WINDING HIS WAY AROUND. HE MUST HAVE BEEN SHELL-SHOCKED OR SOMETHING. I RAISED UP RIFLE AT THE READY, AND WHAMMMMMM! I GOT HIT!!! IT FELT LIKE A HOT ELECTRIC IRON AND A BASEBALL BAT HAD HIT ME IN THE THROAT! THE BLOOD WAS SQUIRTING OUT OF ME IN BUCKETS! I PUT MY HAND THERE, AND IT CAME AWAY COVERED IN BLOOD. HELL, A MAN COULD BLEED TO DEATH

UP HERE....GOTTA GO...GET OFF...GET OFF THE STINKING DEATH HILL! I FOUND OUT YEARS LATER THAT C.W. EXAMINED MY RIFLE AND FOUND IT HIT BETWEEN THE RIFLE BARREL AND THE GAS CHAMBER. IT RICOCHETED OFF INTO MY THROAT. I DO NOT RECALL HOW I GOT OFF THAT HILL, OR HOW THE STRETCHER BEARERS DID IT.

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE HILL IT WAS CHAOS. I SAW LT'S. FINKE AND LT. ROWE THERE. MANY WOUNDED WERE STREWN ABOUT. FINKE WENT UP THE HILL AND THAT IS WHERE HIS LEGS WERE BLOWN OFF AND HE ROLLED DOWN TO THE BOTTOM WHERE HE HAD STARTED FROM, TO DIE THERE. TO MY LEFT, AS I LAY THERE, WAS A KNOCKED OUT TANK. UNDER IT I COULD MAKE OUT A JAP SNIFER! I WAVED, I TRIED TO SPEAK, I DID EVERYTHING YOU CAN THINK OF TO CALL ATTENTION TO THAT BASTARD. I LAY BACK DOWN. IF HE SAW ME MOVING I'D BE PLINKED AGAIN FOR SURE. I MADE A PROMIS RIGHT THEN AND THERE, "LORD, LET ME LIVE AND I'LL ALWAYS BE GOOD TO MY PARENTS, SISTER, BROTHER. I'LL NEVER EVER CHEAT ANYBODY AND I WILL ALWAYS TRY TO TELL THE TRUTH!" AND ON AND ON AND ON....THEN ANOTHER STRETCHER WAS LAID BESIDE ME AND I FELT BETTER. I HAD COMPANY. THEN CAME ANOTHER ONE, AND ANOTHER...AND ANOTHER...! HELL, THE ENTIRE COMPANY LOOKED LIKE THEY WERE ALL HERE. AN AMTRAC GOT THROUGH TO US, AND WE WERE LOADED ON IT AND THAT SNIPER NEVER ONCE FIRED AT US. I WONDERED WHERE HE WAS, AND LATER FOUND SOMEONE SPOTTED HIM, AND SENT HIM ON HIS WAY TO HIS HEAVEN....OR HELL.

I WAS CARRIED TO AN AID STATION AND GOT ONE OF MY SEVERAL OPERATONS. THAT BULLET IS LODGED IN MY NECK TO THIS DAY. TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT TO CUT AWAY AT IT. LUCKY GIB!

BOB KENNEDY WAS WOUNDED HERE AND RAY SCHLINDER, MACHINE GUNNER. RAY THREW OVER 300 GRENADES THAT NIGHT! ONE LANDED ON HIM, A JAP ONE, SO HE THREW THAT ONE BACK WHERE IT CAME FROM! HE HAS A PIECE OF SHRAPNEL IN HIS LIVER TODAY THE SIZE OF A SILVER DOLLAR WHERE A JAP KNEE MORTAR GOT HIM.

MAYBE THE BIG 3 MET AT YALTA, BUT TO ME THEY WERE ON A PLACE CALLED SUGAR LOAF HILL.

RAY SCHLINDER BECAME A SALES MANAGER, AND THE PRESIDENT OF OUR 6TH MARINE DIVISION ASS'N.  
BOB KENNEDY BECAME THE GREATEST GOLFER IN THE HISTORY OF THE 6TH AND ALSO THE BEST POKER PLAYER. SCHLINDER CHALLENGES HIM ON THE POKER THING THOUGH.  
KANTER BECAME THE SCOURGE OF HIS SENIOR CITIZEN BOWLING CLUB.

H YES...I WAS PUT ON THE PLANE THAT TOOK ME TO THE HOSPITAL ON GUAM BY BILL OSMANSKI, THE CHICAGO BEARS FULLBACK. THAT I ALSO REMEMBER EASILY.

I END THIS WITH ONE MESSAGE...I KNOW WE LIVE ON A LITTLE SPECK OF DUST, THAT IF IT DIDN'T EXIST, WOULDN'T MEAN ANYTHING TO THE VASTNESS OF THE UNIVERSE. FOR OUR SHORT STAY HERE WE HAVE TO GET OUR ACT TOGETHER....

## MY DAYS ON OKINAWA - 1945

The horrendous ordeal was over, the mission completed in Victory and we were headed back. Co I, was unloading their troops at a beach near Naha. After one hundred and one days on Okinawa, and as the ramp was about to close on the LST to take us to Guam, one of the last officers to step off the soil, Lt. Vellman, spat back and cursed the land and Enemy that had taken so many lives and blood of our fellow Marines. That purty well summed up my feelings at that moment as well. Three of my tent mates at Guadalcanal were left behind, dead.

I, as a corporal and a fire team leader in a rifle platoon, to this day almost fifty years later cannot understand the providence of fate, to endure all those hellish challenges of battle and misery for 82 days without sustaining a single wound, is still puzzling to me, and to many others as well.

Going ashore, April 1, that bright, sunny Easter Sunday was much easier than we expected. Not without some apprehension though, this was reality not a training exercise and everyone knew it. Some elements of the Division had gone ashore ahead of us and what movement we could see from aboard ship was progressing inland without much obvious enemy action. There were smoke patches in various places on the slope towards Yonton airfield which was on top, perhaps, a thousand yards ahead, and the beach or landing craft didn't encounter any enemy artillery or airplane action. It was a breath of relief when we descended the ship to the landing craft without being harrassed by enemy gun fire as in other previous landings by other Marines. I did have some trepidation going down the side on the ship's net with all my gear on my back, my gas mask and holding on to my rifle. The thought occured that I could barely swim with nothing on at all and what if I had to now. That was only a flash in the mind amidst all the activity getting on to the landing craft, and before I knew it I was transported, safely, to the beach, getting my legs and feet wet wading in near the shore. I have to give credit and a salute to those courageous Navy fellows for a job well done.

Everyone discarded their gas mask on shore to a delegation of Marines collecting them and yelling back to us that they would be back at Headquarters. We deployed inland a short distance and to the left of the landing site. We dug in for the night, just as we trained, pairing up and spacing our fox holes and setting up for our guard watches. As dusk approached the Japs began to send their planes in and the ships opened up on them with spectacular fire works from their anti-aircraft weapons. The sky was ablaze with streams of tracers in every which direction. Like the 4th of July, it was almost a thrill to watch, yet realizing it was a deadly encounter and we had much to lose with what appeared like myriads of ships offshore. I don't recall how many sorties the Japs sent over but for the most part the rest of the night was reasonably quiet.

To the left of our bivouac area (NW), facing the airfield, the shore line was high and its contours were followed by a narrow strip of palm trees near the edge. When morning came so did the call of nature and since all was quiet I walked to the shore edge and leaned against a palm tree to relieve myself, when "Lo and Behold!" a Jap Zero comes by, gliding quietly with throttle down just below the tree

tops following closely to the edge. I could see the pilot in it moving his head about and the big red zero on the side. My first thought was, "My God! My rifle is back at the fox hole!" Here I had such a golden opportunity to get my first Jap and missed it. I was very distressed and disgusted with myself, (P-Oed!) and was mentally kicking myself for ignoring a Paramount-Cardinal lesson. "Never leave your rifle!" "Always have your rifle at the ready near you!" "Your rifle is your best friend!" How many times had we heard this? After a short moment I heard the plane's engine accelerate as rifle shots could be heard along the shore as the plane sped away.

Later that morning our Co. moved out in a column or columns going up the hill since we knew that Yonton was secure. We had already heard the news of the Jap plane landing without realizing it was in the Marines' hands already, and the fellows had taken care of him. That plane was there, plus others damaged and remnants of planes scattered about. It was my first experience seeing plane revetments. Several of these semi-circle earth embankments encircled the field.

I believe it was that day that we came upon an enormous sink hole. It had to be fifty or more feet deep and at least a hundred feet across with a cave to one side at the bottom. Some demolition had been used earlier so a few Marines were at the edge of the cave calling in for someone to come out, "De- Te- Coi!", but got no response.

On this day or possibly the next we caught up to the Marines that had gone in ahead of us. We were spread out and sweeping through wide sparsely overgrown fields. Shots were fired occasionally on both sides of the flanks, possible snipers or trigger happy Marines. When we set up for the night we were told to find bulky things to cover our fox holes because a Jap air invasion was expected during the night and shrapnel from our ship's weapons could be landing in our area, but nothing came of it.

The following day we came upon a small creek where we washed up and shaved, then later as we moved across the Island we ran into a group of Geisha girls all decked out in their kimonos. One, with a big brimmed hat was the English spokesperson for the group. She was all painted up like a bordello madam and the Marines near this group all went batty in excitement, with whistles and cat calls, "Geisha!" "Geisha!" Most others kept their guard just in the event this was a Japanese trick to distract us.

We crossed over to the Pacific side of the Island the next day and moved up the coast road. This, I remember because of the attractive stone sea wall there that supported the road. We moved inland again assaulted a small village by house to house action but found no enemy soldiers, just a few civilians, some chickens, ducks, geese and an old horse. We bivouaced up hill outside this village using some mats we found passing through and got infested by one of the Japanese irritating, secret weapons: Them nasty fleas! Couldn't sleep all night. This was worse than being shot at, it felt at times.

We kept moving North-West, passing through Chuda and Nago. Some homes along the road that were not destroyed had the nice, red tile roofs on them, with fierce looking animal gargoyles looking at you.

This was only April but I noticed sizeable cole plants in the natives gardens and some other plant which looked like sweet potatoes. The people didn't appear to be hostile and those that could speak English would answer your questions politely. I saw a couple groups of small children escorted by a woman attendant to an outside assemblage area for schooling. When I entered one home I was amazed to see, what looked like, a one year old feeding itself mush with chop sticks.

For high winds and typhoon protection some homes had stone walls around them, others had very high hedges. This part of the country was becoming more hilly and had a greater number of larger trees.

By late afternoon on the eight day we found land mines in the roadway that had to be cleared by our engineers so our support vehicles could come through. During all this advance northward we only encountered sporadic sniper fire along the way, but no casualties in our unit. We were coming into the Motobu portion of the Island. Just before dusk, part of our platoon or maybe just our squad, dug in on the higher portion of the beach for the night in case the Japs would use boats or swim in to infiltrate. Some of our amtracks were passing near us using the beach also because of the mines in the road.

During the night Jap artillery came into the general area. Next morning we learned that a headquarters was hit, killing three Marines. I remember the name of Crosby as one being mentioned, but none from Co I, that I could recognize. As the truck came by, moving the dead bodies to the rear, the smell of raw human flesh made an ominous impression on everyone that the smooth-sailing days we had to this point were not going to be easy, just ahead.

We continued our advance. The road made a gradual bend to the right, pulling away from the shore and following the contour of the base of the hill in a northerly direction. Third platoon was at the head of the column, so when the forward section reached a shallow river, it halted there and made a right flank turn towards this rather steep slope. We learned this was the base of one leg of Yatake mountain. We went up about 50 yards off the road and dug in for the night. This slope was wooded and had sizeable trees. Orders were passed, "no flames!", to warm our food or coffee, or to smoke as some of the fellows had done earlier.

The following day, first or second platoon went past third platoon following the road and across the river over a destroyed concrete bridge that had fallen down but one could still get over by stepping on the high places.

The terrain on the other side of the river, to the right of the road, was flat for a hundred yards or more before the base of the hill turned up. The first low hill stretched out long almost parallel to the road with a series of elevations beyond it, leading higher towards Yatake summit. The slope had almost no trees, just scrubby brush and tall dry grass, similar to broom sage. That also covered the flat land.

The platoon moved some distance up the road, then a fire fight started and activity could be heard there for some portion of the day. When it stopped the unit withdrew to its original place for the night. I cannot recall of any casualties reported.



While all this activity was going on during the day, the 3rd platoon being just on this side of the river was well screened by the trees along its sides, so we didn't draw any fire in our direction. Still, there was a lot of excitement in our area because during the night when the Jap artillery fired its guns, the same that hit the headquarters a couple days earlier, some of our men noticed its position high upon the mountain and were able to spot it visually this particular morning. Almost everyone was straining his eyes and making discovery comments. The gun was positioned in a cave very high and on the bluff portion of the mountain and veiled somewhat by the trees and vegetation near it. Later in the morning a couple officers came in that we were not familiar with and observed the situation as well. Their dungarees were not the same as our officers, so they could have been higher-ups or from one of the other Services.

By evening it began to rain and continued into the night. It was a cold and miserable night, and the emphasis was even greater for no lights since we knew now that we were right up against the enemy. My fox hole buddy was Bob Luddecke. We huddled together trying to stay warm. Our teeth chattered and I just vibrated all over continuously all night, thinking I would be dead by morning from hyperthermia. Without any sleep I felt very miserable until dawn when I could move around again without being shot by my own buddies.

This day the 3rd platoon was committed along with the mortar unit to engage the enemy where the others withdrew the day before. We crossed over the bridge and up the road for several hundred yards in a column then turned right towards the hill. The morning was still damp and the fog hung low over the tops of the lower elevation hills. We were in the clear and advanced towards the beginning of the slope. Where my fire team turned off there was an unused road, overgrown with weeds, leading towards the hill. There was a small building, the size of a utility shed, near the base of the hill that had a huge cast iron safe propped up against one corner. We were giving it the eye, thinking it might be a booby trap. At about that time the Japs opened up fire on us. We took cover at the shed. They kept shooting sporadically. But as the fog lifted higher, more firepower was sent in our direction and at all others that left the road. Mortars now, began to come in. The few of us at the shed opened up, shooting at every puff of smoke we could see on the hill. Soon, a mortar shell landed near the utility shed. The debris and soil it kicked up gave me an awful sting on the back side, but no shrapnel injury. At that moment everyone took off, back for the main road and back towards base camp. The mortars kept following the troops, as all were doing double time moving back. As we passed near Lt. Vellman, I believe he was in charge of our mortar platoon, he was running and yelling, "Take cover at the wall"! This concrete wall ran 75 or 100 feet along the road, out from a building not far from the bridge we crossed earlier. When most of us tail enders got there the Lieutenant was watching for the smoke trails of the mortars as they were fired, and yells out, "There comes another one"! and we hugged the wall even closer. The mortar shell landed and exploded just on the other side of the wall where the Lieutenant was standing. Without hesitation, he yells out, "Let's get the hell out of here"! So we took off, probably at triple time now, back across the bridge to where we started.

Fortunately, no one was killed or wounded during this futile encounter. We had no choice but to move back. We were in the open country and they had the commanding ground.

Records do show that two Marines were killed on the 10th of April: J. Joiner and D. Smith. This was April 11th. A few days later we learned that a couple bodies of dead Marines were found high upon Mt. Yatake and the scuttle butt was that this couple tried to take out the big gun in the cave. Only the name of Joiner rings faintly in my memory regarding this.

Up to this point I have written of the most vivid things I can recall from memory. I am sure there are many more things that had happened along the way. Almost 50 years is a long way to reach back.

During the winter months I shuffled through some of my old mail that I have saved since day one, of relatives, friends, and Servicemen that is still a joy to re-read. Among it I found a three and a half page diary that I had copied from notes of a note pad I carried during the war. These notes must have been copied on Guam or back in the states where I had access to my sea bag with the correspondence paper. It has the 6th Division emblem on it with the San Francisco address.

Some inserts are brief, so, where possible, I will elaborate on the events that I can remember. Such as for April 12th, I have only one word, "Ambush", yet this was a very eventful and tragic day for Co. I. The notes are daily, with a couple exceptions, and run from April 12 to the 16th of May when Co. I. made its first assault on Sugar Loaf Hill. The casualty dates, of only the ones I had knowledge of at that time, are right on the money as in the official records. This astounded me when I read them. Most of these notes were jotted down later from memory during reserve or rest periods when we did our mail.

#### **April 12, "Ambush!"**

This was a bright, sunny day. We were told early of our mission, that would be directly up the hill towards the summit of Yatake. There was a trail, an unused road, at the left flank end of our bivouac area and up from the river, that led up the hill at a slight diagonal. It came out on the ridge above a few hundred yards ahead. We started our advance sometime early in the afternoon, I believe, using this trail. The wooded portion ended even sooner. Beyond this, all was an open field with the same type of tall dry grass and scrub in patches here and there.

When we reached the ridge, it was very broad and the Co. could spread out reasonably well in fire team columns abreast of each other. The ridge gradient was flat to very gradual up for some distance, with a step in the middle, up about ten or fifteen feet then the same gradient again for some distance towards the very steep portion of the summit. Within a hundred yards or so where the mountain turned up sharply the ridge had a large thicket of small trees, eight or ten feet high and densely growing together. When we reached within fifty to a hundred feet of this thicket, a single shot was fired, and almost immediately afterwards, all hell broke

loose. The whole mountain exploded with a rage of gun fire, of all sorts from the enemy, and probably from other directions as well. We were caught by surprise in an "Ambush!" Everyone just melted down in the grass and crawled for the nearest cover one could find. I crawled to the edge of the thicket, seeing none of my fellows around I crouched and kept moving around the scrub. I reached an opening where the Japs had cut a swath eight or ten feet wide in the center of this thicket and in line with the summit above. The first individual I came upon was our radio man with the heavy equipment on his back. He was dead, lying in this open space. Others were running back and forth from this overgrowth. With the enemy fire still raging, it was bedlam and confusion not knowing where or what had happened to the rest of our men. One Marine that was running towards me still lingers in my memory. He was carrying no weapon. When we came together he stopped for a moment, looked me straight in the eyes, didn't say a word, then took off again. That terrified look I can never forget. Perhaps, my look was no consolation to him either.

Soon I met up with a couple of fellows with a litter and helped carry a wounded man. In the process we were drawing machine gun fire. The dirt and grass was kicking up all around us. We made it over the knoll without any casualties to the first aid station that was located a short distance down, under a clump of trees. As we reached the entrance of the field station, the first person I noticed was our Platoon Sergeant McQuinlin, leaning against a tree with blood on his face and hands. We put the individual down that we carried in. He didn't appear to be wounded badly. Looking about, I was horrified to see the number of casualties. Our platoon leader, Lt. Sullivan, was assisting the Corpsmen, as were other fellows.

We went back up to look for other individuals, whether by command or voluntarily, I'm not sure. Too much activity was going on.

The heavy, enemy fire had subsided somewhat, still, rifle shots kept coming in. The face of the mountain was all grey now of smoke from all the gun activity. I don't recall who the other fellow was with me. We went up through the thicket again, over the ridge, looking for other wounded. We met up with four other Marines carrying a badly wounded man down towards the trail from where we came. When they put him down to give him some Morphine, I recognized him as Pvt. Greska, from our second platoon. He was shot through the stomach and the contents would ooze out each time he would make a crying moan. He was in terrible agony of pain. The two of us took turns to help carry him to the road near our bivouac area from where we started. A good distance down. We got him to a vehicle that took him away.

We met an officer there that was studying his maps on a huge stump along the road. We told him of our plight up on the mountain and that assistance was needed. He looked at us very concerned for a moment then said to go back up to the tree line and dig in, in case the Japs counterattack. Then he turned back to his maps again. At least eight or ten of us were there by that time, so we did just that. By dusk I was so exhausted I don't recall how our remaining force came back, or how our wounded or dead were removed.

**April 13, 1945... At bivouac area. Art. and air strikes. Naval gun fire.**

The artillery, our planes and ship's guns pounded the mountain most of the day... In the morning, Lt. Sullivan, brought us the sad news that the President, F.D. Roosevelt, had died... Co. I, is in reserve this day... At our bivouac area the men are having much discussion about the day before with Lt. Sullivan. One incident of one of the fellows struck a humorous note. He said, "What are you supposed to do when the Jap fire gets heavy around you while carrying a wounded and he jumps off the litter and starts running?" I'll let you imagine some of the answers. Some not too complimentary.

**April 14, ... Pulled down road about a mile. Began wide sweep movement toward Yatake. Bivouaced to right of ambush area. (Art-As)**

We moved back down the road towards Nago. Swept the opposite slope and valley of day 12, and bivouaced in the area of the the first aid station on that day.

**April 15, ... G. Co. assaulted Yatake. 3-I came up later and extended line to the left. Dug in along a ridge. Nips and civilians infiltrate our lines. Seven were killed during the night outside our fox holes.**

On this day the third platoon of I Co. was in reserve and joined G Co. left flank in the evening. So during the day we could move up the hill and look down on the wooded thicket where we were ambushed and see the Japs advantage. In addition to the open cuts of the trees they also had trenches dug parallel to the hill where some of our men took cover and were direct targets. I don't know how many were lost here. I was assigned with a couple other men to remove one dead body from within one of the trenches. The sun was hot these three days after the ambush and the odor from this shattered body was unbearably acute. The other fellows couldn't handle it. I had to plead and prod, suppose this was theirs, that we got it out of the soil on to a litter and to a location where it could be picked up. His name was Sgt. O. Johnson. After this, I picked up a name from my fellow Marines, and was referred to as, "Blood and Guts", for this action.

One artillery gun of The 15th Marines had reached our location now and was working the top of the mountain in conjunction with G Co.

It was this day also, that the bodies of the two Marines were found that we assumed were going for the big Jap gun in the cave. One was defecated on, we were told.

From this higher elevation we had good view of the ocean and saw the invasion of Ieshima, by our forces, This island was large enough to contain a sizeable, cone shaped, (Volcano) mountain, which stood out very prominently in the distance. This is where Ernie Pyle, a revered news correspondent, met his demise from the Japs.

In the evening, Company I, moved up on the left flank of Company G. and set up its perimeter for the night near the top of the ridge. It had a bend in it that swung to the left, somewhat. The top of the ridge had a narrow tree line on it. Below this was a clear field, like a meadow, twenty or thirty yards wide, and then a depression of

assorted brush and medium size trees. Company G. was to our right, up the hill following the ridge towards the summit. Our Company I. came in on a dirt road from below and continued along the edge of this wooded ravine. Third platoon came in last, so our squad was used to cover the right flank, that is the open space between the road and the ridge, facing towards and below Company G. The rest were dispersed along the ridge in the back. My fire team was on the bank nearest to the road. Everyone dug in well, being on the front again.

Grover Shankle is the new B.A.R. man in my fire team. I don't know what happened to Ivan G. Zahler. That was his position. Later, during the night there was rustling in the weeds and low voices coming towards us, so our squad opened up fire in that direction. Grover Shankle must have been dozing and was startled when the shooting started, and began to spray the whole area with his B.A.R. in every direction, including the back where most of our fellows were. The next morning we found six women and a young boy dead, out in front of our fox holes. Our squad caught "holy hell" from everyone for the miss-guided shooting. Even Company G. complained. Fortunately, none of our men were injured.

Most of the dead bodies were in the roadway leading down the hill. I was involved helping to remove them from the road. I shutter now, when I think about it, that to clear the road I grabbed this young corpse, (8 or 9 yrs.) by the heels and tossed him over the side into the wooded ravine. Cruel as this may sound now, that was nothing unusual then, just getting a part of a day's job done. Death wasn't so unusual now. One was too busy to dwell on it. Its happening was ever present around us.

**April 16, ... Patrols sent out. 4th assaulted from reverse side of Mountain. By evening area secure. Moved back down valley. Boarded Amtracks.**

The morning of day 16 is already described in the above, day 15. This is more likely the day we viewed the invasion of IeShima, while on patrol. I remember watching it for some time.

After the war in 1945, when we returned and entered the real world again with our new tasks and responsibilities, there wasn't much time to think about the war. Years later, when I tried to retrace my steps of events there, I could never put a date to a fierce battle we had. Now with my diary notes and a casualty list Ken Long sent me, I am able to place it on this day. I wondered where we went with the Amtracks. Suddenly, it came to me, we were transported quickly to another location where the assault was already in progress, and by foot we could have never made it.

At this new location where we were making our sweep, the terrain was very broad and bare and had a gradual to steep incline. The top, we learned later, was flat like a plateau, with trees and the usual scrub among them. Everything was cleared about twenty feet or more back from the rim on top and possibly a hundred yards or more along it. When we started our drive up the hill, the Japs used some of these piles of scrub to camouflage their automatic weapons, we sure

got pinned down by them for a good long while. This is one spot I said a lot of 'hail Marys', barely squeezed down in a shallow erosion gully. When our mortar and other support fire came in we made our assault to the top and drew no Jap fire from the flat portion. We continued our drive, gradually, towards the other side of this hill. We found a few civilians there. One young man, probably in his 20s, that was dressed in a robe, was sent away. Too ideal, to be out of uniform, knowing the Japs. We also found a young boy, of about 14 years, that I was frightfully taken back by his horrible disease. I had never seen anyone, in the past, with Elephantiasis. His whole right leg was as large as the torso of his body, all the way down.

The other side of this hill dropped down very steep. A great view down at the valley, at least a mile down. A small stream was at the bottom, a road up the bank beyond it, then a small village. On this road we spotted a column of Japs, moving quickly to the right, away from us. Just too far for rifle range. Probably, the ones driven from this hill and other parts of Yae-Taki, giving us a rear guard fight, leaving the area. We had a sizable amount of casualties. The ones I have marked for day 16 are; Bob Luddecke, Russel Hamilton, J.V. Brown Gaylord Leach, and Myron McMahon. J.V. Brown had light wounds so he was back with us soon. Leach got a buttock wound and had four punctures in his back side, we were told.

**April 17, ... Scuttlebutt we rest two days then go south. Instead we rode trucks across to East side of Island. By 1500 my fire team ran into enemy. Killed several Japs. Found horn. Dug in on ridge.**

This was the start of the mop-up operation. I originated from West Virginia. The hills we were about to undertake reminded me much of those back home, including the forrest, so I kinda felt in my own realm here. One of the many names I was labled with was 'Ridge Runner'. I never heard that expression till I left that state.

My first memory of this mop-up sweep was crossing a fast running stream. Probably, excellent for trout. Some of the fellows even threatened to jump in the deep spots to take a bath, but we had to keep on moving. Our platoon moved through the low area for a while then started up the slope, through the forrest, spread out in fire team columns. About fifty yards up our squad came upon a spot where a fire had been made and the coals were still warm. This warmed up our coals too, that we became more alert and excited. A short distance up again, we found the aluminum mess container with warm rice in it. Now everyone was anxious and moved even faster up hill. In no time at all a Jap was running directly in front of my fire team. We all opened up fire on him. He fell, but when we got practically on top of him, he was reaching for a grenade of which he had three or four strapped on his belt. Well, he didn't get that chance. He hadn't finished convulsing when we all grabbed something from him. Someone got his wallet with photos inside. I got the horn. It happened to be a two piece bamboo flute in a fancy, brown cloth bag. I still have it, but, I have never attempted to blow it to play a tune. I don't recall what other fellows took. Someone must have taken his rifle.

During all this time that we were occupied, there was sporadic shooting to the right and left of us, and occasionally again moving up to the ridge. There we made a patrol beyond it before we dug in for the night.

April 18, ... Pushed ahead. Steep mountains. Bivouaced on ridge in woods. Short Art., wounded some of our men during night.

The artillery was from our ships. They had to be big shells by their explosive noise and concussion. The shrapnel would zing through the forrest very near to us. Records show no one from Company I. was wounded, so it could have been scuttlebutt or some other Company.

April 19, ... Swept down the mountain towards the ocean on West side. Passed through several villages. All civilians evacuated towards the sea. Only sniper fire encountered. Bivouaced near village in valley. Rode horses. Cooked Okie chicken. Dug in.

April 20, ... Souvenir hunted. Made panel hut.

April 21, ... Patrolled in towards mountain. Wet day.

April 22 ... Wrote letters. Cooked duck. Went on patrol along coast.

April 23 ... Got dummy run on Nips being in caves. Inspected, found civilians only.

April 24, ... Moved almost two miles down the road to new bivouac area. Prominent ground along hill. Nice view towards ocean. Village and school house below. Made panel hut, Zahler and myself.

April 25-30, ... Made patrols. Bathed in river near the ocean. Bathed at a spring. Souvenir hunted, mailed few home. Here the natives were very friendly. Kids were always around.

While patrolling near the edge of a village we found a well, the old fashion kind with a bucket and rope to pull the water up. Later, a couple of us went back to take a dousing bath. We stripped down in the buff, then tossed the bucket down into the well but couldn't get it to tip over to fill up. Each time it landed bottom down that we tried. A very old woman was doing her laundry not far from us and after a while, seeing our futile attempts, came over and took the rope and gave it a quick jerk when the bucket was near the water level. She waited just a moment, then pulled up a bucket full. She did this several times while the other fellow and I poured it over each other, getting our dousing bath. We laughed and kidded each other all the time this was going on, not being accustomed to this bare exposure in front of a woman. Yet, in all this lapse of time, not a single wrinkle moved to change the somber expression on this kind old lady's face. How could I ever forget this! So even in the adversity of war there were some occasions of lighter moments to ease our stress and anxieties.

The one thing that concerned me the most during the mop up and patrols in the hill country, where only a column could move sometime, was that the fellows would never allow space between them. Always bunching up. I worried what a grenade, mortar or artillery shell could do to a lot of men. I would have to shout for them to space out, "Keep your distance!" or "Keep your deployment!". From all the mail I received they knew I was engaged to a girl named Ruth, back in Philadelphia. So to get back at me, they would razz me every chance they got. When they would find a certain candy wrapper in their rations, they would shout, "Here's a Baby Ruth for you Frankie!". At times, we were so typically Ammerican, overcome by the 'buddy, buddy bunch syndrome', and very irresponsible for our safety.

In one village several of us were invited inside a house by an English speaking native that gave us the names of various objects in Japanese. I have a short list of few of the translations.

**May 2-9, ... Going South! Rode down near Katena air field, set up bivouac. Again made panel shack. Fleas almost ate us up. Nip planes came over every night. Our A.A.A. busy.**

I learned later that the spelling was 'Kadena'. At present, it is the main and largest air field on Okinawa.

**May 10, ... Rode down to sea wall. Dug in along wall. Amphibious landing attempted here.**

**May 11, ... Walked farther South. Dug in West of air strip. Got several rounds of artillery during night. No casualties.**

This is about the time we got tanked up on grapefruit juice. I was sent to pick it up from some Master Sergeant with a Jeep, for our squad or platoon, four big, olive drab, gallon cans. Did we ever get our fill of it. Here we also experienced, for the first time, the use of trucks firing a battery of rockets at enemy positions.

**May 12, ... Moved further South. Crossed river. Began to set up when Nip artillery opened up. Menefee was first casualty in our platoon, one month since last wounded. Started to dig in on forward slope. Nip artillery found us. Withdrew to reverse side of hill. Dug in. About five casualties in Co., 2 dead, Zug - Moneyppenny.**

We crossed the Aza river. this is now in or near the Suri vicinity. The Suri Castle can be seen in a distance on a hillside. A lot of shelling and activity was going on there.

James Menefee had just returned that morning from being wounded a month earlier at Motobu on Yae Taki. This day he got a crotch wound from an artillery shell and was carried out quickly by two fellows, with arms around his shoulders and under the thighs. I wrote to him shortly after the war. His mother answered, that he died, not from his wounds but from some jaundice condition from contaminated blood



he received at the hospital. She was in South America when she wrote.

Jesse Johnson and John Money Penny were hit by the same shell. Jesse wrote me in April, '94 that he was wounded in the legs and Money Penny was killed by shrapnel going through his helmet and head.

May 13, ... Had five light casualties during night: Newmam, Lavoie, Lally and Woodard. Moved out to join Battalion on line when Lt. Sullivan and Pl. Sgt. Siooss were hit by sniper, both simultaneously. Sgt. Lilly and I were in line behind them. J. V. Brown and Wicka take over the platoon. Capt. Mylod in charge of Co. Continued advance to front lines under fire. Dug in West of village at dusk. Exhausted from days activities. Artillery pounded the village all night.

In the morning when we pulled out we passed by a sugar mill in that area. I overheard Lt. Sullivan say that an artillery dud pushed someone in to the hillside. No name was mentioned. Francis Lally was wounded during the ambush on April 12, and now again. Sometimes when the number of casualties are mentioned they may be of another platoon or Company adjacent to you. I state five but have only four listed. In the record, Newman is listed wounded on the 31st of May. These are the names we heard. This was an extremely tough day for us so my mind could have been confused or Newman may not have been injured badly enough to be sent back.

In the morning as we were advancing to join the rest of the Battalion we were passing the rubble remains of a house when a near rifle shot came in and hit Lt. Sullivan in the foot or leg. He hopped around for a moment then fell to the ground. Sgt. Lilly and I were just behind him. Two fellows grabbed him under the arms and walked him around the side of this debris for cover. Although my notes state that Sgt. Siooss was wounded at the same time, he didn't show any reaction to it. My last recollection of him was, helping Lt. Sullivan get around the side of this house rubble. The next time I saw Lt. Sullivan was on Guam in late July or early August. Had no information on Siooss from that day, on.

Corporal J. V. Brown took over for Lt. Sullivan and Corporal Wicka for Pl. Sgt. Siooss. When we were on Guadalcanal we heard that J. V. Brown was washed-out of officers training and ended up in a rifle platoon. Well, as a 'non-com', he did a very good job. We got Lt. McCormick later for a few days until he was wounded and J. V. took over again and continued for rest of the war there. I didn't like some of the assignments he gave me, but I did them, complaining all the way, (not really). He was a Corporal too. That was the reason I had no hesitation doing so. At times I thought he wanted to get rid of me, and at others, I felt he knew he could depend on me. That may be the reason we got along real well. The one instance I remember is when an adjoining Company needed to fill in a gap on a flank, I was sent with some others. I had diarrhea all that day and was pretty exhausted and frustrated from all of this when he gave the orders to go. I joined the other Company in a trench so tight I couldn't turn or move to get any comfort. With the Japs in front and my dilemma in

the back, it was a real miserable night. This was the forward slope of a low hill with a gully and another low hill in front of us. All night long the Japs rolled grenades towards us from the other hill, and we kept their heads down by bursts of fire all night from our side. Our flares lit up the area just enough to avert infiltration.

In the morning I returned to my unit and discovered my M-1 rifle barrel was split on the end. I must have picked up some dirt in it during my reloading in the trench. It was like parting with a faithful friend giving it up. I believe I had it since Camp Lejeune. Headquarters found me another one right quick, and I continued.

According to the records, Captain Mylod was in charge of Company I. since near the end of April, but we, or I apparently, only learned of it this day.

The artillery pounding the village was ours, to eliminate and prevent the Japs from occupying it and using it for their defense.

May 14, ... Advanced not more than 30 yards this morning at 8 AM when we lost half of our platoon. Mortar and artillery barrage was laid in on us, also SA fire. Lenahan was killed at my side carrying Wicka out of village. Bob Demuth and James, (corpsmen) killed, so was Rossi. Tellinghuisen hit in chest, (died in Hawaii). Others hit, Nokes, Nangano, Miller, Santarpia, Thornton, Sparks and C. J. Miller. J. V. Brown led rest of platoon to Charlie Hill. Long advance. Shankle was hit. Didn't miss him till next day. We hid in ready made trenches, separated from our main units on both flanks. One machine gun section was with us. Capt. Mylod was hit badly during morning.

This, I believe, was the most 'Hellish' day of the war since the ambush up North. From where we dug in, just ahead of us, were three terraces of rice paddies in steps, following to the left, down hill somewhat. Beyond that, about seventy five yards, was a hedge row or narrow strip of trees that broadened out considerably farther to the left. To our right the slope went up ten or twenty yards that gave us cover for our right flank. Our third platoon was at the end of it here. The zero hour for take off was 8 AM.

We started our advance and moved only a short distance when the Japs opened up on us with everything they had. Besides the gun fire they began to sweep the area with their mortars, starting at the tree line and working towards us. We took cover on the back side of the rice paddy terraces and waited as the mortars kept coming in closer and closer. Mortars were my greatest terror, having that gut ripping sound. They came right to the edge of the terrace on top then worked their sweep back again towards the wooded area.

We were more fortunate than our other platoons because the terraces slowed us down to walk around them. The other good thing was they gave us some good cover. Had the mortars come in an increment further, most or all of our platoon could have been wiped out.

The other platoons, less impeded, had already reached the woods had many casualties, including their corpsmen. When our support fire came in we took advantage of it to get our wounded out.

Four of us, with a litter, went around the terraces and ran in to the wooded area directly ahead. We found Corporal Wicka there laying on the ground where a house had been burned down. He was conscious but very disoriented from concussion. We asked him of his wounds since we saw no blood and all he could muster out was, "Give me a cigarette!" We propped him up against part of a brick chimney that was still standing there, till he took a few drags, then put him on the litter and ran him out towards the terraces. Half way across the field a very loud shot came in. Tom Lenahan let out a short, high pitch squeak and fell to the ground. He and I had the rear handles of the litter. I had the right side. The shot came from that direction, passing my back and hitting Tom. I managed to grab the other handle to bring Wicka to the less exposed area. Our Corpsman, John Pauk, ran back to Tom but found he was dead already.

I don't know what I meant by, 'S A fire', unless it was sniper action.

Just above the terraces and towards the woods, from where Wicka was recovered, was a dirt road. The wooded section ended here. The slope on the right of us, that I mentioned earlier, also ran out at this point to a field with a gradual decline. One of our Tanks came in and parked at this location. We were to continue our drive with the assistance of this Tank. It was exposed, somewhat, to the right flank. Very shortly, the Japs opened up on the Tank and it began to back up. Several of us were behind the Tank, ready for the drive, but had to jump away from behind it quickly when the Tank reversed. My last vivid memory of Corporal Tellinghuisen was being up on the road bank, looking very disgusted, why the Tank was going in the wrong direction. He got wounded this day.

The time could have been noon or later when all got organized again and we started our drive along the right slope of Charlie Hill, all the way out to the butt end. This was a long hill and a forever advance, with constant gun fire from the enemy. To our advantage, fairly high on the butt, (Someone may describe this the nose end, facing the enemy), we found an already made trench that our platoon settled into, what was left of it. We also got a Machine Gun section in and were practically elbow to elbow in this tight groove... All of this must have been calculated very carefully by the Japs, who are smaller, that if occupied by the bigger Americans would be very uncomfortable and disadvantaged. I, being a small fellow, barely making it into the Marine Corps by the stretch of my neck, was able to squeeze into it... Nothing was on our flanks. I have no idea where the rest of our Company were.

Captain Mylod was wounded this day... I met Captain Mylod at the 1983 Reunion in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. When he introduced himself as my Company Commander on Okinawa. I told him that I didn't remember him. This was an embarrassing moment for me. Now, I can see why, because I cannot remember ever seeing Captain Mylod in combat, and being acquainted with his name for so short a time would have made it even more difficult to remember. When I wrote Ken Long, (I-3-29), over a year ago, I was under the impression that Mylod was in charge when we left Guadalcanal, but that was Captain Jorgensen.

It is amazing how a few reference items, such as the casualty list and my diary, with a jolt in my memory have put into perspective the movement and the daily events of the war, and the location of the dead and wounded that I was aware of at that time.

May 15,... Stayed low in trenches. Didn't expose ourselves. Very cramped area. Artillery always coming in at set times except when we make an assault, at 11 P M and 5 A M. Intermittently during the day. Breaux hit by sniper near eye. Was sent back. Second platoon sent one squad to help us. More cramped than ever. During day, rest of Co. advanced to a low hill just forward of Charlie Hill. Dug in. Second platoon squad joined their unit. Our artillery on our men.

The artillery mentioned above was ours. The reason second platoon squad came in during the day was to allow us to sleep some since there was infiltration all during the night and everyone had to be extremely watchful and alert. A number of Japs were killed here doing just that, including a woman soldier. J.V. Brown claimed he got one with his K-Bar knife.

Sugar Loaf hill was in front of us, some distance yet. We could see a Tank burning to the right of it. I don't know if it was ours or the Japs.

"Our artillery on our men." .this was in the margin section of my diary. It could be that I didn't remember the exact day and put it there. John Hermanies was our message runner, who had a brilliant memory and I suppose was chosen for the job, came running back past our position, shouting, at the top of his voice to Headquarters to stop the artillery because it was coming in too short.

May 16, ... Third platoon in reserve now. First and second platoon made an assault on Sugar Loaf Hill. We (3rd) withdrew through trenches on reverse side of hill. waited for developments. While waiting near a village on reverse side of hill, John O'Leary was hit in the head with a sniper's bullet. Killed almost instantly. Rest of Co. was routed on Sugar Loaf. We returned back to the trenches as support fire unit in case the enemy followed with an assault. Many casualties in Co. Shinn was killed, (of Co. Hq.). At dusk we cleared the trenches, joined rest of our Company.

Several of us were sitting on a low stone wall, that supported a terrace, waiting for instructions for our next movement. All had their helmets on and rifles ready to go except John O'Leary. He was wearing a soft cap, and I can still visualize the twisted wad in his green skivvy shirt, at his belly, where he kept his cigarettes. He was standing out from me on the terrace about an arm's length away when a shot came in and hit him in the temple . He made a short sound "EH" and nearly fell on me. It is even difficult to write about it. I never realized such a stream of blood could come from a wound like that. I realized his fate at that very moment. He was rushed off in a Jeep almost immediately, but never made it.

At this point three of my tent mates at Guadalcanal have suffered fatal wounds: Shinn and O'Leary, dead. Tellinghausen died later.

This is the last day of my diary notes. I have no idea why I stopped since the hardest part of the war was yet to come. Perhaps, after Sugar Loaf, I figured the diary wouldn't be necessary.

In the morning on day 17, we were working our way towards Sugar Loaf hill and either a part of, or all of Company I. had to pass through a wide open field while under a terrific barrage of gun fire. The impact noise of the bullets sounded like they were exploding right at my ears. We rushed to the end of the field to a depressed cut of about two feet, that was an unused road. This gave us good cover and a chance to get our breath again, and a short respite.

During this stop-over, (it is amazing how one simple incident sticks in a persons mind amidst all the bullets flying and after so many years), one of our replacements was cleaning something on his rifle, sitting on the rim of this cut, while still plenty of shooting was going on. Suddenly, he exclaims! "Hey! Did you see that?" pointing to his arm. "The bullet went right through my sleeve!" Like a dummy, he still had half of his body above the bank, holding on to his sleeve and showing where the bullet went through his dungarees at the biceps level. Then realizing what could have happened, suddenly ducking for cover. Lucky for him, it only went through the garment.

We continued our move towards Sugar Loaf through depressions and a railroad cut in that area. Third platoon would be committed for the assault, along with First or Second. Which? I don't remember.

Sometime before noon the first plan was to spearhead the assault by using Tanks and the rest of the force to follow. There were three Tanks there spaced out for the charge. My assignment was with a Tank to use the telephone beneath it to communicate information regarding targets, (Enemy positions). I am ever so thankful that this plan never materialized. Before we got under way the plan changed and my assignment was canceled. The word now was for the assault force to charge the hill and the Tanks to support it from the rear.

Everything was held up while more of our artillery worked the hill and our planes saturated the top with Napalm, when ignited, looked like an exploding volcano, with high rolling flames and thick black smoke billowing up from it. We were certain nothing could survive through all of this.

In the early afternoon when the artillery and planes ceased their operation, the word was, "GO!" Everyone made a running dash for the hill, a hundred yards or more, ahead. Glancing to my left it appeared like our entire Battalion was stretched out making the charge.

Company I. was at the right end and the third platoon at its right flank. Our squad was at the extreme right end. I only remember Frank Lilly our squad leader and Donald Slade, there. Over a hundred new replacements had been shifted in by now. Acquaintanceship was too short for names to register well enough that I could remember.

We scrambled up hill over half way to the top, along the right side, avoiding the ridge, till we reached an overhang that was either blown away by our shelling or natural erosion and was too steep to go higher without exposing ourselves on top.

By now, the Jap firepower had increased dramatically. The Tanks in the back, all three of them, were knocked out by Jap artillery just one after the other. Looking to my left at the steepest part of the slope at the center of the hill, I saw our Marines tumbling down like cartwheels from the intense firepower of the Japs, from above and elsewhere as well. The hill in the back of the ridge, from where we were, we learned later was called Horseshoe. It was from this location our end was getting the most enemy fire. It was also, about the only place we could direct ours since we couldn't see above us. We were truly grateful and lucky for the overhang being there. At one time when I was digging a hole for better footing and protection and the enemy fire found us, I must have had four guys pile up on top of me for cover. Later, one of our machine gun sections set up near our group. That was a great relief to us.

I have no recollection of what happened to the rest of the Marines that attempted to climb the hillside since the tumbling and falling. We were that preoccupied on our end. I have no picture in my memory of the dead or wounded being removed, or if planes or artillery action was used later. I do remember staying there till dusk with our group, including the machine gunners. We were so exhausted by now. We were the very last to go back. One of the fellows with the machine gun was debating whether to take a chance carrying it back to where we started and be a target or to bury it in the hole I dug. No one volunteered to carry it, so he took the bolt out and covered up the rest of it and we took off for our original jump off point.

The record shows that Ken Aust and Donald Slade were wounded this day from Third Platoon, but I have no memory of it. The same platoon had considerable losses earlier in the week so it was not at full force to the best of my recollection.

On the morning of the 18th, four of us were patrolling along the railroad tracks, in the vicinity of our bivouac area, that ran through cuts of small humps of hills with short, open areas in between them. We had gone some distance and after passing one of the open spaces and were approaching the abrupt hump of the next hill, a Jap bolted out of a side hole in the bank along the tracks and threw a hand grenade at us. This startled us, because there were many such cavities along the banks, so this one caught us unaware. We couldn't react fast enough to shoot because the grenade was in our midst already. I don't know how the other fellows avoided it but all I could do in this split second moment was to jump backwards and lay on the low bank, along the side behind me, and let my legs dangle, hoping to save the rest of my body from shrapnel. It exploded! I only felt concussion and the dirt it kicked up. It still amazes me that no one was injured. Thank God, for their crappy, smooth casing grenades. They didn't fragment like ours.

When we got back on our feet we got only a glimpse of him going back in the hole, where he disappeared. We threw a hand grenade in the hole but felt it was useless since we knew the tight turns in their tunnel construction. I still have an image in my mind of this short bearded, mustached Jap, coming at us with the grenade.

Later that day, the 18th, just before dusk, Company I. moved along the low area at the right base of Sugar Loaf hill through a wooded section. I remember the trees being rather thin with smooth bark and bare of limbs to above head height and fifteen to twenty five feet tall. We passed through this to the reverse side of the slope, just opposite and over the hump of the slope we were on the day before. Fortunately, it was dark by now, because we were in full view of the Horseshoe. Only the eerie lights of the flares that came in regularly, that our artillery sent up and parachuted down, gave us light enough to dig our fox holes, and we dug, really, deep ones this night. The Japs knew we were there but didn't fire at us, giving their positions away, but they did send in a number of mortar rounds.

For our night watches, we were provided with a few weapons with the night scope on them. My first experience with this. Objects looked green and not very detailed. Probably, the earliest technology of this, used by the Marine Corps, in warfare.

Early, on the morning of the 19th, my fox hole buddy, Cecil Utley, awoke with a terrible headache and was complaining about the war's miseries and even the unfairness of it in regard to the men, that one had to be wounded to get the simplest reward medal, the Purple Heart. He asked me to bring him an Aspirin from the Corpsman, which I did, to alleviate his headache. Later, about mid morning, the 4th Marines came in to relieve us and in the process of exchange of fox holes, the Japs counterattacked. When I learned later that Utley was hit in the neck and shoulder, I was almost elated to hear the news, when our Corpsman, John Pauk, said it was a 'happy wound' and that at last, Utley, earned his Purple Heart and would get a rest from all that misery. Yet, deep down, I felt sad that he was wounded and would miss him. I was twenty six and he was forty five years old. I looked up to him as an old salt or a fatherly figure. This amuses me now when I think that forty five was old and look back to see how awfully young forty five was, now that I'm seventy five. Whether Utley was a career man in the Corps, I don't recall. He, already, had a son in the Marines at that time, as well.

Company I. was allowed to rest for over a week now in the vicinity of Machinato air field. When we got there I found my original B.A.R. man, Ivan G. Zaller, there, all cleaned up and shaven, waiting for us. How this fellow did it, always intrigued me, yet I knew he was clever and had a good knack of persuasion, and a lot of luck, as well.

During this respite, gave us a chance to clean up and shave, and to read and write letters. We also went out on patrols in small groups to search out holes and caves and possible infiltrators. Souvenirs, were also the big bi-product of our mission. Big items like, Jap rifles, Samurai swords, Flags and the like could be bartered, sold at a good price or sent home, so we took advantage of that. At one location we found a hospital supply dump that was bombed or destroyed by artillery that had all sorts of medical supplies. I remember seeing the bandages scattered around and tooth brushes by the gross (wooden handle ones), and all sorts of other medical items.

All of this was blown out from a low hillside that could have even been an underground hospital. I took particular interest in one item there, a small Centrifuge, but figured it too big an item to send back to the States, even if I was allowed to. I found some packaged dry salmon that I tasted very cautiously. It tasted so good I ate the whole thing. The most delicious morsel I had had in months. Later, I found a brand new, ( $\frac{1}{2}$  inch), electric drill that was still in a box with excelsior packing protruding from one side where a board had come loose. I spotted part of it's shiny handle. I sent this home, lying to the censoring Lieutenant, that the contents of my package was an old, beat up drill, because, he mentioned that any new items would be confiscated. I had very good use of this for over 30 years.

By this time, also, I had sent back two Jap rifles from the front lines to our Company Headquarters, to keep, until I had a rest period so I could send them home. When I went to claim them, no one had any knowledge of them. Somewhere, over some mantle piece or in a gun cabinet are two of my, hard earned, trophies. Come-on Guys! After 49 years, own up to it! I'll forgive you! Who, done it?

In our movement towards Naha it was wet and dreary. I can't recall any major landmarks except some villages or maybe a few houses here and there. I don't believe we stayed in any of them. In this advance we encountered mostly, mortar and artillery exchanges, and sniper fire. No big assault on a position as we had in the past. If there were fire fights, I don't recall them.

Here in most places we didn't have to dig fox holes because the mortar and artillery craters gave us ready made ones. One incident, I remember clearly, was when two new replacements were pushed down in a hole under my shelter half and someone shouted down, "Here's a couple of men for you Kukuchka!" I don't know if they set up their shelter half beside me. I do know they were crouched down, close by. These two young fellows immediately took out their little Bibles and began to read them. I had great respect for the Bible and read it myself, as often as I could, but this, sort of, amused me. I told them not to depend on the Lord alone, but that they would have to help themselves as well, by taking cover at every opportunity and not exposing themselves unnecessarily. But after a few days they were all over the place taking chances like all the rest of us. Their names were, John Townsend and Harry Sowden.

Later, when we were in the reserve mode and scouting out places and looking for souvenirs again, these two men and I went in to a cave to inspect it. There was a deep sink hole about eight or ten feet deep and even greater in width before the opening entered the hillside. A mound of soil to one side allowed you to climb down. I don't even recall what we used for a light. The place had railroad tracks inside and timbered out like the coal mines we had in West Virginia. This must have been Jap navy related because of the uniform epaulets I found there. I also found some leather satchels, a rubber pistol holster, a pair of canvas shoes with the separate big toe and some aluminum mess gear.

When we were leaving to go back out, I was the last to leave and



almost met my demise there. Unaware, an acrid choking smoke came in from the other end and surrounded me that I was blinded, unable to see my way out and the weight in my lungs was so heavy and choking that I panicked and began screaming to the other fellows. They in turn saw the smoke cloud coming towards them and shouted to me, "This way! This way!" and I managed to get out following their voices. We reached the exit OK only to find a ring of Marines up above, around this sink hole, all pointing their rifles at us. They, or others had thrown a smoke grenade in a hole on the other side of the hill, then hearing all this commotion in the cave thought we were Japs.

This January, ('94), Ken Aust sent me a short list of addresses of Marines from Company I. and John Townsend's name was one of them. I wasn't certain that this was the person I was looking for because I met a John Townsend at the 1983 reunion but he claimed he was from the 22nd Marines. I received an answer quickly. He remembered me mostly for all the mail I received. Of that, he was correct. He also wrote that he last had contact with Harry Sowden many years ago, that at that time, he was in the Philadelphia area. I looked up his name in the phone book and found him living just twenty miles away. Both men discovered since 1945, one day apart since receiving John's letter. I hope to see them both this Fall.

Now, back to 1945: Approaching the outskirts of Naha we began to find heavy Jap fortifications that had been destroyed and vacated. Some of the big gun emplacements were pointing in the opposite direction from where we were advancing. They probably had a different idea from where we would come in.

Some of our other forces were working the cliffs just across the river from Naha. Company I. was put aboard trucks and transported through what was Naha. A total devastation! Completely burned out, only some parts of some masonry walls standing and some chimney parts, plus all the ash and rubble of all the rest.

We boarded landing craft again and made a beach landing, across the estuary from Naha, on the Oroku part of the Island, a peninsula. We encountered no opposition here until we moved some distance Northward and were approaching the hill in the vicinity of the cliffs, where the Japs were concentrated, and our movement was slowed down considerably because of heavy fighting. Here, we also encountered a new Jap psychological weapon, the Screaming Meemie. A rocket of some sort that made an awful howl passing through the air and gave you a feeling of something gigantic coming at you.

The last day of our concentrated advance was in a broad valley that had a steep, cliff-like, hillside on its left. As we advanced further our men concentrated closer and closer together. Once we were shoulder to shoulder many had to drop back to second or third rank positions just to have elbow room. We were closing in on the last pocket of the Jap resistance here.

One thing still sticks in my memory making this advance, when someone threw a smoke grenade into a hole of some debris, a Jap rushed out, vomiting from the mouth and nose at the same time. He only had trousers on. In a few moments while being escorted back to

Headquarters, he never made it. Someone from our sidelines got his revenge.

Company I. closed in towards a sugar cane field near the foot of this steep hillside, and as we neared it the Japs there began their heavenly ritual, 'Harakiri', by blowing themselves up with grenades and demolition packs. One could see body parts flying up in the air and all over. I'm thankful they didn't think as I did had I been cornered. We saturated the cane field with our gun fire just in case someone lost his religion, or had my thought in mind.

This was the last assault in the war for Company I., except for the mop up. That took a day or two or more. The actual number, I am not certain of. I dreaded these last days the most while we were sweeping these open fields because I knew the main Jap force had been beaten but those sporadic pop shots by fanatic snipers or someone that didn't get the word, were getting to me. I figured, wouldn't it be my luck, of all the heavy stuff we came through not to be injured, and to happen now at the very last moment. There were still about twenty more days of our stay on Okinawa and all sort of ill possibilities, but thank goodness I made it. Throughout most of the war I bartered the cigarettes that came in my rations for sugar and instant coffee. That gave me considerable stimulus to keep going. But by now even that was fading. I was glad, at last, that the fighting there had come to an end.

The battle there was declared over but we still took no chances. We still carried our rifles and grenades when we left our bivouac area to patrol and souvenir hunt. I believe it was Ben Snipes and I that made a patrol in a small village. In passing a house we noticed a hole, along the side of it, in the ground. I threw a smoke grenade down and when it went off we got the scream of a child. We looked down immediately, that we could see, and found heavy blankets on top of this child and two women. They were shaken and looked frightened but didn't appear to be injured. We began to escort them to our Headquarters. We had to pass through an opening in a masonry wall that was on one side of this village. The moment we got to the outside, the woman with the baby took off and beat it around the end of the wall. The other stayed with us, calmly, till we took her back. The fighting was over so we didn't make any attempt to stop the other woman. In some sense we were glad she did get away. The one that came with us was let go immediately afterwards also.

While we were bivouaced near this village, some officer came in to interview me regarding awards. The group I was with at Sugar Loaf hill claimed I was deserving of an award because of my role there. I told the officer I did nothing heroic or unusual, but did just what I was called to do, to help get the war over with and to get back home again. I told him I had no interest in any medal or award, and so he left. I was too naive then to realize the significance of it. I learned much later that it played an important part in landing jobs and also the prestige part of it.

Company I. moved closer to Naha, still on the Oroku side, in the area of the cliffs fairly high above the Naha river. I had good view of the river and the big island in the middle of it, straight out off the cliff from where I set up my shelter half. I believe Snipes and I pitched together. I even made a pencil sketch of the island and have it to this date. I'll make a reproduction of it.

At this location a tent mess hall was set up. I remember this long assemblage with screening or netting on its sides very clearly, yet my memory has slipped on what we ate there, rations or hot food. My mind is blank on this one. It is strange that the two prime necessities of life, food and bowel movements, are the least remembered. I know what we ate, especially "C" rations; spam, cheese or scrambled eggs in a can, but where or how, I don't recall a single moment. The grapefruit juice, yes.

Surely, I enriched the soil of Okinawa from one end to the other because our toilet was the outside wherever we could go. Except for my spell of diarrhea, the other times are totally blank.

The hill on which we bivouaced ran inland from the river. It was wooded, somewhat, along the ridge and the edge of the cliff. On the other side of the slope that we were on, down at the foot of it, was an inlet that looked like another tributary flowing out to the main river. Snipes and I decided to wash our laundry there. We took our dungarees, scivvies and socks down to the inlet. A crude wooden boat was tied up where we dipped the water into a five gallon, square can, with the top cut out that we were going to use to soak them.

When I was home on the farm, weather permitting, my Monday morning ritual was making a fire, outside, under a big kettle for my mother to boil her laundry. This was common practice by many country people then. They turned out pretty clean I thought, so that's what we decided to do here. We put all the soap we had with the clothes. Lit a fire under the can with adequate wood to last for a while. Then we got in the boat and paddled out to the main, Naha, river that was about fifty yards out and down to the big island. Our plan was to go around it, but we only got right up near it because it was farther than we had expected and turned back. Even though it was tiring, it was the most fun experience I had since landing on Okinawa.

When we returned, the fire was out and all we saw on top in the can was a thick scum. We began to wonder what happened and shortly figured it out. This river and the small stream are not far from the outlet to the ocean and this was still salt water that backs up during the tidal changes. The soap and this hard water is not compatible as it is with rain or well water. I don't recall if we rinsed them there or back at camp. They looked a mess. We had no soap to do them over again, but at least they got sterilized.

I believe we stayed in this location until we shipped off the island of Okinawa. We still did our guard duty but I believe the patrols were eliminated. As for recreation, I remember vaguely some men throwing a ball around near the mess hall. It was a time to rest and to get caught up on our mail before our next move. At this point it was still a question mark.

On the 4th of July there was a Dedication - Memorial service at the Sixth Marine Division Cemetery for all of our fallen Heros. I am quite certain we were transported there by trucks. The top "Brass" was there to give their appropriate remarks and prayers. It was a huge turnout, so all of the regiments must have been there. I don't recall any of the other formalities. I do remember walking freely among the rows of crosses and checking the names. Greska and O'Leary are the ones I recall most clearly. It was like reading an obituary column. For the first time learning the names of Marines from our Company that had been killed, with the exception of the few that we were near when it happened. A sad day, indeed!

All during the war all of our immediate officers were a very friendly bunch. Besides being our leaders, they were counselors, messengers, chaplains and many other things and 'shot the bull' and fraternized as regulars among the men. Some even played cards with the fellows in the fox holes when it was possible. They didn't wear their bars or insignia on their dungarees, for obvious reasons, so it wasn't discomfoting or to feel disrespectful to fraternize.

A renewed awakening, a stab to the heart or some may have considered it a kick in the ass, came I believe, a few days prior to our visit to the cemetery. Captain John Stone, asked for the whole Company to meet at a certain location. We assembled there and were sitting on a hillside while he gave his gracious and glorious remarks to all of us for our fine work and effort of winning the 'Big Battle'. He also paid honorable and respectful homage to the dead, who had given their last full measure of devotion for their country. These are some of the words he used, and after finishing all those nice remarks and stopped for a moment, then said, "I want you all to pay attention to hear this. From this moment on, all of you will have to call us, 'Gentlemen', again". The whole Company let out a loud groan, all at the same time, "Oooh! Nooo!". He snapped back quickly, saying, "I'll have none of this!", and had the respective Sergeants assemble their platoons, there for the first time, and march them back to the bivouac area. After being, buddy like, on the front lines all these months this was sort of a bitter pill to swallow, but we were still in the Corps, and we knew, we had to abide by the commanding rules...

... and thus, ends my tour of Okinawa... at times apprehensive, at times frightening and even horrifying, but with luck, prayers and the Grace from the Man Above and all the brave men around me, I survived it, from the beginning to the end and even more remarkably, without a physical blemish... All I can say is, I was one damn lucky Marine!

## " SPOOKS in the PRIVY "

by DICK Mc KEEL- *The Piddlin Poet*

*The service station trade was slow  
The owner sat around,  
With sharpened knife and cedar stick,  
Piled shavings on the ground.  
The country bards were present, too,  
With glittering blade and bough,  
Had I retained the things I heard,  
I'd be much wiser now.  
No town facilities had they,  
The log across the rill  
Led to a shack, marked "His and Hers"  
That sat against the hill.  
"Where is the ladies restroom, sir?"  
The owner leaning back,  
Said not a word but whittled on,  
And nodded toward the shack.  
With quickened step she entered there  
But only stayed a minute,  
Until she screamed, just like a snake  
Or spider might be in it.  
With startled look and beet-red face  
She bounded through the door,  
And headed for the car just like  
Three gals had done before.*

*She missed the foot log-jumped the stream-  
The owner gave a shout  
As her silk stockings, drooping down  
Caught on a sasfras sprout.  
She tripped and fell-got up, and then  
In obvious disgust,  
Ran to the car, stepped on the gas,  
And faded in the dust.  
Of course we all desired to know  
What made the gals all do,  
The things they did, and then we found  
The whittling owner knew.*

*A speaking system he'd devised,  
To make the thing complete,  
He tied a speaker on the wall  
Beneath the toilet seat.  
He'd wait until the gals got set,  
And then the devilish tyke  
Would stop his whittling long enough,  
To speak into the mike.  
And as she sat, a voice below  
Struck terror to the dear,  
"Will you please use the other hole,  
We're painting under here."*

PFC Alfred 'Al' F. Stadius  
I Company, 3rd Bn.  
22nd Marines, 6th Marine Division

I was what is known as a Fire Team Leader. That put me in the front of everything. I was 1st fire team, 1st squad, 1st platoon, and in the 1st wave on Okinawa, on April 1st, 1945!

We were at the 'point' after landing and we were approaching the first objective, the airfield at Yontan. We came to the edge of a row of cliffs and I noted many caves dug in on the sides of the hills. I stopped the squad, the platoon and thus the company. Our Captain, Captain Graham Conoley came forward and asked me what the problem was. While standing next to me, a sniper got him in the right shoulder and down he went. We got him back to where there was a jeep, and he received immediate attention. We also had a corporal, whose name escapes me, from Newark, New Jersey who was killed in the fire-fight that followed along the hill line.

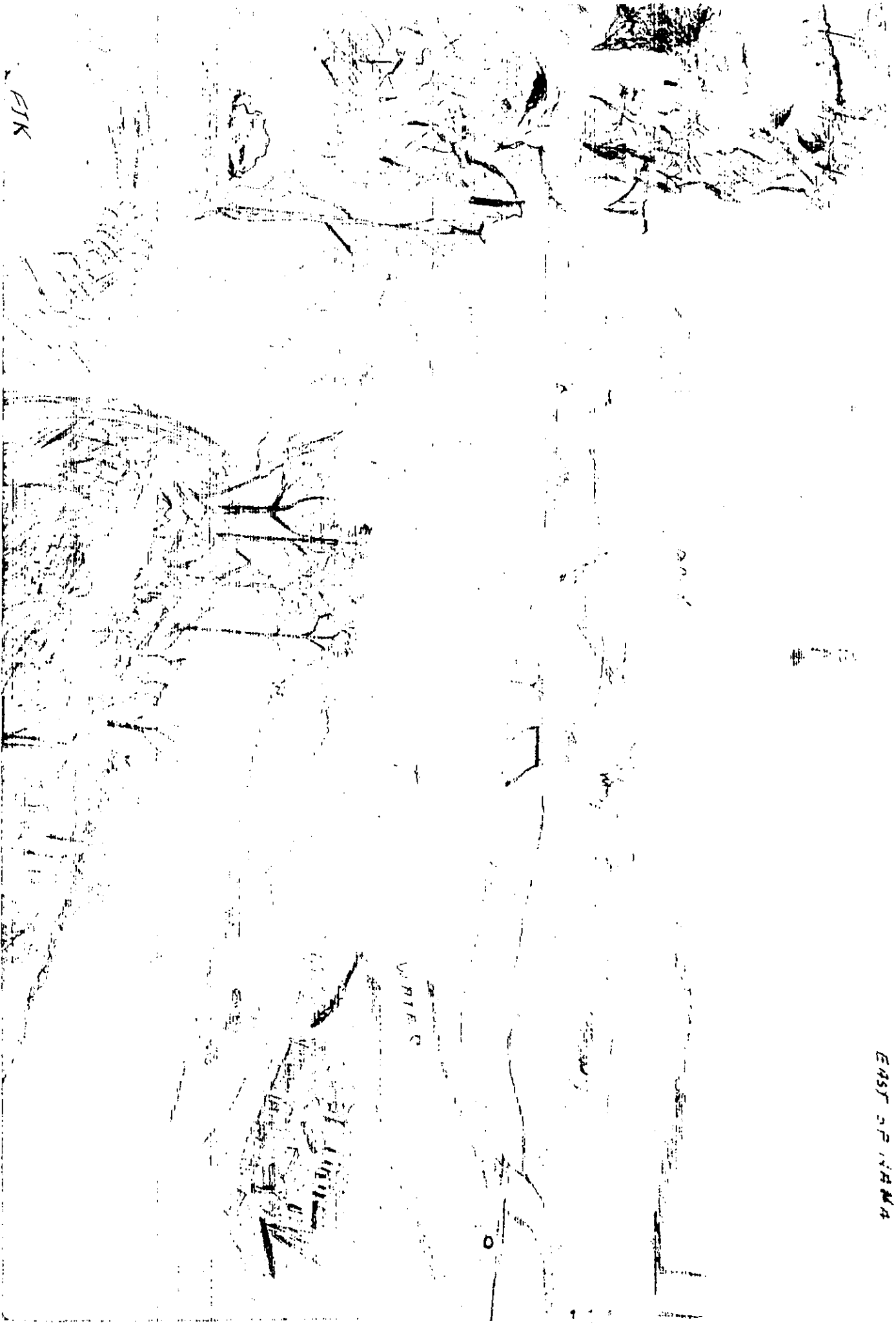
I got wounded by shrapnel on the 13th of April, 1945. Of course I was the point of the first fire-team, first squad and when we went up a valley to the hill line on Motobu Peninsula, the Japs up on Mt. Yaetake, with a good view of us coming, shelled the 15th Marine artillery dump. They blew up the ammo dump and the 15th lost many guns.

I ended up in a Hospital Ship and then an Army hospital on Saipan. Not finished with me, they airlifted me back to Guam for return to my outfit when the Okinawa battle ended. Now would come Japan...but fortunately for us, the dropping of 'the bomb' ended the war. While on Guam I had the pleasure of meeting with my brother, also a Marine, and in the Third Marine Division. In March of '45' he was wounded while on Iwo Jima. During combat on Guam I received a Bronze Star with the combat 'V' for rescuing some wounded Marines.

One of our lieutenants, Lieutenant Salmon was in the Naval Hospital on Guam so I went to visit with him. He had been the platoon leader of the 1st platoon of Item Company. While on Okinawa he was wounded twice. On one occasion he was up front and on returning toward the lines, the new replacements mistook him for a Jap, and besides firing at him, showered him with hand grenades. He was hit by the shrapnel and one piece took his nose off. He was one hell of a mess without a nose, shrapnel in him and bullets in his legs!

After I was discharged, I joined the U.S. Army. I ended up with the Signal Corps and served from October '47 to '51 at Yokohama, Japan. I ended up being discharged as a Sergeant in 1951.

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EAST OF WAWA

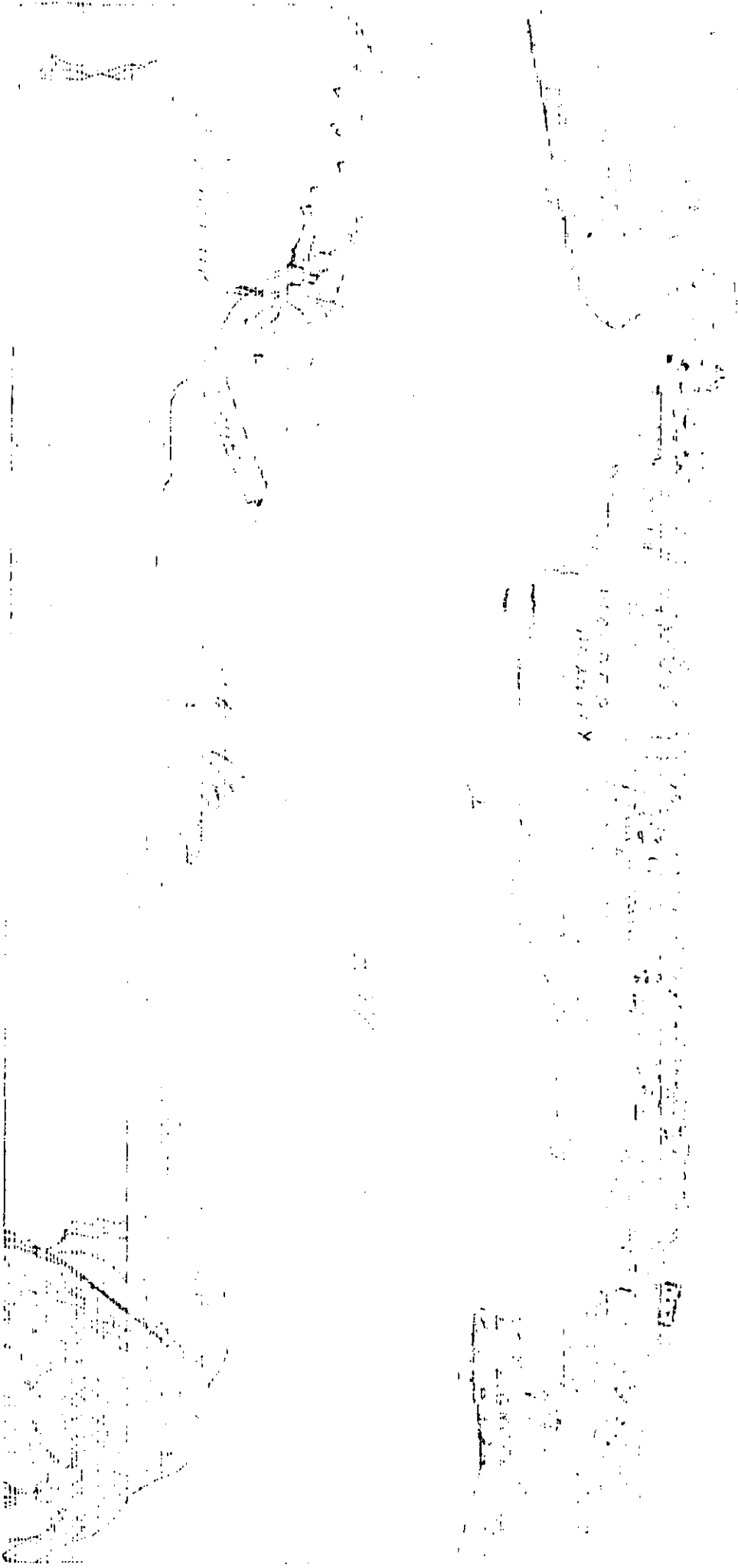
1

200'

WATER

ST. JOHN'S

FRK



OROKA DENINSUKA  
LOOKING NORTH TOWARDS NAHA



The Battle Of Okinawa...I was there!  
Corporal Walter 'Walt' G. Rutkowski  
G Company - Second Battalion  
22nd Marines - 6th Marine Division

In the year of our Lord, 1944, I was a Corporal, proud of it and stationed on Guadalcanal. As a member of G Company of the 22nd Marines, we had trained hard for many months for the next island that lay ahead of us. None of us knew then the place of destiny was to be the island of Okinawa. The 22nd had seen action in the Marianas and then with the First Marine Brigade on Guam. I was proud to be a member of one of the Corps best fighting units. They would prove themselves on Okinawa, to be just that...the best!

Training consisted of night problems, infiltration, beach landings, assault problems, flanking movements, frontal assaults and street fighting in a SeaBee constructed village called 'Bonnegiville'. It should also be added the inevitable U.S. Marine Corps practice of hiking some 20 miles with full packs and equipment was not forgotten on Guadalcanal. The island was infested with disease with many Marines having malaria, jungle rot, leeches, mosquitos and various skin disease beset with horrible blotching. All of the above were treated the same... the Corpsman coated you with a swab out of a purple bottle of God only knows what!

In march of 1945, we received orders to start packing our gear, break camp and be ready to board transport ships then in the harbor. Once aboard the fat bellied, grey ships, crowded to the gunwales with men and equipment, we were told that our destination was to be Okinawa in the Ryukyu Island group. Not one single soul had ever heard of the place. We spent most of our time playing cards, writing letters and watching the Navy at work. We cleaned our rifles and our gear not only daily, but some men did it by the hour. Knives were sharpened so you could shave yourself.

At the Navy anchorage in the Ulithi Islands we were taken ashore to the Island of Mog Mog. Ask anyone where that island is and you get blank stares. Once on the hot Island of sand we were issued some beer, sandwiches and just lazed around enjoying ourselves as best we could. The harbor was crowded with Navy ships. Some of the ships had returned from a recent battle with the Japs and showed much damage. Once aboard we then sailed with our convoy to Okinawa.

On March 31, the day before landing on the Island, I had a chance to attend religious services. With rosary in hand I got the chance to say the rosary. None of us there knew what to expect in battle and the service gave us much solace and comfort. We were told that the Island had been softened up with much naval fire and air bombardment and the support would continue as we headed to the beach.

On April 1, 1945, called 'L' Day, we were up at 0430. The usual pre-combat breakfast was served, consisting of steak and eggs. We all headed topside to see what was going on. The roar of shellfire was all around us. Many Navy ships were firing shoreward and skyward and we did see one Kamikaze crash in the water nearby. It was comforting knowing our support was doing their job.

We went below, put on all of our gear, slung our rifles and headed topside to begin embarking on the landing crafts. We were loaded in amphibian amtracs for the run to the beach. My thoughts were of my men and the squad, wondering what it would be like battling the Japanese for this island, as Okinawa was considered part of their homeland. We lay only 350 miles from Japan proper, a short trip for the many Japanese aircraft and the Kamikazes to do their work.

The LST (landing craft tank) doors were opened and with the motors roaring, smoke and fumes filling the belly of the ship, the ramp was dropped in the water. The amtracs proceeded, one at a time to the ramp, made their steep angled descent into the water and we Marines were on our way. We had some two miles to go to reach the beach as other amtracs, swarming like water-bugs, gathered up as groups to head shoreward. As we passed the huge Navy ships the sailors aboard gave us the 'V' for victory sign. It made one feel we were all in this thing together.

The Navy personnel in their Higgins boats (small naval landing craft aboard the transports) were up and down the lines of amtracs trying to form a line for the initial assault at the proper time. When the signal was given, all the amtracs roared forward, spewing smoke and sending up individual wakes behind them. There was no stopping us now...no turning back. We were heading in!

When we reached the beach we quickly disembarked and spread out, feeling the sand beneath our boots. It was truly an Easter Sunday...a gift from God...there was no enemy resistance! Not a Jap in sight. We came to a rise immediately in front of us of about 20 feet. The elevation of the land kept rising as we surged inland.

Our Sixth Division turned north and the 22nd advanced rapidly over the northern end of Okinawa. We eventually reached to the furthestmost point on the northern end of the island. We had met some Japs here and there on the advance but nothing that slowed us up. The 4th and 29th had a major battle west of us on Mt. Yaetake, the highest point on the north end. [Motobu Peninsula] In a few days the Japs were annihilated. We dug in and waited for further orders and tension built not knowing what was ahead. While there we got the news our President, Franklin Roosevelt had died. That shocked and saddened all.

In early May, we were ordered south to relieve the 27th Army Division. They had been shot up badly and mauled on the southern end, to the point the Division could no longer function. We were loaded on trucks and aimed south along the road, which was not much, almost all the bridges being blown up\_\_\_\_\_. [Note: A page was missing from Cpl. Rutkowski's account but the missing page would cover the period during the first week of May when they relieved the 27th Army Division and were located in the area around Machinato Airfield. On May 10th, the 22nd crossed the Asa Kawa River and spearheaded the Sixth Division attack on the southern end of the Island. Cpl. Rutkowski's story picks up on the 14th of May]

On May 14th we advanced south to another ridge line. Many casualties were experienced on the approach march. Platoon leader Lt. Bob Nealon (destined to be killed in action) informed me that only 50 men remained from George Company. He then said, "Rut, you take 25 men and Stankovich (WIA) will take the other 25". He said we would have smoke at 1900 for cover to make our advance against a hill to be known as 'Sugar Loaf Hill'. I came down a ridge with my 25 men and met Major Henry Courtney, who would be killed and received the Medal Of Honor. The Major said to me, "What are you waiting for"? I told him I was waiting for our BAR men to cover our flanks. He replied, "We don't have any time for that"! I signalled my men to follow me and advanced across the field towards Sugar Loaf Hill. I signalled my men to disperse to the left and right of me and we continued advancing up Sugar Loaf. Just short of the top we took cover. The Japs were hurling grenades from the very top of the hill.\_\_\_\_\_

[Note: The following is taken from the book, Killing Ground On Okinawa, by James H. Hallas, and fills in some of the gaps in Cpl. Rutkowski's account.]

Over by Walt Rutkowski, a Marine by the name of Ed Tew had been wounded in the eye. In bandaging the injury, the corpsman had covered both eyes, so Tew couldn't do much except sit in his foxhole. Pretty soon a Japanese hand grenade sailed in and exploded, driving fragments into his legs. Tew came scrambling over to Rutkowski, having tilted the bandage over so he could see with his good eye. "I'm getting out of here!", he announced.

"Just hang in for awhile", said Rutkowski. "We've got an amtrack coming to take you guys back."

"I'm going back to the first aid station," repeated Tew.

Rutkowski tried to talk him out of it. "Just wait here," he said. "You don't know what's in between us and the lines back there. The amtrac is coming, they'll be more than glad to take you back. Just hang in."

"I'm not waiting," retorted Tew. "I'm going right now!" And he did. Though Tew survived, Rutkowski never saw him again.

By now, some of the men were out of hand grenades...a shortage the Japanese didn't seem to share. Over to Rutkowski's left, a couple of Marines were talking excitedly. They could hear the Japanese jabbering away just over the crest, but all

they had left to throw at them were a couple of smoke grenades. "I'm going to throw a smoke," said one of the Marines. "Jesus Christ!" blurted Rutkowski, "Don't throw any smoke now. It'll help them more than it'll help us. It's not going to do them any harm!" The Marine must have realized Rutkowski was right because he didn't throw the smoke grenade.\_\_\_\_\_.

Up on top of the hill, Walt Rutkowski was standing next to Courtney and a BAR man. The BAR man turned to Rutkowski during the lull and asked, "What are we going to do?"

"Well", said Rutkowski, "we can dig in together, but I don't have a shovel."

"I'll get one", said the other Marine. Rutkowski took the man's BAR and the Marine disappeared after a shovel.\_\_\_\_\_.

Courtney stood at the crest picking out targets for the men. Standing just to the right of him, Rutkowski heard him yell out, "There's 20 of 'em!" Rutkowski opened up with the borrowed BAR. He expended the clip and the BAR man suddenly reappeared and handed him another. Then there was a tremendous explosion almost at his feet...whether it was Japanese mortars or friendly artillery, Rutkowski never knew.

Rutkowski found himself lying on the ground between Courtney and the BAR man. He called a corpsman and the doc came over and checked Courtney. "Jeez," he said, "he's gone!" He moved over to the BAR man. "He's gone!" A shell fragment had severed the Major's jugular vein. Rutkowski suffered wounds to his arm. The corpsman bandaged him up and then vanished.\_\_\_\_\_.

Some time during the morning a replacement scrambled up to Walt Rutkowski. Since being wounded by the same shell that killed Courtney, Rutkowski had been waiting things out. He had his M1 and He'd taken Courtney's .45 off the Major's body. The new man just materialized out of the dark and announced, "I'm a replacement. I've got a machine gun!"

Rutkowski looked at the gun. "It's not going to do me much good", he replied. The back plate for the trigger assembly was gone, he pointed out. The gun was inoperable. "Where the hell is it?" he asked the other Marine. The man said he'd taken the part off and thrown it away because he didn't want the enemy to capture an operable gun. "It's not going to do me any damn good without it!" said Rutkowski, dismissing him. The man disappeared, leaving Rutkowski all alone. Sometime later another shell hit near to where Major Courtney's body lay stretched out. The blast tossed Rutkowski two or more feet into the air and hurled Courtney's corpse over him. When Rutkowski looked at the body he saw that the second blast had ruined the Major's face.

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[Walt Rutkowski continues.] I was evacuated to a hospital in the rear lines and then to Guam. I rejoined my outfit in June, on Okinawa, and fortunately we saw no action after that.  
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FOX COMPANY      2nd BATTALION - TWENTY SECOND MARINES  
SI                  MARINE DIVISION - OKINAWA 1945

TOP ROW L TO R:

CPL. OSTBOE, SGT. HOLLEMAN, TOP SGT. GAGAT, LT. HUTCHINGS  
LT. HASTELL, CPL. CHANDLER, PFC FINKEINER, CPL. YOUNG

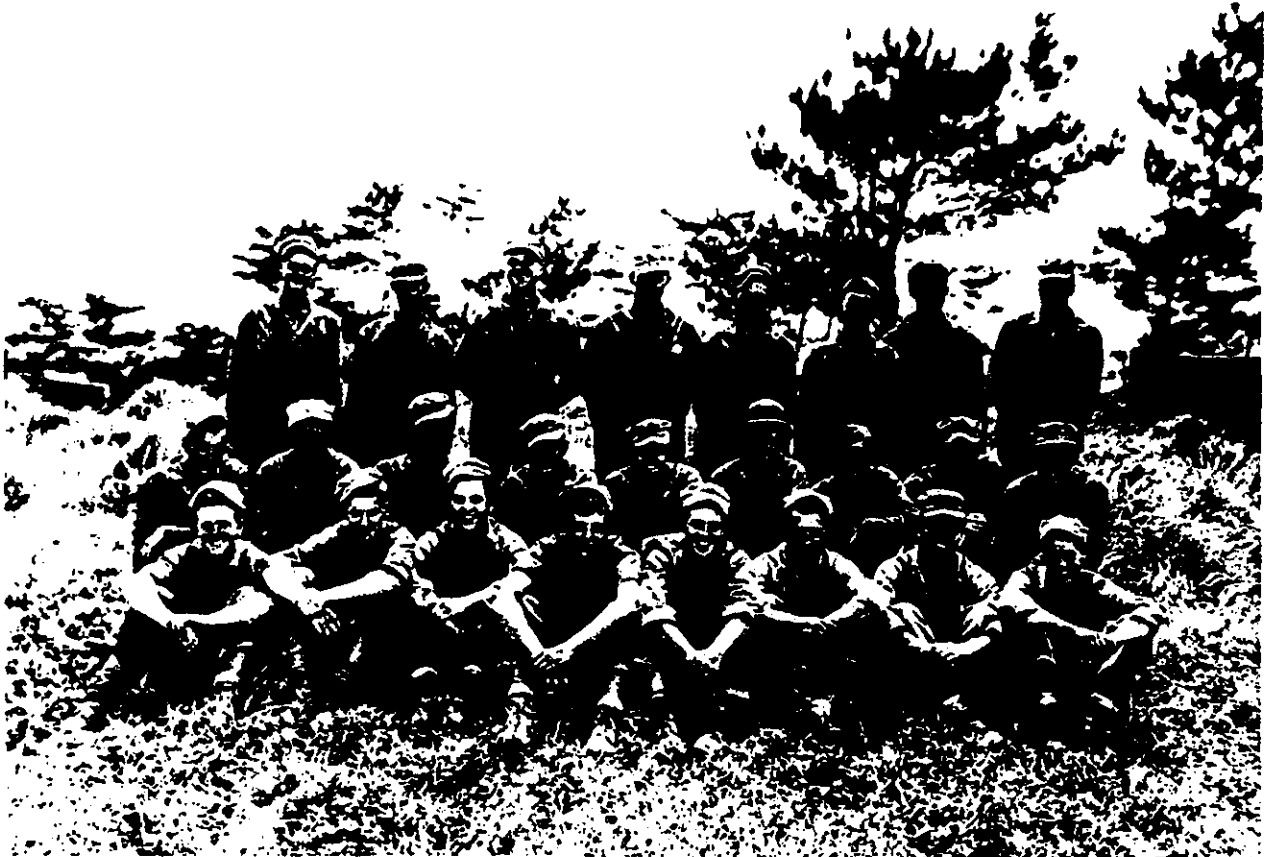
CENTER ROW:

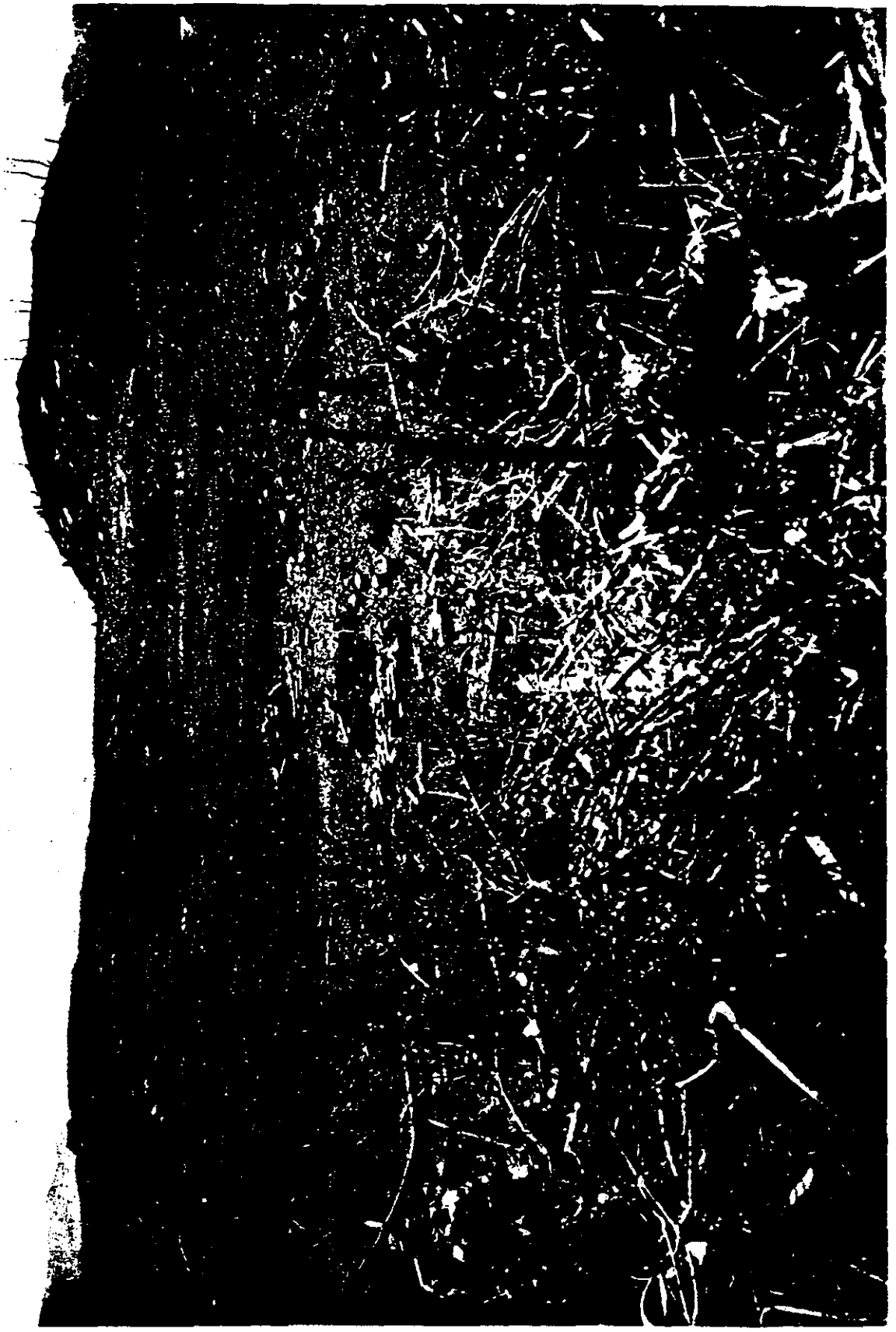
CPL. WOOLMAN, CPL. MAYO, CPL. PETSINGER, CPL. KESTLER  
PFC. HENSLER, CPL. MILLILER, CPL. ENGLE, CASSIDY, CPL. AMODO

BOTTOM ROW:

CPL. CROPPER, PVT. TENNANT, SGT. GOODWIN, CPL. JETT, CPL.  
GREENWOOD, CPL. SMITH, CPL, ELLIS, CPL. FICKLE

THESE ARE THE MEN REMAINING OF THE 250 MAN FOX COMPANY THAT  
LANDED ON OKINAWA APRIL 1, 1945. DURING THE 82 DAYS OF  
COMBAT, ALL BUT ONE OF THE MEN SHOWN WAS HOSPITALIZED AND ALL  
RETURNED TO ACTION.

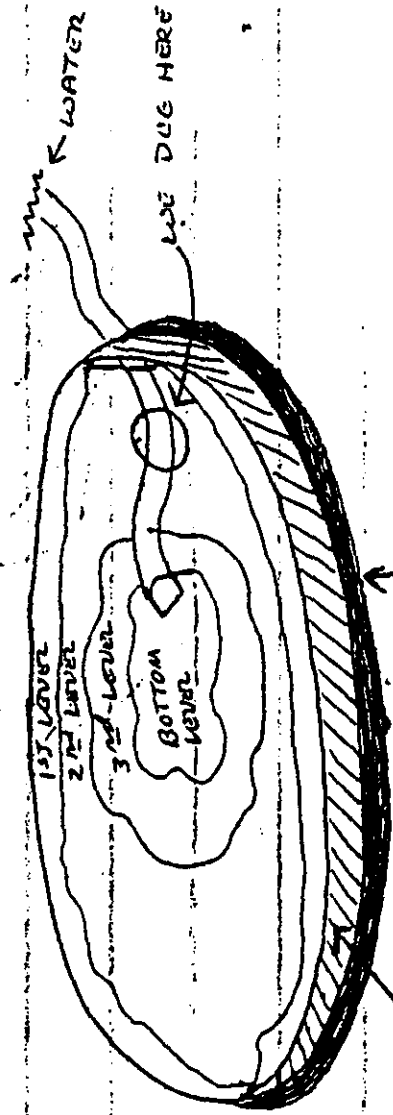




Sugar Loaf Hill, seen from the north. This unpretentious elevation formed one leg of a triangular system which protected the left flank of the Shuri Line. Its capture spelled doom for the Shuri position, a fact which the Japs well knew.

# SUGAR LOAF Hill CAVE DISCOVERED 11/95

TOP VIEW  
NAHA  
MORSE-SHOE



ALL THAT'S LEFT OF THE TOP AS YOU SAW IN JUNE

SIDE VIEW



SKETCH DRAWN BY: DAVE DAVENPORT,  
OKINAWA MUSEUM

Edwin H. Denty  
H&S Company,  
22nd Marines-6th Marine Division

Written by: Kenneth J. Long  
I/3/29/6

Those Compassionate Marines

While at the Hyatt Regency in Schaumburg, Illinois, for our annual 6th Marine Division Reunion during September of 1996, Ed Denty invited a few of us up for some refreshments one afternoon to sample some of the fine spirits his son so graciously had sent to his room. To make it possible to verify this story, I am including the names of the Marines in attendance. Ed of course and in addition there were Dick Ross, 'I' Company-29th, Fred Addison, 1st Armored Amphibians and myself. During some point in the conversation the topic turned to the emotional strain all of us were under during the battle and of course we all related the blood and guts stories involving ourselves as well as those experienced by other Marines that we had known. After a lull in the conversation Ed said, more to himself than to us, "Yes...but Marines had compassion too." He went on to relate this account of an incident that, to me at least, proved his point.

Although the exact date had been forgotten, it was during the time frame of the 29th and 4th Marines battling for Mt. Yaetake, the 77th Infantry Division landing on Ie Shima and the death of Ernie Pyle, and the death of President Roosevelt. So with our approximate place in time established, the account began.

During the middle of April, 1945, Ed was with a squad of Marines from H&S Company of the 22nd Marines plodding their way through the hills and valleys of northern Okinawa, just east and north of the Motobu Peninsula with the assignment of flushing out and destroying any of the enemy they encountered. Fortunately, few Japs were encountered but little did they realize at the time they would be placed, 'center stage', in about 30 days. The weather was bright and clear that day as they ambled along the west coast road adjacent to the East China Sea, heading for Hedo, on the island's northern tip. Supplies had kept pace with their speedy advance but the steady diet of 'K' and 'C' rations was already getting old, so everyone was on the look-out for an alternate for the hum-drum food in the cracker jack boxes and tin cans. As the squad of Marines trudged in a staggered column with rifles in hand and canteens slapping against their hips, a Marine at the front of the group yelled, "Hey...lookit' this!" pointing to a small field adjacent to the road. There, only ten yards away stood two cows. More precisely one bull and one cow both staring at the motley group with eyes wide with amazement but not showing any sign of fear. As the group of Marines watched the pair it became evident that the cow was 'bulling' and the bull was more than willing to accommodate her. "There's our chow", the Sgt. shouted and with that comment, drew his .45 in preparation for the kill. The Sgt. had only taken a step or two



toward the romantic couple when a violent objection was heard from one of the other Marines who was a farm boy from Kansas. "Geez, we can't kill em' now." he protested, "let 'um finish whats on their mind." Apparently his message was clear, concise and powerful because the Sgt., without dissent of any kind, replaced his .45 in the holster. The event was now taking on the air of an athletic contest and the entire squad of Marines became the spectators as they sat themselves on a stone fence adjacent to the road to watch the romantic drama unfold. Cheering and booing began almost immediately as the bull mounted the cow but missed his mark. This was to be repeated several times and although the cow was cooperating in every way she knew how, the bull was to the left or right, too high or too low, but never on target. The cheering, jeering and sexually oriented commentary by the Marines continued through-out the amorous attempts by the performers to make good, and stopped only after one of the guys shouted, "He needs help". Without hesitation, the Kansas farm boy left his seat on the stone wall, strode up to the bull and during the next attempt, guided the bull's mechanism into the promised land amid the climactic cheering of this compassionate group of 22nd Marines, who for the last 15 minutes had been oblivious to the war going on.

The Marines were entertained, the bull was satisfied, the cow was now content and stepped off in a lively fashion, with her udder swinging from side to side, towards a grove of trees located near the meadow where all this occurred and as she was about to enter the grove she heard the thunderous report of a .45 pistol. "Those damned Marines and their target practice." she thought.

A squad of guys from H&S Company of the 22nd Marines had the sweetest morsels of beef that night which they had ever tasted. They deserved it though...Those compassionate Marines.

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## **THE STRIKING SIXTH**

-Dedicated to Corporal Bill Costello / 22nd Marines

**We sat in a friendly huddle  
Down in the Corporal's den  
Talking of battles behind us  
Speaking of now and then**

**We'd all served different Divisions  
We made an assorted mix  
But only our host, the Corporal  
Had worn the Sword and the Six**

**He told us the Sixth was founded  
Far over the ocean foam  
We've often been called the Orphans  
It's said we haven't a home**

**Ours were the Raider Battalions  
The masters of wire and knife  
Who picked up the honored Colors  
To give the Fourth Regiment life**

**Ours were the island veterans  
The winners of glory and fame  
Who fought for the Corps even before  
We were given a number or name**

**Gladly we welcomed our brothers  
Fresh from the battle scenes  
The men who subdued Eniwetok  
The Twenty-Second Marines**

**Every town and city and mountain  
Was part of the master plan  
To hold the island forever  
Or die to the very last man**

**Our every gain was bought with pain  
And sealed with a pact of blood  
On jungle trail or open vale  
In dust and rain and mud**

**Summer began with burning heat  
As the weeks and months rolled on  
With sleepless nights and firefights  
And another advance at dawn**

**Time and enemy took their toll  
But we struggled and fought and endured  
Until with dogged persistence  
The island had been secured**

**Once more we mustered to bury our dead  
And to whisper a last goodbye  
Through lips half bitten in anguish  
And eyes that were not quite dry**

**I sometimes think we might have smiled  
As Guam rose out of the waves  
If our thoughts weren't back on Okie  
With those lonely white-crossed graves**

**The time had come to fill our ranks  
And prepare for another start  
With our Six in a circle of honor  
And our sword at the enemy's heart**

**We hardly believed the scuttlebutt  
When the war was finally won  
And the guns had fallen to silence  
And the bleeding and dying were done**

**Together we joined the forces  
Attacking the island of Guam  
Together we met the challenge  
Of rifle and mortar and bomb**

**The new Twenty-Ninth was blooded  
Not far away on Saipan  
Where, toe to toe, they met the foe  
And conquered him to a man**

**We took the Fifteenth from battalions  
And proudly their praises I sing  
For if Infantry's "Queen of the Battle"  
Then Artillery surely is King**

**And so it came to September  
In the autumn of Forty-Four  
That the Sixth Division was added  
To the muster roll of the Corps**

**We went to work on Guadalcanal  
To rest and sharpen our skills  
For the challenge that lay before us  
In jungle and valleys and hills**

**The ultimate destination  
That we had been training for  
Was the island of Okinawa  
At the foot of the enemy's door**

**On Easter Morning we landed  
With little resistance at first  
And we hoped for an easy battle  
But it quickly became the worst**

**Every rock and hummock and valley  
Had been plotted with infinite care  
To hold a complete battalion  
Or serve as a sniper's lair**

**Every town and city and mountain  
Was part of the master plan  
To hold the island forever  
Or die to the very last man**

**Our every gain was bought with pain  
And sealed with a pact of blood  
On jungle trail or open vale  
In dust and rain and mud**

**Summer began with burning heat  
As the weeks and months rolled on  
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And prepare for another start  
With our Six in a circle of honor  
And our sword at the enemy's heart**

**We hardly believed the scuttlebutt  
When the war was finally won  
And the guns had fallen to silence  
And the bleeding and dying were done**

**Then some of us sailed for China  
As we had in the days of old  
When the uniform was full dress blue  
And the banner was scarlet and gold**

**Still others took the final step  
Of our long range battle plan  
When they made a peaceful landing  
On the shoreline of Japan**

**Before too long we closed the log  
And our fighting flag was furled  
While, one by one, we took our leave  
And scattered across the world**

**But as we left the Circled Six  
We each took a little part  
Of its short but shining history  
And tucked it away in our heart**

**And for those few who served the Sword  
For those grizzled, gallant ones  
The Sixth is living with honor and pride  
At home in the hearts of her sons**

**-R. A. Gannon**

## M - 1

Do you wonder why that rifle  
Is hanging in my den?  
You know I rarely take it down,  
Though I touch it now and then.

It's not a family heirloom,  
I grant you that is true.  
And yet on close inspection,  
It's not exactly new.

It's rather slow and heavy  
By standards of today  
But, not too many years ago  
It swept the rest away.

It's held its own in battles  
Through snow, or rain, or sun.  
And I had one just like it!  
This treasured old M-1.

It went ashore at Bougainville  
In Nineteen Forty-Three.  
It stormed the beach at Tarawa  
Through bullet-riddled seas.

Saipan heard its strident bark,  
Kwajalein, its sting.  
The rocky caves of Peleliu  
Resounded with its ring.

It climbed the hill on Iwo  
With men who wouldn't stop  
And left our Nation's banner  
Forever on the top.

It poked its nose in Pusan,  
Screamed an angry roar.  
And took the First Division  
From Chosin Reservoir.

Well, time moves on and things improve  
With rifles and with men.  
And that is why the two of us  
Are sitting in my den.

But sometimes on a winter night,  
While thinking of my Corps,  
I know that if the bugle blew  
We'd be a team once more.

R.A. Gannon



## **MONUMENTS AND MEMORIES** **(FOR THOSE WHO NEVER CAME HOME)**

**SOME PEOPLE SAY I SHOULD NOT WASTE  
THE HOURS OF MY LIFE  
ON MONUMENTS AND MEMORIES  
RECALLING TIMES OF STRIFE**

**THEY SEEM TO THINK IT ONLY IS  
A NAME UPON A STONE  
WHILE I REFLECT THAT EASILY  
THAT NAME COULD BE MY OWN**

**SHOULD I FORGET THOSE MEN I KNEW  
WHO STOOD AND FELL BY ME?  
SHOULD I FORGET THOSE TORRID ISLES  
UPON THAT SULTRY SEA?**

**SHOULD I FORGET THAT SMILING LAD  
FROM ARIZONA'S PLAIN  
WHO FOUGHT ALONGSIDE ME  
THOUGH WOUNDED AND IN PAIN?**

**OR SHOULD I JUST FORGET ABOUT  
THAT CORPSMAN STANDING FAST  
WHO PUT HIS BODY OVER MINE  
AND TOOK THAT MORTAR BLAST?**

**SHOULD I FORGET THOSE COUNTLESS MEN  
WHO WADED INTO SHORE  
AND GAVE THEIR LIVES DEFENDING  
MY COUNTRY AND MY CORPS?**

**I CAN'T FORGET ONE SINGLE NAME  
THOSE MEN ARE WITH ME STILL  
IF I DON'T REMEMBER THEM  
I ASK YOU THEN, WHO WILL?**

**- ROBERT A. GANNON**



## A HELMET ON A RIFLE

They built a marble monument  
In town the other day.  
They put it on the village green,  
In permanent display

It's a grand and noble symbol  
Raised by a grateful land,  
But I remember a simpler one  
Of steel and wood and sand.

I remember the puffs of dust  
That swirled around our feet  
And the way the rifle barrels  
Shimmered and glowed in the heat.

I walked with my eyes on the pointman.  
He was the first to go down.  
I saw how the bullets hit him  
And slammed him onto the ground.

That day lasted almost forever  
But it finally came to an end  
And there were no strangers among  
For each man was every man's friend.

And then I looked at the captain,  
And he silently answered me.  
He took my hand and he nodded,  
Then turned so I couldn't see.

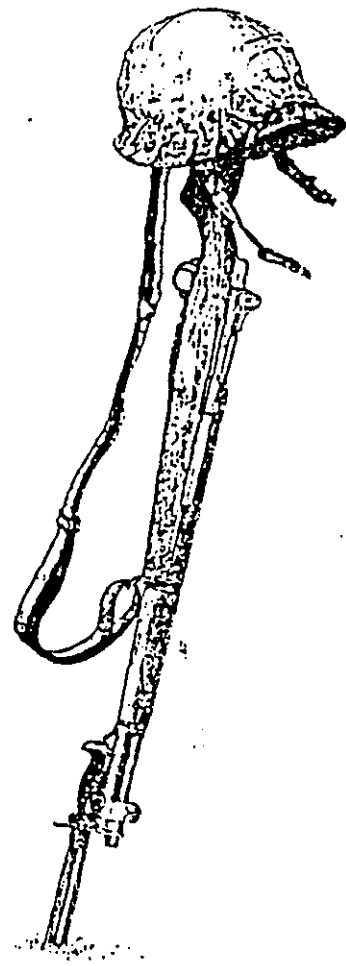
And I walked back to the pointman,  
To the place I'd seen him fall,  
Where now the land was quiet,  
With the peace of God on all.

I covered him up with a poncho  
And then, to be sure he'd be found,  
I took his rifle and bayonet  
And jabbed it into the ground.

There wasn't much more that I could do.  
My tribute seemed a trifle  
So I took a battered helmet  
And placed it on the rifle.

Years have passed since that fateful night  
And now I read his name  
Carved on a marble monument,  
Enshrined on a Roll of Fame.

Yet, that helmet on a rifle  
Was a far more fitting shrine  
For the rifle was my brother's,  
And the helmet? It was mine.



Edward R. Gannon

R. A. Gannon

Abbie Jones  
Chicago Tribune  
August 13, 1995

Okinawa girls chose death in fear of advancing Yanks

Hara, Okinawa----Sachiko Ishikawa huddled in a dank, blood-soaked cave as American troops pounded the Japanese in the last weeks of World War II. As a nurse's aide forced into service during the battle of Okinawa, she clung to safety among the stench of limbless, dying soldiers rather than surrender to the United States.

"I'll never forget seeing the troops getting wounded," said Ishikawa, 69. "The most vivid memories were the ones who were injured, with no hands, no arms, no legs. They would stack them two per bed. There was nothing you could do."

Ishikawa was among more than 200 teenage girls from the elite Okinawa Women's Normal School and First Prefectural Girls' High School who were mobilized into a student nursing corps during the last great battle of the Pacific campaign.

Only 15 to 19 years old, the girls known as the Himeyuri (Star Lily) Student Corps, fulfilled their duty amid the horrors of combat. But at the end of the fighting they were abandoned by the Japanese army and many died among those they were trying to save.

As American and Japanese veterans returned to the island to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the battle of Okinawa, survivors of the nursing want to ensure their testimony will not be forgotten. Years later they are compelled to recount the terror they experienced inside the island's network of dark, foul caves, which became makeshift hospitals for the thousands of wounded.

Their stories are the tragedy of combat: They risked their lives to fetch water, food and medical supplies to comfort soldiers. They fed rice to men whose faces had been blown off. They used chopsticks to pick maggots from their wounds.

When supplies ran short of anesthetic, the girls restrained the screaming soldiers while their limbs were being amputated. And when the dead took up too much space, the girls carried their rotting, bloated corpses outside to bury them in craters made from the naval bombardment.

Although sheltered from the opposite sex from an early age, the student nurses were forced to grip the bodies of amputees so they could urinate and defecate.

For Ishikawa, the only way she could clean herself was to take her clothes off after a rain, wring them out and put them on again. She says she was limited to a meal of one rice ball a day unless she could find grass or vegetables during dangerous excursions to the hills.

"In order to win we had to bear the unbearable," she said. "I was really scared. You couldn't think about it too long. Any rational person would want to give up."

The island of Okinawa, 350 miles southwest of Kyushu, was the staging point for an attack on mainland Japan. During the

three month battle, the Japanese 32nd Army vowed to fight a "war of attrition" in an attempt to allow the mainland time to prepare for an invasion.

Students from the best Okinawan schools with a track record of devotion to Emperor Hirohito received training as assistant nurses. When American troops invaded in the spring of 1945, the students were ordered to join the underground medical units.

After American troops advanced in May and June, 32nd Army Lt. Gen. Mitsuru Ushijima issued a directive to "fight to the last man." When the Americans broke through the last Japanese defense lines, the military ordered the nursing corps to be disbanded, and the girls were left to fend for themselves in the hail of artillery known as the "Typhoon of Steel."

The military doled out grenades and poison, urging the wounded soldiers and civilians to commit suicide rather than surrender. Convinced by the Japanese that they would be raped or tortured by the American invader, many of the girls jumped off the island's cliffs or exploded the grenades on themselves.

According to the Himeyuri Peace Museum on Okinawa, there were 221 students and 18 teachers of the Himeyuri Corps and an additional 84 from other corps assigned to medical units. By the end of the battle, 217 were dead.

Ishikawa recalls one incident in which U.S. troops approached her cave and yelled for everyone to come out, warning them of an impending attack. When the troops started firing, one of Ishikawa's fellow aides was shot in the legs and later died. Another was injured in the buttock but lived.

She regrets that she believed the militaristic propaganda of the Japanese and rejected the promises of American troops that civilians who surrendered would be cared for, she said.

"If there was a choice of being captured or killing ourselves, we'd rather kill ourselves. We thought the Americans would kill us, and we'd rather die by our own hands. If I came out with raised hands, maybe my two friends wouldn't have gotten injured."

Unaware of the surrender, Ishikawa remained in the cave for two months after the fighting ended, surviving on sugar cane and the vines of sweet potatoes.

Today there is a powerful memorial to the members of the Himeyuri Corps and a Himeyuri Peace Museum, which includes reproductions of the caves and a history of the militarization of the girls. One room, called "Requiem," includes a display of more than 200 portraits of students who died and the story of their sacrifice.

Another survivor, Ruri Miyara, was inside a cave the day the nursing corps was disbanded on June 18. She was one of only 11 who survived a gas [note: This could have been the fumes from phosphorous grenades] that killed 85 students, teachers, soldiers, civilians and medical personnel in what is known as the "Cave of the Virgins."

Miyara and her friends, many of whom were ill, heard the footsteps of Americans approaching the cave. "Don't cough; the enemy will hear it," someone warned. A voice from outside yelled for everyone to come out. Miyara made her way deeper into the

cave when there was a blast, filling the cave with white smoke. Desperate and crying, her fellow students cried out in agony and begged to use the hand grenades they were given to kill themselves. Someone ordered her to urinate on her pants and hold it to her mouth, a tactic used to survive a gas attack. Miyara did as she was told and resolved to stay alive. "I thought I was going to die, but I wasn't going to put up my hands [to surrender]. It was overwhelming. It was choking. Kids were crying for their mothers and fathers. For three days I lost track of time. There were dead people everywhere," says Miyara, 68.

Until the end, Japanese soldiers and Okinawan civilians believed Japan would be victorious. In the ultimate show of loyalty to the Emperor, Ushijima and his chief of staff committed suicide.

"We were taught in school there was no questioning of helping the Emperor," Miyara said. "The Japanese told us we were never going to lose. We were going to win. We were told that when the American troops came they would take the young girls, rape them and then kill them. I didn't know that the Americans would help us out."

Okinawa reverted to Japanese control in 1972. Today it is a bustling and developed society barely recognizable to veterans who fought there. It is estimated that 150,000 civilians died in the fighting.

The "Cornerstone of Peace," a giant granite monument listing the names of more than 200,000 American, Japanese and Okinawan war dead, was unveiled in June during events marking the 50th anniversary.

Masahide Ota, the governor of the prefecture, said in an interview that honoring those who died from all sides of the conflict, may ensure that peace will now prevail on Okinawa.

"We don't want to bring tragedy to this island again," Ota said.

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JASCO - FIRST PROVISIONAL MARINE BRIGADE  
GUAM - 1944

THE FOLLOWING STORY WAS IN THE POSSESSION OF GLEN AKIN -  
JASCO AND A MEMBER OF THE FIRST BRIGADE. HE PRESENTED THE  
STORY TO A GATHERING OF JASCO MEMBERS AT A GATHERING IN 1995:

JASCO AND GUAM - 1944

BEFORE THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY WAS OVER THERE WAS A BIG CHANGE  
IN THE MARINE CORPS. THE 3RD SPECIAL WEAPONS BATTALIONS, THE  
FOUR RAIDER BATTALIONS AND THE PARATROOPER BATTALIONS WERE  
DISBANDED AND COMBINED INTO THE 4TH MARINE REGIMENT.

A MONTH OR TWO BEFORE DECEMBER 7, 1942, THE OLD 4TH, THE  
CHINA MARINES, WERE REMOVED FROM CHINA. PART OF THE 4TH WAS  
SENT TO THE STATES FOR AND THE REMAINDER, INCLUDING H.Q.  
BATTALION WERE SENT TO THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS FOR GARRISON  
DUTY. WHILE IN CHINA, THE OLD 4TH CAUSED THE JAPANESE TO  
'LOOSE FACE' ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

DURING AN INTERNATIONAL RIFLE MATCH, THE MARINE TEAM WAS NUM-  
BER ONE. THE JAPS CONTESTED THE SCORES CLAIMING THAT IT WAS  
IMPOSSIBLE FOR ANYONE, WITHOUT CHEATING, TO SHOOT A POSSIBLE  
AT 500 YARDS. THE MARINES THEN TOLD THE JAPS TO PICK OUT ANY  
MARINE SHOOTER AT RANDOM AND THAT MARINE WOULD SHOOT A  
POSSIBLE AT 1000 YARDS! THE JAPS PUT THEIR OWN PEOPLE IN THE  
RIFLE BUTTS AND AN OBSERVER AT THE 100, 200, 300 AND 500 YARD  
LINES TO MAKE SURE THERE WAS NO POSSIBLE CHEATING. THE JAPS  
THEN PROCEEDED TO PICK OUT THE MARINE WHO HAD THE LOWEST  
SCORE FOR THE DAY TO DO THE SHOOTING. THE MARINE, AFTER TAK-  
ING HIS TWO SIGHTERS, PUT NINE ROUNDS IN THE BLACK WHILE  
LYING PRONE, AND HIS LAST SHOW WAS AN X FIRED IN THE OFF HAND  
POSITION!

ON PATROL DUTY, IN THE INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENT, THE JAPS  
WOULD WALK THE SIDEWALKS WITH A SIXTEEN MAN PATROL 4 X 4. THE  
JAPS WOULD FORCE THE BRITISH, FRENCH, ITALIAN AND GERMAN PA-  
TROLS OFF THE WALKS. THE MARINES PATROLLED WITH FOUR MEN.  
THESE FOUR MEN WOULD STAND FAST AND FORCE THE JAPANESE TO  
WALK IN THE STREETS.

ONE NIGHT, AFTER 2400 HOURS, A JAP PATROL, ARMED AND WITH AN  
OFFICER, MARCHED THROUGH THE GATE OF THE U.S. CONSULATE DEM-  
MANDING TO SEE THE AMBASSADOR. THE MARINE ON DUTY, A PFC,  
ASKED THEM TO PLEASE LEAVE AND TO COME BACK IN THE MORNING  
WITHOUT THEIR RIFLES AND SIDEARMS. THE JAP OFFICER STATED HE  
WOULD NOT LEAVE UNTIL HE RECEIVED AN APOLOGY BECAUSE SOME  
MARINES HAD FORCED HIM TO WALK IN THE STREETS.

THE MARINE PULLED HIS PISTOL, CHAMBERED A ROUND AND POINTED  
IT AT THE JAPS HEAD. HE TOLD THE OFFICER TO ORDER HIS PEOPLE  
TO GET THEIR ASSES OFF OF U.S. TERRITORY. HE THEN DISARMED

THE OFFICER AND YELLED OUT FOR THE DUTY NCO. HE EXPLAINED TO THE NCO WHAT HE HAD DONE AND THEY BOTH AGREED TO LOCK UP THE JAP TILL THE C.O. CAME ON BOARD IN THE MORNING.

THE OUTCOME WAS THAT THE AMBASSADOR CONGRATULATED PFC JOE MARSHALL FOR PROTECTING U.S. SOIL. HE DEMANDED AND RECEIVED AN APOLOGY FROM THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR FOR THE ACTIONS OF THE JAP OFFICER FOR BRINGING AN ARMED DETAIL ONTO U.S. SOIL. THE SHIP JOE WAS ON WAS TWO DAYS OUT OF SAN FRANCISCO WHEN THE JAPS BOMBED PEARL HARBOR.

THE MARINES THAT WERE SENT TO THE PHILIPPINES DIDN'T FARE SO WELL. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME IN THE HISTORY OF THE MARINE CORPS THAT A REGIMENT LOST IT'S COLORS. AT THE FALL OF BATAAN THE JAPS FOUND THE 4TH MARINE'S COLORS AND BURNT THEM. ANY MARINE WHO WAS SUSPECTED OF BEING A MEMBER OF THE 4TH WAS ILL-TREATED OR BEHEADED. SOME OF THE OLD 4TH ESCAPED AND FOUGHT AS GUERRILLAS UNTIL THE LIBERATION OF THE ISLANDS. BECAUSE THE COLORS WERE DESTROYED, IT WAS DECIDED THAT THERE WOULD NEVER BE ANOTHER 4TH MARINE REGIMENT. HOWEVER, IN FEBRUARY 1944 IT WAS DECIDED TO REACTIVATE THE 4TH MARINES. A 4TH REGIMENT FLAG, CALLED 'OLD BLUE', HANGS IN THE MUSEUM AT THE USMC RECRUIT DEPOT IN SAN DIEGO, CA. A STORY IS DOCUMENTED NEXT TO THE FLAG OF THE COLORS BEING SMUGGLED OUT OF CHINA. AT THAT TIME THE MARINE CORPS FLAGS WERE BLUE, AND WERE CHANGED BY DIRECTIVES TO THE NOW FAMILIAR RED AND GOLD.

THE 4TH JASCO (JOINT ASSAULT SIGNAL UNIT) WAS TOLD THAT THEY COULD EXPECT A LOT OF CASUALTIES IN THE ASSAULT ON GUAM. THE UNIT WAS SCHEDULED TO MAKE EVERY FUTURE ASSAULT WHENEVER POSSIBLE. THEIR JOB WAS TO SET UP IMMEDIATE COMMUNICATIONS, SHIP TO SHORE, CALLING IN FIRE, AND DIRECTING INCOMING SUPPLIES. IT ALSO ENCOMPASSED A GROUND TO AIR NETWORK AND AN INLAND TO SHORE ALSO. IF ALL WENT WELL WITH THE LANDING, WITHIN THE FIRST WEEK, ALL EQUIPMENT WOULD BE TURNED OVER TO THE OCCUPYING FORCES, DRAW NEW EQUIPMENT, ANY REPLACEMENTS, AND MAKE READY FOR THE NEXT LANDING. IT WAS RUMORED THAT THEY WOULD HAVE AT LEAST 60% CASUALTIES EVERY TIME THEY LANDED.

LATE MARCH 1944, THE NEW 4TH MARINES AND THE 22ND MARINES JOINED FORCES AND FORMED THE 1ST PROVISIONAL MARINE BRIGADE. THIS WOULD BE THE FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE SIXTH MARINE DIVISION. THE GENERAL TO LEAD THEM WAS LT. GENERAL LEMUEL C. SHEPHERD, A PROVEN COMBAT LEADER. THE MARINES WERE TRAINED, AND TRAINED SOME MORE, AND SET SAIL FOR THE LIBERATION OF GUAM. FOR MOST OF THE MEN, AN INORDINATE AMOUNT OF TIME WAS SPENT AT SEA, SOME 57 DAYS, AS THE OPERATION FOR SOME REASON OR OTHER WAS CONSTANTLY DELAYED.

THE CONVOY TOOK ON SUPPLIES AT KWAJELEIN ATOLL, THE LARGEST ATOLL IN THE PACIFIC. DOZENS AND DOZENS OF SHIPS WERE ANCHORED THERE FORMING UP VARIOUS CONVOYS OR GROUPS FOR ASSAULTS ON THE ENEMY. TANKERS, SUBS, SUPPLY SHIPS, DESTROYERS AND OF COURSE...UGLY ROUND BOTTOM GRAY FACELESS

LOOKING TROOP SHIPS OVERLOADED TO THE GUNWALES WITH MARINES.

THE INVASION OF SAIPAN TOOK PLACE JUNE 15TH AND THE BRIGADE CRUISED AROUND SAIPAN AS DECOYS AND IN THE EVENT THEY WERE NEEDED IN THAT BATTLE. THEY WERE USED TO LURE THE JAPANESE FLEET OUT OF THE PHILIPPINES, AND IT WORKED. THE RESULT WAS THE FAMOUS MARIANNA'S TURKEY SHOOT.

THEN THE SHIPS, AFTER SAIPAN WAS SECURED, SET SAIL BACK TO KWAJELEIN. THE MARINES WERE BECOMING SAILORS, THEY WERE ON BOARD SO LONG. THE SHIPS WERE RE-SUPPLIED AND RE-STOCKED FOR THE GUAM INVASION AS MUCH OF THE SUPPLY WAS DEPLETED DUE TO THE LENGTH OF TIME AT SEA.

1ST LT. SEWARD J. DILLENBACK'S JASCO GROUP WAS PART OF THE FIRST GROUP LANDED ON GUAM, ATTACHED TO THE 4TH MARINES. DILLENBACK WAS A MASON, AND HIGHLY RESPECTED BY HIS MEN. THEY CAME IN ON THE THIRD WAVE, AND THAT IS NOT TOO HEALTHY A WAVE TO BE IN. THE LANDING WAVES ARE SCHEDULED ABOUT 3 MINUTES APART WHILE NAVAL AND AERIAL BOMBARDMENT IS LIFTED FOR ABOUT FIVE MINUTES BEFORE THE FIRST WAVE HITS THE BEACH. THAT GIVES THE DEFENDERS OF THE BEACH TEN MINUTES TO CLEAR THEIR HEADS, SHAKE OFF THE SAND AND CORAL, MAN THEIR GUNS AND FIRE AWAY. THE TARGET BY THEN, JUST HAPPENS TO BE THE THIRD WAVE.

MORTAR AND 20MM PROJECTILES MET THE MARINES. NEAR HITS SPLASHED AROUND THE ONCOMING AMTRACS LOADED WITH THE SWEATING MARINES. THE JASCO UNIT, SCHEDULED TO LAND AT GAAN POINT ENDED UP LANDING AT BANGI POINT. THEY RAN AND DUCKED, CARRYING THEIR HUGE RADIOS AND COMMUNICATION GEAR, SOME 1000 YARDS BACK ALONG THE BEACH TO THEIR ASSIGNED POINT. THE ARMORED AMPHIBIAN TRACTORS (THE ARMORED MEN CALLED THEM TANKS) SUFFERED TERRIBLY AT GUAM. THESE TANKS PRECEDED THE MARINES AND SOME 24 OF THEM WERE KNOCKED OUT, MOSTLY FROM JAP GUNS THAT FLANKED THE LANDING AREA. THEY HAD MANY CASUALTIES AND BROKEN UP TRACTORS LINED THE BEACH AREA ALONG WITH THE MANY WOUNDED MEN OF THE FIRST ARMORED BATTALION.

THERE WAS CONSTANT SHELLING OF THE LANDING AREA WITH MARINES DISGORING FROM THE LANDING CRAFT AND DOUBLE TIMING IT UP THE BEACH TO DIG IN. LANDING CRAFT WERE HIT IN THE WATER AND NEVER MADE IT TO THE BEACH. THEY DISAPPEARED IN A HUGE EXPLOSION OF MEN, EQUIPMENT AND SMOKE. THEY SIMPLY VANISHED. PRIVATE CALDWELL, LU NIEWALD AND BILL SPEAKMAN DUG IN BEHIND SOME BOULDERS SOME 30 YARDS FROM THE BEACH. LT. DILLENBACK AND CUTTER, A FORMER RAIDER WERE JUST AHEAD.

THE RADIO ACCESSORY PACK WEIGHED SOME 40 POUNDS AND IT CONSISTED OF BATTERIES. CALDWELL WAS LYING ACROSS A DEAD MARINE, A 40 POUND SPOOL OF WIRE IN FRONT OF HIM. CALDWELL, 17 YEARS OLD, FROM ALABAMA, HAD BEEN RAISED BY TWO OLD MAIDS. HE HAD JOINED THE BRIGADE FRESH FROM THE STATES.

CHAPLAIN MC CORKELL HEADED FOR THE DEAD MARINE TO GIVE HIM

IT WAS POINTED OUT TO HIM THAT THE MARINE LYING THERE WAS THE FIRST MARINE KILLED AND A MEMBER OF THE 4TH MARINE REGIMENT. WHEN THE CHAPLAIN GOT TO CALDWELL AND ASKED HIM TO MOVE, CALDWELL FOR THE FIRST TIME REALIZED HE WAS LAYING ACROSS THE LEGS OF A DEAD MARINE. HE LEAPED UP, 40 POUND SPOOL OF WIRE AND ALL, AND BOLTED OUT OF THERE.

THE RADIO'S WERE SET UP JUST THE WAY JASCO HAD PRACTICED DURING THEIR TRAINING PERIOD. A RECEIVER UNIT IS SET UP AND THEN PLUGGED INTO AN ACCESSORY SET. THEN THE ANTENNA IS FIXED THEREON AND FINALLY THE GENERATOR. THEIR FIRST MESSAGE WAS CLEAR TEXT AND WAS RECEIVED BY SGT. SPEAKMAN FROM PENNSYLVANIA. IT CAME IN CLEAR EVEN BEFORE THE ANTENNA WAS PROPERLY TIED DOWN. BILL SPEAKMAN FILED THE MESSAGE IN HIS MEMORY AND WHEN THE GENERATOR WAS HOOKED UP HE ASKED FOR POWER. HE TAPPED OUT A DI DA DIT AND THEN ASKED FOR A MESSAGE BLANK. THE MESSAGE READ "RECEIVER - BATTERIES DAMAGED ON LANDING. NEED SAME AND SMALL ARMS AMMO - SHAPLEY. SHAPLEY WAS COLONEL SHAPLEY OF THE 4TH MARINES, THEIR COMMANDING OFFICER.

LT DILLENBACK SENT THREE MEN TO TAKE A SPARE BATTERY PACK AND WHATEVER AMMO THEY COULD ROUND UP AND CARRY AND DELIVER SAME TO THE COLONEL. RENO NATIVIE FROM BERRY, VERMONT, CALDWELL AND WALTER MATEJKA FROM OMAHA, NEBRASKA AND THEIR LEADER TOOK OFF. ALL WERE BOOTS EXCEPT THE CORPORAL.

USING RUN, DUCK, SQUAT, CRAWL AND MOVE OUT METHODS THE PATROL DELIVERED THEIR PRECIOUS CARGO. SHAPLEY AND HIS MEN WERE ABOUT A HALF A MILE INLAND ON THIS ISLAND AT THIS TIME. WHEN THEY RETURNED LT. DILLENBACK WANTED A PHONE LINE STRUNG FROM THEIR POSITION TO THE BEACHMASTER BACK AT THE BEACH. THE MEN STRUNG THE LINE AND WERE BACK IN TIME FOR A QUICK LUNCH BREAK. THE CREW HAD DUG IN AND THE RADIO WAS SET UP BEHIND SOME ROCKS IN A SAFE LOCATION. A COOK STOVE, A ONE BURNER COLEMAN DID DUTY TO GIVE SOME MARINES A HOT LUNCH.

THE GROUP DUG IN FOR THE NIGHT PREPARING DEFENSIVE POSITIONS. EATING RATIONS THAT NIGHT, A SMALL CHILE PEPPER PLANT HAD BEEN FOUND AND THE COLD C-RATONS GOT DOSED WITH SOME SPICE. RADIO TRAFFIC HAD BEEN LIGHT. WIRES HAD TO BE RAISED BACK TO THE BEACH AS A 4X4 TRUCK WAS ON RECON NEAR THE AGAT CEMETERY. THE C.B.'S (SEA BEE'S) WERE GOING TO CONSTRUCT SOME KIND OF BRIDGE DURING THE NIGHT SO TANKS COULD MOVE OUT THE NEXT DAY.

AT 20 HUNDRED THE JOB OF RAISING THE WIRE WAS COMPLETED AND IN PITCH BLACK DARK THE GROUP STARTED TO RETURN TO THEIR OUTFIT. THE RECON TRUCK HAD ONLY GONE A FEW YARDS WHEN THE MOTOR DIED OUT. IT STOPPED ALONGSIDE A JEEP THAT HAD RECEIVED A DIRECT HIT FROM A JAP MORTAR. THE DRIVER KNEW HIS ONIONS, AS HE FIGURED OUT RUST GOT IN THE FILTER AT THE BOTTOM OF THE CARBURETOR. ONE OF THE BOOTS SITTING IN THE TRUCK WANTED TO 'LIGHT UP'. THAT CIGARETTE COULD BE HIS LAST AS JAP INCOMING WOULD COME IN FAST WHERE LIGHT WAS SEEN. THE BOOT MADE A WISE REMARK LIKE... "ALL YOU OLD SALTS ARE ALL GOOSEY!" HE LIT UP



AND WITHIN TEN SECONDS THE SCREAM OF AN INCOMING SHELL RENT THE AIR. THE SHELL LANDED WITHIN 3 FEET OF THE RECON TRUCK, BURYING ITSELF IN THE MUD. IT WAS A DUD!

IN 1979 ONE OF THE MEN RETURNED TO GUAM AND FOUND THE EXACT SPOT THE SHELL HAD LANDED. THERE WAS A TELEPHONE MANHOLE WHERE THE SHELL HAD HIT. LATER, THEY MET A TELEPHONE MAN HE TOLD THE GROUP THAT WHEN THEY BUILT THE MANHOLE THE BACKHOE OPERATOR HAD HIT THE SHELL AND IT BLEW THE BUCKET OFF HIS RIG.

AT 2400 OR SO ALL HELL BROKE LOOSE AT THE JASCO C.P. DRUNKEN JAPS, LOADED WITH SAKE, HAD SNEAKED INTO THE LINES ON THE RIGHT OF THE MARINE PERIMETER. THE NAVY PUT UP SOME FLARES FROM ONE OF THE DESTROYERS LIGHTING UP THE SNEAKING JAPS. THEY WERE QUICKLY MOWED DOWN.

AT FIRST LIGHT, MARINE GEORGE HODGES, FROM SAN ANTONIO CAME INTO THE C.P. FROM ONE OF THE INLAND RADIO POSITIONS. HE WAS SOMEWHAT HYSTERICAL AND RANTING THAT THE ENTIRE RADIO TEAM HAD BEEN SHOT UP AND HE HAD NO IDEA HOW MANY MEN WERE DEAD. JUST THEN A RADIO CALL CAME IN FROM WILL MC GREY WHO WAS A MEMBER OF A NAVY GUN FIRE TEAM. WILLIE WAS FROM THE OLD SPECIAL WEAPONS COMPANY AND HE WAS ASKING FOR SOME HELP. DILLENBACK SENT SOME MEN UP TO HIM WITH INSTRUCTIONS TO SEE WHAT HE WANTS AND HELP ALL THEY COULD. THE MEN HAD TO MAKE THEIR WAY SOME 1000 YARDS INLAND ALL THE WAY TO THE BASE OF THE HIGH MOUNTAIN, MT. ALIFAN.

THEY FOUND TWO SHELL HOLES ABOUT 50 FEET OR SO APART. THESE WERE LARGE ENOUGH TO HAVE COME FROM OUR OWN NAVAL SHIPS, AND PROBABLY WERE 16 INCHERS. IN ONE OF THEM WAS OLD WILLIE WITH FOUR NERVOUS BOOTS. ASKING WHERE THE TROUBLE WAS, WILLIE POINTED TO THE OTHER SHELL HOLE. IN THAT HOLE WERE TWO DEAD MARINES AND ONE WOUNDED MARINE AND POP LAUGHTER WHO WAS HURT BADLY. AROUND THE HOLE WERE THREE DEAD JAPS AND IN THE SHELL HOLE WAS ALSO A DEAD JAP. POP HAD BEEN STABBED BY A BAYONET TIED TO THE END OF A LONG BAMBOO POLE. THE BAYONET, STILL ATTACHED TO THE POLE, WAS STICKING OUT OF HIS THIGH.

THEY CUT POP'S PANTS AND SKIVVIES OPEN TO GET AT THE BAYONET. THE LONG JAP WEAPON HAD ENTERED AND EXITED HIS THIGH, THROUGH HIS SCROTUM AND HAD ENTERED HIS OTHER THIGH. A SHOT OF MORPHINE WAS ADMINISTERED AS BEST THEY COULD AND THEN THE BLADE WAS PULLED OUT. SULFA WAS LIBERALLY APPLIED TO THE WOUNDS AND THE G.I. DRESSING WRAPPED AROUND THEM. SURPRISINGLY THERE WAS NOT MUCH BLEEDING. THEY LOADED POP AND THE WOUNDED MARINE ON AN AMBULANCE JEEP WE HAD SPOTTED. THAT WAS THE LAST TIME THEY EVER SAW OLD POP.

WILLIE RELATED THAT SHORTLY AFTER MIDNIGHT THE JAPS SPOTTED LAUGHTER'S RADIO ANTENNA. THEY TRIED GRENADES AND EACH TIME ONE LANDED IN THE SHELL HOLE, POP AND THE FOUR OTHER MARINES WOULD LEAP OUT AND THEN JUMP BACK IN. THEY CONTINUED THIS

TILL DAYLIGHT. WILLIE AND HIS SQUAD OF MEN BEING FIFTY YARDS AWAY COULD NOT OBSERVE WHAT WAS GOING ON. HE COULD HEAR, BUT HE COULD NOT SEE.

WHEN DAYLIGHT CAME WILLIE OBSERVED SOME JAPS NEARBY AND THE SQUAD OPENED UP ON THE JAPS. THE JAPS THEN CHARGED POP LAUGHTER'S HOLE. THE ONE WITH THE BAYONET ON THE POLE WAS ACTUALLY SHOT BY POP, BUT THE JAP IN HIS DEATH LUNGE ENDED UP IN THE HOLE WITH POP ON THE END OF THE BAYONET. TWO MARINES IN THE HOLE WERE KILLED BY GRENADES, THIS TIME THEY WERE UNABLE TO LEAP OUT.

THE RADIOS WERE PICKED UP AND THE GROUP HEADED BACK TOWARD THE BEACH. THE MEN WERE ASSIGNED TO WILLIE WHO WAS NOW SHORT OF MEN, AND THEY ALL ENDED UP THE GUAM CAMPAIGN RUNNING THE NAVAL GUNFIRE TEAM. THEY SPOTTED FIRE FOR THE 3RD BN., 4TH MARINES AND THEIR GUNFIRE SHIP WAS THE CRUISER HONOLULU.

ON THE 22ND THE MEN SPENT THE NIGHT NEAR WHAT WAS LEFT OF A JAP SUPPLY DEPOT. LIKE ALL MARINES, THEY DID SOME SCROUNGING, AND FOUND SOME CRAB MEAT, PEACHES AND MANDARIN SLICES. A BOX OF OFFICER'S BOOTS WERE FOUND AND THEY TURNED OUT TO BE FLIGHT OFFICER'S BOOTS, FUR-LINED AND LEATHER. TO A MAN, THE LARGEST JAP SIZED BOOT DID NOT FIT A SINGLE MARINE. THEY BECAME SOUVENIR'S. LOGGER GASTNER PICKED UP A BEAUTIFUL SILK KIMONO TO SEND HOME TO HIS WIFE. IT RAINED THAT NIGHT, AND NO ONE IN JASCO GOT A GOOD SLEEP. NEXT MORNING THE SUN CAME UP AND AS THE MEN CAME OUT OF THEIR DIRTY MUDDY HOLES AN JAP MORTAR BARRAGE WAS DIRECTED AT THEM. THEY QUICKLY MOVED OUT. ONE MORTAR LANDED IN THE HOLE WHERE THE RADIO HAD BEEN A MINUTE OR SO BEFORE.

THE ARMY CAME ASHORE AND TOOK OVER THE LINES FROM THE MARINES. THAT PUT JASCO DOWN TOWARD THE 22ND'S LINES WHO WERE DRIVING DOWN OROTE PENINSULA. AT LUNCH THAT DAY, A JEEP DELIVERED MAIL. INCREDIBLE. A FRONT LINE DELIVERY. THIS WAS THE FIRST MAIL SINCE GUADALCANAL. THE MEN GOT A LAUGH WHEN ONE OF THEM MENTIONED HIS LITTLE OLD MOTHER THAT DID NOTHING BUT COOK AND RAISE KIDS, WAS NOW WORKING IN A HAND GRENADE FACTORY. SHE ALSO MENTIONED THAT SHE HAD PUT HER NAME ON SOME OF THE GRENADES AND HAD HOPED THAT IT WOULD GET PERSONAL DELIVERY. SHE ALSO HAD A REQUEST...SHE WANTED A JAP PISTOL AS A SOUVENIR!

WE DUG IN ON THE LEFT WHICH WAS A COCONUT GROVE ON HIGH GROUND. A LOT OF FIRING WAS GOING ON TOWARD THE RIGHT FLANK OF JASCO AND THE WORD CAME IN THAT STRETCHER BEARERS WERE NEEDED BADLY. HARRINGTON, GASTNER, HURST AND ONE OTHER SET OFF, LEAVING WORD THAT HOPEFULLY A FOXHOLE WOULD BE DUG FOR THEM WHEN THEY WERE GONE. ARRIVING AT THE RIGHT FLANK THE MEN WERE TOLD THAT JUST AHEAD WERE SOME WOUNDED. THEY KEPT GETTING DIRECTIONS..."UP FRONT..." "A LITTLE FURTHER UP" "UP FRONT"...THEN THEY CAME ON A BUNCH OF MARINES DIGGING IN. THEY WERE STANDING THERE WITH THE STRETCHERS WHEN A JAP NAMBU

(JAPANESE MACHINE GUN) OPENED UP AND HARRINGTON AND THE OTHER MARINES HIT THE DECK. THEY ALL ESCAPED EXCEPT THE STRETCHER. THEY WERE STANDING HOLDING IT ERECT AND IT ENDED UP FULL OF HOLES!

A LIEUTENANT LYING NEAR US ASKED IF THEY HAD SEEN WHERE THE FIRE HAD COME FROM. THE ANSWER WAS NO. SMOKELESS POWDER THAT THE JAPS USED MADE SPOTTING DIFFICULT. AMAZINGLY THE ALLIES DID NOT PERFECT OR KNOW HOW TO MAKE SMOKELESS POWDER. THEN THE LIEUTENANT SAID, "I'LL STAND AND DRAW SOME FIRE AND YOU GUYS SPOT WHERE TI'S COMING FROM." THE MARINES THOUGHT HE WAS NUTS. HE DID SO, AND ANOTHER BURST WAS IMMEDIATE. THE LIEUTENANT SLAMMED HIMSELF EARTH-BOUND. FORTUNATELY HE WAS NOT HIT. HE ASKED AGAIN IF THEY SPOTTED IT, AND AGAIN THE ANSWER WAS...NO! THEN HE PASSED THE ORDER FOR EVERYONE TO FIRE INTO THE TREE TOPS. HE POSSIBLY THOUGHT HE WAS ON GUADALCANAL WITH THE RAIDERS. TREMENDOUS FIRING TOOK PLACE, HARRINGTON EXPENDING SOME 10 CLIPS OF M1 AMMO. THE FIRING CEASED AND THE SOUND OF A NAMBU FIRING AT THE MARINES TOOK PLACE. THE NIP WAS STILL THERE....

FIFTY YARDS OR SO AWAY, SOME NIPS SUDDENLY BOLTED UPRIGHT LOOKING AT THE MARINES ON THE FRONT LINES. ALL THE MARINES OPENED UP AT ONCE, SOME OF THEM STANDING STRAIGHT UP AND TRADING FIRE WITH THE NIPS, EVEN THOUGH NO SHOTS WERE COMING FROM THEM. WHO CARED...THEY WERE THE ENEMY.

ONE JAP WAS ALL DRESSED UP IN KHAKI, LEATHER BELTS AND WAVING A LARGE SAMURAI SWORD. FOR SOME REASON OR OTHER THE 100 OR SO JAPS JUST SEEMED TO RUN AROUND IN CIRCLES. THEY WEREN'T EVEN FIRING AT THE MARINES. MAYBE THEY WERE ALL ON SAKE...WHO KNOWS? THE MARINES KNOCKED THEM DOWN, AND WHEN THE JAP THAT WAS HIT GOT UP HE GOT KNOCKED DOWN AGAIN. AMONG THE MOST PISSED OFF MARINE THERE, WAS HARRINGTON, WHO HAD FIRED HIS TEN CLIPS OF AMMO INTO THE TREES AND DID NOT GET TO FIRE ONE SINGLE SHOT INTO 100 JAPS JUST ASKING TO BE SHOT.

THE SABER WAS RETRIEVED ALONG WITH A RED SASH BELT INDICATING THE OFFICER WAS SOME KIND OF BIG SHOT. THE LITTLE OLD MOM AT HOME MAKING GRENADES DID NOT GET A JAP PISTOL, SHE WOULD HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH THE SWORD AND SASH. THE DEAD OFFICER HAD THE LANYARD WRAPPED AROUND HIS WRIST INDICATING IN NO WAY WAS HE ABOUT TO LET LOOSE OF THE SWORD. EVEN IN DEATH HE GRIPPED THE SWORD FIRMLY, THE MARINE FORCING IT OUT OF THE DEAD JAPS HAND.

THE STARS AND STRIPES WERE RAISED AFTER OROTE PENINSULA WAS SECURED. THEY WERE RAISED AT THE OLD MARINE BARRACKS ON THE PENINSULA. THE DATE WAS JUNE 29, 1944. THE JAPS WERE PINNED IN AT THE END OF THE PENINSULA, AND THOSE NOT SHOT COMMITTED SUCICED OR JUMPED OFF THE CLIFFS TO THEIR DEATH RATHER THAN SURRENDER.

THE MARINE BRIGADE GOT TRANSFERRED DOWN TO THE MARINE 3RD

DIVISION. THE ARMY RELIEVED THEM IN TRUCKS. THE MARINES WALKED THE 18 MILES OR SO TO THE 3RD DIVISION.. THE NEXT DAY, THE 31ST, THE 18 MILE HIKE WAS SOUVENIR TRAIL. JAP BOOTS WERE CUT OFF PACKS, MARINE AND JAP HELMETS LITTERED THE ROAD. EVEN JAP RIFLES AND AN OCCASIONAL SWORD WAS LYING THROWN IN THE BUSH. ANYTHING TO LIGHTEN THE LOAD. ALMOST EVERY MARINE EITHER HAD MALARIA OR DENGUE FEVER. MANY A MARINE FOUGHT THE CAMPAIGN WITH 100 OR MORE DEGREES OF FEVER. IT WAS GUESSED THAT THE ARMY PICKED UP ALL THE THROWN AWAY SOUVENIRS...WHAT THE HELL.

WHEN THE MARINES GOT BACK TO JASCO, ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS THEY DID WAS HAND LT. DILLENBACK THE JAP SABER. ABOUT ALL THAT WAS LEFT OF THE SOUVENIR HUNTING, JAP KILLING PATROL.

THE JASCO MARINES CAMPED IN A LARGE FIELD AND FOUND AN AVOCADO TREE RIPE WITH FRUIT. A FARM HOUSE AT THE END OF THE FIELD HAD SOME 55 GALLON DRUMS, THAT WERE UNDER THE EAVES TO CATCH RAIN WATER. THE MARINES TOOK THEIR FIRST SHOWER IN 10 DAYS, THANKS TO THOSE DRUMS OF RAIN WATER. DINNER THAT NIGHT WAS FOUR SCROUNGED UP EGGS, AVOCADOS AND SOME SQUASH. NO ONE COPIED DOWN THE RECIPE.

BY DOING SOME WANDERING, THE JASCO MARINES GOT THE WORD THEY WERE NOW ON THE POINT. SEEM SOMEONE GOT PISSED THAT THEY WANDERED OFF ON THEIR OWN. LT. TOM DE BORD, A NAVAL GUNFIRE TEAM CHIEF FROM BELMONT SHORES, CALIFORNIA WAS PART OF THE POINT TEAM. THE PATROL GOT SOMEWHAT LOST, AS THEY WERE TO ADVANCE SOME 1000 YARDS WHICH IS A HECK OF A LONG WAY FROM THE MARINE LINES. THE BATTLE MAY BE OVER, BUT THE PATROL WONDERED IF THE JAPS KNEW IT. SOMEHOW OR OTHER THE EGGS AND AVOCADOS WERE SURVIVING THE BOUNCING AROUND IN THE POCKETS OF THE JASCO PATROL.

SUDDENLY THERE WAS THE SOUND OF A LOUD POP. A JAP STOOD UP ALONGSIDE THE TAIL END OF THE PATROL AND HAD GOTTEN OFF A SHOT AT THE MARINES. SOME SIXTY MARINES HAD WALKED RIGHT PAST THE NIP AND NEVER SAW HIM. FORTUNATELY HE MISSED WITH HIS SHOT, AND CARBINE, M1 AND BURSTS OF BAR'S CUT HIM IN TWO. WHEN IT WAS ALL OVER THE MARINES NOTICED A JAP GRENADE LYING IN THE PATH. THEY ALL SCATTERED FOR SAFETY. SINCE IT WAS NOT SMOKING, ONE JASCO MARINE PICKED IT UP, AND AFTER EXAMINING IT PERCEIVED IT TO BE A DUD. HE UNSCREWED THE STEM. WHEN HE EXTRACTED THE STEM IT WAS FOUND THAT THE JAP GRENADE HAD NO FUSE. SOMEONE BACK IN TOKYO HAD LOUSED UP THE ASSEMBLY LINE THAT DAY, BUT HE DID SAVE SOME MARINE INJURY OR LIVE.

THE JAP WAS WEARING A RED FELT BADGE WITH A GOLD STAR. A SUPERIOR PRIVATE. THE MARINE PLUCKED OFF THE EMBLEM, STUFFED THE GRENADE IN HIS POCKET AND TODAY IT SITS ON A SHELF IN A LIBRARY A LONG WAY FROM GUAM.

WHEN THE MARINE GOT BACK THEY WERE INSTRUCTED TO AN ARE TO BIVOUAC FOR THE NIGHT. A 37MM WAS GUARDING THE ONLY ROAD UP

TO A FARM HOUSE WHERE THE JASCO MEN WOULD DIG IN. THE 37MM MEN TOLD THE MARINES THEY WERE ARMED WITH MOSTLY CANISTER. IF THE JAPS CAME UP THAT ROAD AT NIGHT, SOME 500 BALL BEARINGS FROM EACH SHELL WOULD GREET THEM. RADIO CONTACT WITH THE HONOLULU STUNK THAT NIGHT AND THE FLARES WERE SLOW AND ERRATIC ALL NIGHT LONG. AN ENSIGN BY THE NAME OF HAGGARD, THE LIAISON OFFICER OF THE HONOLULU, ASHORE WITH THE MARINES WAS HAVING FITS.

DURING THE NIGHT THE SAME ENSIGN, HAGGARD, WHILE WALKING AROUND TRIPPED OVER THE ANTENNA WIRE. THE MARINE BERATED HIM WITH 'DUMB ASS', 'HEY STUPID', AND SUCH, AND TO THEIR SURPRISE THE ENSIGN SAT DOWN AND CRIED. THE PRESSURE HAD GOTTEN TO THE POOR SON OF A BITCH. JUST THEN A 37MM SHELL WENT OFF AND THE ENSIGN MUTTERED... "OH MY GOD!", AND BENT OVER AND JUST CRIED HARDER. ONE OF THE MARINES YELLED, "SHUT UP YOU STUPID BASTARD!" THEN ALL GOT QUITE AND A RESTFUL NIGHT WAS HAD BY ALL. EXCEPT MAYBE THE ENSIGN.

THE NEXT MORNING FOUR DEAD JAPS WERE IN FRONT OF THE 37 MM GUN. ONE AN OFFICER. I GUESS THEY NEVER GOT THE WORD THAT THE WAR WAS OVER. WHEN BACK AT JASCO A WIRE STRINGING DETAIL PAN INTO A NIP ALONG THE TRAIL. HE WAS DISPATCHED BY ONE OF THE MEN CARRYING A SHOT GUN.

A FEW DAYS LATER THE JASCO UNIT PASSED THE SAME SPOT THE NIP WAS SENT TO THE PLACE WHERE HE CAN PLEASE HIS EMPEROR. THE BONES WERE ALREADY PICKED CLEAN. THE ANTS AND LAND CRABS HAD THE BONES LOOKING LIKE PIANO KEYS. ONLY SHREDS OF SHOES AND CLOTHING MADE HIM OUT TO BE SOMETHING HUMAN.

THE MARINES LEFT GUAM ABOARD A SHIP CALLED THE US ARMY SEA FIDDLER. IT WAS CAPTAINED BY A DUTCH SEA CAPTAIN AND THE ARMY HAD CHARTERED IT FROM THE DUTCH. THE MARINES SPENT TEN DAYS ON THAT LOUSY MISERABLE SCOW, WATER ON FOR ONLY ONE HOUR A DAY, AND ONLY TWO MEALS A DAY SERVED THE SICKLY, MALARIA RIDDEN, DENGUE FEVER, STARVING MARINES. OVER 500 BATTLE-HARDENED MARINES ENDURED THAT HELL SHIP.

SO MUCH FOR THE CONQUERING HERO!

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PFC GEORGE HODGES  
JASCO - 1ST PROVISIONAL MARINE BRIGADE

GUAM - JULY 1944

"I THINK A MARINE BY THE NAME OF RAMSEY WAS KILLED IN OUR SHELL HOLE DURING THE NIP BANZAI ATTACK THAT FIRST NIGHT ON THE ISLAND. WHEN I READ RUDY ROSENQUIST'S STORY OF HIS NIGHT ON GUAM, MANY PARTS OF THAT NIGHT'S HISTORY HAD 'JELLED' IN MY FADING MEMORY.

WE LANDED ON GUAM WITH A NAVAL GUNFIRE FORWARD OBSERVATION TEAM (USUALLY REFERRED TO SIMPLY AS 'FO') AND WE WERE SUPPOSED TO COME ASHORE WITH THE 3RD WAVE. I THINK WE WERE PRETTY MUCH ON SCHEDULE, AND WHEN WE HIT THE BEACH, I FOUND THE BODY OF A CORPSMAN, EVIDENTLY KILLED ALMOST ON LANDING AS HE WAS CLOSE TO THE WATERS EDGE. FOR SOME REASON OR OTHER, AND I KNOW NOT WHEY, I REACHED DOWN AND REMOVED HIS MEDICAL BAG FROM HIS WEB BELT. THE CORPSMANS KIT OR BAG, CONTAINED SUFLA POWDER, BANDAGES, MORPHINE SYRINGES, ETC. I DON'T KNOW, EVEN TODAY, WHY I FELT WE WOULD NEED THEM, BUT I WAS CERTAIN OF ONE THING...THE CORPSMAN HAD NO FURTHER USE FOR THEM. LATER EVENTS WOULD PROVE THAT THIS IMPROMPTU ACT OF MINE WOULD PROVE TO BE PROVIDENTIAL LATER ON THAT NIGHT.

OUR FO TEAM CONSISTED OF FOUR WIREMEN AND A RADIO TEAM WHICH INCLUDED ME, A TEAM CHIEF, BY THE NAME OF McGRAY AND ANOTHER RADIOMAN BY THE NAME OF RUH, AND A 'GENERAL DUTY' MAN NAMED HARBERT. OUR SPOTTER WAS LT. DeBORD AND HIS ASSISTANT WAS SGT. HUTCHINSON. WE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE IN THE CENTER OF THE COMPANY CP (COMMAND POST), BUT FOR SOME REASON OR OTHER THE LT. PLACED US IN TWO SHELL HOLES AT THE FOOT OF A HILL, SOME 50 TO 100 YARDS BEHIND THE PERIMETER. HE STATIONED HIMSELF, ALONG WITH HUTCH ON TOP OF AN ADJACENT HILL AND WAS CONNECTED TO US BY A FIELD PHONE. WE WERE CONNECTED TO THE SHIP BY RADIO. AFTER WE HAD ESTABLISHED OUR COORDINATES WITH THE SHIP WHOSE FIRE WE WERE DIRECTING THAT NIGHT, WE SET UP OUR WATCHES. WE BEGAN OUR RADIO CONTACT BY ORDERING IN 'STAR-SHELL' ILLUMINATION FOR OUR MARINE PERIMETER DEFENSE.

WE HAD SO MANY BANZAI ATTACKS THAT NIGHT, THAT THE NAVY BEGAN RATIONING STARSHHELLS. THEY HAD THE ADDITIONAL PROBLEM OF HAVING LOST NUMEROUS SHIPS, INCLUDING AMMO SHIPS TO THE KAMI-KAZES, AND I THINK THEY WERE WORRIED ABOUT RUNNING LOW ON ALL FORMS OF AMMO....EVEN FOR THEIR OWN DEFENSE.

WHILE I WAS ON WATCH, SOMETIME AFTER MIDNIGHT I CHALLENGED A DARK SHADOW APPROACHING FROM THE DIRECTION OF OUR FRONT LINE PERIMETER. HE COULD HAVE VERY EASILY BEEN SHOT, BECAUSE THE PERSON DID NOT KNOW THE PASSWORD. SOMEHOW OR OTHER, HE MANAGED TO GET ACROSS TO ME THE FACT THAT HE WAS WOUNDED, AND A MARINE FROM 'K' COMPANY, RUDY ROSENQUIST. I NEVER KNEW HIS NAME TILL I READ HIS STORY IN LATER YEARS. HE HAD BEEN DUG IN ON THE POINT OF OUR LINES, AND AS A MACHINE GUNNER HAD FIRED

BELT AFTER BELT AT THE SWARMING JAPS. HE HAD BEEN BAYONETED (ACTUALLY THREE TIMES, BUT I ONLY THOUGHT THEN THAT IT WAS ONCE) AND THE BAYONET HAD GONE CLEARLY ALL THE WAY THROUGH HIS STOMACH. HIS INSIDES WERE HANGING OUT AND COMING OUT HIS BACK! TODAY, THAT SOUNDS TERRIBLE....THEN, I TRIED TO REINSERT THEM, BUT HE MADE SUCH AWFUL SOUNDS THAT I FELT I WAS INJURING HIM MORE THAN HELPING HIM. SO, I PULLED OUT ONE OF MY BANDAGES FROM THE CORPSMANS KIT I HAD PICKED UP, CRUMBLED UP A COUPLE OF THOSE BIG SULFA TABLETS ONTO THE BANDAGE, AND WRAPPED HIM UP AS BEST AS I COULD. AS A MEDIC, I'M A VERY GOOD RADIOMAN. IN ANY CASE, IN SPITE OF MY HEROICS, RUDY SURVIVES TO THIS DAY. I MUST HAVE DONE SOMETHING RIGHT.

HE BLURTED TO US THAT SOME NIPS HAD BROKEN THROUGH THEIR LINES, BAYONETING HIM IN THE PROCESS. THAT MADE US DOUBLY ALERT, SO WE STRENGTHENED OUR OWN GUARD AND STAYED ON A COMPLETE ALERT. EVERYBODY WENT ON A 100% ALERT. AS THE NIGHT, WITH ALL ITS SOUNDS AND FIRING, GREW OLDER WE BECAME MORE NERVOUS, REACTING TO EVERY SOUND. POOR RUDY KEPT MOANING IN PAIN. I THINK HE AS PROBABLY 'OUT OF IT' ANYWAY, BUT I DECIDED TO GIVE HIM A SHOT OF MORPHINE THAT I TOOK OUT OF THE CORPSMANS KIT. I FIGURED THAT IT WOULD RELIEVE HIS PAIN AND ALSO TO QUIET HIM SO HE WOULD NOT GIVE AWAY OUR POSITION. I HAD NEVER BEFORE EVEN THOUGHT ABOUT GIVING ANYONE A SHOT, BUT THE GOOD LORD PROVIDES. SOMEHOW, IN COMPLETE DARKNESS, I REMEMBERED THE DIRECTIONS AND ROLLED THAT LITTLE TUBE OF DRUG INTO HIS ARM.

THE FEAR OF NOISE WAS A NEEDLESS CONCERN. WITHIN MINUTES OF THE TIME I GAVE HIM THE SHOT, I SPOTTED A NIP BEHIND A COCONUT TREE SOME 20 FEET OR SO TO OUR FRONT. WHEN I SHOT HIM, HE HAD HARDLY HIT THE GROUND, WHEN HIS FELLOW SOLDIERS LET FLY A SLEW OF GRENADES AT US! YOU MAY RECALL, THAT THOSE NIPS HAD TO STRIKE THOSE LOUSY GRENADES ON THEIR HELMETS TO PRIME THEM BEFORE THEY THREW THEM. YOU COULD HEAR THE 'PLINK PLINK' OF THE GRENADE ON THE HELMET, AND THEN SEE THEM COMING BY THE FLAMING FUSE.

THEY WOUNDED OR KILLED MOST OF THE MEN IN THE NEXT SHELLHOLE ALMOST IMMEDIATELY, AND THEIR WAS COMPLETE SILENCE COMING FROM THE BLASTED HOLE. THEN THEY MANAGED TO LOB A GRENADE INTO THE HOLE WE WERE IN! McGRAY SCRAMBLED OUT QUICKLY AND GOT BEHIND A FALLEN LOG. I THINK RUDY FOLLOWED HIM, LEAVING TWO OF US WITH THE GRENADE! IT EXPLODED AND I AND RUH SEEMED TO MIRACULOUSLY BE ALIVE! I SAT UP ENOUGH TO TRY AND SPOT THE JAP HEAVING THE GRENADES, AND SURE ENOUGH, WITHIN SECONDS THREE OF THEM CHARGED OUR HOLE WITH THE LONGEST BAYONETS YOU ALWAYS HOPED YOU WOULD NEVER SEE! THOSE BAYONETS CAN REALLY GET YOUR JUICES FLOWING. STEADYING MYSELF I OPENED UP WITH MY LITTLE CARBINE. IT BARKED RAPIDLY, AS MY SWEATING FINGER PULLED AND PULLED AND PULLED! IT THREW BULLETS ALL OVER THE LITTLE BASTARDS. I ACTUALLY EMPTIED MY CARBINE, AND I SAW ALL THREE GO DOWN. WITH THAT I TURNED TO TELL RUH THAT 'WE SHOULD GET TO HELL OUT OF HERE' AND I FOUND HIM ALREADY GONE!

I CRAWLED OVER TO THAT FALLEN LOG, AND WE ALL SETTLED DOWN THERE, EMPTY RIFLE, AND LOW ON AMMO. WE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER OR NOT WE HAD DOWNED ALL THE ENEMY AROUND US AT THAT TIME. ANOTHER MARINE APPROACHED, WHO TURNED OUT TO BE A RUNNER OR SCOUT SENT FROM 'K' COMPANY. HE WAS SEEKING REINFORCEMENTS FOR HIS COMPANY FRONT, NOW WEAKENED BY THE DEAD AND WOUNDED. McGRAY ORDERED ME TO ACCOMPANY HIM TO THE BEACH AND GET SOME AMMO AND MEDICAL HELP.

THE SCOUT (I NEVER LEARNED HIS NAME) AND I MADE OUR WAY BACK TO THE BEACH UNDER SNIPER FIRE, THE SAND KICKING UP FROM THE BULLETS BEING FIRED AT US. WE FOUND AN AID STATION AND AN AMMO DUMP. I GRABBED ALL THE CARBINE AMMO I COULD CARRY AND THE SCOUT AGREED TO LEAD THE CORPSMAN TO OUR GUYS. WE HAD NO IDEA IF THEY WERE ALL ALIVE, DEAD, OR WOUNDED. THE SCOUT ASKED ME TO TRY TO LOCATE ELEMENTS OF THE ARMY WHO HAD LANDED, AND LEAD THEM UP TO WHERE 'K' COMPANY LINES WERE. THAT SOUNDS LIKE A REVERSAL OF OUR DUTIES TODAY, BUT THEN IT SOUNDED PERFECTLY LOGICAL TO ME. I STARTED UP THE BEACH AND I NOTED THAT DAWN WAS JUST NOW BREAKING. WERE WE GOING TO LIVE TO SEE ANOTHER DAY?

I HAD NOT TRAVELLED MORE THAN A HUNDRED YARDS OR SO WHEN THERE WAS A TREMENDOUS EXPLOSION BEHIND ME. THE AMMO DUMP THAT I HAD JUST LEFT WAS BLOWN SKY HIGH! THE CONCUSSION OF THE BLAST WAS SO SEVERE THAT IT KNOCKED ME OFF MY FEET AND COMPLETELY UNCONSCIOUS. WHEN I REGAINED MY SENSES, I NOTED THERE WAS NOTHING STANDING WHERE THE AMMO DUMP HAD BEEN, AND IT APPEARED THAT NO ONE WAS OR COULD POSSIBLY BE ALIVE. I THINK THAT A JAP MORTAR SCORED A DIRECT HIT ON THE DUMP. I WENT DOWN THE BEACH, FOUND THE ARMY AND LED THEM TO A POINT WHERE WE WERE MET BY ANOTHER 'K' COMPANY SCOUT. HE TOOK THEM THE REST OF THE WAY FORWARD, WHILE I HEADED FOR AN AID STATION TO GET MY GRENADE WOUND ATTENDED TO. WITH ALL THE ADRENALINE FLOWING AND THE ACTIONS OF THE NIGHT, I HAD NOT KNOWN THAT I WAS WOUNDED.

BY THE TIME I FOUND MY WAY BACK TO THE SCENE OF THE PREVIOUS NIGHT'S ACTION, ALL THE WOUNDED MARINES HAD BEEN EVACUATED, SO I NEVER KNOWINGLY SAW RUDY AGAIN."

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NOTE: GEORGE HAD ALWAYS PROMISED RUDY A COPY OF HIS SIDE OF THE STORY. A COPY OF THE ABOVE WAS SENT TO RUDY ROSENQUIST (NOW THE PRESIDENT OF THE MARINE RAIDERS ASSN.) ALONG WITH RUDY'S STORY. RUDY'S STORY AND GEORGE'S IS ONLY ONE OF THE MANY GALLANT TALES OF MARINES THAT FIRST NIGHT ON GUAM. THERE WERE MORE BANZAI ATTACKS ON GUAM, THAN ANY OTHER PACIFIC BATTLE DURING WW II. THEIR EXPERIENCES WERE MOST UNIQUE AND VALOROUS THEY WERE INDEED...."SEMPER FIDELIS".



PFC JOHN F. 'JACK' BRAINARD  
4TH MARINE REGIMENT  
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION

OKINAWA - 1945

"I JOINED THE MARINES SO I COULD FIGHT IN THE INFANTRY AND ENDED UP IN A RADIO SCHOOL. SO MUCH FOR ENLISTMENT PROMISES. I ENTERED THE MARINE CORPS ON THE 2nd OF DECEMBER, 1943 AND STARTED MY BOOT CAMP TRAINING AT PARRIS ISLAND, S.C. ON DECEMBER 15, 1943.

DURING THE NINE WEEKS OF TRAINING THERE, I ENTERED THE BOXING TOURNAMENTS AND WON FIVE OUT OF MY FIVE FIGHTS. AS THE ENLISTMENT POSTERS SAID..."IF YOU WANNA' FIGHT..JOIN THE MARINES!" I DID MY BEST TO GET OUT OF THE RADIO SCHOOL AND AFTER MONTHS OF TRYING I FINALLY SUCCEEDED. I ENDED UP WITH AN INFANTRY OUTFIT AT CAMP LEJUNE, N.C. I WAS PUT IN TENT CITY, WHICH MEANS JUST THAT...A CITY OF TENTS. IT STILL STAND TO THIS DAY, BUT THE TENTS ARE NOW BUILDINGS AND THEY HAVE PAINTED ON THEM THE LETTERS AND NUMBERS, SUCH AS 'T.C. 12'. AFTER A BRIEF TRAINING PERIOD IN 1944 I WAS SHIPPED TO CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA AND FORMED INTO A REPLACEMENT BATTALION DESTINED FOR 'SOMEWHERE IN THE PACIFIC'.

WE BOARDED AN AKA (AN ARMY TRANSPORT SHIP) AND HEADED FOR POINTS UNKNOWN. WE FOUND OUT LATER WE WERE ON OUR WAY TO THE ISLAND OF GUADALCANAL. WE DID SEE PEARL HARBOR AND STOPPED AT EINWETOK, THE SCENE OF MARINE BATTLES, IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS. THERE WE TRANSFERRED TO A U.S. NAVY SHIP, THE AFA GALLITON. I GOT TO BOX A FEW TIMES ENROUTE TO THE 'CANAL', AS MARINES NICKNAMED GUADALCANAL, AND I GOT THE STUFFINGS KNOCKED OUT OF ME. I RIGHT THEN AND THERE, RETIRED FROM BOXING.

ON THE CANAL OUR DAYS WERE MOSTLY USED MAKING MOCK LANDINGS AND LOADING LST's (LANDING SHIP TANKS) WHICH WERE DESTINED FOR COMBAT TO PLACES WE NEVER HEARD OF. WE FINALLY LOADED SHIP AND DEPARTED FOR AN ISLAND CALLED OKINAWA. ENROUTE WE STOPPED AT SUCH POSH RESORTS (JOKE) AS THE ISLAND OF MOG-MOG IN THE ULITHI ISLANDS. ONLY ONE OUT OF A 1,000 SERVICEMEN WILL KNOW WHERE THAT ISLAND IS. THE ULITHI ISLANDS WAS A US NAVY ANCHORAGE, SO WE SAW MANY SHIPS, AND ADDED SOME TO OUR CONVOY.

WE LANDED ON OKINAWA AS A REPLACEMENT BATTALION, AND I WAS IN THE 11th OR 12th WAVE. WE EXPERIENCED VERY LITTLE RESISTANCE FROM THE JAPANESE AT THAT POINT IN THE BATTLE. THE NEXT TWO WEEKS WE SPENT ON THE BEACH, CRANKING GASOLINE PUMPS FOR OUR TANKS. TOUGH JOB, NO REST, HOT, AND LITTLE SLEEP. THE NAVY SHIPS PUT ON A SHOW EVERY NIGHT FOR US WITH TRACERS LIGHTING UP THE SKIES. KAMIKAZE SUICIDE PLANES WERE QUITE COMMON, AND AT TIMES THE NAVY WOULD FIRE AT A JAP PLANE COMING OVER THE ISLAND, AND THEIR AIM WAS SUCH THAT THE TRAJECTORY HAD US

JUMPING INTO HOLES, AND DUCKING. WE DID NOT WANT TO BECOME A CASUALTY TO OUR OWN NAVY. TWO WEEKS LATER WE WERE TRANSFERRED TO THE SIXTH MARINE DIVISION IN THE NORTH, AND SAW SOME ACTION. WE DID NOT KNOW IT THEN, BUT THE TOUGH FIGHTING LAY AHEAD OF US WHEN WE WOULD BE TURNED AROUND TO FIGHT IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE ISLAND.

WE SECURED THE NORTHERN END OF THE ISLAND AND THEN REPLACED THE 27TH US ARMY DIVISION IN THE SOUTH. OUR FIRST MARINE DIVISION JOINED US ON OUR LEFT AND WE LINED UP TO FIGHT WITH THE OCEAN ON OUR RIGHT. WE GOT SOME TASTE OF SOME REAL ACTION, THOUGH WE WERE STILL IN REGIMENTAL RESERVE.

AFTER MAY 18th WE MARCHED IN COLUMN ORDER TO A POINT ON THE FRONT AND WE PASSED THE BATTERED, BATTLE-TORN 29th MARINES WHO HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN THE TERRIBLE BATTLE OF SUGAR LOAF HILL. SOME 2,662 MARINES LOST THEIR LIVES THERE, AND 1,289 BECAME BATTLE CASUALTIES. IT WAS THE MOST COSTLY AND BITTEREST FIGHT IN MARINE CORPS HISTORY. I SPOTTED A VERY DEAR FRIEND OF MINE, WILLIAM J. 'BILL' DAILEY. BILL WAS IN COMPANY H, OF THE 29TH. HE SEEMED TO BE IN A TOTAL STATE OF SHOCK. AS A MACHINE GUNNER HE CARRIED HIS GUN ON HIS SHOULDER AND HE REACHED OUT WITH HIS OTHER HAND AND GRABBED ME SAYING, "IT'S CRAZY UP THERE...ABSOLUTELY NUTS!" THAT WAS THE LAST TIME I EVER SAW HIM AS HE WAS LATER ON KILLED IN BATTLE AROUND JUNE THE 12th ONLY TEN DAYS FROM THE END OF HOSTILITIES ON THE ISLAND OF HELL. HE AND ANOTHER CLASSMATE, FRANK MORATTI WAS ALSO KILLED DURING THE MONTH OF JUNE. PRIVATE FRANK MORATI WAS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE 29th MARINES.

I'M NOT REALLY SURE THE EXACT AREA WE WERE IN AROUND SUGAR LOAF HILL. WE WERE ON EITHER HALF MOON OR CRESCENT HILL. IF I HAD A CHOICE I WOULD PICK HALF MOON HILL. I DO RECALL BEING SHOCKED AND JUST COMING TO A HALT AT THE GRUESOME SIGHT OF THE MANY DEAD MARINES SCATTERED ALONG THE BATTLE AREA. WE ADVANCED, ONE AT A TIME, OVER A SMALL JAPANESE BRIDGE, WHICH WAS UNDER FIERCE JAPANESE FIRE AT THE TIME. WE REACHED THE BASE OF A RIDGE TO OUR FRONT, AND DUG IN AND REGROUPED AS QUICKLY AS WE COULD.

FOUR OF US JUMPED INTO A LARGE FOXHOLE OR SHELLHOLE. ONE OF THEM WAS A YOUNGSTER WHO HAD ENTERED THE CORPS UNDERAGE. HE WAS PROBABLY 16 OR 17 YEARS OF AGE. HE ASKED CORPORAL CHUCK GANGER, BELIEVE IT OR NOT, "HOW THE HELL DO YOU GET THIS FIN BACK IN THE GRENADE?!" WE COULDN'T THROW IT BECAUSE MARINES WERE ALL OVER, AND CLOSE BY. HERE WE WERE WITH A GUY HOLDING A SPOON, AND IF HE LET IT GO, THE GRENADE WOULD GO OFF IN FIVE SECONDS! GANGER YELLED AT HIM, "I OUGHT TO RAM IT UP YOUR ASS...YOU STUPID \*&%^\*\*\*6@###!" AS BAD AS THINGS WERE, IT BROUGHT A CHUCKLE TO ALL OF US. WHEN WE MOVED UP SHORTLY, WE FOUND A PLACE FOR THE YOUNG MARINE TO CHUCK THE GRENADE.

WHETHER IT WAS THE SAME DAY OR THE NEXT I CAN'T RECALL, BUT WE ASSAULTED THE TOP OF THAT DAMN RIDGE. ONE AT A TIME THE

CORPORAL SENT US OVER THE RIDGE, AND DOWN THE OTHER SIDE. WE MUST HAVE ALL SPOTTED A HUGE CRATER, POSSIBLY CAUSED BY ONE OF THIER 'SCREAMING MEEMIES'. THEY LANDED AND EXPLODED WITH A ROAR.

THE JAPS MUST HAVE GUESSED, OR SEEN, THAT THERE WAS A CROWD IN THERE, AS THEY LOBBED MORTARS IN ON US. ONE OF THE SHELLS LANDED RIGHT IN THE HOLE ON TOP OF US! IT BLEW US ALL OUT OF THE HOLE! MY PACK WAS TORN TO SHREDS AND MY WALLET I CARRIED GOT 'WOUNDED'. WE ALL GOT OUT SAFELY, AND HOW NONE WERE HURT ONLY GOD KNOWS. WE WERE IMMEDIATELY FINNED DOWN BY MACHINE GUN FIRE AND MORE MORTARS RAINED DOWN ON US. I TRIED TO TAKE COVER, BUT A BULLET HIT ME IN THE LEFT ELBOW, SHATTERING IT AND THROWING ME FORWARD AND DOWNWARD. THE BULLETS SEEMED TO ME, TO BE COMING FROM OUR REAR, SO I PAWED AT MY RIFLE LAYING THERE, AND PULLED IT BACK TO ME. I FELT A RED HOT POKER LIKE PAIN STING ME IN MY RIGHT CALF. I PULLED MY LEGS UP AND FOUND I WAS ON A SMALL STUMP. IN MY MIND I WENT INTO A SHOCK, THINKING I WAS IMPALED ON THE THING.

I LAY THERE FOR SOME TIME, AND I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG. WE WERE STILL TAKING INCOMING FIRE DURING ALL OF THIS TIME. EVENTUALLY, WHITE PHOSPHOROUS SHELLS WERE FIRED INTO THE AREA BETWEEN US AND THE ENEMY SO THE WOUNDED COULD BE SAFELY EVACUATED.

I HAVE NO IDEA WHO THE BRAVE CORPSMAN WAS THAT GOT TO ME, BUT I KNOW ONE THING...HE GOT TO ME WHILE UNDER FIRE. HE PATCHED UP MY BLOODY ELBOW AND CALF, TIEING MY ARM TO ME, AND I HOBBLLED LEANING ON HIM TO A PLACE ON THE REVERSE SLOPE OF THE RIDGE. HE STAYED WITH ME TILL I WAS CARRIED OUT TO AN AID STATION. I OWE MY LIFE TO THAT CORPSMAN WHO GOT ME OUT OF THERE. IS IT ANY WON-DER THAT OUR MARINES HOLD THE NAVAL CORPSMAN IN THE HIGHEST ESTEEM. THE CORPSMAN LEFT ME, AND RETURNED TO THE FORWARD SLOPE TO FIND AND ATTEND TO OTHER WOUNDED MARINES. I BELIEVE HIS NAME TO BE DOMBROWSKI OR DUBROSKI, AND FROM PENNSYLVANIA. THAT STICKS IN MY MIND. I ONLY WISH I COULD FIND HIM AND SAY SIMPLY..."THANKS...FOR SAVING MY LIFE!"

THE WAR WAS OVER FOR ME."

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## SUICIDE RILEY

EARNEST RAY RILEY - PHARMACIST MATE 1/CLASS U.S. NAVY  
CORPSMAN - 22ND MARINE REGIMENT  
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION

FEBRUARY 18 WAS D-DAY FOR EINEWETOK ATOLL, MARSHALL ISLANDS. THE YEAR WAS 1944 AND THERE WOULD BE MANY MORE MARINE LANDINGS AGAINST THE JAPANESE FIGHTING MEN. THE 22ND'S OBJECTIVES WERE THE ATOLLS OF ENGEBI, PARRY AND EINEWETOK. AT 1801 RILEY HIT THE BEACH AT ENGEBI WITH THE FIRST ASSAULT WAVE, AND IN THE FOLLOWING 365 MINUTES THAT COMPOSED OF THE BATTLE FOR THIS STRATEGIC MOUND OF CORAL AND SAND, RILEY HELPED TO ANHILATE THE 1200 JAPS THAT WERE THERE BY KILLING THREE OF THE SONS OF HEAVEN. ONCE ASHORE, HE WAS CONSTANTLY ALERT FOR WOUNDED MARINES. THAT IS WHERE HE FOUND HIS FIRST TROUBLE.

HE WANDERED TOO FAR FROM HIS OUTFIT AND A JAP MACHINE GUN OPENED FIRE. HE TURNED ON HIS HEELS AND RAN FOR SAFETY WITH THE JAP BULLETS CHEWING UP THE CORAL AND SAND ALL AROUND HIS RACING FEET. BY 4:00 P.M., EARNEST RAY RILEY WAS THE PROUD OWNER OF THE NAME "SUICIDE RILEY" AND THE ONLY MAN IN THE 22ND MARINE REGIMENT THAT SO FAR HAD OUT-RUN A JAPANESE MACHINE GUN.

THE DAWN OF FEBRUARY 19 SAW SUICIDE RILEY SAVING LIVES ON PARRY ISLAND, AND THE DAWN OF FEBRUARY 20 SAW HIM ON EINEWETOK ISLAND FIGHTING AND RISKING HIS FOOL NECK EVERY TIME HE WENT TO A FALLEN MARINE, RECEIVING THE ENEMY'S ATTENTION AND A RASH OF BULLETS. ANOTHER ATOLL, EBON WAS ASSAULTED AND WE HAD SOME MEN KILLED THERE ALSO, BUT TODAY, LITTLE NOTICE OR EVEN RECOGNITION IS GIVEN TO THE FACT MARINES DIED ON SUCH AN UNKNOWN, ISOLATED BARREN PIECE OF SAND.

IT TOOK THE 22ND MARINES 52 DAYS AT SEA TO REACH THEIR NEXT OBJECTIVE, THE ISLAND OF GUAM. WE LANDED ON A VERY 'HOT' BEACH, BUT AS USUAL, RILEY'S LUCK HELD AND HE ESCAPED INJURY. HE AGAIN, RISKED HIS LIFE TO AID THE WOUNDED. HIS MOST SPECTACULAR FEAT WAS THE NIGHT OF JULY 27TH, 1944. THE JAPS STAGED THEIR LAST AND MOST FANATIC BANZAI CHARGE ON GUAM THAT NIGHT. IT WAS 10:00 P.M. WHEN THE WAVES OF SCREAMING JAPS HIT THE DUG IN MARINES. AS THEY WERE MOWED DOWN THEY KILLED AND WOUNDED MARINES.

THE BATTALION AID STATION WAS OVERFLOWING WITH CASUALTIES, SO SUICIDE RILEY VOLUNTEERED TO EVACUATE THREE WOUNDED MEN TO A JEEP AMBULANCE PARKED NEARBY. THE MEN WERE LOADED ABOARD AND RILEY WAS GIVEN INSTRUCTIONS TO STAY AT THE FIELD HOSPITAL OVERNIGHT IF HE MADE IT BACK TO THE REAR. HE DROVE SLOWLY WITHOUT LIGHTS FOR 200 YARDS WHEN HE WAS AMBUSHED BY A JAP WHO OPENED FIRE ON THE JEEP. RILEY YELLED, "HOLD ON MATES!" TO THE WOUNDED MEN, AND THEN ADDED, "JUST TRY TO GET SUICIDE RILEY... YOU \_\_\_\_\_ JAPS!" WITH THIS, HE SHIFTED INTO SECOND, HIT THE PEDAL, AND RACED THROUGH THE AMBUSH.

HE ARRIVED AT MIDNIGHT AT THE BATTALION AID STATION WITH HIS PRECIOUS CARGO. HE HAD DEFIED THE JAPS ONCE AGAIN.

AFTER GUAM HAD BEEN SECURED, WE WERE SHIPPED TO GUADALCANAL AND TO A SO CALLED WELL-EARNED REST. WITH THE TRAINING THAT LAY AHEAD OF US, THE WELL-EARNED REST DISAPPEARED. RILEY, BEING BORED, ENTERED AN ISLAND BOXING TOURNAMENT AND WON THE LIGHT HEAVY WEIGHT CROWN. INSTEAD OF KILLING JAPS HE WAS KNOCKING OUT MARINES AND SAILORS. IN NOVEMBER THE SIXTH MARINE DIVISION WAS FORMED BY THE 29TH ARRIVING, THE 4TH MARINES AND 22ND ALREADY ON THE ISLAND. RILEY GOT TRANSFERRED TO C COMPANY MEDICAL, 29TH MARINES. THE TRAINING WENT ON DAY AFTER DAY FOR WHAT WAS OUR NEXT ASSAULT, THE ISLAND OF OKINAWA IN THE RYUKYU CHAIN, BUT NONE OF WE BOOTS KNEW OUR DESTINATION.

D-DAY FOR OKINAWA, WAS EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 1, 1945. THE PUSH NORTHWARD AFTER AND UNOPPOSED LANDING WAS RAPIDLY DONE, WITH A MAJOR BATTLE TAKING PLACE IN A WEEK OR SO AT MT. YAETAKE. RILEY WENT AWOL (ABSENT WITHOUT LEAVE) FROM C COMPANY MEDICAL AND HOOKED UP WITH A FRONT LINE MARINE COMPANY. THAT COMPANY GOT CUT OFF ON THE SECOND DAY HE WAS WITH THE OUTFIT, AND FOR 24 HOURS THEY WERE OUT OF CONTACT WITH DIVISION H.Q. THEY TOOK A GOOD POUNDING FROM THE ENEMY WHO HAD AMBUSHED THEM. WHEN THEY GOT RELIEVED, RILEY WAS COURTMARTIALED AND SENT BACK TO C COMPANY MEDICAL. HIS COURTMARTIAL READ 'DESERTION'. HE HAD MADE SUCH AN IMPRESSION WHILE UP FRONT WITH THE COMPANY (PROBABLY I COMPANY 29TH) THAT HE GOT RELIEVED OF THE COURTMARTIAL CHARGES. INSTEAD, HE GOT TRANSFERRED ONCE AGAIN TO THE 4TH MARINES.

WHILE WITH THE 4TH, RILEY WENT SOUTH AND ENDED UP IN THE ASSAULT FOR SUGAR LOAF HILL. THIS BATTLE WAS PROBABLY THE MOST BITTERLY FOUGHT BATTLE OF THE PACIFIC AND IN MARINE CORPS HISTORY. IT TOOK 11 ASSAULTS BEFORE THE HILL WAS WON, WITH COMPANY STRENGTHS DWINDLING DOWN TO HANDFULS OF MEN. ON MAY 22ND RILEY WAS IN AN ASSAULT CRAFT LANDING ON OROKU PENINSULA. NOT TO BE OUTDONE, HE WENT ASHORE CARRYING A THOMPSON SUB-MACHINE GUN AND ALL HIS CORPSMAN GEAR.

AT 11:00 A.M., MAY 25TH, RILEY AND TWELVE MARINES WERE CHARGING A SAMLL RIDGE AND CAME UNDER HEAVY JAP MORTAR FIRE. RILEY WAS ORDERED TO TAKE CARE OF THE NUMEROUS MEN WOUNDED AND 'STAY PUT'. THE REST OF THE MEN KEPT GOING TO THE SUMMIT OF THE RIDGE AND IMMEDIATELY FOUR MEN WERE HIT BY THE VICIOUS MORTARS BLASTING ALL AROUND AND AMONGST THEM. RILEY GRABBED HIS MEDICAL GEAR AND THE TRUSTY THOMPSON AND TOOK OFF UP THE INCLINE AS FAST AS HIS LEGS WOULD CARRY HIM. HE KNELT AT THE FIRST CASUALTY HE REACHED ON THE TOP OF THAT STINKING HILL AND A WELL-AIMED MORTAR SHELL LANDED DIRECTLY ON HIM. RILEY AND THE WOUNDED MARINE DIED INSTANTLY. SUICIDE RILEY WAS HIS NAME...FIVE FOOT TWO STICK OF DYNAMITE, WITH SHOULDERS HALF AS BROAD AS A MAN'S. HIS NAME WAS WRONG. 'KILLER RILEY' IS BETTER FOR THIS SAILOR WHO REALLY WAS 'A MARINE!'

PFC CHARLES J. LEONARD  
F COMPANY -2 BN.-1ST MARINE REGIMENT  
FIRST MARINE DIVISION

OKINAWA - 1945

"LOOKING THROUGH SOME OLD PICTURES, AND FOUND THAT TWO OF MY BUDDIES FROM BOOT CAMP WERE KILLED IN ACTION ON OROKU PENINSULA. PHIL SCHAEFER L CO., 4TH MARINES, AND DICK TOUT, D COMPANY 29TH MARINES, BOTH WITH THE 6TH MARINE DIVISION. HALF OF US WENT TO THE FIRST AND THE OTHER HALF TO THE SIXTH. IN TOTAL I LOST 24 OF MY CLOSEST FRIENDS IN THE CORPS ON THAT LOUSY ISLAND OF DEATH. WAYNE LYONS AND BRUCE MITCHELL WERE THE CLOSEST. THEY WERE BOTH KILLED ON KUNISHI RIDGE ON THE 15TH OF JUNE, ONE WEEK BEFORE THE END OF THE BATTLE, AND ONE DAY PRIOR TO OUR BEING RELIEVED BY THE 5TH MARINES. WAYNE WAS DECLARED MISSING IN ACTION, AND WE NEVER DID FIND HIS BODY.

A RECENT VISIT WITH MY WIFE TO THE PUNCHBOWL CEMETERY IN HAWAII, I WENT TO BRUCE'S GRAVE. WAYNE'S NAME IS ENGRAVED ON THE WALL OF THE 'MISSING IN ACTION.' I PRESENTED SOME FLOWERS AND SOME SMALL USMC FLAGS, AND SOME TEARS AT THEIR MEMORIALS. WAYNE HAD BEEN SLIGHTLY WOUNDED IN THE HAND ON THE 10TH OF JUNE AND WAS LYING OUT IN THE OPEN FOR SEVERAL HOURS BENEATH THE BODIES OF SOME OF HIS DEAD BUDDIES KILLED IN THE SAME MINUTE. WE HAD NO SMOKE GRENADES WITH US, AND SEVERAL NAMBU'S HAD US ZEROED IN. WE WAITED FOR DARKNESS, CREEPT OUT, AND DRAGGED THEM ALL BACK IN. ALTHOUGH WAYNE WAS A MESS, HIS WOUND PROVED TO BE SUPERFICIAL AND HE WAS NOT EVACUATED. I RECALL HIS PANTS AND JACKET BEING COVERED WITH THE BLOOD OF HIS BUDDIES, AND IT TOOK ME A GOOD HOUR TO GET HIM CALMED DOWN. THEN...5 DAYS LATER HE IS MISSING ON KUNISHI RIDGE.

IT IS LITTLE KNOWN, THAT ALTHOUGH THE 7TH MARINES MADE THE FIRST NIGHT ATTACK ON THE 11-12TH OF JUNE ON KUNISHI RIDGE, MY OUTFIT, THE 2ND BN. FIRST MARINES MADE A SIMILAR ATTACK ON THE 14TH OF JUNE. AT THAT TIME THE BATTALION HAD ONLY ABOUT 40% EFFECTIVE STRENGTH SO WE WERE RELIEVED BY THE 5TH MARINES ON THE 15TH OF JUNE. JUST A DAY LATE FOR WAYNE AND BRUCE. I WAS WOUNDED IN ACTION ON THE 12TH OF JUNE ON HILL 69, SOME 800 YARDS NORTH OF KUNISHI RIDGE.

NOW I AM PURSUING THE AFTER ACTION REPORTS FOR THE 1ST BN. FIRST MARINES, DURING MAY AND JUNE OF 1945. I CARRIED ONE WOUNDED MARINE AND THE BODIES OF SEVERAL DEAD MARINES OF C COMPANY, 1ST BN. OFF OF YUZA HILL ON THE NIGHT OF JUNE 10TH. TWO OF THEM WERE THE BODIES OF MY BOOT CAMP BUDDIES. C COMPANY LOST 75 MARINES THAT NIGHT! A FORMER PLATOON LEADER OF F COMPANY, 2ND BN. 382ND REGIMENT, 96TH ARMY DIVISION WROTE ME A LETTER RECENTLY. IT WAS RATHER OFFENSIVE IN THAT HE STATED THAT HIS PLATOON RECOVERED MANY BODIES OF U.S. MARINES IN YUZA VILLAGE, SEVEN DAYS AFTER THE 1ST BN. FIRST MARINES WERE DECIMATED AT YUZA HILL. THE IMPLICATION WAS THAT WE HAD ABANDONED OUR DEAD FRIENDS! IT IS TRUE, ACCORDING TO

THE LIMITED RECORDS AVAILABLE TO ME (SEE 'FIRST MARINE DIVISION' BY STOCKMAN, PAGE 49) THAT C-1-1 MAY HAVE ENTERED YUZA VILLAGE WHILE ATTACKING YUZA HILL. BUT, YUZA VILLAGE WAS IN THE U.S. ARMY ZONE OF ACTION. I WOULD LIKE TO RESPOND TO THIS ARMY MAN, BUT I HAVE LIMITED FACTS. I TRUST THE AFTER ACTION REPORTS WILL ANSWER THE QUESTION FOR ME.

I DO NOT BELIEVE FOR A MINUTE THAT WE ABANDONED DEAD MARINES. I SAW THE ROW OF BODIES, THE NIGHT OF JUNE THE 10TH, FROM MY POSITION ON HILL 59 WITH F-2-1. OUR LIEUTENANT MARTEL, SECOND PLATOON, F-2-1, WAS SO CONCERNED ABOUT THOSE C COMPANY MARINES WHO WERE KILLED AT YUZA HILL THAT HE ASKED SEVERAL OF US TO TRY TO LOCATE THEIR BODIES IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT! I DID FIND ONE WOUNDED MARINE AND TWO DEAD. LT. MARTEL THOUGHT ONE OF THE BODIES WAS OF HIS FELLOW OFFICERS AND A FRIEND, AND HE DID NOT WANT HIS BODY TO LAY THERE UNRECOVERED ON THAT HILL. BELIEVE ME, WE WERE ALL SCARED TO DEATH TO PROWL AROUND ON THAT HILL IN THE BLACK OF NIGHT! MANY MARINES HAD LOST THEIR LIVES IN THAT PARTICULAR PLACE, AND HERE WE WERE POKING AROUND IN THE DARK.

STOCKMAN, AUTHOR OF THE USMC MONOGRAPH OF THE FIRST MARINE DIVISION, ON PAGE 49, IS CRITICAL OF ONE OF THE PLATOON LEADERS IN ACTION THAT DAY. THE PLATOON OFFICER AND 11 MARINES WERE KILLED DURING THE ATTACK. MOST OF THE MARINES WERE KILLED, ALONG WITH THE LIEUTENANT AT THE BASE OF THE HILL. THE DEAD LIEUTENANT'S BODY WAS IN AN AREA RAKED BY JAP NAMBUS AND THEY METHODICALLY BLEW THE LIEUTENANT'S BODY TO PIECES. I SAW MANY MARINES SPRAWLED AROUND AT THE BASE OF YUZA HILL AND WE ALL DID OUR BEST TO RECOVER THEM, TRYING TO AVOID THE JAPANESE MACHINE GUNNERS.

WE ATTACKED HILL 69 THE NEXT DAY, AND F COMPANY LED THE WAY. MY PLATOON (THE 2ND) WAS IN RESERVE, BUT WHEN THE OTHER TWO PLATOONS WERE PINNED DOWN BY NAMBUS ON YUZA AND HILL 69 MY PLATOON ASSAULTED THE HILL. WE TOOK IT! WE FORMED TOGETHER ON THE TOP, ALL OF WHAT REMAINED A FIGHTING GROUP OF THE THREE PLATOONS. LT. MARTEL WAS BADLY WOUNDED IN THE HAND AND SHOULDER BY ONE OF THE RAKING MACHINE GUNS.

WE LOST MANY A FRIEND AND FINE MARINE AT YUZA HILL, HILL 59, HILL 69 AND KUNISHI RIDGE. I HOPE SOME DAY, TO TELL THEIR STORY ACCURATELY, WHEN I OBTAIN THE PROPER ACTION REPORTS. IT IS THE LEAST I CAN DO, THOUGH IN MEMORY, THOSE SPLENDID MARINES OF THE FIRST, ARE WITH ME FOREVER."

## "LIZ...THE TANK WITH THE SAWED-OFF NOSE"

PELELIU - 1944:

THE TANK WAS SCRAPPED, THEY SAID. BUT THEY WERE WRONG, LIZ THE BATTERED, SNUB-NOSED GENERAL SHERMAN WASN'T SCRAPPED. SHE WAS RETIRED, UNDEFEATED. LIZ WAS HIT BEFORE SHE MADE THE BEACH, BUT LIZ WAS THE KIND OF TANK THAT'S HARD TO STOP.

ON D-DAY SHE WAS THE SECOND SHERMAN IN A COLUMN OF FIVE GRINDING ACROSS A CORAL SHELF REEF TOWARD PELELIU THROUGH WATER ALMOST TURRET DEEP. THE JAPS IN HILL POSITIONS ASHORE "WALKED" THEIR MORTAR BARRAGE ON THE COLUMN FROM FRONT TO REAR. THE LEAD TANK STAGGERED UNDER A DIRECT HIT. OILY BLACK SMOKE ALMOST OBSCURED THE COLUMN. THE LIZ GOT IT ON THE NOSE...A MORTAR SHELL SMACK DAB ON THE MUZZLE OF HER TURRET GUN.

THE HOLE IN THE GUN MUZZLE WAS NO LONGER ROUND. IT WAS SHAPED LIKE AN EGG. IT MADE LIZ FIGHTING MAD. LIZ WAS MADDER EVEN THAN SHE HAD BEEN MONTHS BEFORE AT ARAWE, NEW BRITAIN, SO SHE DIDN'T NEED ANY PRODDING BY SGT. STAN E. PIOTROWSKI OF DEARBORN, MICHIGAN, TO LUNGE FORWARD AND MAKE THE BEACH. LATER LIZ WAS PROUD OF THE WAY HER CREW TOOK CARE OF HER NOSE AND GOT HER BACK INTO THE FIGHT.

FIVE HOURS OF SAWING, 22 HACKSAW BLADES AND A BLOW WITH A SLEDGE HAMMER TOOK TEN INCHES OFF HER GUN BARREL AND SHE RETURNED TO BATTLE IN TIME TO KNOCK OUT THE BIGGEST PILLBOX PELELIU'S AIRPORT AND DESTROY A JAP TANK IN THE ENEMY COUNTERATTACK ACROSS THE AIRFIELD LATE IN THE AFTERNOON. BESIDES SGT. PETE PIETROWSKI, THE TANK COMMANDER, THERE WAS SGT. TED BELGARDE OF WHITE FISH, MONTANA, THE DRIVER; CPL. PAT FLAHERTY OF ST PAUL, MINNESOTA, THE GUNNER; CPL. EVAN KNOTT OF CHELSEA, MICHIGAN, ASST. GUNNER, AND TONY VRANICH OF BUFFALO, N.Y., AMMO LOADER.

THEY HAD DRIVEN LIZ TO A DITCH ON THE PERIMETER OF THE BEACH-HEAD AND PARKED HER THERE. IT WAS A HOT SPOT TO WORK IN, BUT LIZ COULD TAKE IT AND THE SWEATING MARINES WOULD JUMP IN THE DITCH WHENEVER THE JAPS THREW HEAVY STUFF THEIR WAY. THE CREWMEN WERE IN AND OUT OF THE DITCH MORE THAN QUITE A FEW TIMES AND MANY SNIPER BULLETS PINGED OFF LIZ'S THICK SKIN AS THEY SAWED ON THE GUN BARREL.

SGT. PIETROWSKI WAS AFRAID THEY WOULDN'T MAKE IT. HE WAS MAD, TOO. WHEN HE WASN'T SAWING, HE WAS YELLING "HURRY UP! HURRY UP!" HE THOUGHT HE AND LIZ WERE GOING TO MISS ALL THE ACTION. IT WAS 0900 WHEN THEY STARTED. SOON AFTER OTHER MARINE TANKMEN CAME OVER TO HELP.

THERE WAS PLT. SGT. BERNIE 'DUKE' ROSOFF OF BROOKLYN, N.Y. WHO TOOK CHARGE OF THE WORKING PARTY; SGT. CECIL ARGO OF WEWOKA, OKLAHOMA, DRIVER OF ANOTHER TANK, AND CPL. LUTHER



MULANAZ OF CORCORAN, CALIFORNIA LOADER OF STILL ANOTHER SHERMAN. ALL TOOK TURNS SAWING. ROSOFF WAS HIT IN THE ARM BY MORTAR SHRAPNEL EVEN THOUGH HE JUMPED IN THE DITCH WHEN THAT CLOSE ONE LANDED. HE KEPT ON WORKING AND DIDN'T THINK MUCH ABOUT THE SORE ARM. SEVEN DAYS LATER THE ARM WAS SWOLLEN AND DISCOLORED AND HE WAS EVACUATED TO A HOSPITAL SHIP OFF-SHORE.

BY NOON THE DAY WAS HOTTER THAN THE WELL KNOWN HINGES AND ALL THE AVAILABLE WATER WAS RUST COLORED AND TASTED LIKE THE OIL CAN FROM WHICH IT WAS POURED. THEY SAWED ON LIZ UNTIL 1400 THAT HOT DAY, SPENDING BLADE AFTER BLADE, AND WHEN THERE WAS ONLY A HALF-INCH OF STEEL HOLDING IT, BROKE THE END OF THE BARREL OFF WITH A SWING OF A SLEDGE. SNUB-NOSED LIZ WAS READY THEN TO AVENGE HER HUMILIATION. WHEN PIOTROWSKI OPENED THE THROTTLE SHE ROLLED UP TO WITHIN A FEW YARDS OF THE REINFORCED CONCRETE PILLBOX FILLED WITH JAPS AND LET HERSELF GO.

SHE KNOCKED THE EMPLACEMENT OUT WITH 45 ROUNDS OF SHELLS FIRED FROM HER SAWED-OFF GUN AND CUT DOWN THE JAPS WHO TRIED TO ESCAPE WITH HER 30 CALIBER MACHINE GUNS. LIZ FELT BETTER AND DROPPED BACK TO THE EDGE OF THE AIRSTRIP...A LADY-IN-WAITING. SHE DIDN'T HAVE TO WAIT LONG. AT 1630 THE JAP TANKS CAME OUT. LIZ SELECTED ONE AND WENT IN AND MADE THE KILL.

LIZ'S NUMBER WAS 13; BUT IT'S PLAIN TO SEE THAT IT WASN'T UP. SHE SPENT 35 DAYS ON PELELIU. WHEN SHE GOT BACK TO HER HOME BASE, LIZ WAS SCRAPPED, OR AS SGT. PIOTROWSKI PUT IT... "RETIRED...UNDEFEATED."

BY SGT. WALTER WOOD  
USMC COMBAT CORRESPONDENT  
LEATHERNECK - 1945



PRIVATE WENDELL K. MAJORS



G COMPANY - 2nd BATTALION

22nd MARINE REGIMENT

SIXTH MARINE DIVISION

OKINAWA SHIMA, RYUKYU ISLANDS

SUGAR LOAF HILL

MAY 14, 1945

***The U.S. Marine Corps***

"THIS IS MY STORY OF THE PART I PLAYED IN THE BATTLE FOR SUGAR LOAF HILL IN MAY OF 1945. I WAITED 42 YEARS TO TELL MY STORY. I WAS DRAFTED INTO THE MARINE CORPS, IT WAS A JOB THAT HAD TO BE DONE, I DID IT, WAS DISCHARGED AND WENT BACK INTO CIVILIAN LIFE. I HAD NEVER TRIED TO LOCATE ANY OF THE SURVIVORS UNTIL I JOINED THE SIXTH MARINE DIVISION ASSOCIATION. ED DE MAR, MY OLD PLATOON SERGEANT OF GEORGE COMPANY, 2ND BN., 22ND MARINES WROTE TO ME AND SENT ME NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF ALL THE MEN THAT HE KNEW OF THEIR LOCATIONS. I WAS ASSIGNED TO THE 22ND IN JANUARY OF 1945, JUST BEFORE WE SHOVED OUT FOR OKINAWA IN APRIL. IN THE LIST OF NAMES I FOUND CAPTAIN STEBBINS LIVING CLOSE BY, SOME 200 MILES OR SO AWAY. I CALLED HIM AND ASKED IF WE COULD GET TOGETHER FOR LUNCH, WHICH WE DID, AND HAD A FOUR HOUR LUNCH. WE HASHED OVER ALL THE EVENTS AND TRIVIA THAT I RECALLED. A LOT OF IT THE CAPTAIN HAD NEVER HEARD BEFORE AND A LOT OF IT HE HAD FORGOTTEN. HE ASKED ME TO PREPARE A TAPE OF MY RECOLLECTIONS AND THIS MEMOIR IS A RESULT OF THAT TAPE, AND MY STORY AS I REMEMBER IT....

LET ME PREFACE MY STORY BY SAYING I AM NOT DOING THIS TO PROMOTE A BOOK OR TO BUILD UP A BIG HERO, RAMBO CHARACTER. THIS IS WHAT I RECALL AS A BUCK PRIVATE AND I AM TELLING IT AS I HEARD IT FIRST HAND, SAW IT...AND DID IT.

SUGAR LOAF HILL ON THE FIRST ATTACK WAS CONSIDERED JUST ANOTHER HILL. WE HAD MOVED SOUTH INTO THE FRONT LINES REPLACING THE 27TH U.S. ARMY DIVISION AND WE KNEW THAT IT WAS

GOING TO BE BAD. WE STARTED OUT BY TAKING SOME AREA OR PLACE JUST AHEAD, REGROUP AND MOVE OUT TO THE NEXT ASSIGNED AREA, ANOTHER HILL, RAVINE OR WHATEVER. ON THE FIRST ATTACK WE GOT PINNED DOWN AND BY THAT TIME WE HAD LOST LT. KERRIGAN WHO WAS HIT SEVERAL DAYS EARLIER, SERGEANT RUPE HAD BEEN WOUNDED AND OUR CORPORAL HAD ALREADY BEEN KILLED BEFORE WE EVEN GOT TO THE HILL. WHILE PINNED DOWN, THE LITTLE WALKY TALKY RADIO WE HAD, WE LOST COMMUNICATION WITH OUR COMMAND POST. I WAS SENT BACK WITH A NOTE, AND FOR THE LIFE OF ME I CANNOT RECALL JUST WHAT THE MESSAGE WAS. I HAD TO ALL THE WAY BACK TO REGIMENT TO DELIVER THE NOTE. WHEN I GOT BACK TO THE REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS, THERE WAS CAPTAIN STEBBINS LYING ON A STRETCHER, HIS LEGS ALL BANDAGED UP WHERE HE HAD BEEN RIDDLED WITH A JAP MACHINE GUN. I'LL NEVER FORGET THAT WHEN I GOT BACK, LT. COLONEL WOODHOUSE WAS TALKING TO CAPTAIN STEBBINS WHEN I DELIVERED THE MESSAGE. THE CAPTAIN LOOKED AT ME WITH MUCH CONCERN AND SAID, "WHAT? THEY SENT YOU BACK ALONE?!" HERE I HAD NOT BEEN TOUCHED AND LOOKING UP AT ME HE WAS MORE CONCERNED ABOUT ME THAN HIMSELF.

WE ATTACKED AGAIN AFTER I RETURNED AND WE WERE ONCE AGAIN PINNED DOWN, THIS TIME AT THE BASE OF THE HILL. I SAW LT. RUESS, THE PLATOON LEADER OF THE FIRST PLATOON. SOME MARINES NOTING JAPS COMING OUT OF HOLES WERE SHOUTING, "HEY...THEYR'E OVER HERE...LET'S GET 'EM!" THIS TIME WE NEEDED SMOKE GRENADES AND TANKS TO HELP CARRY OUT THE WOUNDED TO GET BACK AWAY FROM THE HILL. I LEARNED THAT LIEUTENANT RUESS HAD BEEN

KILLED ONLY A FEW MINUTES AFTER I HAD SEEN HIM AT THE TIME OF THE ATTACK. THE NEXT ATTACK WAS GOING TO BE MADE BY EITHER FOX COMPANY OR EASY COMPANY. THE REMAINDER OF "G" COMPANY WAS TO LAY DOWN COVERING FIRE ON A HILL OFF TO OUR RIGHT. SERGEANT IRV ORTELL AND ANOTHER MARINE WERE IN A LITTLE RAVINE AND THEY HAD CARRIED IN A CASE OF AMMUNITION AND WAS DELIVERING THE CLIPS AS FAST AS WE COULD FIRE THEM. I WAS FIRING AT EVERY BREAK IN THE TERRAIN, EVERY BUSH, EVERY DEFILE, ANYTHING THAT LOOKED DIFFERENT. I WORKED THAT HILL OVER TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT MY RIFLE GOT HOT...SO HOT THAT IT WAS SMOKING! I STOPPED FIRING FOR JUST A MINUTE AND ORTELL YELLED AT ME, "WHATS THE MATTER WITH THAT RIFLE?" I TOLD HIM IT WAS RED HOT AND HE REPLIED, "IT STILL FIRES DON'T IT...SO KEEP ON FIRING IT!" I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY WAR BONDS HAD TO BE SOLD TO REPLACE THE AMMO THAT I FIRED THROUGH THAT RIFLE DURING THAT ATTACK. THE ATTACK PROBABLY DIDN'T LAST MORE THAN 15 MINUTES. WE WERE GIVING HELL TO THE JAPS THAT HAD PINNED US DOWN. THAT RIFLE WAS SO HOT THAT THE WOOD ON THE FRONT PART OF THE RIFLE WAS ACTUALLY BURNING. I WORKED OVER A SECTION ON THE JAP HELD HILL AND SQUARE OFF A PART OF THE HILL AND I WOULD PUT THE EIGHT SHOTS FROM A CLIP INTO THAT SQUARE AREA. I'D PUT IN ANOTHER CLIP, MOVE UP ON THE HILL, SQUARE OFF ANOTHER SECTION AND PUT A CLIP IN THAT ONE. I WORKED THAT HILL OVER BACK AND FORTH, BACK AND FORTH. I THINK I PUT BULLETS INTO EVERY TWO FEET IN THAT HILL.

WHEN I GOT BACK TO THE HOSPITAL, AFTER BEING WOUNDED, MY

SHOULDER FROM THE CONSTANT POUNDING AND KICKING OF THE RIFLE BUTT HAD BRUISED THE MUSCLE IN MY SHOULDER TO THE POINT IT WAS BLACK AND BLUE AND PURPLE. THE DOCTOR CAME IN, LOOKED AT THE ARM, AND ASKED I HAD BEEN HIT BY SHRAPNEL. HE DIDN'T BELIEVE ME AT FIRST AND HE POINTED OUT THE OTHER MARINES IN THE HOSPITAL WHO DID NOT HAVE SIMILAR BRUISES. "WHY YOU?", HE ASKED. THAT WAS EASY I TOLD HIM...THEY DIDN'T HAVE A SERGEANT THAT WAS STANDING NEARBY AND STACKING UP THE AMMO FOR ME. NO ONE EVER COST MORE WAR BONDS IN THAT BATTLE THAN I DID.

WE LATER MADE ANOTHER ATTACK AND EACH TIME I NOTED THAT ONLY 50% OF THE MEN MAKING THE ATTACK CAME BACK. I REMEMBER GOING THROUGH THIS OPEN TERRAIN IN FRONT OF THE HILL AND HOW I WOULD PICK WHATEVER COVER OR HOLE THERE WAS AND I WOULD RUN AS FAST AS I COULD, ZIG ZAGGING, HEADING FOR WHAT LITTLE REFUGE THERE WAS. I PICKED OUT A NICE LITTLE SUNKEN SPOT AND WHILE IN THERE I NOTICED SOME MORE MARINES MOVING UP. THEY WERE IN ALMOST A SOLID GROUPING AND I BEGAN TO YELL AT THEM, "SPREAD OUT!...SPREAD OUT!" NO ONE SEEMED TO HEAR ME AND THEY DID NOT SPREAD OUT. ANOTHER MAN FROM GEORGE COMPANY AND I RAN LATERALLY ABOUT 25 FEET TO THE NEXT POINT, WHEN A MORTAR CAME IN, LANDING RIGHT SMACK IN THE MIDDLE OF THE GROUP OF MARINES AND KILLED MOST OF THEM. IT WAS AN IRONIC THING THAT I HAD JUST GOT OUT OF THAT AREA IN TIME.

ON THE THIRD ATTACK BY FOX OR EASY COMPANY I WAS UP ON A HILL ABOUT 1/4 OF A MILE FROM THE HILL THAT I HAD WORKED OVER WITH

ALL THE BULLETS. I HEARD A REPORT THAT A BATTLEWAGON OR IN SEARCHING OVER WHATEVER I COULD FIND, I THINK A CRUISER LAID IN SOME SHELLS ON THE HILL IN FRONT. I WAS BEHIND A SMALL CONCRETE FOUNDATION OF SORTS WHEN A PIECE OF SHRAPNEL LANDED BETWEEN MY LEGS. IT HIT THERE, BURIED ITSELF STILL SMOKING. I DUG DOWN WITH MY BAYONET TO RETRIEVE IT FOR A SOUVENIR BUT I NEVER DID FIND IT. WITHIN FIVE MINUTES AFTER THE SHELLING WE ADVANCED. ALL OF US FIGURED THAT NO ONE COULD LIVE UP ON THAT HILL FROM THE NAVY BOMBARDMENT THAT THUNDERED INTO THE AREA. BUT, WITHIN FIVE MINUTES AFTER THE SHELLING STOPPED, THE JAPS WERE SWARMING ALL OVER THE HILL, AND THEY JUST CUT US DOWN LIKE A MOWING MACHINE GOING ACROSS A HAY FIELD. I SAW A JAP MACHINE GUN RAKE ACROSS AN ADVANCING PLATOON, AND IT TOOK THEM DOWN, REMINDING ME OF THE MOWING MACHINE. TANKS WERE ORDERED IN, PUTTING SMOKE DOWN AND TRIED TO GET ALL THE WOUNDED OUT.

AT NIGHT MAJOR COURTNEY CAME UP. AT THE TIME HE REACHED US WE WERE COMPLETELY SHOT UP AND DEPLETED. THE MAJOR GOT EVERY MAN HE COULD FIND, GOT US ALL HARNESSSED UP AND WORD WAS PASSED WE WERE GOING TO MAKE A NIGHT ATTACK. IN THE HISTORY BOOK OF THE SIXTH MARINE DIVISION, ON PAGE 111, IT STATES THAT MAJOR COURTNEY MADE AN APPEAL FOR VOLUNTEERS TO GO WITH HIM ON THE NIGHT ATTACK. I READ THAT STORY AND I THEN MADE MANY NOTES ON THE MARGINS OF THE PAGES THAT THIS WAS ALL BALONEY AND A BIG BUILDUP ON SOMEONE'S PART, AS THERE WAS NO SPEECH BY THE MAJOR. ALL REMAINING MARINES IN THAT AREA JUST WENT WITH HIM.

AS SIMPLE AS THAT....

SECOND LIEUTENANT NEALON, PLATOON LEADER OF THE SECOND SQUAD CAME TO ME AND TALKED TO ME ABOUT MAJOR COURTNEY'S PLANS. THE MAJOR HIMSELF GOT US ALL TOGETHER AND MADE SURE WE ALL HAD WATER, AMMO AND GRENADES. HE TOLD US AFTER DARK WE WERE GOING UP THERE, AND WERE GOING TO GET UP ON TOP OF THAT HILL AND WE ARE GOING TO SECURE IT. EVERY MAN WAS TO GET HIS RATIONS HERE NOW AND WE ARE TAKING OFF AFTER DARK, WHICH WE DID. WE WERE IN SINGLE FILE ON THE ATTACK, AND A JAP TOOK A SHOT AT OUR POINT MAN, BUT MISSED. OUR GUYS DIDN'T. THE MAJOR WAS UP NEAR THE POINT AND ORDERED A DEMO MAN TO PUT A SACHEL CHARGE INTO THE PILLBOX WHENCE THE JAP FIRE HAD COME FROM. I GOT A CHANCE TO LOOK INTO THE PILLBOX WHEN I WENT BY AND I WAS AMAZED AT HOW THEY HAD IT REINFORCED.

WE GOT UP THE HILL WITHOUT ANY FURTHER OPPOSITION UNTIL WE GOT UP ON THE SIDE OF THE HILL. PAGE 110 OF OUR HISTORY BOOK, IT SHOWS A PHOTO OF SUGAR LOAF HILL AS VIEWED FROM THE NORTH. OUR PATROL CAME IN ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE HILL. THE MAJOR WAS OUT THERE DIRECTING EVERY MOVE AND POSITIONED EVERY MAN, TELLING THEM TO START DIGGING IN. "WHERE GONNA STAY HERE FOR RIGHT NOW!", HE SAID. THAT HILL HAD BEEN BOMBARDED SO MUCH THAT IT WAS REDUCED NOW TO LOOSE SHALE. THAT MADE IT HARD TO DIG IN WITH A SHOVEL IT WAS ALL SO LOOSE. SOME JAP WANDERED UP THERE, AS WE HAD COMPLETELY SURPRISED THEM, AND I THINK HE THOUGHT WE WERE FRIENDLY TROOPS. THAT WAS THE LAST MISTAKE



AS HE FOUND OUT REAL QUICKLY THAT WE WEREN'T VERY FRIENDLY AT ALL. AS THE NIGHT WENT ON THEY BEGAN TO COME OUT OF THEIR HOLES, CAVES AND PILLBOXES ON THE REVERSE SIDE OF THE HILL AND APPEAR ON THE TOP OF THE HILL. THEY HAD AN ADVANTAGE ON US AS WE WERE NEAR THE TOP ON THE FRONT SIDE OF THE HILL. THE JAPS COULD THROW GRENADES DOWN ON US FROM THAT VANTAGE POINT. THE GRENADES WOULD ROLL DOWN THE HILL AND RIGHT IN ON US. I CANNOT EVEN GUESS HOW MANY HAND GRENADES WENT BACK AND FORTH. WE WOULD SEE SOME MOVEMENT ABOVE US AND WE WOULD ANSWER BY SHOOTING AT THEM, BUT ONE PROBLEM WE HAD WAS THAT OUR RIFLES WOULD LEAVE A FLAME ABOUT TWO FEET LONG OUT THE END OF THE BARREL WHEN FIRED. THE JAPS WOULD SEE THE FLASH AND HERE WOULD COME MORE GRENADES AT THE POINT OF THE FLAME.

ONE JAP CAME OUT DOWN BY ONE OF OUR TANKS AT THE BASE OF THE HILL. I THINK WE HAD ABOUT SIX TANKS KNOCKED OUT DURING THE DAY AND THEY WERE STILL BURNING THAT NIGHT. THEY GAVE OFF QUITE A BIT OF LIGHT. THE JAP WAS HIDDEN DOWN THERE AND HE STARTED YELLING, "HEY....AMERICANS! HEYYYY AMERRRICANNNN!" A SGT. FROM THE FIRST PLATOON WAS DUG IN ON THE LOWER SLOPE WHERE COURTNEY HAD POSITIONED HIM. OUR DEFENSE HE HAD FORMED WAS IN A COMPLETE CIRCLE. THE SGT. SPOTTED THE JAP. I COULD NOT SEE THE JAP FROM WHERE I WAS DUG IN. THE SARGE YELLED BACK, "HEY YOUUUUU! YOU YELLOW-BELLIED SON OF A BITCH!" THE JAP MOVED AND THE SARGE SHOT HIM. I DON'T KNOW WHAT PART OF THE JAPS BODY GOT HIT BUT IT MUST HAVE BEEN IN THE STOMACH AS THE JAP STARTED SQUEALING WITH A HIGH PITCH SCREAM. IT RE-

MINDED ME OF A PIG SQUEAL. SOME MARINE CALLED OUT, "HEY SARGE!....HIT HIM AGAIN!" ANOTHER MARINE YELLED OUT, "NO! DONT' SHOOT HIM AGAIN...LET THE SON OF A BITCH SQUEAL!...IT'S GOOD MORALE FOR US UP HERE!" THE SARGE DIDN'T FIRE AT THE JAP AGAIN, AND THE SQUEALS COULD BE HEARD FOR ABOUT A HALF HOUR LATER. IT WAS TRUE...IT WAS GOOD MORALE FOR US. IT MADE US THINK THAT THE JAP WAS HUMAN AND AS SUSCEPTIBLE TO PAIN AS WE WERE. BAD AS THAT MAY SOUND TODAY....THATS THE WAY IT WAS UP THERE THAT NIGHT.

IT WASN'T LONG AFTER THAT THE JAP ATTACKS KEPT INCREASING AND WE WERE STILL AT THE DISADVANTAGE OF THE JAP BEING SOMEWHAT HIGHER UP THAN WE WERE. A FELLOW WHO WAS NEAR TO ME HOLLERED OVER, "WHO'S UP THERE WITH YOU? WITH THE NAME OF MAJORS I WENT WITH THE NICKNAME OF 'DEACON'. YOU DIDN'T WANT SOMEONE CALLING YOU MAJOR WHEN ON THE LINE. A LOT OF THE JAPS COULD UNDERSTAND ENGLISH AND THEY HAD A HABIT OF SEEKING OUT THE OFFICERS AND KILLING THEM. I DIDN'T LIKE THE THOUGHT OF BEING TAKEN FOR AN OFFICER. WHEN SOMEONE YELLED UP TO ME I YELLED BYACK, "DEACON!" BUT HE FORGOT AND CALLED OUT, "OKAY MAJORS!" WELL YOU GUESSED IT! AN IMMEDIATE GRENADE CAME DOWN ON ME AND BOUNCED INTO MY HOLE. I REACHED AROUND SEEKING THE MISSILE IN PANIC AS I KNEW THE FUSE WAS SHORT. I COULDN'T FIND IT, SO I JUMPED OUT AND LAY ON THE TOP AS THE THING WENT OFF, AND THEN I JUMPED BACK INTO THE HOLE. A JAP CHARGED US AT THAT TIME AND I RECALL THE FEELING I HAD AS HE WAS RUNNING TOWARD US. THE BULLETS WERE RAPIDLY GOING INTO THE JAPS BODY

AND THE SOUND WAS LIKE ENTERING A WET PAPER SACK. AMAZINGLY THE BULLETS DIDN'T STOP HIM! I WOULD ESTIMATE SOME 20 ROUNDS OR SO HAD TO BE FIRED INTO THAT JAP. HE DROPPED AND AS HE WAS FALLING, THE GRENADE HE HAD IN HIS HAND HE TRIED TO POP ON HIS HELMET TO ARM IT. HE FEEBLY THREW IT AND IT WENT WILD. BY THE TIME HE FELL HE WASN'T MORE THAN 15 FEET AWAY FROM WHERE I WAS DUG IN. ANOTHER HAND GRENADE BOUNCED IN AND WENT INTO THE HOLE OF THE MARINE ON MY LEFT. HE JUMPED AND WHILE HE WAS IN THE AIR THE GRENADE WENT OFF. IT BLEW HIM IN KIND OF A SUMMERSALT AND HE LANDED ON HIS BACK. TWO OR THREE MORE JAPS SUDDENLY APPEARED ABOVE US AND CHARGE US. THAT MADE IT VERY EXCITING UP THERE FOR THE NEXT FEW MINUTES. ONE OF THE JONES BROTHERS FROM TULSA, OKLAHOMA WAS HOLLERING FOR A CORPSMAN. LATER ON I COULD NEVER FIND ANY RECORD OF WHATEVER HAPPENED TO HIM. THE CORPSMAN YELLED UP TO HIM TO CRAWL DOWN THE HILL TO WHERE THE CORPSMAN WAS. JONES YELLED BACK THAT HE COULDN'T MOVE. RIGHT AFTER THE LITTLE BANZAI CHARGE BY THOSE JAPS, JONES BOLTED UP, AND MOVE HE DID, HE SCRAMBLED DOWN THE HILL TO WHERE THE CORPSMAN WAS. I DID SEE HIM IN THE HOSPITAL THE NEXT DAY SO I KNOW HE SURVIVED SUGAR LOAF. I GUESS HE WASN'T WOUNDED AS BAD AS HE THOUGHT HE WAS.

MAJOR COURTNEY SAW THAT WE WERE NOW AT A DISADVANTAGE SO HE NOW ORDERED A LITTLE COUNTER ATTACK. HE GOT SOME DEMOLITION MEN UP THERE AND GOT THEM TO SEAL UP THE CAVES IN FRONT OF US. I THINK THERE WERE ABOUT THREE OF THEM. THAT SEEMED TO STOP THE INCOMING GRENADES FOR AWHILE. THEN WE HEARD ON THE

REVERSE SIDE OF THE HILL, THE JAP SIDE, SOME JABBERING AND SOME ACTIVITY GOING ON. COURTNEY SURMISED THAT THE JAPS WERE ABOUT TO LAUNCH A COUNTER ATTACK AT US. HIS THOUGHTS WERE WE SHOULD BEAT THEM TO THE PUNCH. WE HAD AN ARTILLERY SPOTTER UP THERE WITH US AND HE CARRIED ONE OF THOSE BIG RADIOS WITH HIM. THE SPOTTER WAS RIGHT BESIDE ME AND I HEARD COURTNEY TELL HIM TO CALL BACK TO REGIMENT AND HAVE THEM SEND UP ANY REPLACEMENTS THEY COULD SPARE AND BRING ENOUGH GRENADES WITH THEM THAT EACH MAN WOULD HAVE TWO GRENADES. TWO ANTRACS NOW CAME UP AND THEY CARRIED IN THEM SOME 12 TO 15 GUYS. COURTNEY MOVED THEM OUT AND PLACED THEM OVER TO THE RIGHT OF THE HILL AS IT SHOWS ON PAGE 110 OF OUR HISTORY BOOK.

I CRAWLED OUT OF MY HOLE AND WENT DOWN THE SLOPE TO FORM A HUMAN CHAIN TO BRING THE GRENADES UP TO US. WE DISTRIBUTED THEM OUT TO WHERE EACH MAN HAD AT LEAST TWO GRENADES. THE MAJOR LAID OUT THE PLAN TO THE MEN AND ORDERED US TO CRAWL UP TO THE CREST OF THE HILL, AND ON HIS COMMAND THROW THE TWO GRENADES OVER THE HILL, AND THEN GET UP ON TOP OF THE HILL TO WHERE WE COULD LOOK DOWN ON THE JAPS TO SEE IF ANY SURVIVORS WOULD STILL BE LEFT UP THERE. I CRAWLED UP AND IN DOING SO THE SLING OF MY RIFLE CAME LOOSE ON THE LOWER END. I STOPPED TO HOOK IT BACK UP, AND LT. NEALON CRAWLED UP TO ME AND SLAPPED ME ON THE BACK AND ENCOURAGED ME TO GO ON UP. I THINK AT THAT TIME HE THOUGHT I HAD CHICKENED OUT. I TOLD HIM WHAT HAD HAPPENED AND HE MUTTERED SOMETHING OR OTHER. THAT WAS THE LAST TIME I SAW LT. NEALON ALIVE.

JUST BEFORE OUR ADVANCE TO THE TOP, MAJOR COURTNEY HAD THE SPOTTER CALL BACK AND REQUEST ARTILLERY TO DROP BACK CLOSER TO US SOME ROUNDS. A BARRAGE QUICKLY FOLLOWED AND THEY LANDED ON TOP OF THE HILL, BUT UNFORTUNATELY SOME FELL A LITTLE SHORT AND HIT AMONG OUR GROUP OF MEN. I DON'T KNOW IF IT KILLED ANYONE BUT COURTNEY YELLED TO THE SPOTTER TO HAVE THE IMPACT POINT OF THE BARRAGE RAISED. THEY DID SO, AND THE SHELLS LANDED JUST OVER THE TOP OF THE HILL.

WE CRAWLED UP TO THE TOP OF SUGAR LOAF. THE MAJOR HAD ALSO REQUESTED THAT THREE FLARES BE IN THE AIR AT ALL TIMES. THOSE FLARES LIT UP THE HILL JUST LIKE IT WAS DAYLIGHT. EVERY SHOT THAT I FIRED AT A JAP I GOT A GOOD BEAD ON MY TARGET DUE TO THE GOOD LIGHTING. WE GOT INTO POSITION TO THROW THE GRENADES IN UNISON. I HAD ALREADY PULLED THE PIN ON ONE GRENADE AND WAS HOLDING IT IN MY HAND JUST WAITING FOR THE MAJOR TO GIVE THE WORD. THE OTHER GRENADE I PLACED RIGHT BESIDE ME SO THAT WHEN HE GAVE THE WORD I WAS READY. THE MAJOR SHOUTED, "LET 'EM GO!" I THREW THE ONE WITH THE PIN REMOVED, AND GRABBED AT THE OTHER ONE AS QUICKLY AS I COULD. I WANT TO TELL YOU THAT NO ONE REALIZED THAT ROUGHLY 100 GRENADES GOING OFF IN SUCH A SMALL AREA ZONE COULD SOUND JUST LIKE AN ARTILLERY BARRAGE. SHRAPNEL, DIRT, ROCK, DUST WAS FLYING EVERYWHERE. WE LOOKED OVER THE REVERSE SLOPE, THE NAHA SIDE, AND FOUND SO MUCH DUST AND SMOKE THAT AT FIRST WE COULDN'T SEE ANYTHING. WE HAD CAUGHT THE JAPS COMPLETELY BY SURPRISE. WHEN IT CLEARED A LITTLE WE SAW THEM RUNNING LIKE SCARED RABBITS! AS THEY WERE

RUNNING WE HAD A HAY DAY...IT WAS THE BEST PART OF THE WHOLE BATTLE. WE RECEIVED NO FIRE AT ALL FROM THEM, AND WE HAD OURSELVES A REAL TURKEY SHOOT!

I WAS RIGHT BESIDE COURTNEY AND THE SPOTTER DURING THE TIME ON TOP. REPORTS SAY HE HAD HIS .45 PISTOL OUT AND WAS FIRING BUT I DON'T RECALL THAT AT ALL. HE DID POINT OUT JAPS TO ME AND I WOULD TAKE THEM OUT, THEN HE'D YELL AS HE POINTED OUT ANOTHER ONE AS I WOULD SWING AROUND AND TAKE THAT JAP OUT. I WAS BUSY AS HELL FIRING AND THE MAJOR WAS BUSY FINDING THE JAPS. THERE WERE TWO OR THREE OF US RIGHT AROUND THE MAJOR AND WE WERE FIRING RAPID FIRE AND IRONICALLY I HAD FIRED MY FINAL EIGHT ROUND AND THE CLIP FLEW OUT. ALL OF US WERE NOW STANDING CLEARLY ON TOP OF THE HILL FIRING LIKE DEMONS. NONE OF US THOUGHT OF THE ADAGE, 'KEEP OFF THE SKYLINE!' WE WERE THE SKYLINE! NO JAPS WERE FIRING BACK AT US AT THAT TIME. WHEN THE CLIP FLEW OUT OF THE RIFLE I WENT BACK DOWN THE HILL TEN OR 15 FEET FOR MORE AMMO, AND HAD JUST PUT A NEW CLIP INTO THE RIFLE WHEN A BARRAGE HIT THE TOP OF THE HILL. IT HIT RIGHT ACROSS THE TOP WHERE EVERYBODY WAS STANDING!

ONE SHELL LANDED AT THE FEET OF COURTNEY AND ALL I HEARD WAS A GROAN. HE FELL WITH THE TWO MEN STANDING BESIDE HIM. I HAVE NEVER SEEN SUCH AN ACCURATE BARRAGE. IT HAD TO BE ALL MORTARS AS THERE WAS NO SOUND LIKE AN ARTILLERY SHELL MAKES, AND THERE WAS NO WARNING THAT IT WAS COMING IN. I WONDERED MANY YEARS LATER IF IT COULD HAVE BEEN PRE-SET CHARGES THAT THE

JAPS HAD PLACED ON THE HILL TO BE SET OFF IT WE GOT UP THERE. ANYHOW, WHATEVER IT WAS IT HIT IN THERE AND REALLY DID A JOB ON US. IT WIPED OUT MANY OF OUR TROOPS. I DO THINK LT. NEALON WAS KILLED DURING THAT BARRAGE.

I JUMPED QUICKLY INTO A SHELL HOLE AND WAS EXPECTING MORE COMING IN, BUT NONE CAME. I YELLED UP, "COURTNEY...COURTNEY!" AND GOT NO RESPONSE FROM HIM, SO I KNEW THEN HE HAD TO BE KILLED. THE ARTILLERY SPOTTER WHO WAS STANDING NO MORE THAN TEN FEET FROM COURTNEY WAS ALSO KILLED AT THE SAME TIME. I CRAWLED CAUTIOUSLY BACK UP TO THE TOP AND I SAW THE SPOTTERS RADIO LYING THERE. I WISHED THAT I HAD BEEN CHECKED OUT ON THAT PARTICULAR RADIO SO THAT I COULD LET REGIMENT KNOW WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO US UP THERE.

A LIGHT MACHINE GUNNER HAD PLACED HIS WEAPON IN POSITION SO THAT HE COULD RAKE THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE HILL. HE HAD BEEN KILLED AND HIS BODY LAY ACROSS THE MACHINE GUN EXACTLY LIKE HE WAS TRYING TO PROTECT IT. I HAD THOUGHTS OF GOING FORWARD AND RETRIEVING THE MACHINE GUN, BUT IT APPEARED TO BE DAMAGED IN THE BLAST. THAT MACHINE GUNNER WAS AT THE MOST FORWARD POINT OF THE HILL YOU COULD GET TO. HE HAD A HECK OF A VIEW OF THE JAPS BUT HE WAS VERY EXPOSED UP THERE.

I CRAWLED OVER TO THE LEFT SIDE OF SUGAR LOAF AND FOUND A SPOT WHERE I HAD A GREAT VIEW BUT THERE WAS LITTLE COVER THERE. I HAD ABOUT A 180 DEGREE FIELD OF FIRE ON THAT SIDE OF

THE HILL. AT THE BOTTOM WAS A HUGE BOULDER AND SUDDENLY I SAW A JAP COME OUT FROM BEHIND THE ROCK. THE JAP QUICKLY LOOKED UP TO THE AREA WHERE COURTNEY WAS KILLED. THEN ANOTHER JAP POKED HIS FACE OUT, LOOKED AROUND AND DUCKED BACK. AT THAT MOMENT I THOUGH OF THE OLD GARY COOPER MOVIE OF SERGEANT YORK IN WORLD WAR I. I HAD SEEN THE PICTURE AND IN THE INCIDENT I THOUGHT OF, YORK HAD GERMANS HE WAS SHOOTING, EXCEPT ONE WHO SEEMED TO DUCK DOWN BEFORE HE COULD LINE HIM UP. SO YORK GOT HIS RIFLE ALL READY AND THEN GOBBLED LIKE A TURKEY. THE GERMAN POPPED HIS HEAD UP TO SEE WHAT WAS HAPPENING AND THAT WAS THE LAST TIME THE GERMAN DID ANYTHING. I COULD SHOOT THE ONE JAP STANDING THERE, AS HE WAS REALLY EXPOSED COMPLETELY, BUT I WANTED TO GET BOTH OF THEM.

I SIGHTED ON THE SPOT WHERE THE JAP HAD POKED HIS HEAD OUT. I MADE THE GOBBLE SOUND AND SURE ENOUGH THE HEAD POPPED OUT RIGHT INTO MY SIGHT. I SQUEEZED ONE OFF AND PUT ONE INTO HIS HEAD. AND JUST LIKE RAPID FIRE TRAINING ON THE RANGE, I SWUNG MY SIGHTS OVER AND CLEANLY PICKED OFF THE JAP STANDING THERE IN FULL VIEW.

NOT LONG AFTER THAT A JAP MACHINE GUNNER HAD COME UP ON THE FAR RIGHT SIDE OF THE HILL. THAT JAP COULD SEE ME BUT HE COULDN'T DEPRESS FULLY TO GET ME. HIS BULLETS HIT ON EITHER SIDE OF ME AS HE SPRAYED ME. HE WASTED AN ENTIRE CLIP OF JAP BULLETS ON ME. THE BEST HE DID WAS CLIP ME ACROSS THE LEG ON THE CALF. THE WOUND BURNED AND I FELT IT WAS FIVE MINUTES TO



FEEL FOR THE GASH AND FOUND IT NOT TO BE SERIOUS. I DIDN'T BREATHE FULLY THEN, AS IF I DID IT WOULD RAISE ME UP OUT OF THE DEPRESSION I WAS IN AND EXPOSE ME. I WISHED I WERE A MOLE SO THAT I COULD BURROW DOWN AND GET MYSELF OUT OF THERE. THE JAP HAD PUT AN ENTIRE CLIP ON ME AND I WONDERED IF HE HAD MORE AMMO. I TOOK MY HELMET OFF AND STUCK IT UP WITH MY HAND INSIDE. I SLIPPED IT UP AND DOWN A LITTLE HIGHER EACH TIME TRYING TO TEASE THE JAP. IF HE HAD RELOADED HE WOULD SURELY GET ME IF I MOVED OUT. HE NEVER FIRED ANYMORE AT ME.

ANOTHER JAP APPEARED FROM BEHIND THE SAME ROCK I HAD TAKEN OUT THE TWO JAPS. THERE WAS AN OPEN SPOT AND HE HAD TO RUN ABOUT 15 FEET TO A CAVE OPENING. AS HE CAME ACROSS THE OPEN SPOT, I SET SIGHTS ON HIM AND KNEW HE WAS A GONER. THEN A STRANGE THING HAPPENED. MY TRIGGER SNAPPED! I HAD BEEN FIRING SO MUCH UP ON THE HILL ALL NIGHT AND I GUESS ALL THE RAIN, THE MUD, CONSTANT FIRING AND WHAT HAD WORN THE RIFLE OUT. THE LAST ROUND HAD BEEN EJECTED BUT IT HAD NOT PICKED UP ONE FOR THE CHAMBER. SO THAT JAP LIVED TO BE CLAIMED BY ANOTHER FINE MARINE.

ONE OF OUR THIRD PLATOON GUYS NAMED JOEL FORTRELL HAD BEEN WOUNDED, BUT NOT SERIOUS ENOUGH TO SEND HIM OFF THE HILL. HE COULD STILL FIGHT. I RECALL HIM YELLING AT ME TO COME OFF THE POINT WHERE I WAS WELL EXPOSED. SO I JUMPED UP, AND RAN LIKE A SCARED RABBIT TOWARD JOEL. THERE WAS AN OPEN SHELL HOLE NEAR HIM, SO I SLID IN LIKE I WAS GOING INTO THIRD BASE IN A

BASEBALL GAME. WHAT I DIDN'T SEE WAS A RIFLE THAT HAD BEEN PROPPED UP ON THE EDGE OF THAT HOLE WITH A BAYONET FIXED ON IT. THAT WAS SOMETHING THAT COURTNEY HAD ORDERED PRIOR TO OUR GOING UP THE HILL WITH OUR TWO HAND GRENADES. HE WANTED EVERY TO FIX THEIR BAYONETS AS HE EXPECTED US TO END UP IN HAND TO HAND COMBAT. BUT FOR MY OWN REASONS, MOSTLY FOR MANEUVERABILITY I NEVER DID PUT MY BAYONET ON MY RIFLE. I WANTED THAT FAST MOVEMENT OF BEING ABLE TO SWING MY RIFLE AROUND WITHOUT THE FEELING THE BAYONET GAVE ONE OF THE RIFLE BEING LONG AND HEAVIER. I PROBABLY WAS THE ONLY ONE THAT WENT UP THAT HILL WITHOUT HIS BAYONET ON HIS RIFLE.

WHEN I WAS IN MY SLIDE INTO THE HOLE, I HIT THAT PROPPED UP RIFLE WITH THE FIXED BAYONET AND IT ENTERED MY THIGH COMING OUT IN MY GROIN AREA! IT FELT LIKE I WAS STRUNG UP FOR BARBECUING. THE WOUNDING STUNG PAINFULLY AND TO MOVE AROUND THE HOLE TO RELEASE SOME OF THE PRESSURE WAS VERY DIFFICULT DUE TO THE LENGTH OF THE RIFLE WITH THE BAYONET NOW STICKING IN ME. I GUY OVER ON MY RIGHT YELLED, "HERE COMES ONE!...HERE COMES ONE!" HIS RIFLE DRY FIRED ON THE JAP. HE PICKED UP A BAR (BROWNING AUTOMATIC RIFLE) LYING NEARBY AND THAT MISFIRED ALSO. HE THREW THAT DOWN, RAN OUT TOWARDS THE ONCOMING JAP AND MET THE JAP 10 FEET AWAY FROM ME. HE BAYONETED THE JAP THROUGH THE NECK. THAT JAP WAS ONE THAT WE HAD WOUNDED AND THOUGHT DEAD. HE EVIDENTLY RECOVERED ENOUGH TO MAKE HIS MOVE. IT WAS NOT THE JAP COMING OVER THE HILL ON THE LEFT SIDE THAT WAS CHASING ME.

BY TWISTING AROUND IN THE HOLE I GOT THE RIFLE TO A POINT I COULD NOW GIVE IT A YANK TO REMOVE IT FROM MY BODY. IT DIDN'T EVEN BUDGE. I KEPT MANEUVERING AROUND TILL I GOT PROPPED UP A CERTAIN WAY WHERE I NOW HAD A LITTLE MORE SPACE. I GAVE THE RIFLE AS BIG A LUNGE AND PULL AS I COULD. IN YANKING IT OUT THE MOMENT THE BAYONET CAME OUT BLOOD SPURTED OUT OF MY LEG ALMOST TWO FEET HIGH. I KNEW THEN THAT I MUST HAVE CUT A MAIN ARTERY IN MY GROIN. THE WOUND WAS SO HIGH THAT I COULDN'T GET A TOURNIQUET ON IT TO STOP THE BLEEDING. AT THAT TIME IT ENTERED MY MIND THAT I HAD 'BOUGHT THE FARM' UP THERE. MIRACULOUSLY I GOT MY FIRST AID KIT OPEN, AND GOT THE BATTLE DRESSING OUT. I Poured THE SULFA THAT IS IN THE KIT IN THE HOLES IN ME AND PLACED THE BATTLE DRESSING ON, GIVING THE WOUND SOME LITTLE PRESSURE OF SORTS. JOEL FORTRELL GAVE ME ANOTHER BANDAGE FOR THE OTHER SIDE OF MY LEG.

THINGS WERE AT THAT POINT THANKFULLY, SOMEWHAT QUIET ON TOP OF THAT HILL. THERE WERE MAYBE TEN MARINES ALIVE ON TOP OF THE HILL AT THAT TIME. ALL OTHERS WERE DEAD. WE HAD NO OFFICERS, NO N.C.O.'S ALIVE. EVERY MARINE UP THERE WAS A BUCK PRIVATE OR A P.F.C. I HAD NO WRIST WATCH ON, AND ALL SENSE OF TIME WAS LOST TO ME. IF I HAD TO GUESS I WOULD SAY IT WAS THE EARLY PART OF THE MORNING. AN OCCASIONAL SHELL WOULD COME IN AND LAND ON TOP OF THE HILL AND SOME WOULD COME IN ON THE SIDE OF THE HILL FURTHER TO THE RIGHT THEN WHERE I WAS. SOON AFTER DAYLIGHT, SOMEONE TO THE RIGHT OF ME YELLED, "GUYS!...

GET READY!...HERE THEY COME!" I TWISTED AROUND IN THE HOLE AS BEST AS I COULD.

BY THAT TIME MY LEG HAD STARTED TO THROB PAINFULLY AND IT WAS SORE ALL OVER. DASTARDLY SORE...AND I COULDN'T MANEUVER AROUND TO ANY DEGREE TO FIGHT. WITH NO HELP IN SIGHT, AND NOT ENOUGH OF US LEFT TO FIGHT THE JAPS OFF, I THOUGHT THE BEST THING I COULD DO WAS TO GET OUT OF THERE! I CRAWLED OUT OF THE HOLE AND JUST STARTED ROLLING DOWN HILL LIKE A LOG. I ROLLED ALL THE WAY DOWN TO THE BOTTOM OF THE HILL AND STARTED CRAWLING TOWARD ANY KIND OF COVER I COULD FIND. A SNIPER MUST HAVE SPOTTED ME FOR BULLETS PINGED MY WAY. IT IS AMAZING THAT WHEN YOU GET SHOT, AND BULLETS ARE MEANT FOR YOU THAT IT PUMPS ONE UP AND THE ADRENALIN PROVIDES SOME ADDED RESERVE.

ALL AT ONCE I FOUND OUT THAT I COULD STILL USE THAT LEG. I HALF HOBbled, SKIPPED, JUMPED AND HOBbled SOME MORE AND I WENT IN BEHIND TWO OR THREE OF THE TANKS THAT WERE DISABLED AND SITTING THERE, AS THEY PROVIDED ME WITH A LITTLE MORE PROTECTION. I GOT UP THROUGH THE BLASTED TERRAIN AS BEST I COULD AND GOT OUT OF THE JAP FIELD OF FIRE. IT NOW BECAME JUST A MATTER OF LIMPING AND HOBBLING MY WAY BACK TO OUR LINES. I CONSTANTLY HAD TO REST ALONG THE WAY TO GATHER UP MY STRENGTH. AT ONE POINT I HAD EASED INTO A RAVINE AND I LOOKED BACK TOWARD SUGAR LOAF HILL. THE MARINE BODIES LAY SO THICK ALL THE WAY TO THE HILL AND ON THE HILL THAT ONE COULD EASILY WALK TO THE HILL BY USING MARINE BODIES!

I COUNTED TEN TANKS IN VIEW AND TWO FLAME THROWERS THAT WERE KNOCKED OUT AND WERE SITTING THERE, SOME STILL SMOKING AND BURNING. AS I CAME BACK A LITTLE FURTHER TO OUR LINES, TWO MARINES WERE THERE BUSY STRINGING SOME COMMUNICATIONS WIRE. THEY SPOTTED ME, DROPPED WHAT THEY WERE DOING, AND INSTANTLY STARTED TOWARD ME. WHEN THEY GOT TO ME THEY ASKED ME WHAT OUTFIT I WAS WITH AND I MUMBLED PROUDLY..."G-2-22". ONE GOT ON EACH SIDE OF ME AND CARRIED ME INTO THE REGIMENTAL COMMAND POST A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY.

FIRST SERGEANT PETE MARISH WAS THERE AND WHEN HE SPOTTED ME BEING BROUGHT IN HE YELLED, "MAN BACK FROM THE HILL!!!" AND THAT WAS RELAYED FROM GROUP TO GROUP AND OUT OF ONE OF THEM OUR C.O., COLONEL WOODHOUSE CAME RUNNING. HE WAS CARRYING A LITTLE 'OL CARBINE ON HIS SHOULDER AND IT WAS BOUNCING ALL OVER HIM AS HE RAN. I WAS SLUMPED THERE SITTING DOWN AND A CORPSMAN WAS BUSY DRESSING MY WOUNDS. THE COLONEL ASKED ME "TELL ME...WHAT HAPPENED UP THERE?...I'VE HAD NO COMMUNICATIONS WITH ANYONE SINCE YOU WENT UP AND I THOUGHT YOU'D ALL BEEN WIPED OUT!" HE THOUGHT WE'D BEEN WIPED OUT LIKE CUSTER.

I TOLD HIM THAT I THOUGHT THERE WERE MAYBE FIVE MARINES OR SO LEFT ON THE HILL AND THAT THE JAPS WERE GETTING READY TO COUNTER ATTACK. SO HE STATED THAT HE WOULD SEND SOME MEN UP IMMEDIATELY AND GET THOSE JAPS. I RELATED TO HIM IN AS MUCH DETAIL AS I COULD ABOUT MAJOR COURTNEY'S EFFORTS AND TOLD HIM

HOW HE HAD BEEN KILLED. LATER IN LIFE WHEN I GOT THE SIXTH DIVISION HISTORY BOOK, I FOUND THAT WHAT I HAD RELATED TO COL. WOODHOUSE WAS EVIDENTLY WRITTEN UP AND BECAME PART OF THE COURTNEY CITATION FOR HIS MEDAL OF HONOR. PERSONALLY I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT THE MAJOR DESERVED THE MEDAL. HE WAS EVERY BIT A MARINE OFFICER AS ONE COULD ASK FOR. HE WAS A LEADER, AND SEEMED TO HAVE NO FEAR. HOW COULD A LITTLE BUCK PRIVATE LIKE ME BE SCARED WHEN I WAS AROUND A MAN OF SUCH COURAGE?

FINISHING MY STORY TO THE COLONEL, HE LOOKED DOWN AT ME AND SAID... "SON.... GOD BLESS YOU... LET ME SHAKE YOUR HAND!" IT HAD BEEN RAINING AND ALL WAS MUD ON THE BATTLEFIELD. WHEN I LIFTED UP MY HAND IT HAD TO BE COVERED WITH AN INCH OF MUD. WHEN HE GRABBED MY HAND THE WET MUD JUST SQUISHED THROUGH OUR FINGERS AS WE GRASPED EACH OTHERS HAND. I SAID TO THE COLONEL... "IT'S A LITTLE MUDDY, COLONEL..." HE SMILED AT ME AND TOOK OFF FOR HIS COMMAND POST. THAT'S THE LAST I EVER SAW OF COLONEL WOODHOUSE. LATER IN THE BATTLE, THE COLONEL WOULD BE KILLED.....

I WAS LOADED ON A JEEP AND CONVEYED BACK TO YONTAN AIRFIELD NORTH OF US. FROM A HOSPITAL THERE, TWO DAYS LATER I WAS STRONG ENOUGH TO BE FLOWN TO A HOSPITAL ON GUAM. LOOKING BACK OVER THE SIXTH DIVISION HISTORY BOOK, WHEREIN I HAD PUT MARGINAL NOTES ON VARIOUS PAGES, I NOTED THAT I HAD LEFT OUT A LITTLE BIT OF THE STORY. ON THE SECOND OR THIRD ATTACK ON THE HILL, WE WERE BEHIND A LITTLE EMBANKMENT. IT WASN'T VERY HIGH AND IT WASN'T VERY LONG, BUT IT DID GIVE US SOME COVER. WE HAD BEEN FIRING ON A HILL TO THE RIGHT THAT WAS GIVING US SOME PROBLEMS, AND ON THE MAP THAT HILL WOULD BE 'CHARLIE HILL'.

WHILE GIVING COVERING FIRE TO SUPPORT SURVIVORS THAT WERE MAKING THERE WAY BACK, I WAS BUSY RAKING THE HILL WITH RIFLE FIRE. SOME DARN JAP GOT ME IN HIS SIGHTS AS WHEN HE FIRED AT ME THE BULLET HIT IN FRONT OF MY FACE, SOME 12 INCHES OR SO. THE EMBANKMENT I WAS IN WAS HIGH ENOUGH THAT ONE COULD STAND UP AND NOT BE EXPOSED. I CRAWLED UP THE SIDE OF IT AND MY HEAD WAS JUST SLIGHTLY EXPOSED AND I HAD MY RIFLE LYING THERE SET TO FIRE. THAT JAP HAD ENOUGH OF ME TO PUT HIS SIGHT ON ME. I FAKED BEING HIT AND JUST SLID OFF THE TOP AND DOWN INTO THE HOLE. THAT MADE ME DECIDE NOT TO GO BACK UP TO THE TOP AS THAT WAS TOO HOT A SPOT TO BE IN. THIS HAPPENED LATE IN THE AFTERNOON.

EARLY THE NEXT MORNING ONE OF OUR MACHINE GUNNERS BY THE NAME OF PFC CHARLIE TRIPLET HAD GONE TO THE SAME SPOT I HAD BEEN SHOT AT IN THAT EMBANKMENT. HE HAD SET UP THE MACHINE GUN AND WAS FIRING AWAY, WHEN THE JAP GOT CHARLIE RIGHT BETWEEN THE EYES. HE WAS INSTANTLY KILLED.

THIS IS MY STORY AS I REMEMBER IT... THINGS THAT I SAW PERSONALLY AND HEARD FIRST HAND... AND DID!

PRIVATE ERNEST 'ERNIE' C. DAVIS

D COMPANY - 2nd BATTALION

29TH MARINE REGIMENT

SIXTH MARINE DIVISION

OKINAWA - 1945

I WAS ONLY 17 AND FRESH OUT OF SCHOOL WHEN I JOINED THE MARINES. I KNEW EVEN THEN, THE VALUE OF FREEDOM AND I WANTED TO DO MY PART TO DO ALL I COULD TO PRESERVE THAT FREEDOM. AFTER I VOLUNTEERED I WAS INDUCTED INTO THE CORPS IN NOVEMBER OF '44 IN NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE. I ENDED UP AT PARRIS ISLAND, S.C., WHERE MOST OF US ON THE EAST COAST BECAME MARINES.

AFTER PARRIS ISLAND I WAS GIVEN A 10 DAY FURLOUGH HOME BEFORE REPORTING FOR DUTY AT CAMP LEJUNE, N.C. I SPENT ABOUT TWO MONTHS IN ADVANCE TRAINING WHEN THEY FORMED THE 55TH REPLACEMENT DRAFT. LOOKING BACK NOW, IT IS STRANGE TO THINK THAT I MIGHT HAVE MISSED OKINAWA ALTOGETHER. THEY HAD FILLED ALL THE MEN THEY NEEDED FOR THE DRAFT AND MY NAME WAS NOT ON THE LIST. I WENT TO THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE 55TH AND BEGGED HIM TO FIND SOME ROOM FOR ME IF HE HAD TO LEAVE SOMEONE HOME WHO HAD KIDS OR WAS MARRIED OR SOMETHING. A DAY OR TWO LATER I WAS CALLED IN TO THE C.O. AND I WAS INFORMED THAT I HAD BEEN PLACED ON THE LIST OF MEN TO GO OVERSEAS. AFTER ALL, THAT'S WHY I JOINED THE MARINES....

IN THE EARLY PART OF APRIL OF 1945, WHILE THE BATTLE RAGED ON OKINAWA, WE MOVED BY TROOP TRAIN TO NORFOLK, VA. AND SAILED ON APRIL 12TH, THE DAY PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT DIED, FOR POINTS UNKNOWN. WE SAILED ALONG THE EAST COAST IN A SOUTHERLY DIRECTION AND WE HAD NO APPARENT ESCORT. NONE COULD BE SEEN. A DAY OR SO LATER IT WAS SAID THAT A GERMAN SUB HAD BEEN SIGHTED AND SOME ESCORTS NOW SHOWED UP TO SHADOW OUR SHIP. THAT MADE US ALL FEEL ONE HECK OF A LOT BETTER, JUST THE SIGHT OF THOSE LITTLE NAVY SHIPS DARTING TO AND FRO. WE EITHER OUT RAN THE SUB, OR THE ESCORTS DROVE HIM OFF, AS WE GOT TO THE PANAMA CANAL SAFELY.

GOING THROUGH THE CANAL WE PASSED THE U.S.S. FRANKLIN, AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER MAKING ITS WAY IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION. IT WAS ON ITS WAY TO THE BROOKLYN NAVY YARD. IT IS HARD TO DESCRIBE THE AMOUNT OF DAMAGE AND APPARENT HOLES IN THAT VALIANT SHIP. SOME 800 MEN DIED FROM TWO BOMBS WHILE THE SHIP WAS OFF OF OKINAWA. MORE MEDALS WERE HANDED OUT TO THE 900 OR SO CASUALTIES, INCLUDING TWO MEDALS OF HONOR THAN ANY OTHER SINGLE UNIT IN WW II. WE STOOD AT THE RAIL, AT ATTENTION, OUR HANDS IN A SALUTE OF TRIBUTE, MANY OF US WITH TEARS IN OUR EYES. ON THE 2nd OF MAY WE ARRIVED AT PEARL HARBOR. WE WERE NOW HALF WAY ACROSS THE WIDE PACIFIC.

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I COULD ONLY GUESS WHAT WAS GOING ON AT THAT TIME ON OKINAWA, BUT WE DID GET SOME SHIPS REPORTS AND NOTICES, PLUS LOTS OF INFO FROM THE OLD 'SCUTTLEBUTT' OR RUMOR-FACTORY. (NOTE: AT THIS TIME THE SIXTH MARINE DIVISION HAD SECURED THE NORTHERN END OF OKINAWA AND WERE ASSEMBLING TO MAKE THEIR WAY INTO THE LINES IN THE SOUTHERN END OF THE ISLAND). AFTER A FEW DAYS WE WERE TAKEN OFF THE OLD TROOP SHIP, THE U.S.S. GRIGGS. IT WOULD BE INTERESTING TO KNOW HOW MANY MEN SHE TOOK TO BATTLE AND THEN HOME AGAIN.

WE THEN BOARDED THE U.S.S. ROCKWALL, LEFT PEARL ON THE 24TH OF MAY, AND CROSSED THE INTERNATIONAL DATE LINE AND ENTERED THE IMPERIAL DOMAIN OF THE GOLDEN DRAGON ON MAY THE 29TH. ON THE 10TH OF JUNE WE DISEMBARKED THE SHIP WE HAD CALLED HOME FOR SO MANY DAYS, AND SET FOOT FINALLY ON OKINAWA. SHIPS WERE EVERYWHERE, SUPPLIES STACKED ALL OVER. MUCH APPREHENSION AND NERVOUSNESS AS TO WHAT LAY AHEAD WAS WITH US ALL.

I WAS ASSIGNED TO THE SIXTH MARINE DIVISION, WHO HAD BY NOW EARNED THEMSELVES A GLORIOUS COMBAT RECORD ON OKINAWA. I BECAME A RIFLEMAN WITH DOG COMPANY, 2nd BN., 29TH, A COMPANY THAT IS FAMOUS FOR THEIR FINAL ASSAULT ON SUGAR LOAF HILL. I SPENT THE NEXT TWO WEEKS IN COMBAT AND I LEARNED WHAT DEATH WAS LIKE FIRST HAND. THE SCENT OF HUMAN FLESH ROTTING AND DECOMPOSING I CAN RECALL EVEN TO THIS DAY. I CONSIDER MYSELF VERY FORTUNATE THAT I WAS NOT WOUNDED DURING THOSE DAYS WITH 'DOG' COMPANY.

IN EARLY MAY WHEN THE FIGHTING WAS BRUTAL AROUND SUGAR LOAF HILL COMPLEX ON OKINAWA I WAS AT PEARL HARBOR. OUR SIXTH DIVISION HAD FOUND THE JAPS DUG IN SECURELY AND WHEN ATTACKED THEY SWARMED FROM THEIR CAVES LIKE RATS TO CONFRONT OUR MARINES IN HAND TO HAND COMBAT. THE FIGHTING WAS FURIOUS. CLOSE COMBAT WITH GRENADES, BAYONETS AND RIFLES WENT ON DAY AFTER DAY, NIGHT AFTER NIGHT. REPELLING BANZAI ATTACKS BY INFILTRATING JAPANESE WAS COMMON. OUR DIVISION SUFFERED 2,662 CASUALTIES DURING THE 11 DAY BATTLE. MORE THAN HALF THAT NUMBER MORE SUFFERED FROM BATTLE FATIGUE, OR EXHAUSTION.

NOW I WAS WITH THOSE WARRIORS ADVANCING TO MEET THE ENEMY. OUR FRONT LINE WAS NEAR THE KOKUBA ESTUARY, AS I RECALL, WITH THE 29TH ON THE LEFT AND THE 4TH MARINE REGIMENT ON THE RIGHT. THAT NIGHT, THE 15TH (OUR ARTILLERY REGIMENT) GAVE THE JAPS HELL WITH SHELLS GOING OVER OUR HEADS NOISILY WITH A SWISH, AND THEN LANDING ON THE JAP SIDE WITH A ROAR. WE WERE ALL GLAD IT WAS LANDING ON THEM AND NOT US.

THE JAPS TRIED TO INFILTRATE OUR LINES THAT NIGHT AND SOME SMALL FIRE FIGHTS BROKE OUT WITH THE SOUND OF HAND GRENADES SHATTERING THE NIGHT CONSTANTLY. THE 4TH TOOK THE BRUNT OF THE COUNTERATTACK BY THE JAPS, ALL NIGHT LONG. WHEN DAYLIGHT CAME, OVER 200 DEAD JAPS WERE COUNTED OUTSIDE, AND SOME

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INSIDE, THE FOURTH'S LINES...ALL DEAD.

SOME EIGHT BATTALIONS CONTINUED THE ATTACK SOUTH, WITH TANKS IN SUPPORT. BY NOW WE WERE UP AGAINST DIE-HARD JAPS WHO WOULD NOT SURRENDER, DETERMINED TO FIGHT TO THE DEATH. OUR TANKS GOT INTO A POCKET MINED BY THE JAPS, AND ENGINEERS HAD TO COME UP TO DISARM THE MINES. WE ATTACKED AROUND THE TOWN OF TOMAGASUKU TO TAKE ON A HILL MASS EAST OF THE TOWN. THE 3RD DROVE TO KOKUBA ESTUARY AFTER HOURS OF BITTER FIGHTING. THE BATTALION TOOK HILL 53 AND OTHER HIGH GROUND AROUND IT. THE JAPS HAD POWERFUL DEFENSES WELL DUG AND WE MADE LITTLE PROGRESS.

THE JAPS WERE ACTUALLY TRAPPED IN A TIGHTENING CIRCLE OF MARINES AND THIS FORCED SOME OF THEM OUT OF THEIR CAVES INTO THE SWAMPY FLATS AND RICE PADDIES IN THE AREA. SOME ELECTED TO DIE IN THEIR CAVES, WITH OFFICERS FIGHTING TO THE DEATH. THESE WERE BLASTED TO DEATH WITH DYNAMITE AND GRENADES. THOSE IN THE MUD-FLATS WE GOT WITH SKIRMISH LINES. SOME SURRENDERED WITH LITTLE WHITE RAGS ATTACHED TO BAMBOO POLES. THEY ALL LOOKED PATHETIC. SOME PREFERRED SUICIDE AND ONE GROUP WE ENCOUNTERED, 10 OF THEM, BLEW THEMSELVES UP. THE JAPS WERE TOLD WE WOULD TORTURE AND KILL THEM, OTHERWISE MANY MORE WOULD HAVE LIVED TODAY.

THE 29TH FOUND A FORMIDABLE FORCE ON EASY HILL SOUTH OF THE TOWN OF OROKU. THEY WERE IN COMPANY STRENGTH AND WERE PUTTING UP A FRANTIC FIGHT. AS WE ATTACKED WE COULD SENSE AND SEE CONFUSION IN THEIR RANKS. THEY WERE BECOMING DISORGANIZED. WE KILLED 881 THAT DAY, AND TOOK ONLY 74 PRISONERS. WE LOST SOME 1,608 MARINES KILLED AND WOUNDED ON THAT BITTER OROKU AREA, BUT THE AREA HAD TO BE TAKEN. MUCH MOPPING UP, BLOWING OF CAVES, AND SECURING THE SWAMPY AREAS WENT ON EVERY SINGLE DAY.

GENERAL CLEMENTS, OF OUR DIVISION, HAD REMARKED THAT THE PLACE WAS STRONGER THAN CORREGIDOR. WE FOUND HIM TO BE CORRECT. THE JAPANESE HAD OVER 80 MILES OF TUNNELS IN THE CAVE SYSTEM ON OKINAWA. THEY HAD BEEN DIGGING FOR YEARS. THEY EVEN DUG WHEN WE WERE COMING AT THEM...

IN A CAVE HEADQUARTERS ON OROKU WAS FOUND THE CAVE OF THE NAVAL ADMIRAL OTA. THE CAVE WAS DISCOVERED AND INVESTIGATED BY A PATROL OF MARINES LED BY LT. COL. WILLIAMS, THE DIVISION INTELLIGENCE OFFICER. THE MARINE WHO FIRST DISCOVERED IT WAS PFC NICK COGNITO. AT THE PATH ENTRANCE WERE TWO BOMBS BOOBY TRAPPED, AND IN THE CAVE WAS THE ADMIRAL AND THIER AID, THROATS SLIT, AND LAID OUT IN THEIR BEST UNIFORMS. A SORRY END TO A GALLANT FOE.

ONE OF THE COLONELS OFFICERS HAD ASKED ME WHERE THE CAVE WAS AND I SAID I DID NOT KNOW FOR SURE. THEY WERE DETERMINED TO

Okinawa Diary  
by Frank H. Haigler

L/3/22

Covering the Period 1 April to 10 May, 1945

BLT 3/22  
6MarDiv

Sunday, 1 Apr. 1945  
(Easter)

- 0430 Reveille Aboard LST 952. Cleaned, shaved, last shower.
- 0500 Breakfast. Special meal of fried eggs, fresh oranges,  
0530 etc. "Air Alert". Went topside and noticed we [were]  
entering rendezvous area. Five LSTs of our group ahead  
and six behind. Also columns of LSTs on either hand.  
Sound of heavy bombardment ahead in mist of early dawn.  
Sea calm and glassy with slight rolling swells.
- 0545 Shore line beginning to appear far ahead in early morn-  
ing haze. Heavy naval bombardment in progress. Several  
flights of sixty to ninety navy fighter (F6Fs, F4Us,  
SBDs, TBFs) on combat air patrol continually passing  
overhead at high altitude. Hundreds and hundreds of  
combat ships and assault transports, various patrol  
and control vessels noted all along coast to limit of  
visibility.
- 0555 Hook dropped; in position.
- 0600 Called away to Amtracs on Tank Deck just as LSTs  
immediately ahead opened fire on OS-2U (NGF Spotting  
plane) which was coming in at low altitude off port bow  
and leisurely turning to cross bow of LST ahead. 20mm  
gunners in starboard tub prepared to fire as word  
passed from bridge that plane was possibly a "float  
zero". I prevented fire of this gun crew. Plane hit  
by leading LST and passed across bow flaming, crashed  
into sea off starboard bow. Sickening sight. Then  
word was passed that this was a friendly aircraft---  
too late! Pilot lost. There was no excuse for failure  
to properly identify own aircraft. I was amazed at the  
excitability and poor training of the navy 20mm gun  
crew.
- 0605 Returned to stateroom, squared away gear, and went  
below to Amtracs.
- 0700 Doors open, Amtracs hit the water. Circled in rendezv-  
ous area. First wave left line of departure. Assault  
elements of K and I company. Second wave off three  
minutes later with reserve elements of assault compan-  
ies and attached units. Third wave, fourth wave, fifth  
wave off LD at three minute intervals consisting of  
L company with attached weapons platoon. Sixth wave  
off---Tank company. Seventh wave in, first elements  
of CP, BLT 3/22. Tanks having trouble getting in;  
some hung up on niggerheads. We pass two LCMs with  
tanks, stranded.
- 0803 First elements on beach, very little opposition app-



arent. Tanks land and disperse along beach. Armored  
antracs above beach several hundred yards; limited  
amount of small arms fire. We hit beach, ramp down and  
we strike up and off beach. Find defiladed position  
and set up forward temporary CP. Moved up almost  
immediately to line of tombs and set up forward CP  
again.

- 0850 Investigated tombs. Reorganized and moved up thru  
China on road on left flank, passing empty recently  
excavated gun position.
- 0930 Established forward CP. One half hour later received  
mortar fire from possibly Bald Hill Mountain. No  
casualties. Called NSF and got 5" fire on this area  
Forward elements moving on; very little resistance.  
Encountered some civilians in very poor condition  
(shelled and shocked). Rummaged thru couple of houses  
and remains of a store--school supplies. Obtained  
and old straw mat to relax on. Tanks came up from  
beach.
- 1000 Word received Yontan Airfield taken by 4th Marines.  
Noticed many trenches and camouflaged enemy positions  
about Bald Hill; all unoccupied.
- 1100 K ration
- 2000 Slept in ditch. Also in ditch, Miller, Colonel and  
1st Sgt. Cold as hell!! (Note: Lt. Connally and  
three men WIA, 2 Men KIA)

2 April '45

- 0445 Up and about. Very cold. Shelter half wet, shoes wet.  
Hot coffee (Nescafe). Little activity in AM while  
awaiting further orders.
- 1100 Broke up CP after visit by staff and General Shepherd.  
Moved ahead along edge of Yontan south and then east.  
Turned north and moved upward onto highest ground  
overlooking the peninsula which was currently under  
attack by 29th Marines. Returned several hundred yards  
SE along dirt road and set up CP and bivouac. Good  
position at fork of road, one company up north fork,  
one in vicinity of CP and one company along east fork.  
Dug shallow slit trench; ground very hard and rocky.
- 1800 K ration. Smoked. Hot coffee. Turned in, after  
checking position.

3 April '45

- 0500 Vehicles up. Water distributed.. C rations passed out.  
Noticed number of bites on skin. Discarded clothing  
(Northwestern Univ. T-Shirt, shorts, socks) dusted  
clothing with flea powder. Itched like hell! Worried  
about scrub typhus.
- 0930 Made lone reconnaissance with GySgt thru valleys, rice  
paddies, village NE. Ran into I Co., contacted L Co.  
on high ground, thickly wooded. Good road although  
heavily but openly mined with AP and AT. CP moved up  
to edge of village--contacted them--
- 1200 K ration with CP which had moved up.
- 1230 Moved out up mined road to summit of high ground past

several Jap radio vehicles. At summit in heavy woods located radio station demolished. Picked up Nip portable receiver and carried it rest of day like damn fool; heavy as hell!

- 1330 Continued down other side on narrow, winding trail. Outfit had previously picked up two horses; one bogged down on the trail at broken down foot bridge. Hard march down thru heavily wooded glens and out across meadows in view of Pacific. Across the plain a sugar mill was seen heavily damaged. Moved onto good road and turned N several hundred yards: moved off road down into sugar fields and set up CP and bivouac. Bn MT showed up as darkness settled.
- 2000 Good chow. C rations. Cooked in dark. Hold, Young and I made hot chocolate from D rations. BLT 2/22 on right, 1st Mar Div behind to the south along coast.

4 Apr '45

- 0600 Up and about. Relaxed in AM. Wrote two notes on message blanks, one to Marilyn and one to folks. Ceo. Creitz came up, gave out some Choc Malt and took my letters to mail.
- 1000 Moved out at about 1000---down to coast and up road north (main road). Skirmish ahead---dead Nips along road near blown bridge and number in wooded area right of road and S of river. Moved on N several thousand yards to Nip village. Supported with tanks and M-7s. Skirmish N of village. Casualty from M-7; man had foot mangled (Reported to be son of editor or owner of Chicago Daily News).
- 1600 Set up CP and bivouac S edge of village. Nip in bivouac; GySgt nearly hit when grenade exploded--killed Nip with BAR. I acquired rifle and blanket.
- 1645 Made reconnaissance with Roy Miller and L Co. patrol westward up onto high ground along dirt road to attempt to contact 29th Marines. Map wrong--road ended. Returned to bivouac. Slight rain--slept in "folly" made from stacked ammo boxes.

5 Apr '45

- 0600 Up and about. Things quiet; Looked like bivouac for the day.
- 0800 Drove back in jeep to beaches---saw Meadows, acquired blood plasma, blanket; swiped drum of gas. Ran into Gene Richards in DUKW and borrowed his combat jacket. Acquired a Nip neon airfield light (portable).
- 1300 Returned to bivouac area to find only Bn-4 outfit; Bn had moved out. Had K ration. Moved up road in Weasel. Much troop activity. Many bridges blown. Helped pull 6x6's and Recons thru fords around bridges. Finally caught Bn at fork in road.
- 1600 Moved out on west fork into interior with weapons pl. of M-7s attached.
- 1800 Up onto high ground toward nightfall; made confused night bivouac. Dangerous and confused what with 17 horses picked up and used as pack animals. Spent

considerable time hobbling horses and arranging perimeter defense.

1900 Lt. Kurta showed up wounded; shot accidentally in leg by corpsman behind him on march. Lucky stiff! Got plenty of brandy to hold him thru night.

2200 Turned in after K rations. Plenty worried about untenable position and loss of contact with adjacent units. However, uneventful night which was fortunate; we were in a helluva spot for a counterattack!

6 Apr '45

0500 Up and about. C rations. Moved out early

0700 Moved out and retraced road to flat plain E of fork.

1300 Made bivouac. Men turned out in wheat fields cutting grain for their sacks. Dug slit trench, filled it with grain and arranged shelter half over it. Holt bunked with me. Chavez and Young rigged fancy shelter as did 1stSgt and GySgt.

1700 1stSgt caught and cleaned pig although we did not cook it then.

7 Apr '45

0800 Moved out. Approach march back to vicinity of road junction. Turned north and took coast road along east coast for several miles. Made bivouac ocean side of road behind hill adjacent to farming community.

1630 1stSgt roasted pig. Rigged jungle hammock in trees on side of hill. Good chow and quiet night. 10 in 1 rations.

8 Apr '45

0800 Moved out--up coast road short way; turned on road west and crossed island below Motobu peninsula to East China Sea. Turned north and marched 20 miles approx. Ate enroute. K rations. Many horses in unit by now.

1700 Bivouac in valley up from road on right. Rice paddies, concrete-lined, spring-fed irrigation ditches. Plenty of clean water for washing. First bath. Rigged jungle hammock on slope above CP. Panels and firewood gathered in village on northern edge of bivouac by men. Trouble concerning looting began---nothing serious. Black-out tent erected for Colonel Donohoo and Maj. Bird and Roy Miller. Late that night Bird killed by Colonel's runner.

9 Apr '45

0730 Learned of Major Bird's death from 1st Sgt at morning chow. Hard to believe. 10-in-1 rations.

0900 Patrols out. Uneventful day. Relaxed. Took jeep ride up to Regt CP in PM.

10 Apr '45

Remained in area--patrols out. Little activity. Night rain. It was wet in hammock; trying to sleep--poor night.

11 Apr '45

0700 Raining hard. Soaked and cold. Miserable wet morning. Tried to eat in 1stSgt's folly.

1000 Skirmish by patrol--ambush. Wounded brought in.

Raining hard.

1200 Company patrol sent inland on road. Wounded civilians (2) given plasma under poncho in heavy rain, one a 12 year old girl. Evacuated.

1500 Returned to CP area. Quiet night--very little rain.

12 Apr '45

0930 Moved out by truck to south coast of Motobu Peninsula. Bivouac in field adjacent to 4th Bn, 15th Marines (105 How). West-North-East perimeter defense. Area quiet.

1600 Dug slit trench with 1stSgt and GySgt. Slept fair.

13 Apr '45

(Friday)

0800 Sniper fire killed one man (L Co. ?). Patrols sent out.

1000 Bailey's platoon ambushed. Went up and checked with Chavez and Lannigan on high ground overlooking valley and interior mountains.

1200 Patrol formerly pinned down managed to get free and came out running. Casualties evacuated. Called down heavy mortar and artillery fire with smoke to aid in evacuation. Returned to CP area.

1400 Commenced being shelled by Nip 8" naval artillery located inland. Very accurate firing; Arty Bn hit hard; ammo exploded, CP on fire. Evacuated to new CP. Much gear lost. Lost my clothing roll which contained several bottles of whiskey and a good tanker jacket from USS Nevada. Saved some other peoples equipment, trailers, clothing rolls, etc.

2000 Ate in dark; slept in slit trench along with 1stSgt. Noted that heavy piece of shrapnel had fallen in my slit trench during bombardment. Approx. wt. 5 lbs.

14 Apr '45

1200 Moved out by truck and returned to previous rest bivouac. Learned of Roosevelt's death in AM. Follies' still standing. Rerigged jungle hammock.

15 Apr '45

(Sunday)

Moved out, left bivouac, embarked on trucks and went number of miles north to new and final rest bivouac up in a valley mile or so inland from coast road. Village of Hicihi.

Remained this area almost two weeks while carrying out patrol activities inland and up opposite coast to tip of Island.

Highpoints:

Steep high ground adjacent and south of bivouac from which tip of island could be seen about 16 miles north.

F4U with US markings on lower edge of wing and Meat Ball on upper edge shot down by friendly F4Us.

Visit by DUKW of Richard's company and gift of bottle of brandy. Battalion patrol inland...me in charge of CP. Denny and I finish brandy that night---feeling no pain. (Denny Moore).

Preparation and scuttlebutt re: independent landing by 22dMar.

Visit to Engineer outfit to inspect their galley setup.

Hand-made crappers.

Swimming and washing in concrete walled river aqueduct affair. Ice cold water.

Visit to Rgt CP, Red Cross facilities. Mailed rifle & bayonet home.

10-in-1 rations, bacon, hamburgers, etc.

Investigation of village south, Jap flags obtained.

5 May '45

0200 Broke bivouac and embarked aboard trucks for movement south. Traveled in dark to mask movement of Division.  
0700 Arrived at assembly area vicinity of Inubi and bivouac set up in vicinity of TA 9190. C ration chow. Organized area and dug in. Soft ground-sandy loam. Many trees, cool breeze, somewhat hilly. Very comfortable clean area.

6 May '45

Remained in bivouac, assembly area.

7 May '45

Remained in bivouac, assembly area.

8 May '45

0725 Entrucked for movement south into lines.  
1000 Debarked from trucks after traveling SW [number] of miles over winding hilly roads---saw much activity. Moved in approach march south several miles to vicinity of Machinato Airfield.  
1200 Noon chow on march...  
1400 Commenced moving into position on lines relieving 2dBn 7th Marines. K Co. on rt anchored to sea, I Co. on left along high ground. Backs on cliff below which 81mm mortars & Army 4.2" chem mortars are dug in. L Co. Bn reserve and located to rear and in region of village along coast.  
1700 Well established in CP in caves and holes dug into face of cliff fronting coast. TA 7575-N  
1730 Received 8" enemy artillery fire from long range SE  
No damage, no casualties, uneventful night.

9 May '45

Patrols from I & K Co. out during AM to reconnoiter the Asa Kawa [river] and bridge. Looked over area during day---located knee mortar ammo and attempted to disarm.

Toured Jap trenches and fox holes. Drew long range  
rifle fire from SE.

10 May '45

0300 Attack launched to seize O-a line. Assault elements  
I & K Co. crossed Asa Kawa on foot bridge layed by  
Engineers during night.  
0530 Bridge destroyed by Jap suicide crew.  
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Major Bernard William "Barney" Green  
CO, 1st Bn., 4th Reg., 6th Marine Div.  
Killed In Action-April 14, 1945  
Okinawa

Submitted by: Bill Pierce, Wpns. Co, 29th Marines

Some of the following was taken from: History Of The Sixth Marine Division; Edited by Bevan G. Cass.

On page 64 of the "Green Book", History of the Sixth Marine Division, The following story is related with regard to Major "Barney" Green, Commanding Officer, 1st Bn., 4th Marines.

Mt. Yaetake..."The excellent observation available permitted the defenders to site their machine guns and register their mortars on all likely avenues of approach. Almost invariably they would allow a squad or platoon of the Marines to cross an open spot then fire at the platoon following, usually aiming for officers. It was dangerous to show a map, wave a directing arm or even to carry a pistol instead of a carbine. The enemy's guns and riflemen could be reached neither by scouts nor flank patrols, so that it often became necessary to deploy rapidly from what was really an approach march to an assault formation in order to carry the attack without interruption. It was like fighting a phantom enemy. An entire platoon passed over one portion of a trail without event. Yet when the company Commander came along with his Headquarters Section, A machine gun suddenly opened up, killing him and several others.

A battalion commander (Major B. L. Green) was standing in his observation post with members of his staff. There had been no shooting for over half an hour in that area, but suddenly from an adjacent ridge a nambu chattered briefly; the battalion commander fell dead as three bullets riddled his body. The percentage of officer casualties in this sort of fighting was exceedingly high. The Marines wanted to fight the enemy, they wanted to find a Jap at the end of their sights, but found nothing tangible. As one Marine put it, "Jeez, they're all carrying nambus, but where are they?"

+++++

The date was April 14, 1945. For Major Barney Green the war he had begun as a Raider in the jungles of Guadalcanal into Tulagi and Guam, ended on the island of Okinawa, at a place called Mt. Yaetake, a 700 foot ridge in the northern area of the island. He would be one of the almost 13,000 American Sailors, Soldiers and Marines who were killed in the 82 day battle for the Island.

God rest our fallen Warrior. We of the Sixth Marine Division know the gates of Heaven are surely well guarded.

Bill Pierce, Wpns Co, 29th Marines

**MAJOR BERNARD "BARNEY" GREEN**  
**COMMANDING OFFICER**  
**1st BN - 4th MARINES**  
**6th MARINE DIVISION**  
**KIA APRIL 14, 1945 OKINAWA**





History Of The First Battalion-Fourth Marine Regiment  
Major Bernard W. Green-Commanding Officer

This history of the first battalion, Fourth Marines, Sixth Marine Division begins in February 1942 when it was redesignated from First Battalion, Fifth Marines to the First Separate Battalion and attached, as such, to the First Marine Division.

Lieutenant Colonel Meritt A. Edson was Commanding Officer and Major Samuel B. Griffith, Executive Officer of the Battalion.

The Battalion began it's training in Quantico, Virginia and in March of that year was redesignated First Marine Raider Battalion. Shortly thereafter the Battalion boarded troop trains and shipped across country to the San Diego area. The forward echelon embarked aboard troop transports in April and arrived the latter part of the month in American Samoa. In July the rear echelon, composed of D Company, under the command of Major Samuel B. Griffith, arrived.

Training was continued until the Battalion embarked late in July for New Caledonia, where they engaged in the final phase of training.

The latter part of July 1942, the First Marine Raider Battalion embarked for Guadalcanal, B.S.I., to participate in the first allied offensive of World War II against the enemy in the Pacific area.

The morning of 7 August, 1942, a successful landing was made on Tulagi, B.S.I. in conjunction with the First Marine Division's landing on Guadalcanal.

Tulagi proved to be a bitter battle against a determined enemy. The enemy force, consisting of a reinforced battalion of the Japanese special naval landing force (approximately 800 men) was defeated and the Island secured in four days. After the Island was secured, the Battalion did heavy patrolling on Florida Islands for about four days, but found only a few scattered enemy groups.

The Battalion was then moved to Guadalcanal and bivouacked in the Lunga area in Division reserve. It was moved up on the lines and played a major part in the battle of Lunga Ridge. If this Ridge had not been held, Henderson Air Field would probably have been lost. For their outstanding performance and bravery Lt Col. Meritt A. Edson and Major Kenneth D. Bailey, commanding "C" Company, received the Congressional Medal Of Honor. In July, Lt. Col. Edson was promoted to Colonel and Major Griffith to Lt. Colonel.

After the battle of Lunga Ridge, Colonel Edson was given command of the Fifth Marines, First Marine Div., and Lt. Col. Griffith became Commanding Officer of the First Marine Raider Battalion,

until he was wounded 27 September, 1942 and evacuated to destination unknown and on 28 September 1942, Captain Ira J. Irwin took command.

8 September 1942 the Battalion made a raid from auxiliary personnel destroyers at Tasimboko, Guadalcanal, B.S.I. and destroyed artillery pieces and great quantities of ammunition which had been landed by a reinforcing Japanese artillery regiment. Two companies, A and E Companies, made a patrol to Savo Island; No Japanese were encountered. The Battalion also participated in the first and second battle of the Matanikau River.

The Battalion was embarked aboard ship on the night of October 12-13th, and arrived in Noumeau, New Caledonia 17 October 1942. On 25 November 1942 The Battalion sailed to Wellington, New Zealand for liberty and then returned to New Caledonia 10 January 1943 for another period of training.

Lt. Col. Sam Griffith returned to duty 14 December 1942 and assumed command of the Battalion. On 27 April 1943 Major Charles L. Banks joined the Battalion and assigned duties as the Executive Officer. Replacements were received, which brought the Battalion up to strength.

On 28 May 1943 the Battalion embarked for Guadalcanal for another four weeks training Period, Prior to embarkation for a new theater of operation. At 0130, 5 July 1943 it landed at Rice Anchorage on New Georgia, B.S.I.. The Battalion at this time was an organic part of the First Marine Raider Regiment commanded by Colonel Harry B. Liversedge, USMC.

A successful landing was made despite the shelling delivered by two enemy 12cm coastal guns located at Enogai and the sinking of the USS Strong, an escorting destroyer, by a torpedo presumably fired by an enemy submarine. Native guides and members of a First Battalion recon party led by Captain Clay A. Boyd, met the troops on the beach and led them to an assembly area in the dark jungle. At dawn the First Marine Raider Battalion began its march on Enogai, followed by the Third Battalion, 148th Infantry, U.S. Army.

The March overland was extremely difficult. Because of rains, the trail was covered with mud and swamps and the rivers were raging torrents. Due to these conditions supplies were very difficult to bring up during the operation and great and untold hardships were experienced by the troops because of acute food and water shortages. The first evening, contact was made, 7 July 1943, at Maranusa, an enemy outpost on Enogai inlet. When contact was made the Battalion was in battalion column, D-C-B- and A Company. D Company was immediately deployed across the trail and G Company deployed on the ridge to the left.

Only very light opposition was met and shortly overcome. Marine gunner Angus D. Goss, USMC was ordered to advance to Triri with his demolition platoon; seize and hold high ground there. As they entered the clearing at Triri, Japs began to come out of the native shacks and Goss' platoon fell back 100 yards to the south bank of the creek. "D" Company crossed upstream west of the demolition platoon and flanked the enemy, approximately one platoon, who fled leaving 10 killed, including one officer and one wounded.

A perimeter defense was set up around the native shacks, high ground and the well at Triri by D-C-and B Companies, and A Company placed in reserve. At dawn the next day, 8 July 1943, D Company combat patrol under Lt. Bennie M. Bunn [were] to ambush the trail leading to Enogai.

Contact was made with an estimated company of enemy on the Bairoko trail by D Company, and a heavy fire fight ensued from 0700 to 1100. At 1000 C Company passed through D Company and the Japanese fell back a short distance. At 1200, C Company disengaged as K Company, Third Battalion, 145 Infantry Regiment took over the position.

"B" Company patrol made no contact on Enogai trail, and the Battalion moved out toward Enogai. The trail led into impassable mangrove swamps, and at 1500 a decision was made to return to Triri and seek a new trail the following day. Intensity of the fire fight on the Bairoko trail increased at 1600 and two Army Companies began to fall back. First Marine Raider Battalion's demolition platoon was committed to bolster the line. Marine gunner John E. Kennedy led a combat patrol around the enemy's left flank and into his rear. The enemy was surprised completely and withdrew immediately, leaving twenty dead.

At 1500 native scouts reported location of a trail leading north towards Enogai on high ground west of a mangrove swamp. The Battalion took up the march the next morning, 19 July 1943 to a point overlooking Enogai Point. Three companies with Company A on the left, B Company on the right, and C Company in the center, were deployed as contact was made with the enemy; D Company was held in reserve. The advance was continued against enemy resistance to the bluff overlooking Enogai.

10 July 1943 the assault on Enogai, with the companies deployed as above, was launched. The left flank of A Company was pinned down and at about 1000, the first platoon, D Company, commanded by Lt. Thomas Pollard, was ordered to make a passage of lines through A Company and continue the attack.

Lt. Pollard launched a determined attack and cleared the left flank of the enemy. The attack had such force that it carried on to the rear of the enemy holding up B Company's advance, and the enemy was routed. This furious action broke the main enemy resistance and Enogai Inlet was secured 11 July 1943. At 1600,

10 July 1943, L Company, Third Battalion 145th Infantry Regiment arrived from Triri with water and food. Our men had no water or food for some thirty hours. For his outstanding performance and Bravery, Lt. Pollard was awarded the Army Distinguished Service Cross.

Four enemy coastal defense guns and many 13mm and 30 caliber anti-aircraft guns, together with quantities of rations, clothing and all types of ammunition were captured.

Heavy patrolling was then done and the enemy positions at Bairoko were scouted. On the 20th of July, the assault on Bairoko began, with the First Marine Raider Regiment moving in column of Battalions. The First Marine Raider Battalion was followed by the Fourth Raider Battalion, B and D Companies in assault. Contact was made with the enemy at 1000 and a fierce battle began. The enemy was driven back to the very edge of Bairoko Harbor, but held. The Fourth Marine Raider Battalion, which was committed on the left, had great difficulty advancing against enemy pillboxes and concealed machine guns. At 1700 Colonel Liversedge ordered the attack to cease and a slight withdrawal was made to a defensive position. At 0400 there was an enemy counter-attack of small strength which was repulsed. The next day, 21 July 1943, it was decided to withdraw to Enogai. Our casualties had been very severe and there was a great number wounded needing medical attention and evacuation. The force withdrew to Enogai. The wounded were evacuated by PBY's and APC's.

Enemy aircraft bombed the First Marine Raider Battalion's positions nearly every night during the entire New Georgia campaign. There was heavy Japanese barge traffic at night during this period. P.T. boats were ineffective against these barges.

About the ninth of August, contact was made with the 37th Infantry Division of the U.S. Army, who were moving on Bairoko Harbor from Munda. Reconnaissance patrols found that the Japs had evacuated Bairoko. Large amounts of enemy material were captured including many trucks and automobiles, but much of this had been damaged by the enemy. It was found that elements of the 6th and 7th Kure Special Naval Landing Force had garrisoned Enogai and Bairoko. The First Marine Raider Battalion embarked APD's and landed at Tetere, Guadalcanal, B.S.I. the 30th of August. Shortly afterward the Battalion embarked for New Caledonia and from there was sent to Auckland, New Zealand for liberty.

23 September 1943, Lieutenant Col. Samuel B. Griffith, II, was detached and Major Charles L. Banks, USMC, took over command of the Battalion. Major John T. Rooney, USMC, joined the Battalion 14 October 1943 and assumed duties as executive officer. The First Marine Raider Battalion returned to New Caledonia; replacements were received, and training was resumed January 1944. In February the First Marine Raider Bn. was redesignated

The First Bn., Fourth Marines, Reinforced. The Regimental Commanding Officer was Lt. Col. Samuel Puller, USMC.

In March 1944 the Battalion participated in the Fourth Marines occupation of Emirau in the St. Mathias Group. No enemy opposition was met. Upon returning to Guadalcanal the latter part of April, training was resumed. 25 April 1944, the Fourth Marines reinforced and the Twenty Second Marines Reinforced, were organized into the First Provisional Marine Brigade, commanded by Brigadier General Lemuel C. Shepherd USMC. I May, prior to embarking for a theater of operations, Major Charles L. Banks was promoted to Lt. Col. and was relieved as commanding officer by Major Bernard M. Green USMC. Major John T. Rooney, USMC was detached to Regimental Weapons Company.

30 May 1944, The First Provisional Marine Brigade embarked aboard APA's and LST's to participate in the liberation of Guam. On the morning of 21 July 1944 the First Battalion, Fourth Marines, First Provisional Brigade landed on Japanese held Guam, M.I. with two companies in assault; B Company on the left, "A" Company on the right. Sgt. Robert J. DeTemple of the first platoon B Company, planted the colors on Guam as he hit the beach with the first assault wave at 0825.

Although stiff opposition was met from enemy pillboxes, the two companies were able to move through the opposition approximately 700 yards inland before the third assault wave hit the beach. This fine work allowed the reserve Company, C Company, room to come in, organize quickly, swing to the right flank and move toward their objective, Hill 40 and Bangi Point. At 1000, A and B Company advanced to the O-1 line and the Battalion was secured.

The enemy made a determined counter-attack on "A" Company's right flank and C Company's left flank. The tanks were called up and the counter-attack was turned back with heavy losses to the enemy at 1400. B Company ran into heavy opposition it's right flank as they continued to advance to the 4R-1 line toward the west slope of Mt. Alifan. Right after the counter-attack was repulsed on Hill 40, K Company. Third Battalion, Fourth Marines relieved C Company and C Company reverted to regimental reserve. Difficulty was experienced by B Company as they tried to make contact with the Second Battalion Fourth Marines on it's right, but contact was finally made at about 1300. "A" and B Company reached 4R-1 line and prepared to dig in for the night. B Company set up a road block on Harmon Road. A detachment of about 100 engineers, commanded by Lt. George L. Carter, were placed in the front line to help plug a gap in the line. Lt. Clinton B. Eastment, Battalion Plans and Operations Officer led them up the west slope of Mt. Alifan and assigned them a sector between the right flank and the left flank of B and "A" Company, respectively.

At approximately 2300 the enemy came over Mt. Alifan in force and launched repeated furious counter-attacks against "A" Company and the Engineer detachment positions throughout the night. Third

platoon, "A" Company and the Engineers suffered heavy casualties but held their positions and took a terrible toll of the enemy as they repulsed each attack.

Small groups of enemy did infiltrate through our lines and roved behind the lines all the way back to the beach. Sixteen of the enemy infiltrate to the right of the Battalion CP but were liquidated the following morning. During the first ten days of conflict the Battalion lost heavily in officers killed and wounded. Lt. Charles R. McAllister and Lee N. Minier were killed and Lt. Roger A Smith, Richard F. Ladd, and Max Belko were killed and Lt. Richard J. Beachman was wounded during the advance toward Mt. Alifan. Also Lt. John W. Clark suffered internal injuries when his tractor ran over a land mine and he had to be evacuated. Lt. Carter of the Engineers was also killed on Mt Alifan.

The next morning, C Company relieved "A" Company and G Company, Second Battalion, the Fourth Marines relieved the Engineer detachment; "A" Company reverted to Battalion reserve. Active company patrols cleared the enemy from the west slope of Mt. Alifan thereby giving our troops control of this all important ridge. During the night of 22/23 July, the enemy again counter-attacked and were repulsed. Much high explosives, hand grenades, mines, etc. were used by the enemy with very little effect. Enemy infiltration was minor and friendly daylight patrols disclosed very little enemy activity.

On 24 July the First Battalion was relieved by elements of the 305th Infantry Regiment, 77th Infantry Division. First Battalion moved into a bivouac area north of Agat Village about 200 yards behind the front lines of the Twenty-Second Marines. Sniper fire throughout the night and next morning caused eight casualties. About 1500, 25 July the First Bn. relieved the First Bn., Twenty-Second Marines with two companies, B on the left and C on the right. "A" Company was held in Battalion reserve.

Shortly after making the relief, C Company was hit hard and the second platoon, "A" Company, commanded by Lt. William A. Kerr, was sent into the right flank of the battalion sector. The encounter was short lived. After the skirmish, six reserve water cooled machine guns were moved into the line. During the night the Japs used a burning, Twenty-Second Marine tank to guide their attacks. The morning of 26 July revealed that Lt. Kerr's platoon, C Company, had killed 260 Japs during the night without themselves suffering a single casualty. Some of the dead were within a foot of the machine gun muzzles.

A terrific artillery bombardment the morning of 26 July heralded the advance to Orote Peninsula. On H hour the battalion began the advance with two companies abreast, B on the left, C Company on the right. "A" Company, in Battalion reserve. Light resistance was met as the advance continued to the coral pit and the companies reorganized. During this advance, fine infantry-tank teamwork was displayed between Lt. Willard C. Kofer's 2nd

platoon, B Company and Captain Philip C. Morell's supporting tanks in clearing out a long series of enemy pillboxes.

K-hour was at 1300, but the Japs opened up at about 1230 with terrific small arms fire and it was 1500 before the attack jumped off. After the attack was launched good progress was made toward the O-3 line. Lt. Joseph I. Deal's 2nd platoon, C Company was patrolling to make contact with B Company on the left flank when they ran into numerous, well concealed pillboxes and two large caliber artillery pieces. Heavy casualties were suffered and the situation was growing worse, so a withdrawal was ordered. B Company pulled back to tie in with C Company.

The next morning, 27 July, "A" Company relieved B Company on the Battalion left flank and the advance continued. The going was difficult and the resistance stiffening. In the afternoon "A" and C Company had broken the resistance and a line was established on the road parallel to the front leading inland from Maputo Point. On H Hour, B Company made a passage of lines through C Company on the right flank of the battalion sector and the advance continued to within 150 yards from the O-4 line. The morning of the 29th, a few "shorts" fell on "A" and B Company's position during the preparation for the jump-off and they were forced to fall back to 'get out from under'.

C Company, which was in Battalion reserve, was alerted and at 0730 C Company made a passage of lines through "A" and B Company and took up a position in front of the lines. Shortly thereafter was led into the left flank of the battalion sector and the advance continued with C on the right and B Company on the left; "A" Company in reserve. The O-4 line was advanced to the edge of the airfield and secured it at about 1500. Fourth Marine tanks made a patrol to Orote Point and the Peninsula was officially declared secured.

Colors were raised on the Marine Barracks at 1330. On 30 July B "A" and C Company sent patrols by different routes to the end of the Peninsula. They discovered 3 dugouts, one observation tower, 4 six inch coastal guns and considerable quantities of supplies. On 31 July the First Bn. embarked aboard trucks and moved to the top of ridge lines between Mt. Tenjo and Mr. Alifan and took up defensive positions protecting the southern flank. "A" Company, commanded by First Lt. Frank A. Kemp, was sent on a three day combat patrol to Togeha Bay, north to Ylig Bay, south to Talofofa Bay with the mission of contacting and destroying the enemy and liberate and direct through our lines all Guamanians in that sector.

The patrol reached Aslusci on 1 August and liberated about 1500 Guamanians who became rapt with emotion and joy at the sight of their liberators. That night the citizens of Aslusci held a banquet in their honor and broke out Canadian Club whiskey which they had hidden away for the day they were freed from the Japs. "A" Company set-up their base camp at Togeha Bay. The next day

two reconnaissance patrols left the base camp; Lt. Joseph L. Jamison and thirteen men to Ylig Bay and Sgt Thomas P. Ayers Jr. and thirteen men to Talofofa Bay.

Lt. Jamison's patrol made no contact with Japs or natives. Sgt. Ayer's patrol made contact with several Guamanians and instructed them to pass the word that all Guamanians would be escorted through our lines from Togoha Bay. Later 200 natives reported to Togoha Bay. The patrol reported that there was no evidence that the Japs had fled from that sector. The remainder of the Company led by First Lt. Kemp moved out on a combat patrol up Togcha River where thirty Japs, officers and enlisted men, were reported hiding out in four caves. The caves were found to be evacuated. One heavy machine gun was captured. The next morning citizens of Aslusci gave a farewell breakfast to First Lt. Kemp and his liberators.

"A" Company, less a squad of 15 Marines, commanded by Lt. John Clark moved out at 0700, 3 August to rejoin the Battalion. Lt. Clark and his men escorted the 1700 odd Guamanians to the Civil Affairs Committee at Mangino Village and set-up a defensive position composed mostly of natives and the Marines. The Marines maintained an active patrol over the area for three days and then rejoined the Battalion after a permanent camp had been established at Mangino Village.

On the 3rd of August the First Battalion moved 3/4 of a mile to a site east of Agana Airfield, marching practically the full distance as part of Corps reserve. On the 6th of August the First Battalion moved out of Corps Reserve and went into bivouac behind the Third Marine area. The next morning the Battalion made a passage of lines through the 3rd Bn., Third Marines, Third Marine Division and advanced to the O-4 line. A defense for the night was established with B Company on the left, "A" Company in the center and C Company on the right.

The next day, 8 August, the O-5 line was reached and a defense set-up on the road between RJ-478 and RJ-460. On 9 August the Battalion reverted to Regimental Reserve and moved into an area north of RJ-460.

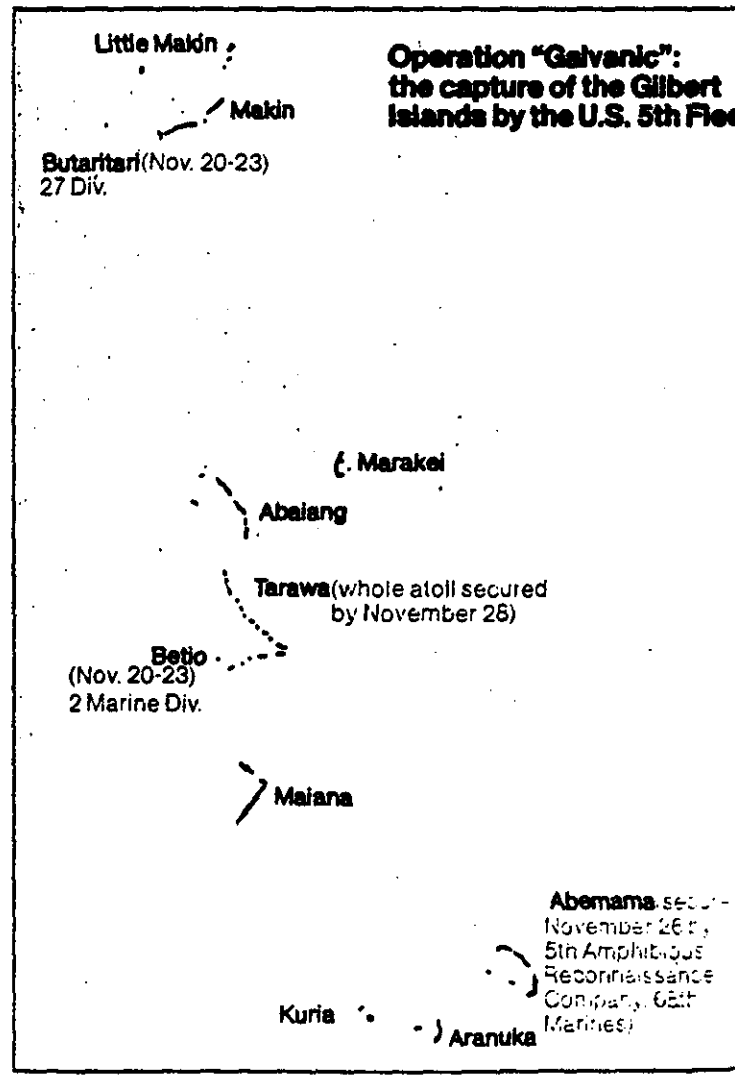
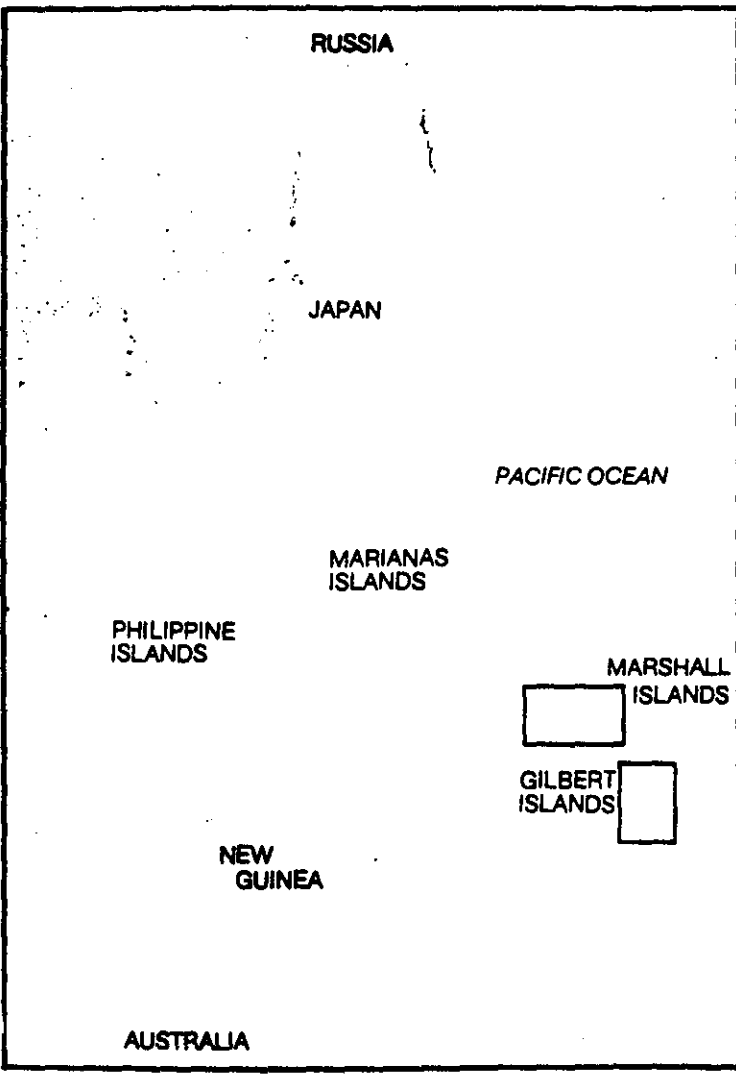
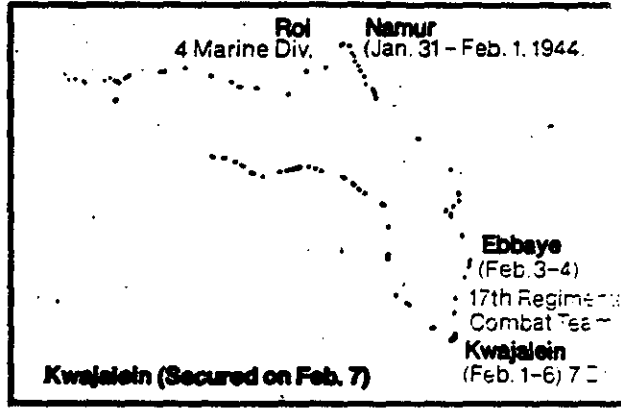
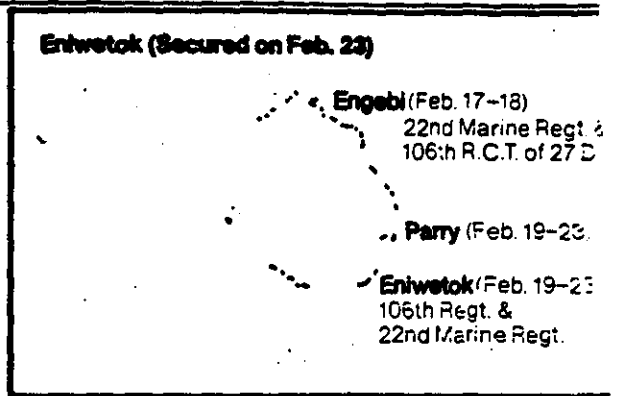
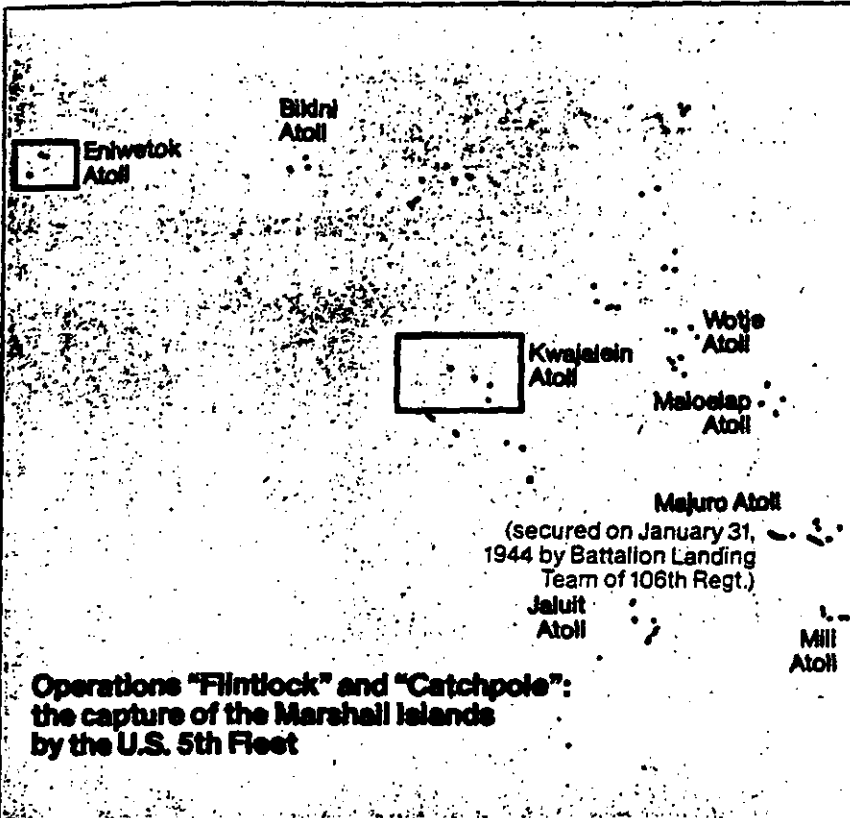
On the 10th of August 1944, Guam was officially declared secured. From the 10th of August to the 27th, the Battalion was engaged in active daily patrols to the northern end of the island.

August 27th, the Battalion embarked aboard ship and returned to Guadalcanal, B.S.I..

Bernard W. Green  
Major-USMC  
Commanding

OFFICIAL  
W. A. Kerr,  
1st Lt. USMCR  
BN-2





The Diary Of Ben Love (Australian Trooper)  
New Guinea: December 1942-January 1943

Submitted by: Cmdr. Donald B. Long, USN (Ret.)

Sun. 13th Dec. Started out from our Ilolo camp for a 3 days Regt. "stunt" - everybody well 'browned off' - when will we stop stunting and start fighting - or was dear Sir Thomas just putting another joke over us. Started to rain about 6 p.m. - Looked like being a good night - for ducks.

Mon. 14th Yes, we enjoyed our first night 'neath the tropical skies. Off at 6.30 a.m. towards Owers Corner, 'enemy' supposed to be retreating to that point, so we trudged on, not very interested in either supposed enemy or our own movements. Then at 1.20 p.m. a jeep tore up the road and made straight for C.O. - Major Wilson and Cpt. Anderson were on board. In a few minutes a miracle happened to that whole line of weary troops - order flashed down road - about turn, back to camp pronto "it's on". Did return trip in record time - fit for hospital not front line by time we reached camp. Left Ilolo 6.30 p.m. by truck - oh boy! wasn't it good to ride on a truck again. Arrived Moresby camp 8.30 p.m. - spent all night packing, sorting gear and discussing where and what was to be our first real job.

Tues. 15th Another truck ride to Ward's 'drome [airfield] at 6.30 a.m. The place was busy spot - planes of all sizes coming and going, reminded me of Railway Square during peak hours. Slight delay of 2 hrs. whilst they re-organised plane accommodation, then another hold-up so pilot of our plane could check up on weights, seemed to think Army was trying to put one over on him. As though the Army would do such a thing. Heard mechanic say to pilot "yes Bill there's a leak in petrol system somewhere, will fix it when you get back". Anyway we filled up both tanks, so should do return trip with a gallon or so to spare. These Allied airmen are sure doing a great job, quietly and without fuss or praise. Took off 9 a.m. - over mountains and jungle the whole journey. Reached Popandetta strip 9.35 a.m. - just a clearing of jungle roughly 1000 yds. long 200 yds. wide and cannot be used after heavy rain. Soon as we alighted native carriers quickly unloaded gear - chaps from 'front lines' climbed aboard and away she went. Those fellows, mostly 25th Batt. certainly looked 'all in'. "Yes", they told us, "it's tough up there". Into native village and boiled the old billy. [made tea] Left at 12.30 p.m. for Soputa - that 12 miles of mostly kuni grass country, with sun burning on our backs was a corker - nearly petered out after 4 miles, came good after dip and rest. Reached Soputa 6.00 p.m. Made camp in amongst trees and vines - sometimes Japs send bombers over at night. We could hear boom of guns that night - getting close now.

Wed. 16th Spent quiet day resting and bathing in river - Col. Logan with a troop went forward and made recce. of track [trail] to Yanks' perimeter (Huggins) about 3 3/4 miles north up Soputa-Sanananda Rd. - this position is actually surrounded by Nips - with our fellows (30th Brigade) holding line 1200 yds.

south of the Yanks.

Thur. 17th C.O. told us about his trip and just what our job was. They struck no trouble until nearing Huggins. Then at a spot along track was a stretch of open kuni country - had to crawl over 200 yds, snipers had certain parts covered - our chaps all got through but one of the Yankee patrol with them did not stay low enough and paid for it with his life. C.O. was really moved by his first contact with the "muddy and bloody" business called war. He said, when crawling along that death track [he] realised his map case was strapped to pack on back, felt it made him more conspicuous and must stand out like "bloody black board with C.O. in large letters printed thereon". Told us our job is to reach Huggins next day, then on 20th at dawn start big push towards Sanananda Pt. only 2 1/2 - 3 miles further north. Enemy strength unknown. G.O.C. of 7th Div. also popped in. Told us all about lousy Jap and his methods of fighting - said if we do job in quick time, and thought we would, 16th Brig. including himself will be "Home" for Xmas. Pretty good - for 16th Brigade. Wished us luck in this our first effort.

Fri. 18th Left Soputa 7.30 a.m. - reached 30th Brigade lines 8.30 a.m. - turned left off road and soon in "no Man's land". My God! I'll say it was No Man's land - this day we had our first taste of "Mud and blood" - twice I tripped and went head first into about 4 ft. of "choice" mud and slush - it was slow, tedious going - just after finishing the pleasant 200 yds. crawl through the danger zone, met A.Sqd. chaps who had come up day before - they were patrolling and guarding the track - had struck Jap patrol - killed 2 and lost 2 - one Nip was lying in mud near path, large pool of blood spread into muddy water through which we must splash. Nearing Huggins came to clearing where Yank and Jap patrols had clashed - dozens of Jap bodies about, only the bones with all clothing on them - phew! what a smell - our native boys coming back as we went forward had pieces of cloth tied over mouth and nose. Reached Huggins 6 p.m. had to dig in immediately, then a spot of food and so to rest, believe me we needed it. The Yanks in this perimeter have been here 21 days - lost about 200 men since leaving Soputa - 220 men left. It has been a terrible experience for these chaps - they look "all in".

Sat. 19th Up at crack-O-dawn for big push - with a bit of luck we may make Pt. by nightfall. A Sqd. moved first - R.H.Q. - B Sqd. then C Sqd. We sat ready to move hour after hour with spasmodic bursts of firing out in front - but no word of progress made by our other Sqds. Snipers in trees and M/g's on left front gave us a burst every now and then - they are deadly too - got to keep down we found. In fact we soon were like Sam Small at 'Battle of Trafalgar' when he fell into sea with cannon ball under each arm - "this up and down sort of existence made us quite mad" - trouble is you cannot retaliate because you cannot see them. Their positions are well placed and camouflage excellent. About noon came first news bulletin - A, Squad were 600 yds. forward and digging in - R.H.Q. and B Squad also up - taken Japs by surprise and not many casualties so far - D Squad going to try right flank - we were to move round left - a dangerous journey, had to crawl all the way. No.7 troop led

C.Squad and John Terry was hit in arm only few yds down track. We started 2.30 p.m. - what a time we had - crawling through that kuni, along path made by other Sqds - all along was abandoned gear - heat was terrific and weight of pack etc. made it a real nightmare. About 50 yds up a m/g or two gave us the works. Gerry, Rod and I were fairly close together and did we keep flat - gosh! there were a few of those bullets that came mighty close

\_\_\_\_\_ So we spend another night with our Yankee friends. I can't help thinking things must be fairly sticky for our chaps out there in front. Communications seem to have broken down.

Sun. 20th Again awoke early - had scrumptious breakfast of bully and biscuits - funny how every meal these days we always ask for 'bully and biscuits. Our issue of Tommy-cookers is a blessing, we can boil up even in the front lines. News at last -

A Squad had made couple of attacks North of their perimeter with disastrous results - over 20 killed. Part of R.H.Q. were with A - also B sqd - D Sqd on Right had not been able to make any headway, one troop pinned down out in front - could not move either way. Then I heard C.O. was hit - his batman had got back badly smashed up - said C.O. wounded going up yesterday - decided to return to Huggins - coming back was hit again and also wounded. Col. Logan evidently knew he was through so ordered others to try and make perimeter. A rotten business - I had a great respect for our Leader - it took him a long time to 'buy' this fight for his Regiment - God knows he paid dearly for it soon enough. At 11 a.m. our troop was to make recce. of left flank. Just when about to leave they pelted us for over 5 minutes - in the scramble I fell backwards - did a somersault into a trench - Don reckons bullets missed my posterior, as I sailed through the air, by inches - recce. postponed. Reg. White's section went out later, saw m/g posts, 3 or 4 guns with no doubt usual concealed snipers all covering perimeter. Reg. got a couple of Japs. First blood to good old 9 troop. Moved to Right side of perimeter this evening. Convoy of Native carriers came up, brought tucker and mail for Yanks, took our wounded back - my word the extra rations and mail made new men of our Yankee comrades. These native carriers are game fellows - doing good work too.

Mon. 21st Just potted around in between 'bursts' - still no move forward for 6 Sqd. Had a long yarn with 2 fellows from Iowa. Borrowed a tin helmet to wash in - one of them asked for loan of soap, they had run out 10 days ago - gave him a piece - he insisted I take half a candy bar (chocolate it is) in return. Being rather partial to chocolate I accepted generous offer and gave them half packet of our famous Arnotts biscuits - altogether a most satisfactory exchange. Like us Aussies our friends are fond of sports - dancing - pretty girls and moonlight etc. - also a 'spot' or two now and then. They sure would be glad to get out of this Gawd-damned hole, back to a civilized spot where a fellow could get himself a haircut, decent feed and a drink. I do not doubt it either - fancy 23 days in this accursed spot.

As I sit in my one-man trench writing, just noticed small 'cross' of 2 sticks in ground couple of yds. to my left. Yes, there was the small metal identity disc tied to

across - Jack Deveraux - son of Mrs. J. Deveraux, Minneapolis - lies there.

Tues. 22nd. Orders came to Batch. that we would be moving out on Right flank to lay and maintain a telephone line between Huggins and our forward perimeter. Great day for our American comrades - Seems someone decided place needed a "spring-clean". Young officer took men out in front to 'tidy' up. Result, Officer killed, 5 men wounded. It's a blasted shame, these young fellows do not seem to know what's struck them yet. How the hell can young inexperienced chaps, led by officers with no more, maybe less, experience, be expected to fight these Japs with years of jungle training, and not suffer tremendous casualties. Ah! says our Military Geniuses, they will gain experience, in time - Yes, and in time whole Battalions are just about wiped out. So it goes on.

Went over to R.A.P. this evening for ointment - scores on legs rather troublesome. Busy spot R.A.P. so did not linger for a yarn - had only walked few yards when - Whizz! Bang! and over I went flat on to my face - Jap hand grenade landed about 10 yards behind me and amongst R.A.P. trenches - luckily nobody hurt - it certainly shook me up.

Wed. 23rd. Rained cats and dogs last night - smart little Tpr. Love fixed ground sheet as a roof before it started - felt very pleased with myself as I lay in my trench, all nice and dry, whilst most of the others hastily prepared any makeshift shelter. But as our leaders tell us - our worst enemy is 'complacency' - alas & alack, ground sheet sagged in centre - after half an hour of heavy downpour realized something had to be done - tried to tip water carefully over bottom end of trench, but tipped it all over my dry little self instead. Was I mortified & was I wet. Left Huggins 10 a.m. to lay line - scheme is to take cable through to James's & 2 troops 7 & 9 will make small perimeters along track - thus keep this supply path patrolled & maintain cable. Leaving Huggins we passed through the Jap camp our Yankee friends had cleaned up 23 days ago. They caught the Nips asleep - killed over 100 of them. From number of skeletons & high stench they certainly made a slaughter house of it. Here we are, 20 of us in our small circle of trenches - we shall live, sleep and eat in these 6'x3'x2' dug-outs, except when patrolling line. Always 4 men on watch - Nips' long suit is attacking & sniping men in these perimeters, but they are definitely best method of all round protection in this God-forsaken jungle country. This would be ideal place for Sydney's catchment area - only dug down 1 1/2 feet for my 'home', & find myself in 3" of water - poor old Gerry is even worse. "Visit the Tropics & die", they say - my sincere recommendation is to 'die' first.

Thur. 24th It is a strain on the old nerves doing the hour 'watch' through the night. One in four we do - every time a branch shakes or leaf falls everyone becomes tense, rifles & Owen-guns are grasped tightly as we crouch down in our holes - you cannot see, only listen - and wait. Then suddenly shots ring out - someone, somewhere in that blackness has started a little game of blind shooting practice. What they see to shoot at

goodness knows, but the Nips evidently think it worthwhile to scare us & keep us awake, with this aimless shooting, shouting & letting off flares over our perimeters. When the Jap goes to rest our 25 pounders & mortars commence pasting their positions - there seems to be no shortage of shells from the amount of stuff they send over. Yes - we certainly enjoy these nights of tropical splendour. Apart from going out along line to make sure all \_\_\_\_\_ sumptuous mixture of bully - M.&V. & half tin of carrots - also we received 1 tin between 2 men of American sweet rations (5 biscuits, 4 boiled sweets, powdered coffee & 3 lumps of sugar) - goodie goodie. Just before dark Sgt. Batchelor sent round message - "no Carols please, our Jap neighbors might not appreciate them".

Fri. 25th Christmas Day - pleasant thought - did not notice any of our boys yelling "Happy Xmas" - maybe we are not too 'happy' - maybe. We are now doing recce. & fighting patrols, other troop looking after line. Have been out twice myself but struck nothing so far. Don Doyle with 2 other chaps found themselves within 20 yds of Jap posts on the last patrol of day - luckily were not spotted by snipers who usually cover Nip m/g emplacements. How different was last Xmas, in those cold but dry barracks at Aleppo - the snow covering the plains around us like a huge white sheet. Inside we were full of good things & beer - parcels had arrived a day or so before & drinks of all kinds were obtainable in all canteens. The chaps are discussing that cheery scene in Syria - trying to decide who drank the most beer. Personally I consider our old friend Ern took the prize - he was practically unconscious from Xmas Eve until 2nd day of the New Year.

Sat. 26th First troop casualty today - Don went out with Batch & others to locate exact position of m/g nests - this information is given to Anti & Mortar crews - helps them in their blasting out of these well dug in & camouflaged Jap posts. Coming back our lads sighted 2 Nips cautiously moving along track about 30 yds on their right - the idea was to lie dog-o, but Don could not resist giving them a burst. He must have only got one of them, for after laying quiet to see what would happen next, Batch ordered our fellows to make for camp - immediately a shot rang out & Don went down with bullet wound in face - it caught tip of nose & tore through left cheek - they put his field dressing on & came back 'pronto'. When they arrived at perimeter Don was in front - he had bloody dressing around face & blood was streaming from tip of nose. First words he said on coming to his trench, next door to mine, were - "Anyway Ben, I got one of the B----s, I got one of them for sure". Has gone down to Base hospital now - our M.O. does not think it will be serious - hope not. Rather quiet all day, other than this incident, only active things are the mosquitoes - they sure do bite.

Sun. 27th. They gave us a good scare last night - just before dark firing commenced in the jungle on our right & shots passed over our heads. We gazed at one another & whispered various comments about our nice lonely spot in case of attack and prepared for the worst. As it became darker all of us swore we could hear noises - first one side then the other. My God it is

a nightmare alright laying there in total blackness, waiting, listening & expecting. During the morning had pleasure of hearing but not seeing a dog-fight overhead - evidently our planes that come over every day from Moresby to bomb and strafe enemy at Buna & Gona had met a little opposition for a change. New C.O. came through on way to Regt. - a Col. Moses - escaped with General Bennett from Malaya. He appeared all spruce & clean - made us realize what sights we must present - no shave \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ next to mine, during his second watch got a bad attack of the jitters. Woke me up 'just for company' - poor fellow was dead scared & so was Trp. Love during his hours of picket. We left our little 'homely circle' this afternoon & moved to James' perimeter, so Regt. is now all together again. Blow me, it is a fairly open area but our chaps make small fires & have tea - whacko. Also do not have to talk in whispers. Batch told us we have a special job in morning - starting at crack-o-dawn. We are not doing any pickets tonight so can have good rest, we hope.

Tues. 29th. Our "good rest" lasted until about 10.30 p.m. then it poured - wouldn't it! Off at 5.30 a.m. - our task is to locate & wipe out m/g posts on right of Rd. between this perimeter & Huggins. We stalked through undergrowth & overgrowth, mud & slush, but contacted no enemy during the whole 10 hours of our travelling. Mighty lucky for us too. Seems a troop from B Sqd. went out on similar job down left flank of Rd. More open on this side & easier going. The troop located enemy, attacked. Lost 9 men out of 19 - 5 killed, 4 wounded. Shot a few Japs, but certainly did not wipe out their post. They are too well dug in & too strong for our small parties to tackle - but it seems our new C.O. has a scheme, or been given orders to 'eliminate' these Nip nests - Looks to me as though what he will do is 'eliminate' 7th Aust. Cav.. But of course that is only my idea & I am NOT the C.O.

Yes, we bought a dear fight - it is 10 days since our good Col. Logan led his men from Huggins - plan was to reach Sanananda Pt. that night. Here we are in our own perimeter, roughly 500 yds forward & no hope of further advance against the strong enemy positions in front & our casualties have now passed the 100 mark.

Wed. 30th. Our Troop had a day on picket - all quiet for us. 'A' Squad sent out to try & destroy enemy position that had proved too much for 1 troop. At same time a company of 39th Batt. from Huggins attacked from their end. The Jap perimeter is still there. 'A' Squad lost 7 killed & 9 wounded - goodness knows how the Militia lads fared. Talking to Rod Frost after he returned with slight shrapnel wounds in back. Showed me his tin helmet - 2 holes in it where bullet had gone straight through - must have singed his hair. A remarkable escape. He went into attack at one point with 4 other chaps - they were all killed within a distance of 20 yds of enemy m/g nest, when he opened up on them. Luckily Rod fell into shallow trench - it was whilst crawling back some time later that shrapnel from our own mortars got him in the back. So again we gained nothing & good men were just mowed down.

Thur. 31st The 'Powers that be' have changed their

tactics - now we are sending out 'fighting patrols' - all supply routes & ambush any convoys of Japs & their "boys" that come along. Our troop has honour of first patrol. We were to move out at dawn, but it rained - in fact it poured all night, so job was postponed until evening. Before lunch small party went out to reconnoitre track Japs were supposed to be using. Heard shots soon after - they came back later with story of having shot 2 out of 3 Nips that happened to come along track whilst \_\_\_\_\_ 'Tis New Year's Eve - no doubt we shall usher in the New Year at midnight with an extra long & loud bombardment by our anti & mortars.

1st Jan. 1943 We spent the New Year's Eve out on the supply track waiting to shoot up anything & everything that came along. For 3 hours we sat, silent & still, but nothing happened. The journey back to our perimeter in dark was no joke & we were mighty glad to hear a ready reply to our password signal when approaching the spot we judged was perimeter outer line.

"A pleasant & prosperous New Year", is the greeting heard on all sides, this damp & muddy morning - tut-tut. One thing we all hope is that this New Year of 1943 sees the end of the war, & I trust a New Era of sane thinking & sensible thinking for all. Again No. 9 troop is in the boom. We are to do a little tour around right flank of enemy lines & do a bit of damage to his stores, dumps & so on. Just no trouble at all to 9 trp. Left James' at 1.30 a.m. loaded up with 5 days rations & extra ammo. Talk about a weight on one's shoulders. Hercules had nothing on us for that first day out. Must say information Ken Hurst (our leader for this expedition) gave us at first halt was a great tonic. American reinforcements were expected within two or three days, so our Regt. were to have a rest at Soputa. When we had done our little job we would join Unit down there. Whoopee! Then off to see the Wizard we went - going was through jungle for first 1000 yds or so, then struck the swamp. For hours we staggered & floundered, cursed & wept almost as we moved slowly through that swirling muddy water. Gradually it became deeper & the vines denser, until at last we realized that it was impossible to go around Jap positions in this direction. I might mention in passing that at this point Tpr. Love was standing in water up to waist line, whilst maps were scrutinized & bearings taken re. suitable spot for nights camp. No doubt others were not so bad - Merch. Macdonald for instance would only be dampish about knee high, instead of feeling the splash under armpits as little Bennie did. At last made high ground & found camp site about 6 p.m. Was it good to remove those packs from our aching shoulders. Still we had cause to thank the Lord for small 'mercies' in shape of our 'tommy cooker'. This meant a dixie of tea, & believe me tea does revive you.

Sat. 2nd At 7.30 a.m. moved off to try & about-flank his main defence line, keeping closer & so avoid swamp. Soon in Jap area saw patrol of 5 men, but did not bother them. Had lunch at creek crossing where Nip had built huts. Evidently big camp close by. During afternoon sections did recce. patrols to right & left of creek - our section were sent right of creek, ordered to move forward for certain distance, then back. Main thing was not to be seen or heard. 'Strike me pink', only went 300 paces &



there was the accursed swamp. Another 500 paces & again it became impossible to move forward - heard sounds of great activity in jungle close by on our left. So back to main body we staggered. Arrived at rendezvous as shot rang out. John killed his first Jap. They searched body - found pouch with leather wallet inside containing fountain pen - \_\_\_\_\_ had no chance of breaking through. Ken had not been ordered to commit suicide altogether, so he thought after further recce. patrols in morning we would move back after about 11 a.m. to Regt. Motion was carried unanimously.

Sun. 3rd 'Mercy on us', what a night was last night - just after dark a terrific storm broke over us, it teemed. Then it settled down to a nice steady downpour that continued for hours - my legs too became a source of annoyance. Lay there cursing the rain & scratching the old legs till dawn brought a new day & activity. Off at 7.30 a.m. for last recce. patrol - again crossed creek. I fell off log for 2nd time, but was soaked to the bone so it mattered not. We felt sure Japs would be on look out, so moved slowly & cautiously. No sign of his Nips - Ken decided to get close view of perimeter & its lay-out. He & Cyril went forward. Two others & myself (there were only 5 of us on this patrol) covered their rear. Only covered about 40 yds, found themselves only 15 yds or so from outer edge of large enemy defence line. 3 Japs happened to be in a group just to their right - one of them spotted Cyril, so knowing further recce. was out he gave them a full mag. of his Owen. Down went those Nips & out came our chaps at the double. The 3 of us in rear needed no explanation & followed the others across creek - also at double. All gathered at rendezvous by 11 a.m. & started back to Regt. almost immediately. Met native convoy on track coming from Huggins so Ken decided to push on for that perimeter - arrived 1 p.m., had good feed. Yanks were now in control, 600 of them in this perimeter, 300 up at James'. They were all fresh troops & itching to have a shot at something - well they would get plenty to shoot at before long we told them. At 3.30 p.m. we left our Yankee friends for our own rear lines & a rest. Rained like 'hell' during trip down, but though wet & weary we didn't care a 'hoot', there was sleep - bathe in creek, chance to wash clothes, at the end of this hike. Reached our H.Q. around 6 o'clock. Found Y.M.C.A. hut & had cup of tea & biscuits. Ken left us & Cpl. of the 36 Batt., who were holding this defence line, told us to follow him. We expected to go down Rd. to Soputa - instead moved up towards front lines. Turned off Rd. & into swamp land, forward of trenches - given posts as 'standing patrol; & told to be careful Jap perimeter only 40 yds in front. What a sell! - instead of a rest, right in front lines amidst mud & slush - 2 men to each post, which means 1 hour on watch, 1 hour off. To make it just perfect, Batch came along with the cheerful news that the 'posts' to our right had already been under enemy fire - in fact as we moved in Japs must have observed movement & opened up. Already the devils had got 3 of our chaps. Sgt. Davies killed - Bob Brasch & George Aldridge badly wounded. Bob & George are troop mates. Poor old Barry Davies, he has certainly gone to a 'resting' place. Damn all wars, & our rotten stupid

ignorance & complacency on these vital matters of international affairs, that allows men of warped minds to lead us like sheep into wholesale slaughtering of men, women & children. Naturally it was dig-in 'pronto'. Our position is behind large tree, we cannot dig down so have built up protection\_\_\_\_\_ tight for weeks in the lines on high, dry ground behind our present position. Only few hours before they left some bright officer decided to go forward - why? nobody ever found out. So into mud & water they crept, then just held position till we came & relieved them. Trouble was a force of Yanks were expected, but rain held up planes landing at Popondetta strip. Well, some unit had to hold line - so we were pushed in. An ideal REST spot - personally I would prefer Wahroongah Sanitorium. What a day!

Mon. 4th Another wet, sleepless night - getting used to it now. Around 10.30 a.m. a little bully & rice came up, also a few mouthfulls of cold tea. All cooking done at Regt. cook-house 1/2 mile in rear & brought to Squad. H.Q. by 'boys' - we collect from our H.Q. Naturally not exactly boiling by time it reaches the men. The Yanks are coming to relieve us - but still too wet - needs at least 2 dry days for 'strip' to be usable - it rains every day. So what. Our 25 pounders & mortars are sure pasting the Jap perimeter in front. Noise is terrific & tops of trees crashing down only few yds. away - pieces of red hot shrapnel are falling pretty close too. 3 of our troop sent out with malaria today. Boys are getting pretty weak, & we all have this wretched rash. M.O. says plenty soap & water only cure for it. Thank goodness extra man coming for each post tomorrow - this will allow every man to have 3 hrs. break each day, to rear, have wash & scrub clothes in creek - best news for weeks.

Tues. 5th. Last night Jock Munro joined us in our 'log cabin' by the waters edge! Made wonderful difference - 1 hour in 2 off. I went to rear from 3 till 6 p.m. Had cup of tea & biscuit at Y.M.C.A. hut, also given small piece of soap. Doing excellent work, these Y.M. & Salvation Army chaps. Then a dip - rub down & scrubbing clothes. 'Tis said "Cleanliness is next to Godliness". Feel now that Cleanliness is part of Godliness. Gosh that clear running stream, the soapy lather, and then to feel clean from head to toe - I'll never forget it. Poor George Aldridge died - was wounded Sunday - they could not, or just did not try to take him straight back to M.D.S.. It was too late next day, gangrene set in & he passed away. Poor old George, he did not want to come up to this B----- Sanananda show right from the start.

Wed. 6th. Ordered to move another 20 yds forward - we now have clear view of enemy movements should he attack - a bit too clear says Cyril. Our new 'log cabin' is entirely surrounded by bog holes full of stinking water etc. Had discussion today with Cyril on 'hereafter'. He considers there must be something, his best & lifelong pal was killed on first day of our attack - he just cannot realise Hitchie has gone for good. My idea is not to worry about 'hereafters', let us concern ourselves with making this life on earth a better & finer existence for future generations. Well, looks as though we shall stay here until 'blitz' starts against Japs in this area. Buna show is now over, so

Yankee & A.I.F troops are coming round to help clean up "Sanananda pocket".

Thur. 7th Have been told to build roof of some kind immediately - 2 of our chaps wounded last night by shrapnel from our own guns. Bombardment of Japs\_\_\_\_\_convoy of native carriers taking stores & ammo up to Yanks at Huggins - must have been over 200 carriers in the 'train'!

Fri. 8th. Too bad - our wonderful roof sprung a leak during night - this morning I was dry from head to waist, soaked to skin from there down. During my break this afternoon met advance party of 2/12th Batt. - the 9th, 10th & 12th Battalions, 18th Brigade are on way to this battlefront. These chaps remembered us, we relieved them at Aleppo, Syria just twelve months ago. A long cry from Aleppo to Sanananda - how we A.I.F. men have travelled - Fitzpatrick has nothing on us. Well this time they relieve us. When big blitz does start, there will be 'hell' let loose along this 3 mile stretch to the coast. We have now had 22 days of it so the sooner it starts, better we will like it. Cyril was promoted today - a good man & deserves the stripes - he has gone to 13 troop. Frank Boyle takes his place with us. Frank is old cobber of mine in 2nd Armoured Regt. together, comes from Manly - that reminds me, received letters from Jean & Jen yesterday. They both wrote of grand picnic at Manly Beach - kindly told me how they really enjoyed marvelous array of dainty delicacies & even beer, supplied by good old Den. What a contrast to our Xmas day "picnic". But it is good to know things are still O.K. back there, & little pleasure & fun is to be had by our folk who are waiting & praying. I guess it's just as hard to wait & watch as it is to be up & doing.

Sat. 9th. Had rather a disturbed night. We have a 'trip' wire about 15 yds in front of our 'fort' - stretching to neighboring posts left & right. On these trip wires we tie tin cans - anyone crawling towards us would naturally kick wire & cans rattle. 3 times those B---- cans alarmed us last night - goodness knows whether his Nips was prowling around, but it positively does upset ones' sleep to think he maybe out there. 18th Brig. are here at last & Yanks have received further reinforcements, so fun will soon be on. A friend of Frank's, Padre Wotton, popped in this afternoon - only young chap, he has seen lots of fighting in N.G., been attached to Militia Brigades, now with 12th Batt. A.I.F. - is definitely pro-A.I.F. He is quite the regular soldier in manner & use of choice adjectives. Frank said later he was amazed at the change in his outlook & speech. Seems even ministers are affected by environment & companionship.

Sun 10th. 12th Batt. went into action - only skirmishes to pin-point the Jap main m/g posts. They gained a little ground on righthand side of Rd. so we now have the Jap perimeter entirely surrounded. When having my break met a bunch of these 12th Batt. chaps - most of them reinforcements, young fellows only just over from Aussie - fresh, clean & shaven. This glorious game of war is going to give them a nasty jar, but we all must live & learn they tell us. Oh yes, we 'learn' alright, it's the 'living' that is the snag in this game. Not been

feeling too good lately - touch of dysentery - taking dope from the R.A.P. - hope it works. Most inconvenient this dashing around in mud & water looking for spot to dig a hole - in darkness it's a nightmare. Great brainwave\_\_\_\_\_and watch tanks go into action against positions we tried to take on our flat feet. Received a gift from heaven, met our good Padre & he gave me parcel for our trio, because Frank & myself do not smoke he decided to give us a few sweets. Parcel contained large slab chocolate, packet biscuits, P.K.'s & a Womens Weekly, Oh boy was that chocolate good - thank the Lord for men like Padre Hartley. Crikey the shells & mortars are coming over thick & heavy - pieces of shrapnel crashing down on our roof fairly often. Believe me we keep well down when these barrages are on, those Japs in front must be having a pleasant time - the mad fools, why don't they surrender, they must know their position is hopeless. Just heard Col. Campbell was killed - he was on our Right in rather open spot - had been doing great work with a Browning. Seems he was sitting on side of trench - not a very sensible thing to do no doubt - when they got him. Damn nice chap, Col.

Tues. 12th. Frank gave us fine scare - just before dawn on his 'watch' he reckons heard movement just in front. Threw 2 hand grenades, one of which landed only few yards away - Jock & I thought we were gone this time.

Well, the Big Blitz started at 7.45 a.m.. Talk about a din - shells, mortars & bullets flying in all directions - at 8.30 a.m. firing died down & soon after heard tanks go up the Rd. Came the sound of heavy guns firing, then we saw smoke & flames over near the Rd. right at Jap perimeter. Must be their post our fellows had blown up we told each other - good old tanks, they are the answer to these Jap pill-boxes & fox-holes. Later we heard just what had taken place. Those Nips had been prepared for just this kind of attack - had a 37 m.m. anti-tank gun, also mined the Rd. 2 tanks knocked out within a few minutes - the flames we saw were one of them burned to a shell with all its crew, poor devils. He is a tough nut to crack, this so often despised little yellow chap. In afternoon I was at Y.M. hut, read yesterdays New Guinea Gold, our local 'rag' printed in Moresby - big headlines 'JAPS IN SANANANDA AREA FACE ANNIHILATION' then lots more bullsh-- that read as though it was all over, bar shouting. Coming back met convoy of wounded men - 12th Batt. chaps who had gone forward after the tanks. Talking to their Padre, he told me casualties this morning had been heavy - 113 of the lads down & only 43 of them brought out. Yes Sir! the Jap sure faces annihilation: Our Squad is now down to 37, we are holding this front line with 110 Cav. men instead of 300. Just as well 'his Nips' is in no strength to attack us.

Put myself on strict diet - tea - biscuits & milk - seems to help alright.

Wed. 13th Weather seems to have cleared up thank goodness - no rain for 2 whole days & 1 night. Things are exceptionally quiet today. Padre dropped in to see us - he goes round nearly every day along our lines, yarning with the boys. Down at the creek found water had risen nearly 3 ft. - good fun watching native boys & another crowd of fresh Yankee troops cross the old

bridge which is now under water. Wonder why things are so quiet today.

Thur. 14th What a day! First incident was a burst from an Owen gun just before 'stand to' at 6.15 a.m. - seemed to come from Peters' dug-out on our left\_\_\_\_. Going for my break at 11 a.m. met a couple of B squad chaps who told me 2 Japs had been shot in similar manner along their line. At 12.30 we were ordered back to our positions ready to move into new forward line. At 1.00 p.m. we moved over No Man's land behind 12th Batt. & across Jap perimeter - but the enemy had flown, only stray men in dug-outs or wandering around more or less dead on their feet were left of be cleaned up. The stench was terrific - with dead lying all over the place, in various stages of decay & rot. After going forward for about 500 yds we were ordered back, another Company of 12th took our place. Blow me down, as we moved back through these chaps I bumped right into Frank Turk - fancy meeting old Frank in a spot like this. He joined the 12th at Good-enough Island - been through Buna show & now this mess. Hope I have a chance to see him again later. We are in new position for tonight, on left flank - dry sandy ground for a change.

Fri. 15th. Of all jobs they have given Cav. today's work takes the bun. 18th Brigade are moving right through to coast, round left flank of main Jap positions. We are in reserve - too weak in numbers & physical strength for battle, our task is cleaning up area - salvage guns & ammo, also bury the dead. 7th Div. Undertakers Unit - "Wouldn't it"!

Phew! what a job - First we salvaged - precious little worth picking up. The business of rummaging around amongst dead bodies looking for souvenirs does not appeal to me in the least. During afternoon our troop buried remains of Aussies who had fallen in early part of the push against the Japs in this area. Padre was in charge - in one grave we buried ten skulls - found them all close together. Searching & digging around we managed to find 8 identity discs of this particular group. Padre gave a short Service, finishing with the 23 Psalm. I could not help feeling how strange was this desolate, foul scene - the little band of men standing around that shell hole containing the remains of 19 young Australians - 10 gleaming white skulls - & listening to the quiet voice of our Padre - "He maketh me to lie down in Green Pastures - My cup runneth over, Surely Goodness & Mercy" - It is so confounded difficult to reconcile the words written & spoken by Man & our actions & deeds towards one another. When, Oh when will we practice what we preach.

Latest information is 18th Bgd. are nearing coast - struck little enemy opposition, but deep & tough swampy going. Wonder how Frankie is faring. The trp. of Arm. Div. with 2 remaining tanks are camped beside us - had a long yarn with some of them about Tues. fiasco. Whole trouble was the leaders just did not anticipate any Jap Anti-tank opposition. Told us of their exploits at Buna where they did good work blowing out pillboxes etc. Wouldn't our chaps have relished a go at the devils in those tanks.

Sat. 16th. Made ourselves comfortable in new position - being high & dry is a real blessing believe me. Night pickets are easier too, still we find it hard to sleep - must be habit of so long night after night with only a chance to doze now & then. The 18th are going fine, closing in on left - Yanks too have been pushing slowly but surely round & are in rear of main Jap lines. Our planes & \_\_\_\_\_. Poor kids, they too like millions of other women all over the world now wait & watch for that little note that means their man is still on top. It must be great mental strain on our dear womenfolk I guess.

Sun. 17th. Another move forward this morning - up the Killerton track to a coconut grove only 1 mile from coast & 18th Bgd. supply dump. Left at 7.30 a.m. arrived at Grove 9.30 a.m., hundreds of native carriers passed us on way up, going to build road from this supply dump to the coast. This army of native workers camp at Grove & our job is guarding both them & supplies from stray bands of Japs escaping from net closing around their positions. Spent afternoon building new home with all latest native conveniences. Floor 2 ft. from ground - large sloping roof - material consisted of good solid saplings for main posts, dozens of thin ones for floor & roof foundations & huge leaves to complete the job - all very sweet & very hygienic they say. All I hope is that it keeps out the rain.

Mon. 18th. Did I say keep out the rain - Hells' Bells, we had a real tropical storm last night, came down in torrents & roof of our bungalow couldn't take it - so we took it instead. Especially Reg. & I. Scotty & Bill at other end had big square type of mosquito nets over them & it helped to keep some of the rain out. Had to go down & collect more mosquito nets from R.H.Q. dump at 30th lines - could not spare 'boys', so sent 6 of us. Had lunch with our rear crowd, tied the nets into bundles of 20 & attached to poles, then off we went in approved carrier style. My conscience that pole made my shoulders sore & we only had to carry it half way, about 1 1/4 miles. A jeep going up packed us all aboard. These Yanks can sure put a load on these midgets - take 'em anywhere too. A jeep & trailer passed us with 24 natives packed like sardines on the darn thing. Arrived back 4 p.m. & went straight to Salvation Hut for cup of coffee. Good hot coffee here at all hours. Saw mob of prisoners brought in - 3 or 4 Japs & about 20 Korean & Chinese coolie labourers. Never struck such a ragged & miserable bunch - just flesh & bones & precious little flesh at that, poor devils. Some of chaps later took them through to Div. H.Q.. 'Marvelous' news on reaching 'home' - we move back in morning to last position & carry on with our war winning effort of "Div. Undertakers". Latest bulletin is that 18th Bgd. have control of coast area, one Battalion now moving down Sanananda Rd. Yanks meeting stiff opposition in front of James', but slowly, bombing, blasting & worrying him out.

We made sure of our roof for tonight.

Tues. 19th. Had best nights sleep for weeks - a great tonic. Moved right back to position near Y.M.C.A. hut. Merch. scrounged tent fly, so we have quite a comfortable & congenial spot - only few yards from creek. After lunch started on

pleasant task of clearing battle field - this time mostly Japs. We just drag the bodies into nearest hole & cover it up, if bodies are in dug-outs we simply smash top of it, letting earth & woodwork cover the remains. A man really needs his respirator for this healthy pastime.

Big commotion at 4.59 p.m. - pack certain gear & be ready by 5 p.m. to go & deal with a party of Japs who were reported to have raided certain village about 7 miles away. We hurriedly prepared & Cpt. James who was in charge explained position - \_\_\_\_\_ the native boys did not want their mates wiped out, even if they had been in strange company for a few nights. Well we waited for trucks & guide until 6.30 p.m. then were told whole thing was off. Later heard story that native who reached Div. H.Q. with the ghastly details forgot to mention it happened 2 months ago.

Wed. 20th. More burying until midday, then afternoon off for some of us. A number of our chaps went right forward to protect a convoy of 'boys' that were bringing down wounded. They passed by the spot where Yanks had cleaned up main Jap positions - one large hut evidently used as hospital was a terrific shambles, hundreds of bodies around. Yanks said Jap made last stand in hut itself & would not surrender, so they had to shoot them out. What a peculiar manner these fanatical Jap soldiers display in their utter disregard of lives - their own as well as others. They say all Jap positions are now smashed, it is just a matter of mopping up. This mopping up costs lives against these madmen, but it is good to know the main job is done.

Thur. 21st. Talking to 3 chaps this morning at Y.M.C.A. hut - they were on their way to M.D.S. - had come from 1/12th who were now holding coast. Told me enemy resistance along coast had been slight, only a few m/g positions & these were not well protected. Whilst camped on beach had heard barges landing & taking off each night, at a point where swamps ran practically down to the sea. Evidently a few Japs were getting away. Afternoon went with Padre & party to find our fellows who had fallen in the forward areas. First was around Jap perimeter between Huggins & James, where twice our lads had tried to do 'so much with so few'. Padre had already found all A Squad men killed at the second attempt - we were looking for 5 B Squad chaps. Finally decided on spot where Tom McCaddie & Wally Grey had helped young Pocock. Tom & Wal. lost their lives but Pocock although wounded, through their assistance, managed to get back - so with bowed heads we stood around that trench wherein they had fallen, whilst Padre recited his short Burial Service. 'Yes', I thought sadly, 'here lies two brave, yet unsung heroes'. For they had given their lives for a comrade & no man can give more. Our C.O. was with us at his request. Padre showed him where the D. Squad men had dug their way back to safety after being out in open & under enemy fire for 6 days. From left hand side of Rd. they had scooped out a narrow trench, over 50 yds it measured - a really marvelous job under these nerve-wracking conditions. Also spot where our good Col. Logan was buried - evidently he was first wounded when only 60 yds or so from position A Squad dug in (afterwards known as James' perimeter). Not knowing his men had been held up just ahead, he decided to make back for

Huggins - Weston, his batman, & Sutton with him. Crawled back about 50 yds & again came under enemy fire. Col. was mortally wounded, Weston badly shot up. Weston made Huggins next morning, Sutton staggered in 7 days later. Padre (a great toiler) desired to carry on with good work, but C.O. thought it rather late. Had tea with Yanks now well established at Huggins - they sure do thing well - sausages, bread beans, spuds - rice pudding\_\_\_\_\_ Rumour this afternoon we may go back tomorrow. Oh boy! hope it is true.

Sat. 23rd The rumour proved correct - early this morning order came out - pack & clean up by 11 a.m. - lunch 12 noon - move at 1.30 p.m. It was shortly after 1.30 p.m. that 92 wary but happy men commenced the 3 mile hike from 30th Brigade H.Q. back to Soputa. Now that it was all over, the thought uppermost in our minds was - well, at last the 7th Aust. Cav. has done something!

Made camp at Soputa in same area as before - had dip in river - then at 5.30 p.m. assembled with remnants of 49th & 39th Militia Batt. at request of G.O.C. He came along - gave us short breezy address - thanked all officers & men for splendid work done - knew job had been tough & at times well nigh impossible, but experience gained would be invaluable for future campaigns against our ruthless enemy. Finally told us Cav. men were going "Home" to be reorganised & re-equipped - Great news.

Sun. 24th Awake at 3.30 a.m. - off at 4.30 a.m. on 12 mile walk to Dobadura Strip - a long dreary trudge, but no-one really 'moaned' no matter how weary they felt - for we were heading towards those "Green Pastures". Our thoughts & conversation concentrated on the one subject - how soon after landing in Aussie would they give us leave. Reached Dobadura village 10.30 a.m., found 'Drome' was another 4 miles further. We were 'all in' too - but Yanks came to our rescue, no trouble at all to carry us per jeep & trailer right to camping area at the strip - I sat on bonnet of one of these little wonder cars - believe me we were glad to sit anywhere & save that 4 mile hike. No planes that day, so made camp for night - good spot with fine river close handy - In afternoon a Flying Fortress was towed right to our camp area - had been in fight with Zeros - a few shots getting 'home' - one killed pilot outright, poor devil - another smashed oil sump in an engine - 2nd pilot had taken over & brought plane in on 3 engines. Huge planes these Fortresses - we made our beds up under wings - span of 110 ft. There was heavy storm about 5 o'clock but all fine & dry 'neath the big 'ship!

Mon. 25th Awake bright & early searching sky anxiously for the familiar passenger planes. About 7.30 a.m. we heard first plane - soon the long broad Strip looked like Circular Quay at peak hours - one after another they swooped down over the trees - made perfect landing, taxied around to side of 'Drome', passengers & cargoes quickly unloaded, parties of men (16 to 20) clambered aboard & off she goes on return trip. Crowds of Yanks coming in all wearing new type camouflage suit - looked like leopards, but certainly effective amidst those surroundings - I moved forward with 19 other men to plane as directed - they were unloading huge tractor engine - took 10 men to finally lift out



on to truck. Side seats then adjusted - a long row each side of plane for all world like so many tin wash-basins - In we swarmed & off went the "Touch of Texas" (all planes have names & clever cartoons painted on fuselage). Arrived Wards' drome in 35 1/2 minutes - straight on to trucks & Suburra rest camp. Proved to be an ideal spot amongst the hills - all mod. cons. - good food. No duties - no staying wet - no carrying pack around. What a Paradise.

Tues. 26th. Whacko! mail, parcels & papers arrive. Naturally ate too much - \_\_\_\_\_ probed about, and 1 out, 3 filled, he said to tpr. Love. Sounds "crook to me, but it is actually an order, so I suppose must be endured. Met young Cec. Jarvis of Richmond this afternoon - he is in 6th Independent Coy. been all over the show on special patrols - spent last 4 weeks at this rest camp.

Wed. 27th. 'Peace, perfect peace' - this 'bed-bashing' as the boys call it is definitely not hard to take. Sleep, read & eat, with a refreshing dip in river before tea, is the daily routine. Going to camp open-air picture show tonight - must go early to get a seat - the whole camp will be there, that is a certainty - it's a wonderful relaxation & change to see a talkie programme. Strange too, but the cartoons, especially Micky & Donald Duck are always greeted with cheers by an audience of fighting men. Hope they show one or two on tonight's programme.

Thur. 28th. Enjoyed last night's show immensely. Already rest & good food making new men of us all, but each day this malaria is taking 2 or 3 from our small group. Fred Moore from our tent developed a temperature this morning - attack of shivers followed - a ride down to 9th A.G.H. finished the day for poor old Fred. We are anxiously waiting movement order - rumour has it our ship already in Moresby Harbour. If delay is prolonged there will be no Cav. to worry about as far as immediate shipping space is concerned. Personally I feel tip top - peculiar thing I have not had slightest sign of fever so far - hope my luck holds out.

Fri. 29th Visited dentist this morning - had fillings & extraction in one sitting - no pain or trouble, but not over keen on manner or materials in fillings. Wonder how long same work by same dentist would take in civil life. Hooray! we are off tomorrow.

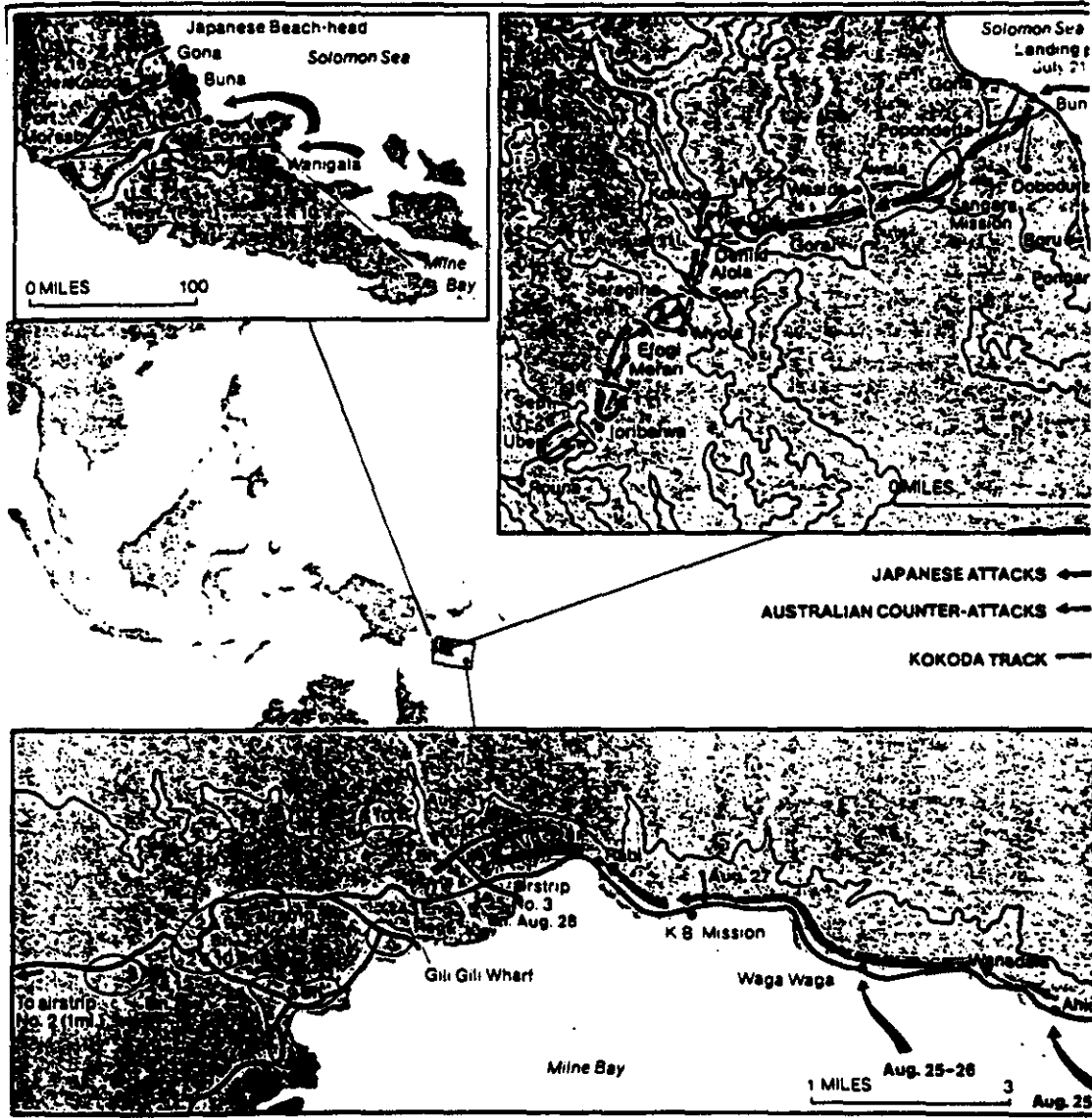
Sat. 30th. Finishing these notes aboard good ship S.S. "Taroon" - I commenced this short diary for sole purpose of keeping a few simple notes on my experiences of our first real 'job' - seems to have developed into a huge pile of pages with enough data thereon to fill half a dozen volumes.

Well, we left Dobudarra camp at midday, arriving Port Moresby 5.30 p.m. - marched on board ship almost immediately - a little after 7 p.m. felt the thrilling throb of those familiar large turbine engines - lines were cast off & slowly we moved away from the wharf & made straight for the open sea.

As we stood looking at the receding coast line, now barely visible in growing darkness, a chap standing close by said in most emphatic tones "Well, I suppose a fellow is lucky to be here, all I hope is that they never send me back to fight in this

B----- stinking country of New Guinea" - to those profound words of wisdom Trp. Love murmured a fervent "Amen".

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Private First Class Charles W. Pugh  
K Company-22nd Marine Regiment-U.S.M.C.  
Sixth Marine Division

This is one Marine's story. But in putting my story into words, it was easily realized that it is the story of one squad of men, my fellow Marines and comrades, who so Gallantry gave of themselves and their lives....

These pages are dedicated to the memory of  
1st Lieutenant Reginald Fincke Jr. K-3-22  
Killed In Action - May 15, 1945

and

Private First Class Baine Leake Jr. K-3-22  
Killed In Action-May 10, 1945

and

all of the valiant warriors of K Company  
22nd Marine Regiment-Sixth Marine Division

Charles W. Pugh  
A Marine

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PFC. Charles W. Pugh  
K Company - 3rd Bn.  
22nd Regiment  
6th Marine Divn.

### One Marine's Story

My story really begins a long time ago. 1919 to be exact, when my Dad's younger brother Jack Jolly Pugh, came home from France. He was a highly decorated Marine, having been in the battles of Belleau Woods and Chateau Thiery. He had also been gassed while in combat and had only one functioning lung.

I loved Uncle Jack, as we called him, and emulating him, I had high hopes of some day being a Marine also. Just ten years later I corresponded with the Marine Corps recruiter in Memphis, Tennessee with an aim toward enlistment. It seems you had to have proof of age to enter the Corps. My dear Mother refused to sign the papers allowing me to fulfill my dream.

My big Chance came in October of 1943. I was drafted and went through the induction center at Camp Shelby, Mississippi. I immediately chose the Marine Corps and was duly sworn in the following day at Jackson, Mississippi, along with eight other inductees. At Shelby, the day before, about 125 went into the Navy and some 400 headed for the Army. I was married at that time, so I called my wife from Jackson and I will never ever forget her scream of anguish! Our baby son was only 10 months old at the time and she suspected that she was possibly pregnant. That news she had not shared with me at the time. Welcome to the Marines!

### Guadalcanal Diary

There are so many little things I remember about our company area on the island of Guadalcanal. Those many and varied tales would take up much valuable time and space. One clear memory though was our company bugler. He would go from one area to the next, blowing 'First Call', then retrace his steps, stopping at the end of each platoon or squad street to blast our reveille. To me it was a beautiful sound. To others it was the start of another lousy day. We would first walk out on the coral shelf, as our tent area was very near the beach, and relieve ourselves. All of the Marine Regiments on the canal could boast of areas we now see in travel brochures beckoning one to far off tropical paradise. We did not have near enough 'heads' (bathrooms to non-Jarheads) to take care of the entire Company. Our tent area faced east and at that particular time of the day, the good Lord had placed the sun way out on the horizon beyond Savo and Florida Islands. He painted a never to be forgotten picture. The ocean would change colors as the sun reflected on it's surface enhancing the scene. I think that singular thing kept me going. I would look at the scene each day and say to myself, "If my dear wife could see this she would say that it was worth it all". The Major in charge of loading our LST (landing ship tank), from which we were to land on a hostile island, would say, "put it all on the top deck. We can bend the men, but we can't bend the track on a dragline or bulldozer!" So, we slept under our shelter halves on deck, like we were still in field training. There was heavy equipment all over the place, pontoons, dozers, etc., and many of the men slept

under the things. If they broke loose while at sea....Oh well, Another Marine reporting Sir! We were on our way to combat unknown till we were very near the landing area and then we were informed the Island of Okinawa was our target. It would be an island of hell!

Our landing zone was called 'Green Beach Two'. I was duly impressed with the smell of cordite, the smoke on the water and the foreboding shoreline, gunpowder, ships, planes dive bombing, etc.. Although the impression was a powerful one, to be truthful, I was like all the other Marines heading to shore, scared stiff. Watching our planes overhead, one of my best friends, PFC Baine Leak Jr., of Gladewater, Texas said to me, "You know Pugh...It's a pleasure to fight for the United States"! We were all thrilled...but still scared.

We hit the beach that day and had two men killed. One of them was Corporal Gerry Kline. He was one of our squad leaders. Our demolition man, a Polish boy, PFC Pietrusiewicz was also killed. Kline was hit directly between the eyes, while Mike was hit through his heart. Both were killed by snipers. A few days later we headed north. Our experience in the northern end of the island was 'a piece of cake' compared to the southern end of the Island yet to come.

#### The Asa Kawa River

We crossed that river of death on May 10, 1945 at 3 o'clock in the morning in pale moonlight. Our Recon Company had staked out the various mines the Japs had planted to greet us when we got to the other side. We crossed on a hastily constructed bridge only one plank wide. The good Lord was with us that day, as when the last man of K Company got across, a Japanese suicide team blew up the planking, along with themselves!

Fire-fights on the northern end of the island were almost nil for us. For others quite contested, but fortunately we did not get involved in any serious close combat. The very first day [after crossing the Asa Kawa] we were warned of a Jap counter-attack, as intelligence had forewarned us of the Japanese tactics of waiting for darkness and then... 'banzai' (suicide charge) our lines. The first night our machine gunners opened up at voices they thought were soldiers talking to one another. It turned out to be an Okinawan woman, an old man and two small children. They had evidently gone someplace to obtain their rice rations, which they carried in a bucket. The bucket was punctured with .30 caliber machine gun bullet holes as were all of the family. Strange, but the rice was knocked out of the bucket in a perfect straight line in the direction of the bullets. One of the mother's fingers was lying on her child's head. That got to me and I almost cracked up. Children are my weakness. I had a 10 month old son at home and my wife pregnant with our first daughter.

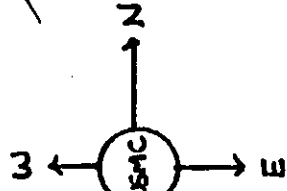
A drainage pipe ran through the sea wall on the south side of the Asa Kawa. It was actually a wooden pipe just barely large enough

EAST CHINA SEA

THE BATTLE OF THE ASA KAWA RIVER

EVACUATION DRAINAGE PIPS

SEA WALL



BREAK IN ROAD WHERE SUICIDE SQUAD OF JAPANESE BLEW UP PUNIK

MINE FIELD

BAILEY BRIDGE

← CAUSEWAY ROAD TO NAMA →

STOCK HOUSE

MOUNDS OF DIRT - LIKE A LEVEE

ABOUT WHERE ZICH AND THAI WERE KIA

NARROW SHALLOW DITCH WHERE WE WERE PINNED DOWN ALL DAY

DIRT (MOUNDS) ON OUR MEN

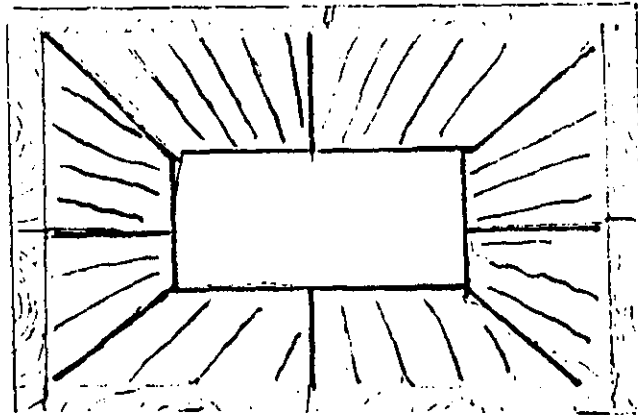
(NOT TO SCALE) (ORIGINAL DRAWING BY C.W. PUGH K-3-22)

THE DRAINAGE PIPE AT THE ASA KAWA RIVER

THIS IS THE WAY THE WOODEN DRAINAGE PIPE LOOKED TO ME AS I ENTERED IT FROM THE SIDE THAT THE ENEMY WAS ON.

ON THE OTHER END, THERE WAS A DROP OFF OF APPROXIMATELY FOUR OR FIVE FEET. I DID NOT STOP TO MEASURE IT! WE LANDED IN WATER ABOUT UP TO OUR POCKETS AS I RECALL. THROUGH THIS WATER WE WALKED, HOLDING OUR RIFLES, MACHINE GUNS, BARS, WHATEVER, OVER OUR HEADS AND BACK TO WHERE THE ENGINEERS WERE BUILDING A BAILEY BRIDGE THAT NIGHT.

PFC CHARLES W. PUGH





to allow a Soldier or Marine to crawl through it. There were soon to be many a Marine who would experience a crawl through that thing. We had been pinned down all day due to the vicious Japanese fire raining down on us from the hills to our front and sides. Lieutenant Paul Dunfey was hit in the stomach, a sight that I will never forget. As I crawled along through the ditch that ran parallel to the sea wall, I came up even with the Lieutenant. The bullet had punctured his abdomen, gases from his intestinal tract forcing his stomach through to the outside. It looked like he was lying there with a big balloon on his belly. Our eyes met and he said, "Keep your head down". That was the last time I ever saw him. He survived and in later years we have talked to each other on the phone and exchanged Christmas cards. My dear friend, Gib Kanter, told me recently that our fine young Lieutenant had passed away to guard Heavens gates. I'll always recall his ruddy complexion and deep blue eyes. He was a fine Marine.

Still in that stinking ditch, I saw a knee mortar explode on the back of a 17 year old Marine. It laid open his body just like you would take an axe to it. Incredibly, his body gave off a steam-like vapor into the cool of that May morning, much the same as I've seen pork do when my daddy would kill hogs in the early Mississippi mornings. We had one man by the name of Zilch who had been awake all the previous night, wailing that he 'knew' he was going to die the next day. Lieutenant Koppitz told us later, that if he had known Zilch felt that way, he would have sent him back to a field hospital. Further down the ditch, I saw PFC Lonnie Beard and PFC Bob Larsen...both dead... with that pallor of death mixed with the yellow of the atabrine tablets they fed us on the Canal. For a 32 year old Marine, these sights were not to my liking that was for sure. Every time I found the body of a Marine whom I had known, I would say a short prayer for those dear parents and loved ones back home who would receive that dreaded telegram weeks later.

We went as far as the Ditch could take us. We were packed in so tight together that spacing between foxholes hastily dug, was so thin they threatened to cave in the sides. Men dug furiously or sought out any covering possible. Jap fire, mortar, machine gun and sniper peppered us constantly. It was at that time that I thought it to be my darkest hour. I frantically reached in my shirt Pocket and fumbled for my new testament my wonderful Mother had given to me. It had a steel cover designed to deflect a bullet. With fingers trembling, I found the 23rd Psalm in the back of the book. I asked the man next to me if he wanted me to read the Psalm aloud. Looking at him, I found him just staring and chewing away violently on his gum. He never answered, just stared. I read it aloud anyway. It helped me and I sure hope that it helped him.

We were picking up heavy fire from the hill ranges surrounding us. One sniper in particular was playing havoc with us. Private Joe Lageose, from Kansas City, had been our Malaria Control

know it then but that hill was to be called 'Sugar Loaf Hill'. [Sugar Loaf Hill was named by Col. Woodhouse Jr., Bn. Commander of the 2nd Bn., 22nd Marines. KIA May 30, 1945.] Our Division would lose more men there in the days we fought for that hill than any other place on that island of death. It was going to take 11 Marine assaults up that hill before it was declared secure.

#### Sugar Loaf Hill

I recall the reverse side of the hill, shaped like a loaf of bread, as being rather steep. The last command I heard from Lt. Finke was, 'All right men, find a hole and get in it"! The column I was advancing with found holes in a hurry. I found myself in a ditch with a fellow Marine, PFC Gib Kanter of Clifton, N.J., they do not make any finer Marine than that man, that I can tell you. In front of me was a dead Jap body, all bloated and stinking away. In the back of us was a BAR team, PFC Stevens and PFC Nolte. PFC Walt Williams was our BAR man after Leake was killed. I just happened to be the most forward person in that ditch. The knee mortar shells were causing havoc on the other men in back of me. That range the Japs fixed is the only reason I can give for my being here today!

There was constant action and firing taking place in back of me. Someone was hurting bad, as I heard a constant cry for 'Corpsman"! After an hour in the ditch it began to rain to add to our discomfort and thankfully the water under me ran downhill to the bloated Jap. During the night I threw every grenade on me and all of the grenades of every man in back of me who passed them forward. They were afraid of hitting Gib and me if they threw them, so we became the recipient of their grenade supply. I threw one heck of a lot of them that night.

In the early light of the day I saw several Japs moving rather fast from my right to my left. I stood up and primed in on the last one for a target. He became the only Jap I knew for sure that I hit. My bullet hit him between the shoulders and it propelled him several feet in the air. Gib was firing away also and it was then that he was hit. A bullet had ricocheted off his rifle barrel and into his throat! That was a dark moment for me. He crawled off bleeding profusely, holding his hand to his throat. It seemed to me then and there that [none] of us would ever survive. There were so very few of us left. I felt panicky! About that time I noticed a little bush moving slowly up the grade to where I was. I guessed it was a moving Jap with a bush for camouflage inserted in his helmet netting. I debated with Myself whether to stand up and shoot the Nip before he winged a grenade over at me. Someone in back of me must have also seen him, as he threw a white phosphorous grenade right on top of the Jap! Some of the exploding fragments of burning, white-hot sulphur fell dangerously close to me. I never did see that mass of smoldering shrubbery move again!

I picked up Gib's rifle and it appeared that the Jap bullet had left a mark along the barrel and gas chamber of his M-1. How it got to his throat I will never know. It is possible it was tumbling when it entered his throat, or at least slowed down somewhat. I will never know. He had dropped to a sitting position when hit and put his hand to his wound, blood running all over his hand and neck area. I first thought the bullet had made it's way completely through his neck, but 45 years later in life he told me it was still lodged in his neck area. No wonder so many of our 6th Division men set the security alarms off when in airport departure areas. Gib incidentally, while at the bottom of the hill awaiting evacuation, spotted a Jap sniper under a knocked out tank firing at us. He could only point the Jap out as he could not speak! No one understood his pointing and mumbles. Later on, someone else spotted the pesty Nip and dispatched him to his destiny.

I heard a movement in back of me and turned to see a Marine. He dropped down beside me carrying his BAR at the ready and said. "We're from Dog Company 29th, and we're here to relieve all the 'K' Company men of the 22nd". We were to withdraw! Great feeling! Just then we looked ahead and noticed a Jap with his rifle pointed directly at us! We were slightly above him, but it did not take much for both of us to realize the Nip was about to do us in. The Marine (Oh how I wish I knew who he was) dropped down, leveled his BAR and squeezed off a burst, all within seconds! The Jap jumped up and then fell backwards as he was hit. Some of his comrades dragged him quickly off the little rise and out of sight. I left that fine Marine from Dog Company up there alone and made my way back down the side of the hill. I got to a small bridge built by the Japs and it had a hole square in the middle of it. With all the debris piled up around and under the bridge it made it impossible to cross under it. I had to jump out of the ditch, run past the bridge and down the other side. It was only a few feet, but at that time it felt like a hundred yard run or more!

At the foot of Sugar Loaf, I found some of our men who had been wounded, all waiting for an amtrac to transport them to an aid station. Only one man do I remember and he was PFC Moles. He had a nasty wound through the biceps of his right arm. I never found my friend and foxhole buddy, Gib Kanter.

I got in another ditch and found Walt Williams and we found cover as we made our way to rendezvous point across a road. As we hurried down the slim ditch, dragging our rifles in the mud, Walt got hit through the shoulder. Fortunately a Corpsman was nearby and patched Walt up, placing his arm in a sling. PFC Homer Goff was just behind Williams when he was hit and Homer was killed by sniper fire. I kept going and found the departure point where we had left our gear and our packs. It was about this time that a jeep from our field kitchen stopped at the foot of the hill. The driver had with him a stock pot of coffee with sugar and cream added to it. The smell was incredible. It was the finest, the

best, cup of coffee I ever had in my life! Meantime, Walt met me at the coffee pot and he said. "Pugh, you can have every single item in my pack that you may need, as I won't be needing them anymore". I went back to his foxhole and got his combination tool and a can of Japanese oil that he had picked up off a Jap who would not be needing them anymore either. [A combination tool was either a shovel or pick each guy carried with them and used to dig foxholes with.] I kept that tool and the oil until a day many years later, we met at the home of one of his friends in Nashville, Tenn. He was taken by surprise when I gave them back to him.

I needed someone to buddy up with me in a fox-hole, as Kanter and Williams were no longer around. I ended up with Kowalski, our flame thrower. Kowalski claimed the hole was not protected enough, so I eased off and found a hole that someone else had already dug. Only thing wrong was the dead Jap that was within arms length of the hole. He stunk and was covered with the ever present maggots and large green flies. A replacement came in that night on the front lines and I guess he didn't care for it too much. PFC Kowalski, incidentally was hit later on with shrapnel from a shell and subsequently died of his wounds while being flown to a hospital in Hawaii.

The next day they moved us to an old Japanese school house. It was unbelievable how few of us were still left from the old platoon and squads. Although the Jap school house was made of concrete, it mattered little to us, so we stood guard all night long just like we were still on the front lines. We were on the second deck of the thing and it held about six of us. As daylight came, we were all sacked in, asleep in exhaustion. Our weapons were all leaning against nearby walls. Just as I was dozing off, I heard the scream of an incoming round. It can never be explained. It has to be experienced to sense and know if that round was coming on top of you, short of you, or over you. I prayed to God in that waking instant, as I heard the screeching sound of the shell! It exploded within a few feet of me! The shrapnel took all the wood off my trusty old M-1, the stock and the upper hand guard. The white plaster walls, which was nothing but powder-like dust cascaded down all over us. We were covered with it and the dirt and various other matter! One could smell the gunpowder. You talk about getting out of that room, we literally took off like scared rabbits! We had to jump across the new hole in the floor the shell had created. It was staring up at us all jagged and jumbled with twisted steel and concrete. It is incredible to believe that not one single Marine was hit.

That day I spent sitting on a wooden bench in a forward, upstairs room of the school house with some high brass who were watching the battle going on out in front of us. One of the brass was Lt. General Roy S. Geiger, Commanding Officer of the entire III Amphib Corps, which was the 1st and 6th Marine Divisions. Colonel Roberts, our Regimental C.O., later killed on the Oroku

Peninsula by a sniper, was also there. He had ordered a rapid advance on Oroku and had not had the caves cleaned out behind the advancing Marines. He was ordered to do so and turned to that officer and said, "Hell, there's no snipers here..."! with those words he was hit and killed by the sniper.

A little while later, the Commanding General of the 10th Army came into the building along with General Shepherd, our 8th Division Commanding General. I walked with General Buchner's staff and a few other high ranking officers down the hall to show them our room with the hole in the floor. General Buchner looked at the hole in the floor and the shrapnel lying all over the place with his mouth agape. I'll never forget his comment when he was told that six men had been sleeping in that room and not one of them had been scratched. He said, "Well men, all I can say is that the good Lord was with you". General Buchner was later killed in action while near the front lines. It is conjecture as to whether or not a shell from one of our Naval ships or a Jap shell exploded near the General.

We picked up more replacements who could never replace our men we lost, who had experience, comradeship and courage. Not to say a thing less about replacements, but they just lacked training and experience. They had to learn it all while actually in combat for the first time. Not an easy task. Most were fresh out of Boot Camps. One day we were taken off the attack by Lt. Rowe and he told us we were to get a few days rest, a bath of some kind and some hot food. None of us would believe it!...famous last words...that very night, Lt. Koppitz informed us that we had to go back up on the line the next day and fill in the gap that opened up when the 4th Marines moved out. When we reached the ridge where the 4th had been, we found it to be one of horror. Right next to where I was told to dig in, was the remains of some poor Corpsman that a Japanese soldier or officer had hacked in half! Another Marine and I decided to bury his remains right there to alleviate the stench and the maggots. As only that would help. We buried him and stuck his rifle in the ground and hung his dog tags on the rifle. We just finished when a nambu opened up on us and took all the wood off the stock of the rifle! Even in death, they were still shooting at that Corpsman along with well aimed bursts at us. It rained that night and next morning when we moved about, every single footprint we made in the mud was filled with the hungry white maggots that infested the Okinawa battlefields. Read any war book on Okinawa and you will find in it's pages that maggots are always mentioned.

Several days later we moved up and I found a Marine sitting against an embankment as though he were sleeping or resting. He was quite dead. His skin was turned almost black and drawn tight against his facial bones. His eyes and almost all the flesh had been eaten away the ever-present maggots, yet there he sat, still wearing his helmet. At that time we ran out of drinking water and rations. We still filled up our canteens from mud puddles or shell holes. I put iodine and water purification tablets in

every canteen but I still got amoebic dysentery. This eventually led me to be transferred from the 22nd Marine Regiment into Division Headquarters Company.

While on the northern end of the island, we went on patrol. Our mission was to bring in civilians who were to get food, clothing and shelter. The people for the most part were reluctant to leave their makeshift homes, mostly inside of caves. They did not completely trust us at that time. Sgt. Neal, our Platoon Sgt., got tired of trying to persuade one old man to let his people leave the caves. Exasperated, the old man yanked a girl from nearby, who appeared to be about 12 years old. He 'gave' the girl to Sgt. Neal. That teed off the Sgt., so he yanked the old man out, who seemed to be possibly 60 years old or so. Before he could turn the old man loose, the old man hit the Sergeant flush in the mouth with his fist. That embarrassed the Sarge. no end, but he did not retaliate in any way. Marine's don't hit old people. Kowalski, who was well built, carried the old man piggy back style all the way back to a shelter. The old man's daughter carried Kowalski's shotgun for him. That was quite a trusting Marine.

On one patrol, still back up on the northern end, we found a cave where a local merchant had evidently hidden a lot of merchandise. We went through that stuff like Sherman marched through Georgia. We found a wooden crate with a rope handle on two sides. In it were bottles of something clear and wrapped with straw. Wine!, booze!. We all knew we had some 'spirits' in hand of some sort to enjoy and drink ourselves silly. We took turns carrying the box as it was quite heavy, and it took two men to lift the thing. When we got back, we eagerly opened the crate and then the bottles. We got a real shock!, the stuff was nothing more than cheap lemon soda of some kind...and we had lugged the stuff for more than five miles!

Another time up north, we reached some very rough terrain which made it very difficult to advance. Our semaphore man signalled a landing craft to pick us up on amtracs and gave us a lift back to the China Sea, which was around the tip of the Island. From the weather deck, I looked through a port hole into the galley and smelled a most heavenly aroma. One of the cooks said, "you guys line up...we're gonna feed you!" We had been eating K-rations or C-rations for weeks, so this was a heck of a treat for us. That was the best spaghetti and meat balls I ever tasted! Also, every man was given a huge Washington State apple, so cold from the reefer it was actually sweating. The skipper wasn't satisfied. He gave each squad a box of steaks to take ashore with us. Some things you never forget!

### The Battle Of The Asa Kawa River

While this part of my story may be somewhat repetitive, I am stating it here, as I would like to get this part into more detail.

On May the 8th, after being in combat since April 1, K Company of the 22nd Marine Regiment was committed to the southern part of Okinawa and the front line. Our Platoon Leader, Lt. Paul Koppitz of Alva, Oklahoma called all of us together and tried to fill us in on what lay ahead for us. I well remember a statement he made at that meeting. "It's going to be terrible"! He turned out to be absolutely correct.

In the early hours of the evening, we boarded trucks that had been equipped with a white piece of cardboard at the rear tailgate of each truck. Since we could not use lights, this would allow the drivers to see the vehicle to his front. Okinawan roads were a mess, to say the least, and in some cases were not suitable for our vehicles, much less to drive at night. Those trucks kept real close together.

When we arrived at our jumping off place, we were met by no other than our Commanding General, General Lemuel Shepherd. We jumped off and formed a single file and headed for the Asa Kawa River, our baptism of fire on the southern end of the Island. The General was still there in his poncho and rubber boots, swagger stick and all. He yelled at us for bunching up and said, "One shell can come in here and kill all of you...spread out"! He made sure we spaced ourselves better. I realized then and there that this had to be the front lines for sure.

We gathered at an area to the right of the causeway, along a high bluff overlooking the river. We could look right down on our future attack area, and the ridge lines and hills around us looked foreboding indeed...so did the black river. We dug in that night after a patrol had been sent out to scout the area across the river. The patrol came under heavy attack and although making it to certain ridges, some Marines were lost. Marines by the name of Donnell and Coomer were Killed there. The ridge became known as 'Coomer's Ridge'. We sent some men out in the afternoon to scout out mines that had been detected along the causeway and the river. These men were under constant sniper fire as they staked out the mines they found with sticks. Some mine areas were just dug out around it for a foot or two to mark it. In the night or pale moonlight it would not be too difficult to fall or step on one of those nasty things.

It was 3:00 A.M., on May 10th and we crossed. An embankment or causeway went across the river, then it was broken in one place, probably by one of our shells or bombs. The Engineers had placed a wide plank over the embankment gap, which was about 12" wide or so, but a Jap suicide team blew it up, along with themselves. The following night we crossed again, but now it was a Bailey Bridge built so tank support could get across to support us. The

foot Marine can go anywhere but not the tanks. Once we got across we turned to face the East China Sea on our right. We were in single file crossing an area that had not one single point of concealment or cover of any kind. I became aware that my BAR (Browning automatic rifle) man, PFC Bain Leake Jr. was sitting atop a seawall looking out over the river. He sat silently with his BAR on the ready, facing the enemy. Word had been passed that the Japs might try to attack us from the other side of the seawall.

As we silently squirmed along, now flat on our bellies, we were heartened by the sounds of our own machine guns firing from the bluff that we had just vacated. They were using tracers and one could see the target area was not too far away from our own heads! We had plenty of confidence in them, but the main thing was they were our guns and not the Japs. Now the Japs opened up with knee mortars. Every time one would hit the ground there was a puff of black smoke and the resultant explosive sound. Our fire team was huddled behind a stone wall about 3' high, which gave us some temporary concealment, but no real cover. We now advanced, one man at a time, single file, following the sea wall via a shallow ditch.

While I was crouching behind the little stone wall, I watched one of our men wiggle across an open space some 20 or 30 feet, as he crawled to the front. A knee mortar hit him with a direct shot, landing on his back. He had been on his belly and the explosion blew his pack up onto his head and shoulders. I knew he had to be dead. Would I be next? I darted out and when I got to the man who was just hit, I dropped just in front of him. I hazarded a quick look over my shoulder to see who he might be that death had so suddenly visited. I noticed a vapor of steam rising from the man's back and his face, his features were all puffy and swollen. I thought it was PFC Walt Dydymus, a lad from Chicago. I learned later that it was PFC Kenny Zilch, from the state of Pennsylvania...and only 17 years old.

I started thinking that if it got Zilch, it could get me too, as I was close to his body. I got up and made it to a little niche the Japs had dug in the sea wall. I looked up into the cliff are from which the Jap fire was coming so I figured that won't do. So I went back and ~~took my chances in the ditch~~ in front of poor Zilch. That ditch was very shallow and we had no place to protect ourselves properly. I made my way forward again and looking to my left I saw two more K Company men dead...PFC Lonnie Beard and PFC Bob Larsen. A little further on and I suddenly realized I was crawling over our own hand grenades. They had spilled out of the cartridge belts where fellow Marines had hung them only by their aluminum handles. It made me wonder if any of the cotter pins had worked loose, in wrenching or falling free. We continued crawling forward when I came across a body lying on level ground ~~just to my left~~. The body was just slightly above my head. It was Lt. Paul Dunfey. He had been shot in the abdomen. The bullet had caused his intestines to fall out and



helped by his body gasses it had inflated like a balloon. The last thing he said to me was, "Keep your head down"! Fortunately the Lieutenant survived.

We were advancing toward the China Sea and we had bunched up too close for comfort. Word was passed to dig in right where we now were. Out in front was an escarpment. I looked back down the line of men to my rear and asked if anyone knew if there were any men from my squad that had been hit. I couldn't hear anyone due to the noise of the battle raging around us, but I froze when our squad leader formed the silent words with his lips... "Leake"!

Leake was from Gladewater, Texas and me, being from Mississippi made us quite friendly. We always argued about which state grew the most cotton. He always wore a .45 pistol he had picked up from inside a tank, while on Guam and he had promised it to me if he were ever hit or killed. I told him he could have the field glasses I carried as my exchange. Only 3 days ago he showed off the .45 and said... "Old man, you can have this in about three days". I believe he had a premonition of death, crossing that river from which there is no return.

We were pinned down all day long. Our hastily dug foxholes were so close together that the guy next to you could fall into your hole, the wall being so thin between us. I will never forget our mail orderly, by the name of Cole. Cole was a North Carolinian. He came crawling along on his belly dragging a mail sack! This in combat! When he got to me he reached in the sack and found two or three letters for me... they were from home. Out there on the line at that time, they were a wonderful boost for me.

Late that afternoon, we noted amphib tanks crossing the estuary. It seemed they were coming straight at us. They were armed with 105mm cannons which looked awesome to us ground troops. They stopped just on the other side of the seawall and began to lay down a barrage on the hills to our front with all the firepower they had.

Soon, word was passed that we were to withdraw through the drainage ditch that passed through the sea wall. It was really a wooden pipe made with 2" by 2" timbers. It couldn't have been over 2' square. The thing was maybe 12' long and no one relished crawling through the slimy thing. (see drawing) I took off my pack and came up with the idea of dragging it with my foot, along the belly-crawling way. Here we were in a pipe, rifles, grenades, packs, cartridge belts, helmets, everything, crawling like snakes. They never taught us this in any training exercise I was ever at. By this time my pack was loose on my foot and I had trouble moving it along. I regretted not pushing it along ahead of me. I couldn't get the darn strap to stay on my foot, but fortunately PFC Artie Kowalski, our flame thrower man was behind me. He pushed my pack along in front of him, along with his cumbersome flame thrower.

We forded the River and found ourselves in water, anywhere from knee deep to waist deep, and returned to the Naha road. Meanwhile our Engineers were busy building a Bailey bridge. They were constantly sniped at. We dug in on both sides of the bridge on a narrow strip of sandy soil at the banks of the River. At least digging was a little easier. We were acting as the flank guard in case any Japs decided to charge or harass our Engineers.

The next morning we retraced our steps and headed to the sea again. Instead of the single file attack, we stretched out in a broad frontal assault. As luck would have it, I came upon PFC Leake's body. I examined him and found that a bullet had entered one ear and exited the other. At least, I thought, he had died quickly. I found his cherished .45, the bad luck pistol and thought of leaving it there...but I reconsidered and picked it up and stuck it in my belt. Part of Bain [Leake] was now with me. I cannot ever describe what was racing through my mind as I plodded along. My brain took me back to my K Company days on the Canal. While there I once asked PFC Walt Williams what it was like to be in combat. He was a veteran of at least one campaign that I knew of, that was Guam. He looked at me thoughtfully and said, "After the battle is over, it makes you want to sit down and throw things"!

We were engaged in mopping up operations along the escarpment and had moved to the top with no opposition that I can recall. We began tossing a lot of grenades into the caves we found at the top of the hill. With the sea secure to our right we turned south and headed for what became the Naha-Shuri-Yonabaru Line. That line would be the heaviest defended line in the entire battle for Okinawa. We never realized it at the time. On that night our outfit was dug in along a sea wall facing the East China Sea. We had moved so fast that we had by-passed some Japs that were still holed up in some caves. That night they tried to sneak back to their lines, and to do so they had to pass right through ours. They infiltrated in groups of usually one or two at a time. We found one who was armed with a nambu. To my left in a foxhole was a Marine by the name of CPL Fred Carter. He was directly in line with this nambu-carrying Jap heading toward him. The Jap noticed Carter first and let loose with the nambu, killing Carter instantly, incredibly missing another Marine in the hole with Carter. He was a replacement and quite a young lad, whose name I never learned. That young Marine lay there all night with Carter's body and suffered a nervous breakdown the next day. He was transferred to a hospital and so ended his combat on the front lines. The nambu-carrying Jap was taken down with much gunfire from every Marine rifleman within sight. This was quite an exiting night as the enemy seemed to be all around us. Firing was going on all over the place. Gib Kanter and I were dug in together and I was watching the sea wall to make sure some Jap didn't slip in on us from that direction.

I heard running feet and a Jap seemed to appear and disappear right in front of us. Now I watched in that direction along with

Gib. He whispered to me not to use Old Bain's .45 for fear of alerting other Japs nearby to our exact position. After awhile I spotted a Jap, I thought was crawling toward us. Now I had reached the end of my patience. I could not stand the tension for another second. I aimed my dear, dead buddy's trusty .45 at the Jap and let go 5 or 6 shots as quick as my finger could pull the trigger. It roared and kicked in my tense hand as I poured lead at the creeping enemy soldier. We heard and saw no more, but then a muffled sound was heard...like a hand grenade going off, only softly. With the always welcomed daylight we left our foxholes and explored the area and ground to our front that the Japs had tried to come across. About 8 or so feet away in a little depression in the sandy beach was a good Jap. He was a dead one. He was missing his chin and his right hand. This was the muffled sound we had heard during the tension packed night. [The Jap had committed suicide with a grenade.]

The next day we had very little small arms fire directed at us but we learned to respect the sound of incoming artillery shells.

I end this story now as the Sugar Loaf Memoirs I can recall, are in the pages prior to this epilogue. My luck held all the way through the battle. I received no wound or injury whatsoever. Death surrounded me, mixed with horror and terror as they were my constant companions. The hand of death, by God's holy will, never touched me. It touched many of those I loved and held dear to me...my fine heroic Marine comrades in arms.

I thank my great God in heaven for my survival, yet I retain many curious thoughts at why he selected me to live and yet would take the one beside me.

My greatest honor in life was being able to serve alongside such splendid, young, courageous men. Their adherence to the violent, savage duty that became theirs, their valor...this will never be erased from my memory.

Perhaps that is one reason God spared me...That I might always be able to sing of their praise and glory!

A Semper Fidelis...Always!

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Confessions of An 'Original' Tunnel Rat  
Tom McKinney, Staff Sgt., USMC, (Ret'd)  
Fox Company, 2nd Bn.  
4th Marines, 6th Marine Division

These pages, a part of my life, are dedicated to:

My Wife Dorothy  
"My Strong Right Arm...  
My Constant Companion...  
My Life..."

My days as a 'Tunnel Rat of World War II' really began on Guadalcanal some time in November 1944. Each rifle company of the 2nd Bn., 4th Marines were required to send four students to Japanese Language classes. These classes lasted till 3:00 PM each day and were held three days a week. I was one of those chosen from Fox Company.

Our instructor was John B. from Wheeling, W.Va. My home was in Martins Ferry, Ohio, just across the river from Wheeling. John and I got along real great and I developed a liking for him and the classes. By Mid-March of 1945 I had a vocabulary of 50 to 60 words and phrases of Japanese. I, in turn tried to give my Company some of the words and phrases that would be of use to them later on...in combat.

For the landing on Okinawa I was back in my machine gun squad, but only until we started up the Ishikawa Peninsula. Caves started to be found with and without occupants. The Bn. S-2 (Intelligence) decided to form a team of so-called language men to send out and search the area behind the advancing Marines. Enter Tom McKinney as an S-2 man.

At first we found only caves and dug-outs full of civilians. They were hiding family possessions and stores of food and household goods. These we did not destroy, feeling that the people would need all these things later on. Many came out of hiding to thank us, when they saw what we were doing. Several times they pointed out hiding places full of military gear.

As we moved north, the country turned into hills and valleys, mostly steep with narrow cuts into and out of them. Most of the military caves were alongside foot paths, usually on the north side of the hill and just above a stream bed.

The openings were down low, just about waist high on me, a 5'4" Marine. The usual contents were wooden boxes of their grenades, mortar ammo and the glass concussion grenades. Sometimes we found a dead Jap soldier lying on top of the boxes.

In Kim village I found my first real cave. It was dug under the two story concrete school house. My luck came from a small girl. I'd given her a Hershey bar and a smile. She was five years old maybe, but very pretty in that oriental way. She led me to the

entrance, dug into the north side of the building. No personnel, but about 500 rounds of mortar ammo plus brand new Nambu machine guns.

From there up to Nago, just the routine caves, but then came the 'biggie'. Just behind the boat house, dug into the cliff was set of stone steps going down. About 8' down the steps there opened up a small room, 6'X 8' at most. A few crates and one dead Jap were it's contents. His collar tab showed me he was a 'Warrant Officer', and he had not been dead for very long, 4 or 5 hours at the most.

Chained to his left wrist was a canvas brief case. Our bayonet released the chain from the wrist that held it. Two days later Major Carney, Bn. C.O. gave us the good news. That case had contained the entire 32nd Army Order-Of-Battle. "Atta-Boys" all around, and for me...I got a PFC stripe.

Most of the caves and tunnels in the north were rather shallow, usually with a turn to the left, about 15 or 20 feet from the opening. The ground sloped upwards toward the turn and then leveled off. Openings were small and well camouflaged. After the turn there would be a sort of open space, 6'X 8' wide and about 5 to 6' feet high./ Slots were cut into the walls, body size. I seldom found an air vent to the outside.

Most of the time, the rifle companies would 'smoke' a cave and leave us a strip of mine field tape as notice to investigate the cave. Our four man crew had a standard operating procedure, (S.O.P.). Tom McKinney...drop your gear, glide to the right, slide to the left, and Ski just the opposite, but not directly in front of the opening.

Collar buttoned up, utility cap (small cloth cap) pulled down, K-Bar knife in left hand, flashlight in the right hand, a 50 foot life line was tied around shoulders and waist, on belly, heart in mouth, crawl in...slow and easy! Nose... ears...and smell become your guide!

After we moved south into the Naha-Shuri-Yonabaru Line, more and more of the larger caves were found. Most were pretty well torn up by the time the S-2 team got there. Flame and satchel charges did one hell of an efficient job. On page 108 of the Sixth Marine Division History book, you will find me in my favorite position. Yep...that's my BAR (Browning Automatic Rifle) standing there.

We entered some very large caves, but didn't find much except dead bodies, broken weapons, and on numerous occasions, civilians. I know that the records say that Lt. Col. Williams was leading the team that found Admiral Ota's cave headquarters, but that is not quite the truth. S-2's team from the 2nd Bn. 4th Marines, found that Headquarters. We employed our standard S.O.P and after ascertaining what we had, the word went up the 'chain

of command'. It was the next day that the 'brass' showed up. I know and believe that I was the first Marine to discover the Admiral and the other dead members of his staff in that cave complex. Our team was shunted out of the way and the 'brass took over'. Later, our team entered the big cave at the foot of the Island. It was unbelievable. Something I would never forget.

I have made it a point not to enter or explore any caves since the end of World War II.

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STAFF SGT. TOM MCKINNEY - USMC - 1994  
(RETIRED)

# SEMPER FIDELIS





TOM MCKINNEY



Sugar Loaf Hill, Okinawa-1945  
Captain Phillip Phil Morell  
Company Commander-"A" Company  
Sixth Tank Battalion  
Sixth Marine Division

I was C.O. of Company 'A', 6th Tank Battalion, during the battle of Okinawa. We had just finished taking Sugar Loaf Hill, Horse Shoe, Half Moon and were moving south. I forget now just about where it was. We had all three tank companies committed and because of the hills, etc., we were sort of channelized in the approach to the front lines from our tank park. We had been using a common trail in the approach with the tanks, tracking each other so as not to hit any mines off the sides. I think it was "B" Company that peeled off first to go to their attack position. I was next as I remember. I had the center as I had lost more tanks than they had and we were a little short handed. I am pretty certain that it was "C" Company that continued on to the easter boundary of our zone of action bordering the 1st Marine Division.

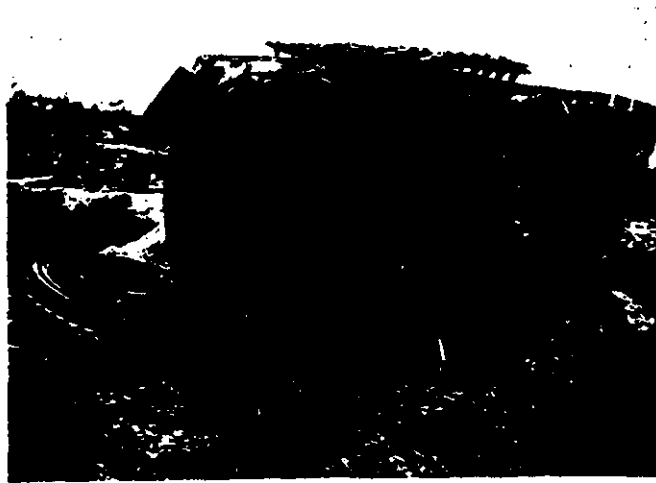
The tank in this story was a 6th Division tank but was so close to the 1st Marine Division zone of action I thought it was a tank from the 1st Tank Bn. It was about the 10th or 15th or so tank that had been along this same exact tracking trail. Suddenly the tank, evidently sinking down in the red clay deep enough, set off an anti tank mine. Besides the A.T. mine there were in the same spot two double decked 500 lb. bombs. Engineers later verified this fact. The explosion was tremendous and large enough to toss the tank skyward, the tank then turning over and landing on the turret. This voided any chance of escaping by means of the hatch cover. The force of the explosion warped the thinner under belly of the tank so that the escape hatch could not be opened. These tanks were gasoline tanks and not the diesels we had used through-out the Guam campaign. The gas poured out and with the engine still hot and running the tank burst into flames. The fire engulfed the tanks and heated the metal of the tank. The roaring flames and the radiating heat from the tank metal was so intense that it thwarted all efforts to get to the five man crew trapped inside. Soon the ammo began exploding within the tank. The crew could be heard screaming from inside. All five men died. The hand carried fire extinguishers from the other tanks were totally ineffective in halting the inferno. After the flames burned out, the tank remained hot for many hours keeping everyone at a distance. The photo in our Sixth Division History Book, page 103, shows the tank lying on it's side but the tank never landed that way. A tank retriever had turned the tank over in order to allow entry so that the crew remains, whatever was left, could be gathered for burial. The black smoke from the exploded tank seemed to go straight up and could be seen for miles around. I was still in my jeep leading my tanks up to our attack position and had heard the blast and saw the smoke and later in the day saw the awful scene close up.

Our nemesis at this stage of the battle were the A.T. [anti-tank] mines. Most would blow off 4 to 8 track blocks and if we were not under fire we could repair the tank in 4 to 6 hours. Each tank carried a track jack and extra track blocks, connectors and wedge nuts. We had about 30 mine incidents in my Company of 18 tanks, none of which were serious except one and that one was to my tank. A triple decked set of A.T. mines blew off many track blocks and wrecked a road wheel.

The extra tracks you see in the photo on page 103 [6th Marine Division History] is welded on the tank to serve two purposes. First it serves as space armor and secondly they are extra track blocks for track repair.

My best friend, Jack Munday, now deceased, was a company commander of a tank company in the 1st Tank Bn., 1st Marine Division and saw the incident described above as he was attacking on the 1st Division's right flank that morning and had a direct line of sight to the gruesome sight of the burning tank.

Yes...we all had a hell of a time on Sugar Loaf Hill...I lost four tanks in 20 minutes in the first attack on Sugar Loaf Hill and continued in attack each successive day until the Hill was secured. My Tank Company went through three Regiments involved in taking that bloody hill. First the 22nd Regiment, then the 29th, and finally the 4th Marines. [Half Moon Hill was not secured until the last of May, when the 1st Marine Division took Shuri Castle and then Half Moon Hill. See E.B Sledge's book; With The Old Breed, On Peleliu and Okinawa]



Not all the land mines could be located: A demolished Sherman tank.

PFC Robert A. 'Bob' Smith Jr.  
'B' Company - First Battalion  
29th Marines - 6th Marine Division

Written by: James F. Chaisson  
'G' Company - 2nd Battalion  
22nd Marines - 6th Marine Division

Okinawa - June '45

The day was warm and dry for a change and we could see the cliffs around us quite clearly. Those cliffs were called "Suicide Cliffs", and were near Mabuni on Okinawa's southern end of the Island.

Sniper fire was coming from a cave on the face of the cliff and from Bob's position, a difficult target to neutralize without getting hit by enemy fire. Bob was a flame thrower, an extremely vulnerable target during the entire Okinawa campaign. The heavy tank was clumsy and in order to close on the enemy to flame him, you had to get too close for comfort every time.

It was decided to lower Bob down the face of the cliff to a position where he could flame the entrance to the troublesome cave! Bob was lowered away and alas...He tipped upside down in the process. He landed on a rock platform below and on top of a Nip soldier, who was killed about 5 days before, who sure as heck was lousy company in so cramped an area. The stench was awful. Bob flamed the mouth of the enemy cave as best he could, torching it and drenching it with flame. No More sniper fire came forth from that damned cave!

During our memorial visit to Okinawa in 1985, Bob and I (Jim Chaisson, the writer) were at the Mabuni Memorial. He was telling this story as we looked out over the forlorn cliffs that had been death to so many. We paid little attention to the Okinawan gentleman standing near us, listening to Bob's intriguing story. That person was our Okinawan tour guide. When Bob had torched the cliffs he had dug in for the night and an Okinawan kid was trying to get past the perimeter that had been set up. Realizing that if the boy continued, he would be in immediate danger of being killed or wounded, so Bob stopped him and pulled him into his foxhole. Later on the Marines gave the boy a cap and jacket, made sure he was not hurt in anyway and nicknamed him "Isaac". That was a lot easier to remember than the boy's real name...Yoshimini Zenuchi. Isaac told the Marines around him that he was in the cave Bob torched and he had watched Bob being lowered down upside down. He survived the flame along with his grandmother, who also was hiding in the filthy, black cave. As Bob was continuing his story of his day on the cliffs, the Okinawan tour guide stepped up to Bob and said, "Sir...do you remember me?" Bob looked puzzled, peered at the man and then shouted..."My God...Are you Isaac?"

Yoshimini "Isaac" Zenuchi now lives in Yonabaru, Okinawa with his wife and family. Today he is head of the Okinawa Tourist Bureau.

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Bob Smith and Isaac  
Okinawa, 1985

PFC Ed Soja  
G Company, 3rd Battalion  
29th Marines, Sixth Marine Division

Okinawa

I was born in Reading, PA. on December 27th, 1924. My two brothers were in the Army and for me, I was only 17 so the war would have to wait. I found out I had a hernia (on both sides) and that stopped me from going into any branch of the service. Without having the money to pay for an operation to fix the problem my solution was to go out and get a job. I ended up in a steel mill, working 12 hours a day for seven days a week. That job got me fixed up and ready to get 'in harms way'.

When I got in front of the Draft Board (enlistments were full in those days) they told me to come back in six months when my operation was all healed up. That teed me off, so I showed up every two weeks until they got so annoyed they sent me my draft notice. I passed the physical and ended up joining the Marines as a regular, not a draftee. That in itself is another story how I swung that.

From Parris Island I went to Cape May, N.J. for 6 months and then was assigned to the 29th Marines, sent to Guadalcanal and into the 6th Marine Division, which was now in training there. I was in the 33rd Replacement Draft and ended up doing shore party work for some 27 days or so on Green Beach 2. Then I got 'In Harms Way'. I got assigned to G Company, 3rd Bn., 29th Marines, that unit was now on the front lines. While on the way up to the front a sniper must have liked me, as he let loose a round at me. I jumped into a nearby foxhole as quick as a rabbit. My rifle shuddered and I found the bullet intended for me had hit the front guard on my M-1 rifle. It made a nice dent in the wooden part on the barrel. Close, but no marbles. We moved up again toward G Company, and a nambu opened up on us. This guy hit the rifle--again! It hit so hard that it knocked the rifle out of my hands. "Hey Pollock", a guy yelled, "Why the hell don't ya' throw yer' rifle away"? While some guys went hunting the nambu, I looked at the rifle and noticed that besides the dent, the trigger housing was all screwed up from the bullets that hit it. I was lucky one again!

A few days later, a mortar shell fell right in front of me...I felt the heat of the explosion and thats all...but I saw a Jap helmet go down about 50 feet or so in front of me and I knew thats where the SOB was hiding. Another guy and I finished the Nip off with a blast of slugs the next time he moved. He had a buddy with him and his buddy joined him quickly. Funny, we carried that knee mortar for two weeks before we traded it for a lousy can of fruit cocktail.

I spotted some Japs in a wooded area and I told our Sgt. about them. He sent up a squad with a flame-thrower. The Jap was a little tricky in hiding but a dose of the flame got him out. He

shouted as he came up and out charging, but he did not get far before a hail of lead cut him down.

About May 12th or so, Corporal Jimmy Polomski stepped on a mine. He lived for a short time, dying within hours.

On May 16th we were on Half Moon Hill. Dick Grego, our BAR man got hit in the side of the face. Gig Carlson dragged Dick over behind a tank and got him bandaged up. That's the day I became a BAR man...and I never let that fine weapon go till the day the battle ended.

After Sugar Loaf Hill, we had a resting period and that's the time I met Lt. Lowell Sheetz. I had known him from my hot Guadalcanal days and when I saw him, he came over to me and said, "Soja...you're my runner". I answered, "Hell no...I'm a BAR man now and that's all I want to be". He snapped back, "I don't care if you wanna' carry a machine gun...yer' my runner"! I said okay. What else could I say? I was his runner till almost the last few days of battle when the Lt. went over a hill and was killed. 'Another fine Marine reporting Sir'.

One day after Lt. Sheetz was killed, we were flushing the Nips out of the rice paddies where they were hiding. I shot an officer and his side kick. The only souvenir I picked up was the officer's maps in a brown leather case. I handed the maps in to our G-2 Intelligence Officer. Someone else got the Nip's sword. The Nip was carrying a shotgun and someone had shouted, "Hey Soja...that's yours"! I just shrugged my shoulders and someone else grabbed it up. I was never a souvenir hunter, my ass being more valuable than anything else on that lousy island.

My foxhole buddy was Ross Wilkerson and a hell of a nice guy. One day Ross saw a Nip in a hole and the Nip's rifle was sticking up. Ross drew a bead and put a bullet right through the barrel. We charged the Nip and blasted him to hell!. The rifle turned out to be a shotgun. Today, that same shotgun is in the Sixth Division Museum at San Diego, donated by Ross who brought it home. He stored it in his garage till it got 2 pounds heavier from the rust.

After Okinawa, many close calls, but nary a hit, we went to Guam. While there [President] Truman dropped the 'big one'. We all firmly believe if he did not do that, we would not be telling this story today. I went to Tsingtao, China and participated in the surrender of the Japanese there. I got to see many places and cities in China. I left China and was discharged after serving 3 years, 24 days, 6 hours and 15 minutes in the Corps. I have never regretted it!.

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G-3-29  
SIXTH MARINE DIV

EDWARD  
SOJA  
READING, PA

*Edward  
J.  
Soja*

PHARMACIST MATE FIRST CLASS KENNETH W. CAMPBELL  
B COMPANY - MEDICAL, 22ND MARINE REGIMENT  
FIRST PROVISIONAL MARINE BRIGADE - GUAM

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"A" COMPANY, 1ST BN., 22ND REGIMENT  
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION - OKINAWA

On September 7, 1943, I enlisted in the U.S. Navy. After a year of duty within various Naval Hospitals I volunteered for the U.S. Marine Corps. On January 15th of 1944 my orders came through and I was transferred to Camp Elliot, San Diego, California. In all my years in the service I was never happier than during my time at Camp Elliot. I was proud to be part of the U.S. Marines.

After training on the Canal and various other places in the Pacific, we set sail for Guam on June 9, 1944. After a few ship transfers, what was to be a landing on the 17th turned into a sea voyage of over 6 weeks. That is an unbearable time for troops to be cooped up on various landing ships, troop ships, etc.. On the morning of July 21, we were off sailing near Guam and preparing to land. Just to get off the ship in spite of what waited for us was a blessing. The landing was not of the Tarawa kind, but the Armored Amphib Tractors that went in first took a terrible beating. Some 24 of them were knocked out killed and wounded men were in those tractors. The first dead Americans that I saw were some really fine Marines that I knew. They were laid out side by side on the beach, outside of their destroyed tanks in a very orderly fashion.

Some of the Corpsman in the early waves had tried to save them but unfortunately most were dead inside the tractors when they beached. The bloody, shattered tractors were evidence enough of the courage of the men that hit Guam first.

We had a vicious banzai attack the first night that almost eliminated B Company Medical. It was halted only 200 yards from our medical position and it cost the Japs over 200 men.

I was detached two days later and sent up to the front lines to the Regimental Aid Station. I will not go into it but I had some very frightening experiences while there for three days. After that I returned to B Medical and was assigned as Surgery Corpsman. Then we moved north from Agate to Agana. We ended up about 3 miles above Agana, where by this time the fighting had almost stopped. By then we were swamped with men with Dengue Fever, the devil's revenge. Men were in combat with fever that was constant and well over 100 degrees. I eventually got the fever and I never in my life, to this day, experienced more discomfort than those miserable days with the fever.

We finally left the island of Guam and for the first time in 18 days, I took my shoes and socks off. Now I would pay for that stupidity. I spent the next few days in the sick bay aboard ship. The skin on my feet had rotted away! It was so bad that I



watched as the Doctor cut my skin off with a pair of scissors. I never felt a thing. I spent the voyage on my back with my feet in the air. My feet were covered with a gauze packing that was watered down every few hours or so. They used boric acid and a saline solution until my old, tired, aching feet grew new skin. I could not walk as my feet were raw flesh. I almost received a court-martial for "gross personal negligence", but the Doc got me off by stating I was always too busy caring for others and no time to care for myself. Lucky me.

On September 8, 1944 we landed back on Guadalcanal after a 101 day leave from the island. It was not even a month later that we entered into rigorous training for what was coming and the word was it would be a 'big one'.

We ended up on Okinawa on April 1, 1945 and they were correct...it was to become a 'big one'. After an unopposed landing, our 22nd Regiment was heading north on the Island. We bivouacked one night near the town at Nago on the west side of the Island, right on the coast. I did suffer from numerous flea bites and suffered 'fleabitis' from swellings in the legs from the bites. One never saw so many fleas as on Okinawa. If one entered a home or cave he came out looking like someone dipped him in black pepper. When they got inside your belt line they could drive you crazy. Many a Marine stripped off his clothing to rid himself of the enemy invading him. Thank God, for the containers of flea powder, without that we would have surrendered!

When we secured the north we were ordered south, and that is where the enemy main body of troops lay waiting for us. On May the 13th, I was assigned front line duty. In one day the Marines moved 600 yards forward, which was more than the Army had done in a week. I was attached to C Company, First Bn., 22nd Marines. We had 44 Marines and two Medics in the lines then, and without knowing it we were up against the main line of defense the Japanese had prepared for us. We were on the west coast and on the sea, [East China Sea] along the road running north to south in our area. Here we were, 44 men, all that was left of 250 men, guarding the entire right flank of the Sixth Division!

We had the rest of the First Bn. to our left, the second and the third was held in reserve. The 29th [Regiment] was to our left and by this time they had lost almost 75% of their men at a place called Sugar Loaf Hill. The 22nd hit that hill first and that is why our outfit was so reduced. The Hill chopped up the Sixth like a meat grinder. Each day we sat there, cost us men waiting for that damned Hill, Sugar Loaf, to get secured. From the exposed ridge we were on, I could see the enemy clearly and watch them digging in their positions. To raise up, even to go from one hole to the next invited sniper fire and the resultant death or a wound. Even to go a little to the rear to use a latrine invited sniper fire. I could hear bullets wing past my head and that whine it makes is clear in my mind as I write this story

today, many years later. We also received artillery fire on the ridge every single day. That artillery took a great number of casualties. One day, at 9:00 AM, all three Company Commanders and the Battalion C.O. met in a small hut for their daily briefing. At 9:05 AM the only shell that came across that day, landed on the hut and completely wiped out our entire Command. From that time on I had only a First Lieutenant as an officer and one Staff Sgt. as our Exec.

We had a severe shelling the early morning of the 19th of May and we were all glad to see the dawn. There were also a lot of Japanese trying to infiltrate our lines. The Navy provided us with much illumination that night and funny, I thought the flares quite beautiful, yet there was a war going on.

I had crept into a hole with a mortar crew and I watched them launch their mortars almost straight up. With a little wind it would blow the mortar to the reverse slope to where the Japs were. The Japs were so numerous that night we began to run out of machine gun ammo and mortar shells. We radioed back for more ammo, but the driver would not get himself involved too close to us. The result was a long haul to get at the precious ammo. Price, who was also a Corpsman and myself became emergency ammo carriers. We ran up a hill to get to the ammo truck, then down the hill and rush up the ridge to our men. I carried all of the mortar cases, six shells to a box and weighing about 100 pounds per box.

I easily made six trips as fast as I could run in both directions, till I collapsed into an empty shell hole, from total exhaustion. Oblivious to the war around me I fell sound asleep. We did stop the Japs just as the mortar crews were unpacking the last box of shells. when dawn broke and I awoke from sleep, all of us alive on that ridge were mighty happy Marines to see the light of day.

Our Staff Sgt. came by checking on everyone and he barked out, "Clean up this mess around your fox hole...we can't have all these cartons lying around here"! So my buddy and I began cleaning up the empty mortar shell cartons lying around. Here we were in no man's land, on the front lines, cleaning up the area like we were in Boot Camp!

After a while, I was placing a bottle of salt tablets on a little parapet in the foxhole when something went past my head and landed in the soft earth between my extended thumb and fingers. Then the explosion knocked me forward. I grabbed my helmet and began hearing calls for "Corpsman!...Corpsman"! By that time I had been able to locate where the calls were coming from; two more shells exploded in my immediate are. I got up quickly, grabbing the medical kit, stuck my helmet on my head, bare-chested I ran as fast as I could to the nearest man lying wounded. About 25 feet away I found a Marine in his foxhole asking for help. I jumped in beside him. Just as I got in,

another shell exploded very close by. The Marine had a nasty head wound, probably caused by the same shell that nearly took my hand off. I kept hearing more cries of "Corpsman!...Corpsman"! I yelled for our other Corpsman, Price, to get on over here quickly.

In a few seconds Price appeared and he too dropped into the foxhole with me. We heard another shell explode and it had blown Price's foxhole to bits. Had he not come over to me he would have been instantly killed. That call saved his life...for now. The shell resulted in giving us a horrible concussion.

By this time yells were coming from the Command Post foxhole, about three holes behind the one I was in. I told Price to finish up bandaging the wounded Marine's head and grabbing the medical kit I ran over to the Command Post. I dove in on top of a wet and bleeding body. The Sergeant, who only recently had told us to 'clean up our messy area', was now part of that mess himself. A shell fragment had ripped through his throat, nearly decapitating him. All that I can remember was that his eyes were still fluttering as I examined him to see if he had any possibility of being saved. There was no way...in the meantime I looked back and saw that a near miss had hit next to my old foxhole. The shell that had destroyed Price's hole had killed the Sergeant.

I rose up and ran to my foxhole and diving in I found my jacket shredded, full of holes and my rifle blown to smithereens. Price's hole was now a smoking crater. My foxhole buddy was buried beneath the blown in dirt and he was trying to get out. I helped him crawl out from under the caved in dirt covering him. He was groaning, so I tried to calm him down and I cleaned him up a little. All we could do was lie there and absorb the incoming; shaking, shivering and hoping it would all stop soon. Finally in a few minutes the shelling ceased.

We were then given orders to abandon the ridge and head for the still standing, three story high, University of Naha building. For some reason or other it was one of the few buildings still standing. Even the Jap artillery couldn't range in on it. I made several trips up and down the hill evacuating our wounded. After we got everyone off the hill, I started treating the wounded who had been placed on the main floor of the building. The Lieutenant came in and asked if the hill had been secured of all wounded and I answered that I didn't know as I was too busy taking care of the wounded now in the building. He then said, "Go back up that hill...check and make sure there are no survivors...check all the dead too and make sure they are dead"! I answered with a "Yes sir", and gathering up the old medical kit I had stuffed with some new supplies, I headed on back up the hill. I checked every crater and foxhole on that damned ridge. I checked every dead Marine's body I found and determined no one was alive on that hill. It was an eerie feeling knowing I was all alone on the hill and easily observed by the enemy as I

walked around checking all those foxholes.

What happened next is not all that clear. Suddenly, there were two loud explosions. One of them was the dreaded white phosphorous shell. This is a shell that bursts like its the fourth of July. White burning smoke and spears of phosphorous bursting forth in a torrential explosion. The phosphorous inflicts a horrible burn if it lands on human flesh. That shell went off first...I know because it was the only white phosphorous shell I ever saw that landed on my side of the fence. When I saw them explode on the enemy side they frightened me to death.

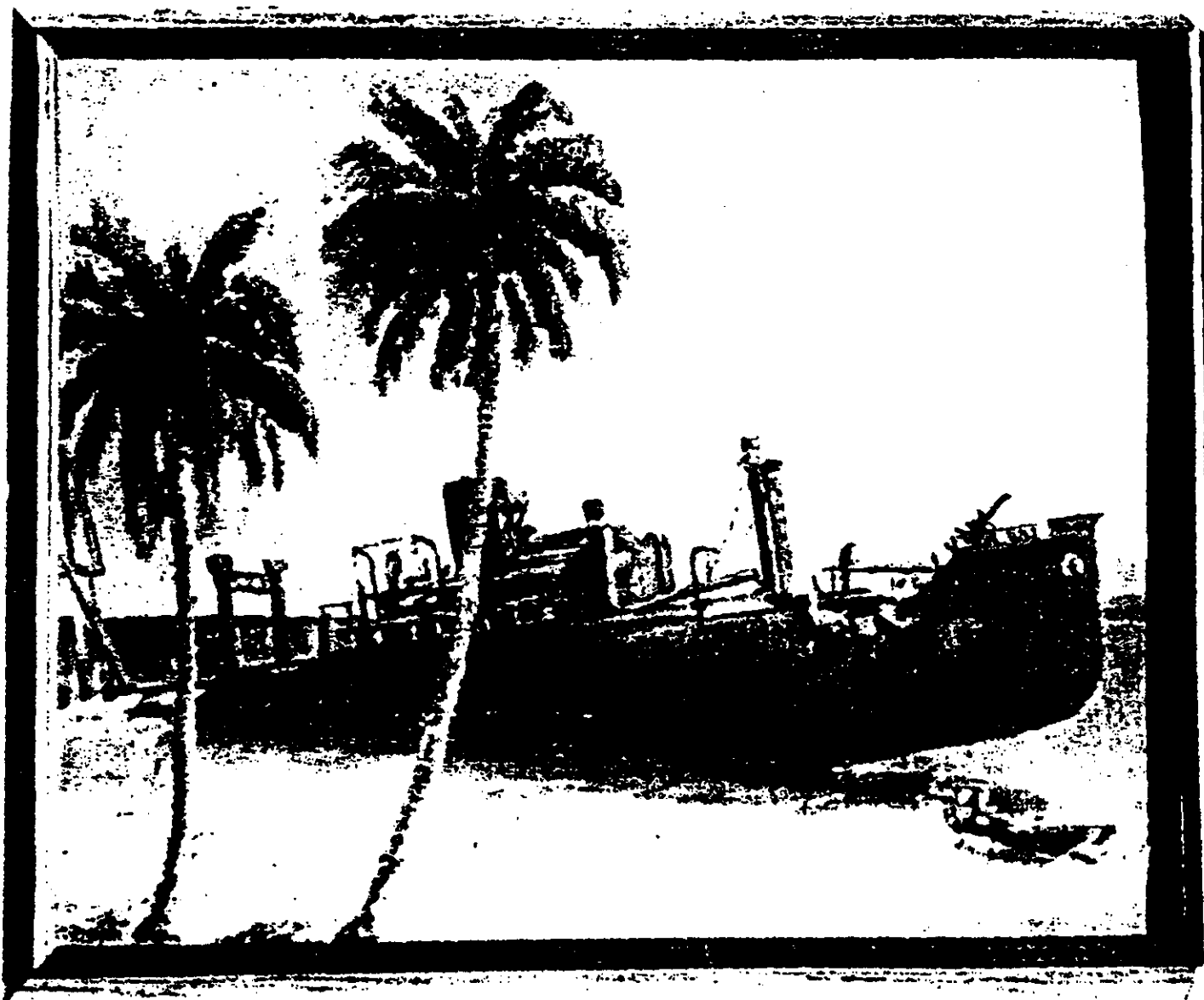
Because we had been very well trained in how to handle this kind of wound, I knew the terrible burn it could inflict. When the second shell went off, I tripped or fell, or was blown off my feet by the full concussion force of the shell. More than likely the blast had knocked me down. The Lieutenant was nearby and I reported to him that the hill was secure of wounded...then I felt a stabbing feeling in my eye that wouldn't allow me to even open it. Ambulances from the Battalion Aid Station had made it to the building and they were busy evacuating the wounded. I helped get the last man aboard one of those jeeps rigged for stretcher, and then climbed aboard myself.

Just as we started off, a jeep rounded the corner and stopped us. A full 'bird' colonel leaped out, cleanly shaven and wearing polished silver insignia on his newly pressed dungarees. He would not live long parading around the battlefield in so obvious a uniform. Some Jap sniper would zero in on him as a grand prize. He came to me and asked for a report. I told him the number of dead and wounded and of the types of wounds the men had suffered. He asked who and where the Commanding Officer was, so I pointed out the Lieutenant. He asked about those in the jeep and I replied that most had concussions. He also asked how come I was going with them. I told him I was going to see they got proper treatment. I was going also to get my eye checked as by now it had gotten quite painful. He said, "Fine...but you be back here by noon...we have to re-group...we're going to advance through Naha".

I was evacuated from one Aid Station to a rear Base Hospital (III Amphib Corps Hospital) at Yontan Airfield. I was then taken to Ward 3-C, Fleet Hospital, # 111 at Agana, Guam. All between the dates of May 19 to May 24 \_\_\_\_\_.

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THE PAINTING OF THE JAPANESE TROOP TRANSPORT, KINUGAWA MARU WAS DONE ON CHRISTMAS DAY 1944. THE OIL PAINTING WAS PAINTED ON GUADALCANAL BETWEEN 1000 AND 1400 AND THE ARTIST RECEIVED A TERRIBLE SUNBURN BY THE TIME IT WAS FINISHED. THE SHIP WAS ON THE BEACH RIGHT BEHIND THE 4TH MARINE CAMPSITE. THE FELLOWS USED TO SWIM OUT TO IT, CLIMB UP ONTO THE MAIN DECK AND JUMP OFF.



"KINUGAWA MARU" BY MEN CAMPBELL  
GUADALCANAL - 1944

PFC LeRoy K. Hammond  
K Company, 3rd Battalion  
4th Marines, 6th Marine Division

When I entered the Marine Corps I was married at the time and I also had a little daughter. I was sworn into the Navy with another man by the name of Warren Reed. After being in the Navy for less than five minutes, we were taken down the hall and sworn in to the Marines. "Two more shit-birds for you Colonel"! was the Navy man's remark to the officer that swore us in.

Both of us were 26 years old at the time, and that is old for the Marine Corps. Invariably we would get called 'Pop' by the younger Marines. After boot camp I was instructed to report to Camp Elliot, U.S. Marine Base in California. While at Elliot I was trained as a BAR man. I got so that I could strip it down and re-assemble it blindfolded.

We were told to 'saddle up' and in due course I found myself aboard a ship with a bunch of other Marines. We were headed overseas and no one knew where. Since we were not a unit it was certain we were destined as replacements or fill-ins for some shot up outfit. I recall our pulling into Pearl Harbor and I was stunned to see all of those Navy ships sitting there rotting away...grotesque with their twisted steel. While there the USS Enterprise came steaming in to Pearl and it passed so close we could have thrown a baseball to it. Every single soul on our ship stood at the rail saluting that gallant ship. The incredible feeling of pride swept through all of us.

Not long afterwards we landed on the island of Guadalcanal. It had been long secured but scattered Japs were on the island. If we didn't find them, the natives would.

My tent was right next to the Headquarters tent. Martin J. Sexton, our Captain had assigned me to become a company clerk. He became known as 'Stormy' Sexton and no better officer ever served in the Marine Corps. Luckily the tent was right next to the mess hall. Our ration of one egg a week didn't apply to me...I made out like a bandit.

Strange things could happen on the Canal. Like the time a palm tree blew down, landed on a tent and killed a Marine lying in his bunk. What a way to go!

We became 'K' Company, 3rd Bn., 4th Marine Regiment. Most of the 4th were made up of Marines who had been [Marine] Raiders, so we sure as heck had all the combat experienced men one could ever hope to go into combat with. The Raiders knew their business.

After much training we embarked for Points unknown, but after awhile we were told it was to be Okinawa-Shima. Not one single soul had ever heard of the place. We were transferred to LST 945, and I carried a bazooka ashore with me. One of my varied

tasks as a Marine. This thing was a tube that could fire a round that had the punch of a 105mm. That is if you could ever aim the thing, and keep rust out of the barrel. I put my extra socks in the tube to keep the rust out and salt air.

The LST was loaded with LVT's which were to take us ashore. On April 1, 1945, our mother hen disgorged the LVT's and off we went, young Marines being carried into Dante's Inferno. The sound of gun fire from the various ships in the harbor was so deafening we could not even talk to one another. We formed up in circles, the armored amphibians to go in first. God bless those guys...unfortunately one of our corporals was hit as the Armored Amphibians were firing 50 calibers all over the beach. One of them [Marines] lurched and the first casualty on Okinawa was one of our men.

After we got to the other side of Yontan Airfield, I talked to Stormy [Sexton] about getting rid of the bazooka. So we decided to dig a hole and bury the thing. Kind of a stupid thing to do when you think of it, but our thought then was to make sure the Japs didn't find the thing. We did experience the Jap 'Screamin Meemie'. So called as they made more noise than anything else, but they did scare the hell out of you.

My Headquarters Platoon bunked in near Yontan that night. We had a coding that when I wanted to wake someone up to go on watch, we would throw a stone out to them. Our mortar guys were to send up a flare on signal if I tossed them a stone. Well, I saw two Japs coming. I tossed the stone and the 60mm guys put the flare up over the wrong area. The Nips changed course a little, but our guys were looking out to the flare and never saw the Nips coming out of the darkness. The Nips came up on the foxhole of Jimmy Golden and Ralph Flatwelder. One of the Nips fired down at Ralph and shot him between the legs. He was our second casualty. I found out later that the sear spring on my carbine was broken and it wouldn't fire. If those Nips had come toward me I would have been in lots of trouble.

Stormy came to me and asked me if I would take over Ducell's job as flamethrower. Ducell was having serious stomach problems and he was evacuated. We came to a gulch and Stormy had called in for an observation plane to come in and see what some Nips were doing about 1/2 mile to our front. We found out they were blowing up their own gasoline. We got credit for some 27 Nips that day, very few of the Nips in the gulch getting away. Here I was with a flamethrower and the entire gulch and hills were on fire. We moved out, and from the heat, the flames and the weight, I fainted. When I came-to, all I had around me was a Corpsman...and he had no rifle. All alone with a Corpsman and a flamethrower. We got to hell out of there!

For some reason or other our Sergeant became disoriented and just wandered off to the rear. At that point Stormy called all of us together and said..."Hammond is my number one man...whatever he

says goes...do it". So I guess I was made acting First Sergeant of the Company. I had a lot of responsibility as Stormy was never around. He was always on the front line...A true, dedicated, great, Marine.

The northern end of Okinawa had more fleas than anyplace on earth. These things were an inch long and when they bit, you knew it. Men became infested with them in Okinawan homes we looked into, or fields, or woods. We had to strip and pick off the fleas constantly. If they got under your belt line, you suffered badly. Many men had skin that turned raw from the itching of the fleas.

I lived on crackers and dried milk while on the northern end as C-rations and K-rations made me sick. I kept a good supply of both on hand as I had first crack at the rations when they arrived, since I was Headquarter Sgt., Acting at least.

Most of what we were doing was patrolling the northern end of Okinawa, all the hills, valleys and towns. The Nips up there had a habit of building for themselves, standing fox holes. When we discovered any, we would simply walk straight at them with all our BARs blazing away. We killed every Jap in the holes we came across with those BARs.

We tracked a bunch of Nips one time and we caught up with them very early in the morning. Lt. Lewis went through the valley, and our Gunny went up over the hill. All of them had every automatic weapon they could carry with them. They surprised the Nips, who were having breakfast and when they opened up on them it was all over. We counted 127 Nips for that little encounter.

Lt. Lewis got nipped in the arm that time, but not too bad. By this time we had criss-crossed northern Okinawa and patrols had gone all the way to the northern tip. A couple of us had gone over to the town of Nago to pick up some supplies. The 29th Marines were engaged over there. When coming back, we saw a Nip plane overhead smoking, and we watched it crash pretty near us. It scared the hell out of us when it passed overhead. We figured the pilot had a nambu or German pistol on him so we hurried over there to see what two dumb-ass, souvenir huntin' Jarheads could find. The plane had crashed in such a mess that we never did find the Jap pilot's body. The wreckage was scattered all over the place.

Okinawa reminded me of the northern part of the Upper Peninsula, in Michigan. Pine trees and beautiful hills. Unfortunately for us, a war was going on.

We got to Nago with the Company and when we got there we found the 29th [Marines] involved in quite a battle. We worked our way around in back of them, as they were then attacking Mt. Yaetake, the highest point on Okinawa. [During the battle for Mt. Yaetake, the 3rd Battalion of the 29th Marines was attached to the



4th Marine Regiment.] While there I got orders to take some 16 men with me and check a place out called Bise. There was a radar group out there and we were supposed to relieve them. When we got there all of them we found were riding horses! We sent word back to Stormy that we found the radar guys all on horses and he said to tell them to, "get the hell out of there and I better not see them on horses".

We could see the 77th Army Division preparing to assault the island of Ie Shima, we were that close to them. We saw Kamikaze;s attacking our ships. Here we were with a grand-stand seat to the climactic happenings of war. The famous writer, Ernie Pyle, was with the 77th, and we later learned he was killed while on the island. All of us felt sorrow upon learning that. With our radio we had, we could actually listen to the ships at sea, so we had a constant report of the sight we were witnessing. It was one never to be forgotten.

We were then supplied by air to a degree and they dropped mostly food and water to us. A parachute would have 3 cans of water attached to the chute. The planes flew so close to the ground and at such a speed that invariably most of the water cans burst. One good thing...we all had foxholes lined with the parachutes...First class living!

We changed our area and advanced up to where the 29th was catching all that hell. When advancing, we came across a long line of bodies, with their feet pointing to the road. They were lying side by side. At first we thought they were Japanese but then we knew they were Marines. When we got to our destination at the foot of the hilly area, we were told to saddle up with water cans, ammo and stretchers and go up the mountain to K Company who was up in those hills. I grabbed two cans of water and I can tell you this, it is one hell of a load to carry 5 gallon cans of water up those rocky, lousy hills. When we got up there we encountered a Jap machine gun that had set up a little to our right and to the front. The Jap had himself a nice little hiding place. I put down the water, aimed my rifle at the point I saw the Jap and after a few rounds the firing ceased. I guess I hit him.

When we got to K Company, Stormy Sexton was there and he said to us, "Hammond...what in the hell are you doing up here"? One thing about Stormy, you would always find him up in front where the action was. I told him I was ordered to bring this stuff up here. He then told us to get back, but before going, dig a hole and put a 29th Marine Lt., and 3 enlisted men in a shell hole of sorts and bury them. We threw ponchos on them and a few shovels of dirt over the unfortunate men.

We got to the other side of Yaetake and found plenty of dead Nips. All of them were all charred up, evidently hit with white phosphorous shells. [or napalm] At one point we had crossed a corn field two separate times. Stormy wanted us to look at the

thing closely and Gunny went out with some men, and sure enough a Jap machine gun opened up. The Nips had let us pass twice without firing and then when they had to, they opened up. Fortunately we took them out without anyone getting hit.

As things come to my mind, let me flip ahead a little. One time at the Machinato Airstrip (near Naha), Brice Martin, our senior Corpsman and I had dug a pretty large foxhole just north of a hedge row in a Jap cemetery. Over the top of the hole we had placed some debris of sorts for protection. Our men were scattered inside the Jap tombs, throwing out the remains of the dead that were in huge urns, and sleeping inside the concrete 'vaults'. Most of us were outside in a position that supposedly was set up to watch a bridge that crossed a river to our front. Brice and I got in the hole and we cooked up some cabbage we found in a near by garden. Plenty of cabbage was in a nearby farm. The next day we saw some Marines in the field and they had mine detectors with them. We went over to talk to them, and they asked if we had eaten any of the cabbage. We said, "hell yes, and it sure was good". They said to us, "Well, you picked the right one's, as we found 3 heads wired up as booby traps"! That was the last of our cabbage experiments.

Brice and I had decided our foxhole, with its tin junk roof was too exposed. I went about 15 or 20 feet toward the hedge row and proceeded to dig a new hole. Brice meanwhile had gone to a nearby tree line and with his pants down was relieving himself. Just then a single shell came in. It landed exactly on top of our castle...the tin roof foxhole! Tin and debris went flying in all directions. Poor Brice was flattened on his back with his skivvies and pants still hanging around his ankles.

Captain Stormy came over one morning and said to me, "Hammond, I got a new partner for you...Gomez. I think he's cracking up a little and I want him to be in with you so you can keep your eye on him". I didn't care for this at all as he had to be on watch and my life depended on his alertness. We gave him a .45 pistol and I didn't like that either. One time we found a nice Jap well near a house. We put some cans down in the well and pulled up some water with the idea of taking a nice bath for ourselves. We stripped, soaped up and watered down. A shell came in and hit some 70 feet or so from us. We fell flat, scarring ourselves on the rubble, and dirtying ourselves all over again. We grabbed our clothes and ran stark naked to our lines to where our Company was. The hoots and hollers from the guys was descending on our naked ears. Just then a second shell hit. It hit on top of the well and blew the house up. We had been zeroed-in all the time we were cleaning up. The near miss saved our lives.

When we got ourselves into our line, we examined ourselves, and my buddy found a piece of shrapnel in his thigh. The Corpsman doctored him up and that became how he got his fourth Purple Heart.

Near Sugar Loaf Hill, just before I was wounded, Gunny Yelitsin and I, in a torrential rain, dug in together. There was a shale pile between Sugar Loaf and Horseshoe [Hills]. Some Marine came sauntering along very near our foxhole. Brice Martin had made a circle with some rags at a spot where the hedge rows or shrubs had been whittled away. The whittling was done by a Jap nambu. The Marine came walking toward us and got to 20 feet of us and the nambu opened up and dropped the Marine right in the center of the 'do not enter' area of the white gauze or rags. It had hit him in the heavy part of his thigh fortunately. The Marine lay there and if the Jap could lower his elevation, the Marine would be butchered. We had to go get him out. We skirted the area and pulling his foot we got him out of there. I told Gunny I'd seen a stretcher laying back away and I'd go get it. I got the stretcher, rolled the wounded Marine onto it and headed for Sugar Loaf Hill. At the foot of the hill there had to be 60 guys there. Gunny and I had to keep going with the Marine as no one there would take the stretcher.

That night I dug in with the Gunny and sure enough there came a Jap. He had dropped into a shell hole about 30 feet or so from us. Gunny had a .45 pistol and I had a carbine. No way we would go over and kill him, we'd just keep him in there till daylight. Every time we saw him move we opened up at the hole and we managed to keep the Jap buttoned up in there. It had rained that night and our foxhole was flooded. We had no sleep that night. In the morning some guy from the first platoon who had noticed the Jap also, just walked over to the hole and let loose a burst into the Jap. No more Jap.

Stormy wanted to know if L Company was tied into us on our right. Bob Duberry and I checked out the flank and found a path running up a small incline. All of a sudden a Jap nambu put bullets all over the sandy path. We lay there and the Nip couldn't get low enough to us, but he sure covered us with sand. We did find L Company tied in, and now we had to go back over that same damned path. Funny, but the Nip never did fire at us when we went back.

Colonel Bruno Hochmuth (C.O. 3rd Bn./4th) visited our Company one day and when we moved we covered up our latrine. The Colonel did not know this and stepped right into the God-awful stuff. He fell in up to his crotch and his nice Eisenhower jacket and his boots and pants were the worst mess you ever saw. We all got a hell of a kick out of telling about the Colonel who 'fell into the shithouse'. Stormy said to me also that the Colonel wanted a jeep driver. I told Stormy that one of our guys was busy digging his foxhole and it measured 4' by 4'. I guess he wanted security. He was also a big shitbird and a goof-off. If you wanted something done wrong, he was the guy.

I took him up to the Colonel and I said to the Colonel, who was in a hammock..."Colonel, I know the best jeep drover in the Company...but it will cost you your hammock". He said that it was fine with him, so I ended up with one of those nice hammocks

the officers usually had. You could die in one of those easily though so most guys would not get in them.

Colonel Hochmuth did attain the rank of General when he stayed in the Corps, but died in a helicopter crash in Nam or Korea.

We were on a hill that was not a hill...it was Horseshoe Ridge, really a hole in the ground, but full of nips. We saw thousands of Okinawans marching north to get out of the mess of war. It was a pitiful sight, those poor human beings caught between two Armies.

Gunny Reiser got hit in the fat part of the arm about that time and I had a hell of a job rolling him over and getting a tourniquet on it. Blood was spurting out all over the place. We also had some of those forward observers with us and they holed up behind a concrete wall and propped the radio up on the wall. Mistake...as the Japs tried to hit the radio. I had to yell over to them to get the damned radio down as the Nips had already chipped a six inch hole in the wall all around the radio. They were surprised they were under fire.

I was standing near a house nearby and a Jap sniper hit a tile over my head and the stuff cascaded down on me and into my shirt. The Nips were hiding in every cave, and the problem was they had civilians in there with them. Much infiltration was attempted at night and many civilians were killed.

PFC Frank P. Kusek was hit and he survived. We also had one snake bite then. A snake crawled into a guys foxhole and I think the snake lost. Those damned things were poisonous though and some of the guys were actually killed by them. They are called 'Habu' snakes. [a variety of the cobra]

We took a prisoner on the lower end and we found the under-ground headquarters for the Jap Navy troops. Most of them killed themselves there and today it is a Jap museum. The top commander was Admiral Ota.

I did something stupid up on Sugar Loaf Hill. I was manning the phones in a defile behind the Hill and a call came in for Stormy, so I went up on Sugar Loaf and told Stormy about the call. He got mad as hell at me and said, "This is the front lines, get your ass off of this hill and back to where you belong..give the call to the officer of the day I left back there"! I got off that hill fast. That hill was a hot bed of sniper, mortar and machine gun fire.

To Move around that area you ran from shell hole to shell hole. The sniper fire would follow you. I don't recall one single foxhole on Sugar Loaf when we got up there. I think men lay in shell holes and they did not dig in. The 4th relieved the 29th up there and we now found ourselves all alone. The First Platoon against all the Japs! [the 4th relieved the 29th on May 19th]

Lt. Cox was shot right between the eyes by a sniper who was in one of those standing foxholes. That Jap was only 20 feet in front of the Lieutenant when he fired. I jumped into the hole where Lt. Cox was and I picked up his radio and did the best I could relaying messages back and forth with Stormy. Nips were shelling us constantly. Tanks drew heavy fire. One shell hit a supply of mortar shells and we had to grab the wooden cases and salvage whatever we could. Brice Martin helped me and other communications men that were up there get those shells to heck away from us. We had some stretcher bearers also with us at the time and they jumped in and helped us. The Amtracs assigned came as close as they could to get our wounded. They came up at high speed, stopped, dropped the ramp and unloaded whatever they had aboard...mostly ammo. We would load the Amtrac hurriedly with our casualties so they could hurry off. The Nips were so damned good with their mortars that they were landing all around the Amtracs, which scared the hell out of the Amtrac guys. If the enemy rounds were heavy, they would up the ramp and scatter like ants back to the rear. The poor casualties would have to wait. All of this happened in mid-May, around or after the 18th of May. At one point a Nip sniper was winging away at us, and we found him to be in one of our knocked out tanks. Stormy ordered me and a couple of guys to go out there and send him to his heaven. We went out and skirted the area the tank was in and we could not find the S.O.B.. My foxhole was on the south west corner of Sugar Loaf, Bob De Berry was dug in with me and a communications man was in the oversize foxhole. Brayson got hit in the calf of the leg and when he got to us the blood was spurting right out of the hole. Without bandaging it he bolted down the hill to find a Corpsman. Right after that the communications guy went out to string some wire and he evidently stepped on a mine as it blew and took the heel of his foot off. He limped back with his foot just hanging loose. He was a mess. We put a tourniquet on his leg and got him down hill and back to the rear.

We moved south to Horseshoe Ridge and we dug in. The Jap mortars found us quickly. Stormy, at this point ordered me to go to the rear and report the Company whereabouts and at the same time give them the casualty list. I headed back with my little 'black book' wherein I had jotted down the names of the KIA and WIA. The book was running out of pages. I stuck the book in my breast pocket, headed back over Sugar Loaf and down the other side. A Jap artillery shell whistled in over my head and I dove down to mother earth. I looked up to see the shell land directly between two guy carrying a wounded man on a stretcher. It blew them all to pieces. Another shell came in as I was running and it landed in front of me onto the path I was using. It knocked me off my feet and I was unconscious for a time.

When I came to, I was on the lower right hand of a jeep, on a stretcher. The jeep could carry four wounded men and some Sgt. was asking me, "Hey Mac...you want a hamburger"? I thought I was in hamburger heaven, but I know now he did it just to keep up all of our spirits. I ended up in a hospital. The next thing I

recall was being knocked out with some kind of sedation. I recall being in a large white building near the water and not much else. I remember playing cards with some wounded guy who had half his face blown off. The guy had jumped in a foxhole and three Nips were in it! The Nips beat him near to death with their rifle butts. His eyes were bloodied, his nose missing, his teeth gone and part of his jaw. He was literally beaten to a pulp.. He was a hideous sight but we steeled ourselves to make him feel human again.

I was put in some kind of a field tent with rows and rows of cots with wounded on them. I noticed in front of the tent they had placed logs just so it would hold a stretcher when it came in and some medic or doctor could work on the wounded man right there. Outside were piles of gear. Rifles, web belts, helmets, dungarees, canteens, BARs, everything. Piles and piles of shoes went eight feet high. The poor guys who wore them didn't need them anymore. I talked to one of the Docs and told him I was away six days and I wanted to head back. The Doc pointed at the piles of stuff and said, "Go get yourself some shoes and whatever and good luck Marine".

I hitch-hiked a ride on a road-grader which was going by and asked the guy where he was heading. He was heading for Machinato Airfield which was now in Marine's hands. We fought over that real estate several times. I found our guys dug-in on the south of the airstrip overlooking the Naha River (I think), the ocean [East China Sea] was on our right. Every two Marines in the foxholes had two cases of grenades and two BARs. They were expecting trouble and we got it. There was a bridge of sorts across the Naha and the Nips wanted to blow it bad. We had swimmers in the water constantly. We had a destroyer escort at night laying their flood lights on the Nips and it lit them up and us too. The Weapons Company had brought up 50 caliber machine guns and they were blasting away at the Nip activity on the other side. It was a spectacle.

Only one Nip got to our side. Somehow or other he became a prisoner, a rare bird those days, and we ushered him to Intelligence in the rear. Stormy had always instructed us to only kill a Nip when he was in the foxhole with you. Meaning of course, just don't blast away, pick your man, and think before you shoot. We had laid out trip wires made out of some communications wire and we got plenty of Nips hung up in the wires that night. The Nips would make a lot of noise when they hit the tin cans we had rigged on the wire and when they ran, the wire wrapped around their necks, legs and bodies. They screamed Jap curse words at us.

We were receiving incoming from the nips as we could easily be seen from the ridges on Oroku Peninsula. One shell came in as the Sea Bees were grading the air strip and landed near one of their trucks. They exited the truck like fleas and ran helter-skelter. We were hysterical. We never knew Sea Bees could move

that fast. When I had first come up to K Company, I stayed one night in the Headquarters tent. When I arrived I was shocked at all the 81mm mortars, the big ones, that we had all around sandbagged in, prepared for war. I never saw so many men in one place. When I had first reported in to our C.O., Stormy Sexton, he gave me one hell of a job. He asked me to go with Graves Registration to Horse Shoe Ridge and pick up some bodies from our Company and possibly 'I' Company men.

It had been raining and when we got to the ridge and found some Marines, they were dead in their foxholes and covered with mud and water. We had to dig them out. That was an incredible task and one that will never be forgotten. Gear was laying all over the place. Web belts, ponchos, helmets, rifles...this was indeed no man's land. You name the gear and it was laying there. Even with such a task, some Nip was across the field in some kind of brush pile and he kept peppering away at us. We would get one body out of the hole, put it in a poncho and then run for some kind of cover. Those bullets were spattering in the mud all around us.

We ran with one dead Marine and his head rolled out of the Poncho...we stopped, went back, picked up his head and placed it back in the poncho. All of us were in some kind of hell. This couldn't be for real! I had a chance to go over to my old foxhole I had left when I was wounded. When I found it, one canteen was missing out of the web belt, but the other canteen was still in it. I headed back to the Company after the disgusting, revolting, nerve shattering task I had just completed. On the way back some Nip sighted in on me with a nambu and he peppered away at me. I was higher than the Nip, but as I came lower, his bullets got closer. I jumped into a cut where a disabled tank lay, and wiggled past it and away from the nambu. I began to think if it was worth the trip to get my old belt and the canteen.

I had been saving the insignia from Jap uniforms and had a pile of them by now. When I got back we were getting replacements. I was busy with them and when I got back to my fox hole, all my souvenirs were gone. Stolen by replacements.

Let me backtrack to the 22nd and 23rd when we were on Horse Shoe Ridge. Sgt. Bob De Berry and Mark Yoakum and a couple of other guys were all dug in around us. When I was wounded I had left them on the hill. A Nip shell landed amongst them and I was told that all that was left of them was pieces. I guess by being wounded saved my life, as I was dug in with them and surely would have been blown to hell and back like they were.

I remember Sgt. De Berry and I would check the lines before dusk. We were sometimes incredibly fortunate. We would check a foxhole, leave it, go some yards away, and a shell would land right in the hole we had left, killing all. There were numerous times that we were in seconds or so of death. It is just amazing

how one is picked to live and another to die. It always amazes me that I survived that holocaust we had on Okinawa.

That 'little black book' I had carried in my pocket containing all the pertinent information on 'K' Company 4th, from April 1, to Japan, had all the KIA, WIA, evacuation, Company strength, officers assigned us, replacements, Corpsman, etc.. That was a valuable little book. All information went back to H.Q. Company from time to time. The original book was sent to Marine Headquarters after the war and ended up also in the National Archives. Stormy Sexton, our C.O. got a copy all done up by the Corps and sent to him after the war. Maury Brice, our Corpsman also got a copy. Stormy placed his in the Marine Corps Raider Assn. Museum in Wilmington, Delaware the day the Museum was dedicated.

We were on the Machinato airfield on May 29th, with all kinds of Marines around us. The place looked like New York City. On June 4th we were embarked in landing craft and we headed around the tip of the Peninsula and landed behind the Japs. With the 22nd pinching in from Naha and us [and the 29th] in their rear, the Japs were at the end of their days. I recall an air drop coming in the first night we had landed and the guy made a beautiful drop. He dropped the supplies and it parachuted down right in the center of the square of flares we had set up.

The Japs were firing at us with those screaming-meemies they had. Huge bombs, laid on a wooden angled platform and fired without any barrel whatsoever. I guess they hit the firing pin with a hammer...but I don't know for sure. Anyhow those things made a terrible screaming noise when they headed your way. When they hit they would go off with a tremendous explosion, throwing up huge clods of earth. Gunny Reiser, who we used to call 'Snuffy' Smith, because he rolled his own cigarettes, was shot through the fat part of his arm. I got him into a ditch on the side of the road. The toughest part I had was getting him rolled over to get his pack off of him. I got his sulfa pack opened and bandaged him up. We sent a couple of guys with him to the rear for some help.

We were under machine gun fire from Nips who were in standing foxholes all over the place. We had called in some fire from the ships off-shore, but they all seemed to be coming down right on top of us. There was an island in front of us and it was covered with the shells from the ships.

[ Note by Bill Pierce, Wpns Co, 29th: Unfortunately, Sgt. LeRoy Hammond's tapes did not go any further into the battle for Oroku Peninsula. God did allow him to survive and he lived a long life. He died during 1996.]

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**A MACHINE GUNNERS PARADISE .....AND HELL**

**EXPERIENCES OF A MARINE MACHINE GUNNER**

**1944 AND 1945**

**OKINAWA SHIMA - RYUKYU ISLANDS, JAPAN**

**BY**

**CORPORAL RAYMOND J. SCHLINDER**

**NUMBER 1 MACHINE GUNNER**

**K COMPANY, 3RD BATTALION, 22ND MARINES**

**SIXTH MARINE DIVISION**





**RAYMOND J. SCHLINDER**  
**6TH MARINE DIVISION ASSOCIATION**  
**PAST PRESIDENT**

September 1, 1944

IT IS ALWAYS DIFFICULT TO PUT DOWN INTO PRINT SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED SO MANY YEARS AGO. YET, THE MEMORIES AND EVENTS THAT MOVED MY LIFE DURING MY U.S. MARINE CORPS CAREER IS WITH ME SO VIVIDLY, AND SEEMINGLY FOREVER.

LET ME START WITH MY BEING ON GUADALCANAL, IN AN AREA CALLED COCONUT GROVE. THIS WAS IN SEPTEMBER OF 1944 AND THE 6TH MARINE DIVISION WAS NOW IN THE PLANNING STAGE, WITH US TO BE A VITAL PART OF THAT SPLENDID GROUP OF MARINES.

WHILE THERE I FOUND A PAIR OF BARBER SHEARS AND ASKED MY BUDDY, 'C.J.' SCHWEITZER FROM ST. PAUL, TO TRIM MY HAIR. AND THEN I'D TRIM HIS. WELL, WHEN H FINISHED WITH ME, IT LOOKED AS THOUGH HE'D HIT ME WITH A GRENADE. NEEDLESS TO SAY, HE WAS ABOUT AS COORDINATED AS THE ROCK OF GIBRALTAR. IN ANY EVENT, BY THE TIME I FINISHED WITH HIS HAIRCUT, THERE WERE TEN GUYS WAITING IN LINE FOR HAIRCUTS. MY DAD USED TO CUT HAIR WHEN WE WERE KIDS, AND I NOTICED THE WAY HE RAN THE COMB ALONG THE SCALP AND THEN SNIP THE HAIR ALONG IT, AND SO ONE. WELL, AS IT TURNED OUT, THESE MEN WERE TOLD THAT I WASN'T A BARBER, BUT THEY SAID THEY DIDN'T CARE. THEY WEREN'T ABOUT TO GO TO ANY DANCES OUT THERE ON THE CANAL ANYWAY. AFTER CUTTING A FEW HEADS WITH THE SCISSORS, I FIGURED IT WOULD BE A LOT EASIER IF I HAD SOME CLIPPERS. SO, I SENT FOR A PAIR OF CLIPPERS FROM MY POP. HE SHIPPED THEM OUT TO ME, AND THEN I FOUND OUT THAT IT WAS MUCH EASIER TO CUT A HEAD OF HAIR WITH THEM. WELL, NOW HERE I AM A BARBER, WITH A RED, WHITE AND BLUE BARBER POLE HANGING OUTSIDE ON THE CORNER OF MY TENT. WOULD YOU BELIEVE THAT? ON GUADALCANAL? A BARBER!

WE WERE IN THAT COCONUT BEACH AREA FOR SOME THREE MONTHS OR SO. ONE EVENING, ABOUT 1700 (5:00 PM) THEY TOLD US TO STAND BY, SADDLE UP...WE'RE MOVING OUT. JUST LIKE THAT! SO WITH ALL OUR GEAR, OUR RIFLES, THE WORKS, WE LOAD UP ON THESE CATTLE TRUCKS. THEN WE RODE SOME FORTY MILES OR SO DOWN THE CANALS ONLY ROAD TO THE OTHER SIDE OF A PLACE CALLED KUKUM DOCKS. THAT IS WHERE THE 6TH MARINE DIVISION STARTED OUT. THE BIRTHPLACE OF 'THE STRIKING SIXTH' AS WE SOON WOULD BE CALLED.

AT THIS POINT, WE ARE ALL RIFLEMEN IN THE CORPS, UNTIL SOMEONE TELLS YOU THAT YOU ARE SOMETHING ELSE. WELL, I HAVE ALWAYS WANTED TO BE A NUMBER 1 MACHINE GUNNER WHEN I WENT INTO COMBAT. SO, WHEN I HEARD SOME SERGEANT BELLOW OUT: "ALL YOU BAR MEN OVER HERE, RIFLEMEN OVER THERE, AND YOU MACHINE GUNNERS, OVER THERE!" NOW I HAD TO MAKE MY MOVE; IT WAS NOR OR NEVER! SO I STEPPED IN WITH THE GROUP OF MACHINE GUNNERS. NOW THAT WAS A BIG PROBLEM. THE PROBLEM WAS THAT I HAD NEVER FIRED A MACHINE GUN IN MY LIFE. I HAD TO DO SOME FAST TALKING. IT WAS HERE THAT I MET BILL ENRIGHT,

MY MENTOR AND SQUAD LEADER. I INTRODUCED MYSELF TO HIM, AND FOUND HE WAS FROM GARY, INDIANA, AND WITH ME BEING FROM MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, THAT MADE US CLOSE NEIGHBORS. ANYWAY, I EXPLAINED TO BILL THAT I NEEDED HIS HELP AND NEEDED IT BADLY. HE ASKED "WHAT DO YOU MEAN?" I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD PROMISED MYSELF, THAT WHEN I WENT INTO ACTUAL COMBAT I WAS GOING TO GO IN AS A NUMBER 1 MACHINE GUNNER, THOUGH I HAD NEVER EVEN FIRED A MACHINE GUN UP TO THIS TIME. WELL, NEEDLESS TO SAY, BILL WAS DUMFOUNDED AND SOMEWHAT SHOCKED. HE TOLD ME IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS TO GET BACK TO MY RIFLE PLATOON, ETC., ETC., ETC.

AFTER SOME TALKING AND CONVINCING, HE SHOULD SEE THAT HE WAS TALKING TO A PRETTY DETERMINED YOUNG MARINE, AND MORE THAN LIKELY A DUMB ONE. HE THEN TOSSED ME A LITTLE MACHINE GUN MANUAL (CALLED "THE BIBLE") WHICH WAS ABOUT 8 OR 10 PAGES OF MACHINE GUN INFORMATION. HE LOOKED ME IN THE EYES AND SAID: "MARINE, YOU GOT 48 HOURS TO MEMORIZE EVERY \*!!!\* WORD IN THAT BOOK!" NEEDLESS TO SAY I DID NOT GET MUCH SLEEP THE NEXT 48 HOURS, BUT EVEN WITH MY LOUSY MEMORY I MANAGED TO MEMORIZE EVERY WORD IN THAT \*!!!\* BOOK.

AFTER THAT, FOR THE NEXT TWO WEEKS, HE MADE ME DISASSEMBLE AND REASSEMBLE, CHANGE BARRELS WITH THE PROPER HEAD SPACE, ETC. AND DO IT ALL QUICKER AND FASTER THAN ANY OF HIS MEN. HE SAID FASTER JUST TO TEST ME TO SEE HOW DETERMINED I REALLY WAS. A LITTLE LATER, HE PUTS A BLINDFOLD ON ME, AND AGAIN I HAD TO CHANGE BARRELS FASTER THAN ANY OTHER MAN. BELIEVE ME, IT REALLY WASN'T EASY. NONE OF IT. ESPECIALLY THE MEMORIZING CRAP. AFTER ALL THE HARD PRACTICE AND TRAINING HOWEVER, I TRULY COULD DO THOSE THINGS AS WELL AND AS FAST OR FASTER THAN ANYONE IN THE SQUAD. I WAS TOLD THAT A NUMBER 1 GUNNER IN ACTUAL COMBAT, HAS THE LIFE SPAN OF ABOUT TWO MINUTES AND THIRTY EIGHT SECONDS. AT THIS POINT, HEARING THAT, I WAS NOT SURE I HAD MADE THE RIGHT MOVE.

AFTER SETTLING DOWN A BIT, SOMEONE TOLD ME THAT OUR K COMPANY BARBER WAS TRANSFERRED OVER TO L COMPANY. SO, I WENT UP TO THE TOP KICK (SERGEANT) AND TOLD HIM: "I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A GUY THAT CAN CUT HAIR." HE SAID: "YOU GOT THE JOB." WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT? HERE I AM NOW, A NUMBER 1 GUNNER, AND ALSO THE COMPANY BARBER TO BOOT. AND REALLY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL I AM DOING IN EITHER ONE OF THE JOBS.

LATER ON, I TAUGHT ROY (CHI-CHI) WOLVEN HOW TO CUT HAIR, SO HE COULD TAKE SOME OF THE LOAD OFF OF ME. CHI-CHI WAS A NUMBER 1 GUNNER IN OUR PLATOON, AND A BIG INDIAN FROM CALIFORNIA. BUSINESS WAS GREAT. IT WAS, UNTIL SOME &!!!& LIEUTENANT WALKED IN A FEW WEEKS LATER AND ASKED FOR A 'FLAT-TOP' HAIR CUT. THOSE TYPES OF HAIRCUTS WERE POPULAR THEN. HE NEVER NEW IT, BUT HE WAS THE 5TH OR 6TH GUY THAT I GAVE ON OF THOSE 'FLAT-TOPS' TO. SO I START ON HIM. FIRST UP ONE SIDE, THEN DOWN THE OTHER, THEN DOWN THE ONE SIDE, AND UP THE OTHER. THEN BACK, THEN FORTH, THEN FORTH, THEN BACK. FOR SOME REASON OR OTHER, WITH ALL THE CUTTING, I JUST COULDN'T GET THE HAIR ON TOP OF HIS HEAD FLAT, NO HOW. FOR THE

LIFE OF ME I COULDN'T COME UP WITH A DECENT LOOKING JOB. YOU MIGHT SAY, I GAVE HIM A 'HORSE SHIT' JOB. WHEN I WAS FINISHED HE ASKED ME HOW MUCH HE OWED ME, SO I SAID... "OH THIS ONE'S ON ME." I DIDN'T HAVE THE HEART TO CHARGE HIM ANYTHING BECAUSE HIS HEAD LOOKED SO BAD. THE NEXT DAY I GOT CALLED IN, AND THE TOP KICK SAYS: "SHCLINDER..WE NEED MACHINE GUNNERS MORE THAN WE NEED BARBERS. SO GET BACK TO MACHINE GUNNIN'...RIGHT NOW!" SO MUCH FOR MY ILLUSTRIOUS CAREER AS U.S. MARINE CORPS COMPANY BARBER. I STILL CUT HAIR THOUGH ONLY I HAD TO DO IT ON MY TIME. HE NEVER REPLACED ME. THAT SHOWS YOU HOW MUCH THEY MISSED ME!

IT WAS A THURSDAY, MARCH THE 15TH, 1945 THAT WE BOARDED SHIP FOR DESTINATIONS UNKNOWN. WE HAD SPENT WEEKS CLEANING WEAPONS, PACKING, ETC. TO EMBARK ON A COMBAT MISSION TO SOME GOD FORSAKEN UNHEARD OF CORNER OF THE GLOBE. OUR SHIP TOOK US TO A PLACE CALLED THE ULITHI ISLANDS, WHICH IS A NAVAL GROUPING AREA. MANY NAVY SHIPS WERE THERE, INCLUDING THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER FRANKLIN. I BELIEVE, WHICH WAS BLASTED TO ALMOST A SCRAP HEAP BY THE JAPANESE. WE SPENT A DAY OR SO THERE, AND THEY TOOK US TO AN ISLAND CALLED 'MOG-MOG'. ASK ANYONE TODAY WHERE THAT ISLAND IS AND I GUARANTEE 99 OUT OF 100 WILL JUST STARE AT YOU. WE THEN BOARDED LST# 1320, WAITED A DAY OR SO AND THEN SET SAIL ACROSS THE PLACID, CALM BEAUTIFUL PACIFIC. THAT WAS UNTIL WE RAN INTO A TYPHOON ON MARCH 26TH THROUGH THE 31ST, WHILE HEADING FOR A PLACE THEY CALLED OKINAWA. OLD RAY HAD A SPECIAL SPOT AT THE RAILING MARKED WITH HIS NAME. FOR OVER TWO DAYS I LOST IT ALL. I HAD THE HEAVES, THE DRY HEAVES, AND HEAVES AGAIN. I'VE BEEN DRUNK A FEW TIMES IN MY YOUNG LIFE, BUT I NEVER EXPERIENCED ANYTHING AS BAD AS THAT. DURING THAT DILEMMA, I'D LOOK UP AND OUT TO FIND THE HORIZON, AND ALL I COULD SEE WAS 30 TO 40 FEET OF WATER AROUND US 360 DEGREES, AND AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS WELL WAS OLD RAY AT THE RAIL. AN OLD NAVY CHIEF KEPT TELLING ME... "DON'T THINK ABOUT IT.. AND EAT SOME SODA CRACKERS, YEAH RIGHT, I DID, AND ALL 400 OF THEM CAME OUT AS DRY AS WHEN THEY WENT IN. AFTER A FEW DAYS, I REALIZED GOD WAS ALLOWING ME TO LIVE. MY NEXT STOP TO LIVE ON WAS GOING TO BE OKINAWA...I HOPED.

IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL, CALM MORNING ON APRIL 1, 1945, AT 8:30 A.M. AND EASTER SUNDAY. WITH THE 4TH MARINES IN ASSAULT WITH THE 22ND MARINES, WE HEADED INTO THE BEACH. OUR 29TH, THE OTHER INFANTRY REGIMENT WAS HELD IN RESERVES, BUT LANDED LATER IN THE DAY DUE TO LACK OF OPPOSITION ON THE LANDING AREAS. WE WERE IN AN AMTRAC HEADING FOR THE SMOKE OBSCURED ISLAND. WE ALL WONDERED WHAT AWAITED US. MOST MARINE BEACH LANDINGS WERE BRUTAL AND FANATICALLY DEFENDED. ON THE WAY IN THE BOATSWAIN SHOUTED FOR SOMEONE TO HANDLE THE LIGHT .30 CAL. MACHINE GUN LOCATED ON THE STARBOARD (RIGHT SIDE, FOR YOU LANDLUBBERS) SIDE, AFT (NEED I TELL YOU WHERE THAT IS?), WHILE WE HEADED TO THE BEACH. SO WHO JUMPS UP THERE? YOU GUESSED IT... DUMB ASS RAY! TALK ABOUT A SITTING DUCK! FORTUNATELY FOR US, AND THE DUMBASS AFT GUNNER, WE RAN INTO LITTLE OPPOSITION FROM THE JAPS, AND MADE THE BEACH WITHOUT INCIDENT. WE HIT THE BEACH ON MY BROTHER 'BABES' BIRTHDAY. EASY FOR ME TO REMEMBER THE DAY. IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL, SUNSHINY DAY, WITH CLEAR BLUE SKIES. FOR OUR FAMILIES AT HOME, THEY WOULD BE ATTENDING THEIR RESPECTIVE RELIGIOUS SERVICES. IF

NOT FOR THIS LOUSY WAS, WE TOO WOULD BE WITH THEM. HOW WE ALL LONGED FOR THAT. SO MANY, SO MANY OF OUR YOUNG MEN LANDING TODAY WOULD NEVER...EVER SEE...ANOTHER EASTER SUNDAY.

A PECULIAR INCIDENT TOOK PLACE ABOARD SHIP JUST BEFORE WE GOT ON THE AMYRAC. SOME GUY BY THE NAME OF LOGEAS (LO-JAY-US) COULDN'T HANDLE THE PRESSURE, I GUESS, SO HE SLAMMED A HATCH DOOR ON HIS TRIGGER FINGER. HE DID NOT MAKE THE LANDING WITH US. AFTER A LITTLE THOUGHT ON THE SUBJECT, WE WERE ALL GLAD HE DIDN'T. WE COULD NEVER RELY ON SOMEONE LIKE THAT TO SAVE OUR BUTTS IF WE WERE IN A JAM, OR ANY SORT OF EMERGENCY, NOW COULD WE? WE WONDERED WHAT EVERY HAPPENED TO HIM. THEN AGAIN...WHO REALLY CARES...HUH?

THINGS WENT PRETTY WELL FOR US AFTER THE LANDING. WE TOOK SOME OLD CASTLE BY ABOUT 1400 (2:00 PM) IN THE AFTERNOON, WHICH HAD BEEN OUR OBJECTIVE TO TAKE IN TWO DAYS. HERE WE WERE AT OUR OBJECTIVE IN ABOUT 1/2 A DAY. THE NAVY WAS CALLED UPON TO LIFT THEIR SUPPORTING FIRE, AS A SHORT ROUND COULD FIND ITSELF IN THE MARINE LINES. I HAD QUITE A FEW BUDDIES IN THE 4TH MARINES...LIKE JOE WROBLEWSKI, EDDIE GLYNN, BOTH BOOTH CAMP BUDDIES AND LATER ON WOUNDED IN ACTION. JOE TOLD ME ABOUT THE NIP PILOT THAT LANDED AT YONTAN AIRFIELD, AFTER WE HAD ALREADY TAKEN AND SECURED THE THING. WE HAD THAT AIRFIELD CAPTURED BY NOON ON THE FIRST DAY. IN ANY EVENT, THIS NIP PILOT, ONE OF THE 2% THAT NEVER GETS THE WORD, LANDED HIS PLANE ON THE STRIP. JOE TOLD ME THAT BY THE TIME HE GOT OUT OF THE PLANE, HIS BODY HIT THE DECK WEIGHING ABOUT 10 TO 15 LBS. HEAVIER DUE TO THE AMOUNT OF LEAD HE WAS NOW CARRYING INSIDE OF HIM. POOR BUGGER...IT DIDN'T HURT TOO LONG HE NEVER KNEW WHAT HIT HIM.

AFTER SECURING THE CASTLE AND THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY, SOMEONE DECIDED TO TAKE US ON A HIKE. DID WE EVER GO ON A HIKE, WE HIKED FROM ONE SIDE OF THAT ROCK TO THE OTHER SIDE, THEN BACK TO THE OTHER SIDE AGAIN. WE HIKED, AND HIKED, AND HIKED. DID WE EVER DO SOME &!!!& HIKING. WE HAD THE TASK OF CLEANING OUT ANY AREA WE FOUND THE JAPS HIDING IN. WHENEVER AND WHEREVER WE FOUND THEM WE CLEANED THEM OUT. WE HEADED NORTH, UP THE ISLAND, ALL THE WAY TO THE VERY TIP.

ONE DAY, L COMPANY MARCHED INTO THOSE HILLS ABOUT ONE-HALF DAYS MARCH AND THEY WERE AMBUSHED. QUITE A FEW OF THEIR MEN WEE KILLED AND WOUNDED. THE NEXT DAY, A PLATOON OF RIFLEMEN, WITH AN ATTACHMENT OF MACHINE GUNS (MYSELF AND ENRIGHTS) WERE SELECTED TO GO UP TO THE AMBUSH AREA AND WIPE OUT THE NIPS. WE PATROLLED FOR ABOUT HALF A DAY AND NEVER SAW A SINGLE ONE. FINALLY, DOWN IN THIS VALLEY WE SAW THEM SCURRYING ABOUT. THE LIEUTENANT GAVE US INSTRUCTIONS: ONE SQUAD GOES DOWN AND ATTACKS ON THE LEFT, AND ANOTHER SQUAD DOES THE SAME ON THE RIGHT. THAT WOULD MAKE THE ONLY ESCAPE ROUTE OUT THE OTHER END AND UP A LARGE HILL, WELL, WE MACHINE GUNNERS HAD A SAYING, "A MACHINE GUNNERS PARADISE." NO ONE SHOOTING AT ME, AND I'M HAVING A FIELD DAY. AS OUR MEN MOVED

DOWN AND IN ON THE LEFT AND RIGHT, I'D SIT AND FIRE AWAY AT THE NIPS SCURRYING OUT THE EXIT END. THE ONLY THING GOOD THAT I CAN SAY ABOUT IT WAS, IT SURE FELT GOOD NOT BEING SHOT BACK AT.

WE WIPED THEM OUT AND BACK WE WENT TO OUR OUTFIT. WE PROCEED NORTH ON OKINAWA UNTIL IT WAS TOTALLY SECURED. WE HAD MANY PATROLS FROM ALL THE REGIMENTS GOING AROUND THE PLACE CONTINUING THE MOPPING UP.

ONE NIGHT WE SET UP ON A MOUNTAIN TRAIL. IT WAS A LITTLE PAST DUSK, AND OF COURSE, THE WORD CAME ALONG TO SHOOT ANYTHING THAT MOVES. A SHORT TIME LATER THERE WAS SOME MOVEMENT DOWN THE TRAIL A WAYS. SO I GAVE IT A BURST OF SIX OR SEVEN ROUNDS. NO MORE MOVEMENT. WE WENT OUT ANXIOUSLY THE NEXT A.M. TO SEE WHAT WAS LYING OUT THERE. WE FOUND OUT THAT WHAT WAS LYING OUT THERE WAS A BIG OLD HORSE. DEAD AS A HORSE CAN BE. WE NUMBER ONE GUNNERS WOULD CHECK EACH OTHER OUT ONCE IN AWHILE TO DETERMINE WHAT OUR SCORES WERE. YOU KNOW, DEAD NIPS. WELL, EVERY TIME THEY'D ASK ME AFTER THAT, I'D TELL THEM AND ADD.. "OH YEAH...AND ONE DEAD HORSE TOO." IT KEPT OUR HUMOR ALIVE ANYWAY. WE CAN'T LOSE THAT OR WE'D LOSE IT ALL.

ON APRIL THE 13TH WE HAD GOTTEN WORD, THAT OUR PRESIDENT, F.D.R. HAD DIED. HE REALLY DIED THE DAY BEFORE, WHICH WAS APRIL THE 12TH, 1945. WE WERE ALREADY NUMB FROM THE WAR AND ALL ITS HAPPENINGS AND NOW THIS. WE WERE RESTING UP WHEN THEY GAVE US THAT NEWS, AND AT THE SAME TIME WE HAD A MAIL CALL. HEADQUARTERS MUST HAVE BEEN HOLDING UP THE MAIL FOR QUITE SOME TIME. WELL, ONE OF THE LETTERS WAS FROM THE COMPANY THAT I HAD WORKED FOR PRIOR TO JOINING THE MARINES. THEY HAD SENT ME A \$50.00 WAR BOND, AND OF ALL PLACES FOR IT TO BE DELIVERED, IN THE MIDDLE OF BATTLE ON OKINAWA. I SHOWED IT AROUND TO MY BUDDIES, WHEN ONE THEM SAYS, "HEY RAY, DID YOU SEE WHO THE BENEFICIARY IS ON THIS BOND?" I SAID NO. HE THEN SAID, "WELL, THE COMPANY THAT GAVE IT TO YOU IS THE BENEFICIARY." AFTER EVERYONE SAW IT, WE ALL HAD A GOOD LAUGH. I TORE IT UP AND TOSSED IT INTO THE WIND, THE RAIN AND THE MUD. I WONDER WHO EVER GOT THE LOUSY FIFTY BUCKS.

AFTER SECURING THE NORTH END OF OKINAWA, WHICH COVERED ABOUT 3/4 OF THE ISLAND, WE HEADED SOUTH ON TRUCKS TOWARD OUR DESTINY. IT IS NOW MAY 6TH AND THE 7TH. ON MAY THE 8TH, WE TOOK UP A POSITION ON THE FRONT LINE JUST NORTH OF THE ASA KAWA RIVER. WE HAD BEEN SELECTED, OUR 22ND, BY GENERAL SHEPHERD DIVISION COMMANDER, TO ATTACK THE JAPS FIRST. ON MAY THE 9TH AT APPROXIMATELY 0900, OUR 3RD PLATOON, WITH OUR ATTACHMENT OF MACHINE GUNNERS, CROSSED THE ASA KAWA RIVER IN SINGLE FILE. WE WADED THROUGH THE SHALLOW WATERS AS THE JAPS HAD KNOCKED OUT THE FOOT BRIDGE THE NIGHT BEFORE. THEY BLEW IT UP AND THE GUYS THAT DID IT WENT WITH THE BRIDGE.

AFTER ALL OF US ON THE ATTACK, GOT ACROSS THE RIVER, ALL HELL BROKE LOOSE! WE WERE IMMEDIATELY PINNED DOWN. WE REMAINED IN

POSITION ALL DAY AND NIGHT AND INTO THE NEXT DAY. TO MOVE WAS A TICKET HOME...OR DEATH. IT WAS CLOSE ORDER COMBAT OF THE CLOSEST KIND. THEY THREW GRENADES, MACHINE GUNS, SNIPERS, AND MORTARS AT US. WE LOST A LOT OF MARINES. OUR FORWARD OBSERVERS WERE EITHER KILLED OR WOUNDED. THE NIPS ALSO HAD ARTILLERY COMING AT US FROM THE SHURI HEIGHTS, THEIR COMMAND POST, A TOWERING HEIGHT OFF TO OUR LEFT.

MY NUMBER 2 GUNNER, JIMMY WHALEN FROM BROOKLYN, N.Y., CAUGHT A PIECE OF SHRAPNEL IN THE BUTT. WE WERE ALL HAPPY AS HELL FOR HIM, AS HE HAD A WIFE AND FOUR KIDS WAITING FOR HIM AT HOME. HE WOULD NOW BE GOING HOME. CHI-CHI AND I PLAYED TAG WITH A NIP MACHINE GUN MOST OF THE TIME. IF WE KILLED THE CREW THEY IMMEDIATELY REPLACED THE DEAD NIPS WITH LIVE ONES. THE PLACE WAS LOADED WITH INTERLOCKING CAVES AT THE FOOT OF EACH HILL FACING US. THEY MUST HAVE RUN AROUND IN THERE LIKE ANTS. THAT ONE DAMN NIP MACHINE GUN KILLED OUR NUMBER ONE GUNNER IN THE OTHER SQUAD. HE PUT A BULLET IN HIS JUGULAR VEIN. HIS NAME WAS LONNIE BEARD, BUT WE CALLED HIM 'BLANKET ASS.' HE WAS FROM LOUISIANA. HE LASTED ABOUT THREE WEEKS, BEFORE HE DIED.

THE RESISTANCE WAS REALLY TOUGH, AND WE JUST COULDN'T MOVE FORWARD. THE LIEUTENANT CALLED FOR HELP FROM THE NAVY SHIPS SURROUNDING OKI, OUR PLANES, WEAPONS COMPANY, ARTILLERY, ANYTHING ELSE TO START BOMBING THOSE HILLS. AND DO IT ALL AT THE SAME TIME. WHEN THEY OPENED UP, WE FINALLY MADE OUR ESCAPE BACK ACROSS THAT RIVER. IN CROSSING I GOT INSIDE OF A DRAINAGE PIPE, ABOUT 2 FEET OR SO HIGH, AND CRAWLED WITH OTHER GUYS TO SAFETY. AT THE TIME I SAID "RAY...WHAT IN THE HELL ARE YOU DOING INSIDE OF THIS THING?" BUT WE DID GET BACK. WE MADE IT TO SOME HIGH GROUND ON THE OTHER SIDE AND WATCHED THE SHOW. THOSE HILLS LITERALLY GOT BLASTED INTO HOLES IN THE GROUND. WATCHING THAT, I THOUGHT THERE IS NO WAY THERE CAN BE ANY LIVING SOUL LEFT ALIVE IN THAT PILE OF RUBBLE. IT TOOK TWO HOURS FOR THE SMOKE AND DUST TO SETTLE DOWN, AND WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT? THERE WERE STILL SOME NIPS FIRING AT US FROM THAT PILE OF NOTHING!

ON OR ABOUT MAY 12TH, WE WERE ON THE WESTERN SIDE OF OKINAWA ALONG THE SHORE LINE. INTELLIGENCE HAD INFORMED US THAT WE SHOULD LOOK FOR SOME KIND OF LANDING BY THE NIPS AND TO SET UP OUR GUNS FACING THE OCEAN. OUR EXACT LOCATION WAS ABOUT 2 MILES NORTH OF NAHA, OKINAWA'S CAPITOL CITY. OUR FRONT LINE RAN ALONG THE SEA WALL, THEN TURNED 90 DEGREES LEFT INTO A LARGE, HIGH CLIFF. IF ANY BYPASSED NIPS TRIED COMING SOUTH THAT NIGHT, TO GET BACK TO THEIR LINES, THEY WOULD RUN STRAIGHT INTO OUR LINES.

WELL, WE DUG IN FACING THE OCEAN. TO THE REAR, APPROXIMATELY 100 YARDS GIVE OR TAKE, WAS THIS REAL HIGH CLIFF. WITH FLARES FLYING UP ALL NIGHT LONG, I THOUGHT I'D BE A SITTING DUCK FOR SOME JAP UP ON TOP OF THAT CLIFF. SO, I IMMEDIATELY WENT TO WORK BUILDING A ROCK FORT FOR MYSELF. I BUILT THE ROCK PILE UP BEHIND ME IN ORDER TO PROTECT MY BACKSIDE FROM THE CLIFF AREA. IT WAS ABOUT



DUSK WHEN I HEARD SOME MOVEMENT BEHIND ME. I CALLED OUT, "HEY, WHO'S THERE?" THEY YELLED, "SECOND PLATOON, WITH CHOW." WE COULD MAKE OUT THE GUYS WITH BOXES ON THEIR SHOULDERS, AND MOVING ALONG SINGLE FILE. IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN 20 MINUTES LATER, WHEN I SEE AND HEAR SOME MOVEMENT BEHIND ME AGAIN. IN THE RAPIDLY DARKENING NIGHT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO SEE CLEARLY, BUT I COULD SEE MOVEMENT. THEY COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE THAN 30 FEET AWAY FROM ME. AGAIN I SHOUTED, "HEY, WHO'S OUT THERE?" AT THIS TIME, I SEE ALL THESE LITTLE ROUND SHINING HELMETS GO DOWN TO A SQUATTING POSITION, CONTINUING TO MOVE ALONG AS BEST THEY COULD. I PULLED THE PIN ON A GRENADE AND TRIED TO LET THE SPOON FLY AND THEN TOSS IT AT THEM. THE SPOON DID NOT LET LOOSE, SO I TOSSED IT INTO THE OCEAN. WHAT A TIME FOR A DUD GRENADE! I GRABBED MY TRUSTY MACHINE GUN, TURNED IT AROUND QUICKLY, AND LET FLY AT THOSE LITTLE BASTARDS. AFTER I OPENED UP, THE WHOLE FRONT LINE OPENED UP. OUR ENTIRE LINE POURED VOLLEYS INTO THE AREA. THE INCIDENT LASTED NO MORE THAN 15 MINUTES OR SO.

NEXT MORNING WE MADE OUR WAY OUT TO WHERE THE MOVING JAPS HAD BEEN SEEN. WE COUNTED 38 DEAD NIPS. TEN OR TWELVE OF THEM KILLED THEMSELVES WITH GRENADES, IN THEIR STOMACH OR HEAD. IT WASN'T A VERY PLEASANT SIGHT. BETTER THEM THEN US.

I WAS STILL CURIOUS AND CONCERNED AS TO WHY THAT GRENADE NEVER WENT OFF. I WALKED INTO THE OCEAN, WHICH WAS ONLY A FOOT OR SO DEEP, FOUND THE GRENADE AND PICKED IT UP. I STUDIED THE THING, AND FOUND THAT HALF OF THE COTTER PIN WAS PULLED OUT AND THE OTHER HALF REMAINED INTACT . WHEN ATTEMPTING TO REMOVE THE PIN, I MUST HAVE PULLED AND TWISTED SO HARD, THAT HALF OF THE COTTER PIN CAME OUT AND HALF STAYED IN. NEEDLESS TO SAY, A GRENADE IS DIFFICULT TO OPERATE THAT WAY. I HAVE OFTEN THOUGHT, IF THAT GRENADE WOULD HAVE BEEN A GOOD ONE, I COULD HAVE TAKEN OUT THOSE NIPS WITH ONE BLAST AND SAVED ALL THAT AMMO. I TOSSED THE GRENADE BACK IN THE OCEAN. OH WELL, BETTER THIS WAY.

THE NEXT TWO DAYS, THE 13TH AND 14TH, WE WERE HEADED TOWARD SUGAR LOAF HILL, DIRECTLY EAST OF US. IT LAY ONE TO TWO MILES WEST AND ABOUT A MILE OR SO SOUTH. MOVING UP THERE, WE PASSED MANY CAVES, AND OUR FLAMETHROWER THREW A HOT JET INTO ONE OF THE CAVES, AND UNKNOWN TO ME AND ANYONE ELSE, THE CAVE CONTAINED JAPANESE ORDINANCE. IT BLASTED THE CAVE TO BITS. MY NUMBER TWO GUNNER, RAY KIEMAN GOT HIT. A BIG BOULDER HIT HIM BETWEEN THE ANKLE AND THE KNEE, SHATTERING HIS SHIN BONE. WHAT A BLAST THAT WAS! MAN...I WAS LUCKY! IT DID A REAL NUMBER ON MY BUDDY KIEMAN THOUGH. THE LAST I REMEMBER OF HIM, HE WAS HIM LYING ON A STRETCHER, SMOKING ONE OF HIS CAMEL CIGARETTES, AND SAYING TO ME, "GO GET THEM LITTLE BASTARDS...I'M GOING HOME!" I NEXT SAW HIM AT THE FARRAGUT NAVAL HOSPITAL IN IDAHO A FEW MONTHS LATER. THE BOTTOM OF HIS LEG CAST HAD BEEN SOFTENED AND WORN THIN BY THE MANY DANCES HE HAD ATTENDED. I SAW HIM AGAIN AT THE MINNEAPOLIS REUNION OF THE 6TH DIV. ASS'N. IN 1993. HE STILL LIMPS A LITTLE BIT, BUT STILL ONE HECK OF A GUY. I DO NOT RECALL THE FLAMETHROWERS FATE, BUT IF A

BOULDER LIKE A SOFTBALL COULD HIT RAY, WHAT COULD HAVE HIT THE FLAMETHROWER?

WE WERE DUG IN ON THE EVENING OF MAY THE 14TH, AND BEING A LITTLE BEHIND THE LINES WE WERE JUST 'JAWING' AWAY. THEN THE WORD CAME DOWN THE LINE THAT WE WERE GOING TO ASSAULT THAT NEXT HILL, AND DO IT NO MATTER WHAT THE COST. THAT HILL WAS SUGAR LOAF HILL. IT WAS NOT CALLED THAT YET, BUT IS NOW, AND IS LEGEND IN MARINE CORPS HISTORY. IT WOULD TAKE 11 ASSAULTS AND DECIMATE THE 22ND AND THE 29TH, AND SOME OF THE 4TH. WE HAD MORE MEN KILLED AND WOUNDED ON THAT HILL IN SEVEN DAYS THAN ANY OTHER BATTLE ON THE ENTIRE ISLAND. IT WAS HINGED WITH OTHER HILLS, HORSESHOE AND HALF-MOON, AND SUPPORTING FIRE COULD BE RAINED DOWN FROM THOSE HILLS ONTO THE TOP OF SUGAR LOAF. WHEN THEY GAVE US THE WORD, 'NO MATTER WHAT IT TAKES', IT SURE GOT US TO THINKING ABOUT IT, IN CASE YOUR MIND WENT BLANK.

IT WAS AT THIS POINT THAT A MAN PRAYS A LOT. NOT THAT I HADN'T PRAYED BEFORE, BECAUSE I DID, LONG AND OFTEN. AFTER AWHILE THOUGH, YOU JUST KIND OF GET NUMB TO THE DYING THING. YOU JUST MAKE UP YOUR MIND THAT IF IT'S MEANT TO BE, IT'S MEANT TO BE. IN THE MEANTIME, I'LL JUST TAKE AS MANY OF THOSE LITTLE BASTARDS AS I CAN WITH ME, AND THAT'S THAT. DEATH WAS ALL AROUND US. WE WERE BECOMING IMMUNE TO THE TUNE OF THE GRIM REAPER.

WORD CAME ALONG THAT WE WERE TO MOVE OUT AT MIDNIGHT, AND WE DID. I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY TIMES THAT HILL WAS ASSAULTED PRIOR TO OUR GETTING THERE. IN ORDER FOR US TO MAKE OUR WAY THERE AND TO GET TO THE TOP WE SAW, AND WALKED BY AND OVER, MANY A DEAD MARINE. I DON'T MIND TELLING YOU, THAT IS A SIGHT I DON'T EVER WANT TO SEE AGAIN AS LONG AS I LIVE. IT IS BAD ENOUGH SEEING YOUR CLOSE BUDDIES WOUNDED, BUT TO SEE DEAD MARINES IN THEIR FROZEN POSTURES OF DEATH IS A TERRIBLE THING. I SORROWED FOR THEM AND ...I PRAYED.

WHEN I GOT TO THE TOP, I SET UP THE MACHINE GUN IN SOME KIND OF TRENCH ALREADY THERE. IT WAS DARK, OMINOUS AND THE SMELL OF DEATH WAS EVER PRESENT. MY TRENCH WAS ONLY 5 FEET OR SO FROM THE EDGE OF THE FORWARD SLOPE OF THE HILL, FACING SOUTH. WE HAD COME UP FROM THE NORTH SIDE OF THE HILL. FROM MY POSITION THE HILL DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF ME DROPPED OFF SUDDENLY, STRAIGHT DOWN, AND I DON'T KNOW HOW FAR. I WAS NOT ABOUT TO WALK OVER AND LOOK. FLARES BEGAN FLYING ALL OVER US, AND THEN MORTARS DROPPED LIKE FIRE FLIES ALL OVER THE PLACE. I BELIEVE THEY WERE JAP KNEE MORTARS, A DEADLY LITTLE WEAPON WHEN USED PROPERLY, AND THEY DID KNOW HOW. MACHINE GUN FIRE AND RIFLE FIRE PEPPERED US FROM THREE SIDES. THOSE DAMN OTHER HILLS! THEY CAME FROM THE LEFT, THE FRONT AND THE RIGHT.

SOME LIEUTENANT WOULD COME CRAWLING OVER EVERY 1/2 HOUR OR SO AND SAY, "HOLD YOUR POSITION, WE ARE GETTING RELIEVED IN 20 MINUTES." HE TOLD ME THAT EIGHT OR TEN TIMES. I FINALLY SAID TO HIM, "HEY

LIEUTENANT, SAVE YOUR ENERGY. I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE!" BEING THE MOST FORWARD MAN OF ALL THE MARINES ON THAT HILL, OTHER MARINES KEPT BRINGING ME GRENADES BY THE BOX FULL. I'D PULL THE PIN AND THROW... PULL THE PIN AND THROW...PULL THE PIN AND THROW. I FIGURED ON MAKING A HALF CIRCLE WITH THE GRENADES WHICH I DID AND ALSO CLEARED OUT WHATEVER WAS DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF US. I FIRMLY BELIEVE, THAT I THREW OVER 200 GRENADES THAT NIGHT!

ALL OF A SUDDEN, I FELT SOMETHING HIT ME ON THE RIGHT THIGH ABOUT SIX INCHES ABOVE THE KNEE. I LOOKED DOWN, AND THERE WAS A JAP GRENADE LYING THERE! WITHOUT THINKING, AND ACTING AUTOMATICALLY, I QUICKLY GRABBED AT THE SPUTTERING BLACK THING, AND TOSSED IT BACK AT THE SONS OF BITCHES! I GUESS MY PRAYING DID SOME GOOD AFTER ALL. TALK ABOUT LUCKY.

I WAS WORKING ON A MACHINE GUN NEST FULL OF THOSE HATED !&&&! WHEN I WASN'T THROWING GRENADES. I GAVE THEM AS MUCH HOT LEAD AS I COULD SQUEEZE OFF. THEY WERE THERE! PROBABLY ABOUT 70 OR 80 YARDS DOWN THE FRONT SIDE OF THE HILL. I'D KNOCK OUT TWO JAPS ON A MACHINE GUN, AND JUST AS QUICKLY TWO OTHERS WOULD TAKE THEIR PLACE ON THE GUN AND WITH THEIR QUICK FIRING SOUND, SPRAY DEADLY BULLETS OUR WAY. THEY WERE HIDING BEHIND A LONG RIDGE ABOUT 4' HIGH THAT RAN PARALLEL TO THE FRONT OF SUGAR LOAF HILL. THIS KEPT UP ALL NIGHT LONG. IT WAS TO BE THE LONGEST NIGHT OF MY LIFE.

OH YES...THE LIEUTENANT? HE WAS STILL CALLING OUT TO ME TO "HOLD MY POSITION...WE'RE GOING TO GET RELIEVED IN 20 MINUTES!" IT MUST HAVE BEEN AROUND 0600 OR 0700 IN THE MORNING, MAY THE 15TH, WHEN BILL ENRIGHT, A MARINE'S MARINE CAME CRAWLING TO ME IN THE TRENCH. HE SAID, "VERN GOT HIT!" HIS REAL NAME WAS VINONE FARNSWORTH, WE CALLED HIM VERN. HE WAS FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE AND HE LIVED TO SURVIVE HIS WOUND. VERN WAS THE NUMBER ONE GUNNER ON MY OTHER GUN. I ASKED BILL WHERE HE WAS LOCATED AND HE POINTED OUT TO ME HIS LOCATION. I TOLD BILL THAT I WAS GOING OVER THERE TO SEE IF I COULD HELP HIM. BILL SAID HE'D TAKE OVER MY GUN WHILE I WAS GONE.

I STARTED TO GET UP AS ONE WILL DO, FIRST ON KNEES AND THEN INTO SORT OF A PUSH UP POSITION. SUDDENLY A KNEE MORTAR HIT ABUT 3' UP AND TO THE RIGHT OF ME! I STARTED SUCKING WIND, EXPERIENCING SUDDEN LOSS OF BREATH. I WAS THINKING I HAD GOTTEN HIT WITH CONCUSSION AGAIN. I HAD BEEN HIT WITH IT FIVE OR SIX TIMES BEFORE AND ALL IT DOES IS KNOCK THE WIND OUT OF YOU. THAT IS IF THE BLAST DOES NOT SEND YOU TO GUARD THOSE FAMOUS GATES.

THIS TIME I FELT SOMETHING DIFFERENT. A HOT SEARING SENSATION ON MY RIGHT SIDE AND OOZING BLOOD! I QUICKLY PULLED MY BLOUSE AWAY TO GET A GOOD LOOK AT WHAT WAS SURE AS HELL A WOUND DOWN THERE, AND SAW A HOLE ABOUT 1 1/2 INCHES IN DIAMETER! THAT WILL SHAKE ANYBODY UP, BELIEVE ME! THE HOLE WAS ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF MY CHEST, 3 INCHES TO THE RIGHT SIDE. IT WAS ABOUT THE SIZE OF A

SILVER DOLLAR, AND MY BLOOD WAS POURING OUT OF IT LIKE A FAUCET! I THOUGHT...HOLY GOD...YOU COULD GET HURT OUT HERE...REAL BAD! I MADE UP MY MIND, THAT I WOULD USE UP WHATEVER ENERGY I HAD LEFT AND WHATEVER BLOOD REMAINED IN MY YOUNG BODY, TO MAKE A RUN FOR THE REAR OF THE HILL AND GET A CORPSMAN OR AID AS FAST AS POSSIBLE, BECAUSE I WAS CERTAIN THAT NO ONE WOULD EVER GET TO ME TO SAVE MY BUTT. I SAID A LITTLE PRAYER AND GOT UP, RUNNING SOME 60 OR 70 YARDS TO THE REAR OF THAT 'HILL OF DEATH', ZIGZAGGING ALL THE WAY.

WHEN I GOT NEAR THE EDGE OF THE HILL, I JUST DOVE OVER IT AND ROLLED ALMOST ALL THE WAY TO THE BOTTOM. THE CORPSMAN WAS NOT FAR OFF. HE HAD PLENTY OF BUSINESS ON HAND WITH WOUNDED MARINES ALL AROUND HIM. HE WAS OUT OF EVERYTHING! SULPHUR, SHOTS, FIRST AID BANDAGES, YOU NAME IT! HE HAD TO TAKE THE BANDAGE FROM MY OWN FIRST AID KIT AND STUFFED IT DIRECTLY INTO THE WOUND, WRAPPING AND TIEING THE ENDS AROUND MY NECK. BY GETTING THAT BANDAGE INTO MY WOUND, IT SLOWED THE BLEEDING AND PROBABLY SAVED MY LIFE. THE DOC HELPED ME TO A FOX HOLE ALONG SIDE THE HILL. I TOLD HIM I'LL JUST LAY THERE WITH MY OLD .45 UNDER MY RIGHT EAR, AND IF THOSE MEATBALLS CAME OVER THE TOP, I'D SURE AS HELL TAKE SOME OUT BEFORE I LEAVE THIS EARTH.

WELL...I LAID THERE. IT SEEMED LIKE DAYS, BUT IT PROBABLY WAS FOUR OR FIVE HOURS. DURING THAT TIME I COULD HEAR AMTRACS COMING DOWN THE ROAD, PICKING UP WOUNDED. THEN A BOOM! A JAP GUN WOULD KNOCK THEM OUT. AGAIN AND AGAIN. THEY HAD TO KNOCK OUT EIGHT OR NINE OF OUR AMTRACS BEFORE THEY COULD GET TO US. FINALLY, IT MUST HAVE BEEN 10.00 OR 11.00 WHEN ONE OF THE AMTRACS MADE IT THROUGH. THAT MARINE PULLED THE AMTRAC RIGHT UP TO THE FOOT OF SUGAR LOAD, ONLY 20 YARDS FROM WHERE I LAY. I THOUGHT TO MYSELF...GREAT! I'LL JUST JUMP ON THIS THING AND RIDE OFF WITH HIM. WRONG! I COULDN'T EVEN SQUEEZE THE TRIGGER ON MY .45! THANKFULLY, THE CORPSMAN HADN'T FORGOTTEN ME. I THINK HIS NAME WAS REX KEARNS. HE AND THREE OTHER GUYS PUT ME ON A STRETCHER AND PUT ME ON BOARD.

THAT VERY MOMENT, I WAS DESTINED FOR FARRAGUT, IDAHO, ALL THE WAY BY LITTER, BUT I SURE AS HELL DIDN'T KNOW IT AT THE TIME. IT WAS A REALLY BAD, ROUGH RIDE GOING TO THE REAR ON THAT RESCUING AMTRAC. I THOUGHT I WAS IN ROUGH SHAPE UNTIL I SAW THE OTHER MARINES LYING IN BUNCHES ALL OVER THE FLOOR OF THAT THING. AND IT LURCHED, IT BOUNCED, IT JARRED! IT WAS ALL WE HAD, AND ALL OF US WERE GLAD TO BE ABOARD, BUT THE RIDE I AM SURE KILLED SOME OF THOSE RESCUED. I HAD A BUDDY, DON SIROKE FROM MILWAUKEE, LAYING NEXT TO ME WITH A REALLY BAD MORTAR WOUND IN HIS STOMACH. HE WAS MOANING AND PLEADING FOR HELP, AND I COULDN'T FOR A DAMN THING FOR HIM...EXCEPT PRAY. HE DIED A FEW MINUTES LATER. THAT PICTURE OF THAT AMTRAC RIDE IS STAMPED IN MY BRAIN, AND I CANNOT EVER SHAKE IT. I JUST PRAYED REAL HARD FOR ALL OF THEM...AND ME. EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THOSE MEN ARE AND WERE TRUE HEROES IN EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD. TRUE MARINE HEROES. MAY GOD BLESS THEM...AND ALL THE OTHERS THAT MADE THE SUPREME SACRIFICE IN THOSE WARTIME YEARS.

THEY TOOK THE WOUNDED MEN, THE WORST CASES, TO THE NEAREST HOSPITAL. THIS HAPPENED TO BE OF ALL THINGS...AN ARMY HOSPITAL. THEY OPERATED ON MY WOUND THAT NIGHT, AND FOUND ANOTHER CHUNK OF SHRAPNEL IN MY LEFT ARM. THEY KEPT TELLING ME HOW LUCKY I WAS, AS IF I DIDN'T KNOW IT. THAT CHUNK IN THE ARM WAS 4" ABOVE THE CENTER OF MY LEFT HAND, ON THE INSIDE OF THE ARM. THAT WAS NOT THE MAIN PROBLEM. THE HOLE IN MY CHEST THE KNEE MORTAR HAD BLOWN IN ME WAS SILVER DOLLAR ROUND, AND HAD LODGED DOWN AND INTO THE CENTER OF MY LIVER! IT'S STILL THERE TO THIS DAY! FORTY-NINE YEARS LATER! DID THEY HAVE TO TELL ME I WAS LUCKY?

I AM FIRMLY OF THE BELIEF, THAT HAD I NOT DECIDED TO RUN TO THE REAR OF THAT HILL, AFTER I HAD GOTTEN HIT, I'D NEVER BE WRITING THIS STORY TODAY. I SURELY WOULD HAVE DIED. BILL ENRIGHT TOLD ME OUR GUN HAD BEEN CAPTURED THE NEXT DAY, AFTER THEY HAD MOVED BACK. BILL ENRIGHT, CHI-CHI, AND JUNIOR ENMAN WERE THE ONLY MEN IN OUR MACHINE GUN SECTION, 65 MEN, THAT WENT TO THE END OF THE BATTLE WITHOUT BEING KILLED OR WOUNDED.

BILL ENRIGHT RECEIVED THE SILVER STAR FOR ACTIONS THE NIGHT THAT I WAS ON SUGAR LOAF HILL WITH HIM. THAT CITATION READS:

CORPORAL WILLIAM C. ENRIGHT, K COMPANY-3RD BN.-22ND MARINES

LEADER OF A MACHINE GUN SQUAD, DURING A DESPERATE ENEMY COUNTERATTACK AGAINST HIS COMPANY'S POSITION ON SUGAR LOAF HILL, CORPORAL ENRIGHT WAS ORDERED TO MOVE HIS SQUAD INTO A FRONT LINE POSITION TO REINFORCE THE DEFENSE. IN DARKNESS AND IN THE FACE OF INTENSE ENEMY FIRE, HE LED HIS SQUAD INTO POSITION AND PLACED HIS MACHINE GUN IN ACTION. HE AND HIS GUN CREW REMAINED AT THEIR POSTS DURING THE NIGHT, DESPITE ENEMY GRENADE AND MORTAR FIRE, AND REPULSED NUMEROUS JAPANESE ATTEMPTS TO PENETRATE HIS COMPANY'S DEFENSE. HIS ACTION CONTRIBUTED MATERIALLY TO HIS COMPANY'S SUCCESS IN WITHSTANDING NUMEROUS COUNTERATTACKS.

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THE SIXTH DIVISION HISTORY BOOK ON OKINAWA DOES NOT MENTION IT, BUT WE MOVED OUT AT MIDNIGHT ON MAY 14TH, SO HE EARNED HIS SILVER STAR IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF MAY 15, 1945 THE SAME TIME OF THE DAY THAT I WAS WOUNDED. WE WERE ALL HAPPY TO SEE BILL RECEIVE THAT SILVER STAR, AS HE WAS A FEARLESS, WISE LEADER, AND LED US IN A MANNER BECOMING THE GREAT LEADER THAT HE WAS. I AM SORRY TO SAY, THAT BILL CAUGHT A BULLET, RIGHT BETWEEN HIS EYES DURING THE KOREAN CONFLICT. HE WAS IN THE RESERVES, AND CALLED BACK TO DUTY WHEN THE CONFLICT STARTED. HE WAS ON THE LINE ONLY 30 DAYS WHEN KILLED. I'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER THE PLEASANT MEMORIES OF MY FRIEND, BUDDY AND MENTOR. GOD BLESS HIM.

AFTER A FEW DAYS IN THE ARMY HOSPITAL THEY TRANSFERRED ME TO A NAVY HOSPITAL. WHILE IN THAT NAVY HOSPITAL, I WAS LAYING IN MY SACK WITH 5 OR 6 GUYS AROUND ME. THERE WAS AN OFFICER IN A SACK

RIGHT ACROSS THE AISLE FROM ME. HE WAS IN A BODY CAST FROM HIS HEAD TO HIS TOES AND SITTING ON A BED PAN JUST A GRUNTING AND GROANING. ALL OF A SUDDEN HE SAID "HEY YOU GUYS," WE LOOKED UP AND SAID CAN WE HELP YOU. HE SAID "NO, BUT I JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU ALL, DON'T EVER, DON'T YOU EVER UNDERESTIMATE A GOOD SHIT!" NEEDLESS TO SAY HE TORE THE PLACE UP. DAMN NEAR RIPPED MY STITCHES FROM LAUGHING. I GUESS I MUST HAVE TOLD THAT STORY 1000 TIMES SINCE IT HAPPENED. HE WAS VERY FUNNY.

I WAS ONLY IN THE NAVAL HOSPITAL A WEEK, WHEN I WAS TRANSPORTED TO GUAM BY AIR WITH ABOUT 100 OTHER GUYS. THAT WAS ON MAY 22, 1945. THE NIGHT I GOT TO GUAM, I THOUGHT THAT I HAD DIES AND GONE TO HEAVEN. FIRST OFF, THEY HAD ELECTRIC LIGHTS, REAL BEDS WITH CLEAN WHITE SHEETS! THEY SERVED REAL CHOW. COW'S MILK, REAL LIVE FRESH ORANGES, AND A COUPLE OF EGGS, SUNNY-SIDE UP WITH TOAST! IT HAD TO BE HEAVEN!

OH YEAH...REAL LIVE NURSES TOO...WOMEN! NOT THAT IT WOULD DO ME ANY GOOD. AFTER EATING LIKE NO TOMORROW...I GAVE IT ALL BACK TO THEM IN SECOND HAND FORM. I STARTED TO GET EXCRUCIATING PAINS ALL OVER MY STOMACH ABOUT MIDNIGHT. THE NURSE PUNCHED AROUND A LITTLE AND SAID, "IT LOOKS LIKE APPENDICITIS." SO THEY GAVE ME A SHOT AND WOKE ME EARLY THE NEXT DAY, THE 23RD. THE DOCTOR CAME IN, PUNCHED AROUND A LITTLE HE SAID, "YEAH RAY, IT'S APPENDICITIS." SO THEY ROLLED ME INTO THE OPERATING ROOM, GAVE ME A SPINAL AND STARTED CUTTING. AFTER HE'D CUT ME OPEN FOR THE SO CALLED APPENDECTOMY, OLD DOC STANDISH SAID, "CHRIST RAY, I SCREWED UP. IT'S NOT YOUR APPENDIX AT ALL, IT'S BLOOD CLOTS IN THE STOMACH AREA FROM THE WOUND THAT'S CAUSING ALL THE PAIN. BUT AS LONG AS I'M IN HERE...SHOULD I TAKE THEM OUT?" I TOLD HIM SURE, THEY WERE NOT GOING TO DO ME ANY GOOD ANYWAY. SO HE PROCEEDED TO TAKE MY APPENDIX OUT. THEY HE STARTED ON MY STOMACH. HE CUT ME STRAIGHT UP AND DOWN IN THE CENTER OF MY STOMACH, ABOUT 6 TO 8 INCHES LONG. THEY INSERTED A SUCTION HOSE AND AT THAT POINT I MERCIFULLY PASSED OUT.

THEY TELL ME I WAS OUT OF IT FOR ABOUT THREE DAYS, WITH NURSES WATCHING ME 24 HOURS A DAY. AFTER I WAS ABLE TO, I ASKED DOC STANDISH WHY HE HADN'T REMOVED THE SHRAPNEL FROM MY LIVER. HE FIGURES THAT IT WOULD NEVER GIVE ME A PROBLEM BECAUSE IT WAS SECURED AND LODGED TIGHTLY IN THE CENTER OF MY LIVER. IF I EVER HAD ANY PROBLEMS WITH IT, I COULD GO TO A V.A. HOSPITAL AND HAVE IT REMOVED. HE DID SAY, THAT IF HE WOULD HAVE HAD TO TAKE OUT THE SHRAPNEL, HE WOULD HAVE HAD TO CUT MOST OF SIX RIBS OUT IN ORDER TO DO THE JOB PROPERLY! NICE THOUGHT! FORTUNATELY, I HAVEN'T HAD ANY SERIOUS PROBLEMS WITH IT IN 49 YEARS.

IT'S MAY 31, 1945, AND SOME NAVY CAPTAIN COMES IN AND PINS A PURPLE HEART ON ME, OF WHICH I AM VERY PROUD TO WEAR. FOR A SHORT TIME, FROM JUNE 1 THROUGH JUNE 10 WE JUST LAY THERE RECUPERATING. ON JUNE THE 14TH THEY SHIPPED ME TO THE NAVAL HOSPITAL AT PEARL HARBOR, STAYING THERE UNTIL JUNE 29TH. MY STOMACH HAD NOT BEEN

WORKING PROPERLY AND THEY HAD TO FEED ME INTRAVENOUSLY. MY WEIGHT WENT DOWN TO ABOUT 130 LBS. FROM MY NORMAL WEIGHT OF AROUND 175. THEY GAVE ME A WHEEL CHAIR, AND I BEGAN TO DO A LITTLE EXERCISING.

I WAS SITTING THERE IN MY TRUSTY OLD WHEELCHAIR ONE BEAUTIFUL SUNNY AFTERNOON, JUST SUNNING MYSELF, WHEN I SEE MY BUDDY C.J. SCHWEITZER WALK BY. I CRIED OUT, "C.J.!" HE TURNED TO SEE WHO WAS DOING ALL THAT YELLING. AFTER HE RECOGNIZED ME AND WE THEN PROCEEDED TO SWAP SEA STORIES. OLD HOME WEEK. WELL, I GOT HIT ON MAY 15TH AND HE GOT HIT ON MAY 18TH. BOTH OF US ON THAT LOUSY SUGAR LOAF HILL. HE HAD TAKEN A JAP RIFLE BULLET IN ABOUT THE SAME SPOT THAT I HAD MY WOUND. ONLY DIFFERENCE WAS, HIS ENTERED HIS SKULL. WE BOTH JUST SAT THERE IN AWE AT THE CLOSE CALLS WITH DEATH WE HAD, AND WONDERED WHY OR HOW WE EVER SURVIVED THAT ONSLAUGHT.

ON JUNE 22ND, I FINALLY GOT TO PHONE MY MOM AND POP. HALLELUJAH! THEY WERE SURE HAPPY TO HEAR I WAS STILL ALIVE AND KICKING. ON JUNE 29TH I LEFT HAWAII FOR THE GOOD OLE U.S.A. WE LEFT AT 1300 HOURS ON THE USS FILLMORE, HEADING FOR SAN FRANCISCO AND A RECEIVING HOSPITAL THERE. WHILE ABOARD SHIP, I BUMPED INTO "BIG JOHN" JOHNSON, MY PLATOON SERGEANT. THAT WAS A GREAT AND HAPPY MEETING.

"BIG JOHN" HAD CRACKED UP SHORTLY AFTER AN INCIDENT INVOLVING LONNY "BLANKET ASS" BEARD. "BLANKET ASS" WAS RELOCATING HIS GUN POSITION, AND INSTEAD OF THE NUMBER 2, OR ASSISTANT GUNNER, REMOVING THE GUN FIRST AND THEN THE GUNNER PLACING THE TRIPOD WHERE HE WANTED IT, HE TRIED TO RELOCATE THE GUN AND TRIPOD AT THE SAME TIME. AND THAT'S WHEN THEY SHOT HIM! THEY SHOT HIM THROUGH HIS JUGULAR VEIN. "BIG JOHN" BLAMED HIMSELF BECAUSE HE FIGURED HE SHOULD HAVE TRAINED LONNY BETTER THAN THAT. "BIG JOHN" WAS IN THREE OTHER CAMPAIGNS PRIOR TO THE OKINAWA BATTLE AND HE FINALLY HAD TOO MUCH DEATH AND HORROR. IT GOT TO HIM... AND HE CRACKED. HE WAS A LAIDBACK KIND OF GUY AND A FINE MARINE AND ALL AROUND GUY. EVERY ONE IN THE OUTFIT THOUGHT THE WORLD OF HIM. I WILL ALWAYS CONSIDER IT AN HONOR TO HAVE BEEN A CLOSE FRIEND OF HIS, AND TO HAVE SERVED WITH THIS GREAT MARINE.

"BIG JOHN" BECAME MY WHEEL CHAIR PROPELLANT ABOARD THE USS FILLMORE FROM JUNE 29TH THROUGH JULY 5TH ALL THE WAY BACK TO FRISCO. I HAD NEVER SEEN THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE BEFORE IN MY LIFE. WE WERE HEADING INTO PORT, AND I WILL NEVER EVER FORGET THAT SIGHT. IT WAS THE GREATEST, MOST BEAUTIFUL OF VIEWS, AND OH, THAT FEELING TO BE BACK IN THE WORLD WE KNEW AND LOVE, THE GOOD OLD U.S.A. WE ARRIVED AT THE FRISCO HOSPITAL AT 1500 HOURS. THAT'S THREE P.M. FOR YOU JARHEADS. "BIG JOHN'S" GIRL FRIEND CAME DOWN FROM BUTTE, MONTANA AND VISITED WITH HIM FOR A FEW DAYS. THEY WERE MARRIED SHORTLY AFTER THAT.

WE BOARDED A TRAIN ON JULY 15TH AND HEADED FOR FARRAGUT, IDAHO. WE ARRIVED THE NEXT DAY AT THE NAVAL HOSPITAL LOCATED THERE AND I STAYED THERE FOR SEVEN TO EIGHT WEEKS. WHILE I WAS THERE, I DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH TROUBLES, MY LUNG COLLAPSED, FILLING IT WITH FLUID. EVERY TWO DAYS THEY'D TAKE AN X-RAY OF MY LUNG AND STICK THAT LONG NEEDLE INTO ME TO REMOVE FLUID. THEY DID THAT FOR SIX WEEKS. FINALLY, ON THE LAST TRY, THE FLUID POCKET WAS SO SMALL THAT HE HAD TO STICK THAT NEEDLE IN THREE TIMES BEFORE HE HIT IT! THIS WAS WORSE THAN GETTING SHOT AT! I TOLD HIM IT HE MISSED IT ON THE THIRD TRY HE WAS OUT! THROUGH! I ASKED FOR A 30 DAY LEAVE, BECAUSE I HAD BEEN EATING AND WALKING FOR ABOUT TWO WEEKS AND FELT BETTER. THEY PROMISED ME, THAT IF I FORGOT THE LEAVE, THEY'D GUARANTEE ME A TRANSFER TO THE NAVAL HOSPITAL AT GREAT LAKES, ILLINOIS WITHIN FOUR WEEKS. GREAT LAKES IS ONLY 60 MILES SOUTH OF WHERE I LIVED, SO I WAS CLOSING IN ON THE END OF MY MARINE CORPS LIFE. "BIG JOHN" WAS STILL MY TRUSTED HELPER, MENTOR AND CLOSE BUDDY. HE AND I WERE ABLE TO GO TO SOME BIG MANSION, OWNED BY SOME WEALTHY WIDOW WHO LENT IT TO THE WAR EFFORT. WONDERFUL AMERICANS IN THIS LAND OF OURS. WE LEFT WITH ABOUT 25 OTHER VETS FOR A WEEK TO CONVALESCE.

IT WAS LOCATED HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS OF IDAHO AND HAD A GORGEOUS VIEW IN ANY DIRECTION. WE HAD A MEMORABLE AND GREAT TIME THERE. WHILE WE WERE THERE WE LEARNED THAT THE WAR WAS OVER. BY THEN "BIG JOHN" HAD TAUGHT ME HOW TO FLY CAST AND TO THIS DAY I LOVE TO FISH. ALL GOES BACK TO HIM AND TEACHING ME THE USE OF A FLY ROD.

A WEEK OR SO LATER I WAS TRANSFERRED TO GREAT LAKES AS THEY HAD PROMISED. LO AND BEHOLD, WHO DO I MEET THERE BUT MY OLD BUDDY C.J. SCHWEITZER. HE AND I HAD GONE TO MILWAUKEE ON LIBERTY. WE HAD MUCH TO CELEBRATE. HE MET A GIRL FROM THE SOUTH SIDE OF MILWAUKEE AND ENDED UP MARRYING HER. AND THE BEST MAN WAS... YOU GUESSED IT...ME. THEY HAD FIVE CHILDREN, AND EVENTUALLY MOVED TO ST. PAUL. TEN YEARS AFTER I GOT OUT OF THE CORPS, I WAS TRANSFERRED TO MINNEAPOLIS AND SPENT ANOTHER TWELVE YEARS TOGETHER WITH HIM, AS OLD BUDDIES AND FRIENDS.

I ENLISTED IN THE CORPS ON JANUARY 13, 1943 AND WAS DISCHARGED FEBRUARY 18, 1946. MY LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS WAS SURELY EXCITING, TO SAY THE LEAST. I HAD NEVER BEFORE LEFT HOME. I WAS JUST LIKE ALL THOSE OTHER JARHEADS I KNEW WHO HAD NEVER VENTURED FORTH INTO THE WORLD. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THAT \$28 BUCKS A MONTH WAS MORE MONEY THAN I EVER MADE BEFORE. IT WASN'T MUCH, BUT IT WAS ALL MINE, AND I DIDN'T HAVE TO GIVE IT TO MY POP, LIKE HE HAD TO DO WITH HIS HARD EARNED MONEY AS A KID.

FROM BOOT CAMP, ALL MY BUDDIES WENT TO THE RAIDERS. I QUALIFIED, BUT ONLY THE CORPS KNOWS WHY, THEY SHIPPED ME TO THE MOJAVE AIR BASE WHERE I BECAME A GUARD AND MP. I WAS THERE FOR 14 MONTHS AND THEN TRANSFERRED TO CAMP ELLIOT IN CALIFORNIA. I WAS THEN SHIPPED TO GUADALCANAL WITH THE 54TH REPLACEMENT DRAFT IN MAY OF 44.



I MARRIED THE LOVE OF MY LIFE, MARGARET ACKERMAN SCHLINDER, AND WE ARE NOW MARRIED FOR SOME 46 YEARS. WE HAVE THREE SONS, TWO DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW, AND EIGHT "GREAT" GRAND-CHILDREN.

AMEN.....



PFC MARTIN "MARTY" DAMIANO  
RIFLE TEAM - SECOND SQUAD - SECOND PLATOON  
'B' COMPANY - FIRST BATTALION  
4TH MARINE REGIMENT  
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION

OKINAWA - 1945



MY DEAR FRIEND AND COMBAT BUDDY WAS WILLIAM W. 'WILLIE' GARDNER. WE CALLED HIM WILLIE AND HE AND I WERE IN THE SAME RIFLE TEAM, SECOND PLATOON, FIRST BATTALION, 4TH MARINES. OUR RIFLE TEAM LEADER WAS CORPORAL DEAN WALLACE WHO WAS KILLED ON THE NIGHT OF THE 20TH OF MAY WHEN WE WERE SKIRTING SUGAR LOAF HILL ON THE SHURI SIDE OF A HILL THEY CALLED CRESCENT RIDGE.

WILLIE TOOK OVER THE FIRE TEAM AND LED THE WAY. I WAS THE BAR MAN IN THE TEAM. WE WERE UNDER ARTILLERY FIRE FROM SHURI AS THEY LOOKED DOWN OUR THROAT. WHAT WE DID WAS MOVE BY TURNS THROUGH A FIELD LITTERED WITH DEAD MARINES. WE GOT TO A CELESTIAL TOMB SOMEWHAT BEHIND SUGAR LOAF. THERE THE JAPS HAD A NAMBU SET UP AND WERE MOWING DOWN MARINES THAT CAME AROUND THE OTHER SIDE. I ASKED WILLIE IF HE'D GET A RIFLE GRENADE SET UP IN HIS RIFLE AND HE SAID NO. HE WAS AFRAID OF HITTING THE MARINES COMING AROUND THE HILL.

HE THEN MOVED BACK AND I WAS ALL ALONE WATCHING THE MARINES BEING MOWED DOWN AND WHO WERE THEN TRYING TO SMOKE THEMSELVES BACK. I THEN THOUGHT IF I DRAW THE JAPS FIRE I WOULD GIVE THE MARINES A CHANCE TO MOVE BACK. I THEN GAVE THE JAPS A SHORT BURST WHICH THEY ANSWERED WITH A KNEE MORTAR THAT LANDED BETWEEN MY LEGS! IT WAS A DUD! I THEN GAVE THEM ANOTHER BURST AND A SECOND MORTAR CAME IN. THIS ONE WAS LIVE AND IT GOT ME. I WAS KNOCKED OUT BY THE BLAST AND WHEN I CAME TO I WAS IN PAIN AND AGONY. I DECIDED TO PLAY DEAD, AND CONSIDERED MOVING TO THE TOMB FOR COVER BUT FOUND THAT I COULD NOT MOVE.

THEN I HEARD WILLIE YELL THAT HE WAS COMING IN FOR ME. HE AND JIMMY 'ZOOTER' HEMSING, MY ASSISTANT BAR MAN, CAME IN DRAWING FIRE AS THEY DID SO, AND PULLED ME OUT. JIMMY WAS LATER ON WOUNDED DURING THE BATTLE.

THE NEXT TIME I MET WILLIE WAS IN UNION STATION, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA. HE HAD BEEN WOUNDED ALSO. HE THEN GAVE ME HIS ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER WHICH I MISPLACED. I OFTEN THOUGHT OF HIM AND THE GRATITUDE I HAD FOR HIM IN PULLING ME THROUGH THAT ORDEAL. WE NEXT MET AT THE SECOND REUNION OUR SIXTH DIVISION HAD IN ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. HE WALKED ACROSS THE BANQUET ROOM TOWARD ME AND I WALKED TOWARD HIM, WHEN WE MET AND HE SAID, "I KNOW YOU BUT I FORGOT YOUR NAME." I SAID, "I KNOW YOURS...I'M MARTY DAMIANO AND YOUR WILLIE WHITE GARDNER..." WE THEN EMBRACED EACH OTHER AND SHED SOME TEARS. WE SPENT THE REUNION TOGETHER TALKING ABOUT DIFFERENT EVENTS AND OF OUR BUDDIES THAT DID NOT MAKE IT. THERE WERE SO MANY OF THEM...

WE MET AGAIN IN WASHINGTON, D.C. AT THE 1973 REUNION. HE HAD ASKED ME ABOUT MY HORSES I RAISED AND I TOLD HIM I HAD ONE OF MY HORSES RACING THAT NIGHT. HE THEN GAVE ME TEN DOLLARS TO BET SO I PHONED MY DAUGHTER AND HAD HER PLACE THE BET FOR HIM. THE HORSE WON AND BROKE HER RECORD AND PAID EVEN MONEY THAT NIGHT. HE WAS VERY PROUD OF RECEIVING THAT TWENTY DOLLARS. WE KEPT IN TOUCH WITH ALL OUR BUDDIES, ONE OF THEM

JOE HIOTT OF PORT ST. LUCIE, FL., ALSO WOUNDED ON OKINAWA.

WILLIE WENT TO GUARD HEAVENS GATES ON DECEMBER 15TH, 1995,  
HAVING PASSED HIS 71ST BIRTHDAY ON NOVEMBER OF THE SAME YEAR.  
I HAD PROMISED HIM I WOULD HAVE A 6TH DIVISION BRONZE MARKER  
PLACED ON HIS GRAVE RECALLING HIS SERVICE IN THE 'STRIKING  
SIXTH'. REST WELL OLD WILLIE... IT HAS BEEN DONE.....

NOTE: MARTY DAMIANO IS TODAY THE NORTH EAST DIVISION  
VICE COMMANDANT -DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA  
THE U.S. MARINE CORPS LEAGUE

PFC EDMUND 'ED' B. RONEY  
6TH RECON COMPANY  
6TH MARINE DIVISION - OKINAWA 1945

ON MAY THE 28TH OUR OUTFIT WAS PULLED BACK JUST NORTH OF THE ASA KAWA RIVER WHERE IT MEETS THE CHINA SEA. WE HAD JUST BEEN THROUGH CRESCENT AND HALFMOON HILLS AND BATTLES IN AND AROUND NAHA. ALTHOUGH WE WERE SUPPOSEDLY IN A REST AREA, WE WERE DRAWING SOME ANNOYING FIRE FROM A NIP 77MM FIRING FROM A CAVE ON OROKU PENINSULA.

THE NAVAL GUNFIRE TEAM THAT WAS WITH US WAS CREDITED WITH A DIRECT HIT ON IT...A SOURCE OF GREAT SATISFACTION TO US ALL. A FEW DAYS LATER I WAS WITH THE 2ND BN., 29TH AGL LANDING ON WHAT IS NOW PART OF NAHA AIRFIELD ON OROKU PENINSULA. WE PROCEEDED DOWN THE ESTUARY SIDE OF THE PENINSULA AND RAN INTO SOME JAP NAMBU'S FIRING FROM ONA YAMA ISLAND, WHICH IS IN THE CENTER OF NAHA HARBOR.

A TYPICAL SNAFU THEN OCCURRED. THE 29TH COULD NOT SEND A PATROL TO ONA YAMA AS THE ISLAND WAS IN THE 22ND REGIMENT'S ZONE OF ACTION. FOR THE SAME REASON WE COULDN'T CALL ON ANY OF THE FORMIDABLE FIRE POWER THEN AT OUR DISPOSAL. EVERY ENTREATY MADE BY THE COMPANIES AND THE BATTALION RECEIVED THE SAME RESPONSE. "THOSE NAMBU'S WERE CLOSED OUT DAYS AGO BY RECON! STOP MAKING EXCUSES AND MOVE OUT!" WE FINALLY PUT SOME MORTARS ON THEM (DIRECTLY DISOBEYING ORDERS) AND BY-PASSED THEM. THEY WERE OBVIOUSLY INFILTRATORS WHO HAD LAID LOW OR HAD RETURNED TO THE ISLAND. WE WERE SOMEWHAT WORRIED THAT THEY MIGHT CROSS THE WATER AND COME IN BEHIND US.

AN AGL TEAM THAT I WAS WORKING WITH A FEW DAYS LATER CAME UNDER HEAVY 240MM MORTAR FIRE FROM THE REAR. AFTER LEARNING THAT THEY WERE TOO CLOSE TO US FOR US TO CALL IN AN AIR STRIKE, OUR LIEUTENANT CALLED A FRIEND IN RECON WHO WAS WITH A GROUP FROM 37MM WEAPONS. A 37MM TEAM TURNED UP VERY SHORTLY AND THEY WHEELED THE SMALL GUN INTO ACTION. I HAD THE SATISFACTION OF WATCHING THEM PUT SHELLS AT POINT BLANK RANGE. INTO THE TUNNEL THE JAP MORTAR MEN WERE TAKING COVER IN, BLASTING IT APART.

THIS WAS THE SAME INCIDENT AND TIME-FRAME IN WHICH BILL HAN-CHESTER (FAMOUS AUTHOR) WAS WOUNDED AND HIS BUDDY (PFC JOHN TERRENCE) STANDING NEARBY HIM WAS KILLED BY A ROUND THAT LANDED AMONGST THEM. THESE MORTARS WERE THE INFAMOUS "SCREAMIN' MEEMIES" THAT WHEN FIRED MADE A GOD AWFUL SCREAMING SOUND. THEY WOULD FALL WITH A WHISPER WHEN THEY CAME DOWN IN YOUR VICINITY. A DUD, FORTUNATELY, LANDED ONLY 20 YARDS FROM MY VICINITY.

I WAS NOT OFFICIALLY TRANSFERRED TO THE RECON COMPANY UNTIL SEVERAL MONTHS LATER WHEN IN CHINA. BY THAT TIME JASCO HAD BEEN DISBANDED. THAT IS THE NAME THEY CALLED THE NAVAL GUN-

FIRE AND AIR/GROUND LIAISON TEAMS. GENERAL GEORGE MARSHALL HAD WORKED OUT A TRUCE BETWEEN THE NATIONALIST CHINESE (KUOMINTANG) ARMY AND COMMUNIST 8TH ROUTE ARMY IN MANCHURIA. THEY NEEDED EXPERIENCED FIELD RADIO OPERATORS FOR THE TRUCE TEAMS THAT WERE SENT OUT TO ARBITRATE DISPUTES ON THE SPOT. I THINK THEY WERE USUALLY MANNED BY RECON PEOPLE AND THAT WAS HOW I WAS ASSIGNED (AS FIELD RADIO OPERATOR) TO RECON COMPANY.

THAT TRUCE DID NOT LAST VERY LONG AND WE WERE CALLED OUT A FEW TIMES BEFORE THE COMMIES TOOK OVER MANCHURIA COMPLETELY.

I AM GLAD THAT I WAS NOT WITH A RECON GROUP THAT WENT UP TO THE EDGE OF NAHA HARBOR THE NIGHT OF MAY 28TH. THEY BROUGHT ALONG WITH THEM TWO OF THE 37MM'S THAT I MENTIONED. ONA YAMA WAS SCOUTED THAT NIGHT. THE NEXT DAY THE 29TH, IN THE MORNING, THE JAPS BLASTED THE CONCRETE CAUSEWAY, PUTTING IT INTO NAHA HARBOR ALONG WITH THOSE THAT WERE BLASTING IT.

ONA YAMA ISLAND IS NO LONGER AN ISLAND. IT HAS BEEN FILLED IN FROM THE OROKU SIDE, PROBABLY TO PROVIDE FOOTING FOR THE MEJII BRIDGE WHICH NOW SPANS THE ESTURARY. THE AREA TODAY CAN BOAST OF FAST FOOD CHAINS SUCH AS KENTUCKY FRIED CHICKEN, BUDGET RENT-A-CAR, TOYOTA RENT-A-CAR, MAZDA KOKUMA RENT-A-CAR AND THE ONA YAMA ATHLETIC FIELD. A TINY SHRINE IS THERE IN A SMALL STONE HUT. THAT HUT HAD BEEN THE SANCTUARY OF MANY A MARINE.

THE PORT OF NAHA HAS BEEN SUPPLEMENTED BY A 'NEW PORT OF NAHA' WHICH IS ALMOST DUE WEST OF THE OLD SUGAR LOAF/HORSEHOE/CRESCENT HILL COMPLEX. SURPRISINGLY ENOUGH, GREEN HILL IS STILL VISIBLE IN THAT AREA. THAT WAS WHERE WE HAD AN OPERATONS POST, AND IT TOOK MUCH INCOMING FIRE FROM SHURI.

SEMPER FIDELIS

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## SALUTE TO THE MARINES

By Marion Hargrove, U.S. Army  
Reprinted from the MARINE CORPS GAZETTE

The UNITED STATES MARINE is a military phenomenon who looks like a soldier, talks like a sailor, fights like a wild cat and thinks like a princess of the royal blood. Always a modest fellow, the MARINE describes himself "as a soldier who can read and write".

The UNITED STATES MARINE, as any UNITED STATES MARINE will tell you with or without provocation, is the best looking, toughest, most intelligent, most polished, and most valuable member of the armed forces. When he hears that one third of the nations people are poorly housed, poorly clothed, and poorly educated, he knows which third it is. It is the Army, the Navy, and the Coast Guard.

Although from year to year the plumage of this magnificent bird has become less and less bright, even today the sight of the full dress MARINE is a sight to dazzle the eyes of all who behold it. In any shortage of electrical power you can suspend him from a lamp post and he would provide enough light for his duller looking compeers to read a newspaper at a distance of four blocks. This splendid spectacle--this symphony of blues and white, of reds and golds--only the splendor of his personal beauty is fading away, leaving the MARINE his proud physique, his pretty "phiz", to lend to the American scene.

The MARINE is extremely proud that he is an amphibious creature. Get one of them to take off his shoes and what do you find? Web feet.

The MARINE thinks of his barracks as a ship and he speaks of it in nautical terms. A wall is a bulkhead, a floor is a deck, to be holystoned rather than scrubbed. A latrine is a head. The MARINE never goes upstairs, he goes topside. When he gets topside he isn't on the second floor, but the second deck and he didn't get there by the stairs, he went up the ladder.

When a MARINE is indoors he has no hat on, he doesn't salute officers. When he is outside and salutes, his officer smiles very pleasantly and says "Good Morning" or some such thing as that. This is because the officer has a deep respect for the MARINE. "There is a member of the most efficient fighting force in the world", he says.

Although it is almost unbelievable, these glamor boys actually do KP. They put on their herringbone twill coveralls with the MARINE insignia and they work in the kitchen for a month at a time. Unlike the more prosaic soldier however, the MARINE gets \$5.00 a month to cover the cost of any dishes he might break. If he breaks no dishes, the \$5.00 is a clear profit and the UNITED STATES MARINE wins again.

All is not peaches and cream in the life of a MARINE though. He gets less liberty than a soldier and a three day pass doesn't mean as much to him, since half of that time must be made in making himself as pretty as possible. When he leaves his barracks, he must pass the inspection of two full-length mirrors just inside the front door. The rest of his leave must be used

to best advantage in informing his family, his girl, his old boss and any other unprotected civilian he might capture just what a great and wonderful thing the UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS is and how lucky the civilian is to know someone who is actually in it.

To make his spiel more effective, a good MARINE will always have about him a fresh clipping headed something like, "Army Lieutenant goes over the hill to join the MARINES" and at least one pad of notes to prompt himself on just exactly how the MARINE CORPS singlehandedly won every battle in every war the UNITED STATES has fought.

The MARINE does not overlook the value of the Army, the Navy, or the Coast Guard. He knows that they were organized and maintained to show, by contrast, the greatness, the wisdom, the courage and the beauty of the UNITED STATES MARINES.



A Japanese Officer  
(name unknown)

The Bloody Action At Sugar Loaf Hill  
(Amekudai)

[Amekudai, consisted of a chain of hills, of which Sugar Loaf Hill (Hill 52) was only one]

After the failure of the May 4 counteroffensive, our 44th Independent Mixed Brigade left Bengadake hill on the night of May 6 and returned to its original position on Sugar Loaf Hill. Meanwhile, on the left flank of the 62nd Division, the Arikawa Brigade was overwhelmed by American marines. The 62nd managed to escape from the town of Takushi and proceeded to Uchim and Jichaku where they made a precarious stand. American marines broke through these fortifications by way of the Asa (Aja) River and were preparing to assault Amekudai. At the same time, the 44th Independent Mixed Brigade, fresh from Bengadake, rushed to Amekudai for what would be one of the bloodiest battles of Okinawa.

I never knew if it was by chance or design that our brigade had been ordered to proceed from Amekudai for a counteroffensive at Bengadake on the night of May 3. I had been opposed to this action, and now our troops were not prepared to face the enemy. In defending ordinary field positions it takes only a couple of days to study the terrain, assemble required ammunition, and prepare proper fortifications. It takes more than a week, however even for fresh troops to establish strong underground defenses. Because of heavy enemy daytime bombardment it was impossible to get out of our caves for even a quick glance at the terrain. Even at night, when we thought we were free to come out, the enemy bombardment continued. Day and night we were forced to stay underground, idle, waiting for the shelling to subside. When our men did leave the caves it was always difficult for platoons and squads to find their intended positions. It was a challenge to occupy a position because it usually took an entire night just to locate the assigned area.

On May 9 the enemy occupied Uchina and then crossed the river [Asa Kawa] the next day. As soon as Colonel Mita's 15th Independent Mixed Regiment reached assigned positions they were immediately engaged in heavy combat. Our front-line troops, with no knowledge of their location, were totally unprepared for the ensuing chaos. It was folly for our troops to fight in such circumstances.

General Suzuki's independent 28th Battalion initiated battle on the far left flank of the Asa-Amekudai line. The Asa River is about sixty meters wide, and it is possible to wade across at ebb tide. On its southern bank a strong underground fortification faced the enemy on the main road. Along the coastline the enemy's amphibious tanks faced a formidable chain of escarpments. I had firmly believed that our fortifications were impregnable against the strongest enemy forces and that we could hold out there for a long time. To our dismay the enemy broke through our

lines easily, and blasted and sealed those underground fortifications. (See map on page 56) [map referred to is not included in this account. See appropriate map covering this area]

It was a shocking disappointment to find that the independent battalion was so inadequately trained and equipped. After it was overwhelmed by the enemy, Captain Kitamura's antitank troops used artillery to defend their positions at the Ameku Primary School. In two days of bloody fighting, they too were annihilated.

Amekudai is on a cultivated plateau, easily open to enemy naval assault and the maneuver of enemy tanks, making it extremely difficult to construct and organize defensive positions. Therefore, our main brigade troops were forced to abandon the hill at Amekudai and retreat to the positions at Makabe, Asato, Hill 52 (Sugar Loaf Hill) the Sogenji Temple, Takahashi, and Tomari hill. Our high command and brigade commanders feared that the enemy would overrun Amekudai and penetrate Naha City.

The anxiety at headquarters was reflected directly in the actions of the brigade commander, who were located in nearby cave positions. Brigade Commander, Suzuki, planted beside his erratically functioning telephone, continued to encourage Colonel Mita at Masagawa. He spoke in a low voice compassionately, as if calming a frightened child. Major Kyoso, finally out of patience, rushed back to regimental headquarter through a storm of artillery fire, with Colonel Mita following close behind. The enemy was as determined to take Naha City as we were to defend it.

At Makabe, the right flank our brigade was defended by Major Nishimura's battalion, and the central heights by Captain Ozaki's battalion. Captain Inoue defended Tomari and Takahashi, to the left of the brigade's right flank. Also joined in the battle were the 2nd and 7th Battalions of our brigade.

Because our troops were unyielding and fought so intrepidly, the battle at Amekudai lasted much longer than expected. Even after Amekudai was captured by the enemy, it was so unbelievable to our troops that they continued to fight. Not only did our troops fight brilliantly, but we were helped by terrain favorable to our defense. The fortifications at Amekudai were ideal. Our stronghold on the escarpment was located within deep depressions which led to a network of caves and tunnels. These kept our troops relatively safe from artillery attack. From the top of the heights we had a bird's-eye view of the enemy. We had observation posts at Shuri with the army Artillery Group and at Shikina with our brigade artillery. Lieutenant Commander Nii's naval gun units assisted our forward positions at Amekudai. During the May 4 counteroffensive, however, we had used up most of our artillery ammunition, so our destructive power was short-lived.

With adequate ammunition we could have had a victory at Amekudai. We had planned to have two more elite battalions available to march along the Asa River on a west-east line to smash the enemy. Because we missed this opportunity to apply pressure at the front line of our brigade, we planned to use our

naval troops for a large-scale, last ditch infiltration. Unengaged, they had been waiting two months in the Oroku (Naha) airfield vicinity for a chance to fight. They were eager for battle, and this was an ideal time to use their strength.

The Naval Base Forces totaled about eight thousand troops, but only three thousand were regulars; the rest were Okinawan civilian conscripts. No more than half of the regulars were well-trained sailors, so we organized them into one hundred infiltration units of three to five men each. They were assigned to the 62nd Division and scheduled to attack the enemy from the rear on two consecutive nights. Rear Admiral Minoru Ota, the Naval Base Force commander was so enthusiastic about this plan that he left Oroku Peninsula for army headquarters in Shuri to observe his men's infiltration into enemy territory. The staff officers were excited about this all-out attack on the rear lines of the enemy. The naval units advanced deep into enemy territory, but we never learned the result of their attack because none of them survived.

By May 18 most of the four thousand picked troops of our Mixed Brigade were still tenaciously holding strongpoints, while American marines began moving through Tomari and Takahshi and into the city of Naha. Lieutenant Hiraga's 6th Special Regiment engaged the advancing enemy in hand-to-hand combat. We had lost the battle at Sugar Loaf Hill, but we were determined to continue the fight at Shuri, Shikina, and the Kokuba River. A seasoned battalion of the 1st Special Brigade was assigned to the hill north of Matsugawa to establish a solid defense zone on the right flank of our brigade. We also assigned the naval battalion to Major General Suzuki and stationed them on the hill line of Shikina, Kokuba, and Kohagura (Kufanga). If they could hold this line, the key Tsukazan fortifications would remain safe even if Shuri came under siege. If the right flank of the 24th Division could hold, the Shuri line would still remain a solid defense fortification.

In the midst of this fierce battle, our 10th Area Army on Taiwan broadcast an enemy news report: "The 6th Marine Division fought a bitter battle at Sugar Loaf Hill and had 250 casualties in one company. Only eight soldiers survived." Overjoyed, we relayed this information to Colonel Mita, one of the 44th Mixed Brigade's regimental commanders, who was engaged in a brutal fight against the enemy. He replied at once, "You are right to push us and encourage us to fight well, but I find this kind of news even more encouraging."

Mita's regiment fought remarkably well. In the April battles his men had done better than the forward battalions of the 62nd Division, who were well prepared, in strong positions, and supplied with plenty of ammunition. Mita, on the other hand, had been thrown into action unexpectedly and with limited ammunition. Still, his troops did very well.

We received many reports of valorous fighting, such as: "Our soldiers jumped out of their caves as soon as the enemy tanks passed, crawled forward, and engaged in hand-to-hand combat with enemy soldiers."

Lieutenant Commander Nii, in charge of the naval gun troops, observed the situation on the Oroku hilltops and highly praised the heroic fighting of our men at Hill 52, north of Asato. "The garrisons at Hill 52," he reported, "remained quietly in their caves while we took the fire of enemy barrages. When enemy guns stopped firing, our men dashed from their caves and engaged the enemy in hand-to-hand fighting." The battle lasted more than a week, during which Hill 52 changed hand repeatedly. The site of that mighty struggle for Hill 52 at Amekudai was given a new name by the Americans. They dubbed it Sugar Loaf Hill.

A stirring American account of the bitter struggle for Sugar Loaf Hill is given in the History of the Sixth Marine Division published by the Infantry Journal Press in 1948. In summary, it describes the May 12 fighting by the 6th Marine Division as

the most bitter, costly, and decisive action on Okinawa. Few Americans realized the tremendous importance the Japanese attached to this "ragged, chopped-up area." After several days of facing fierce and well-coordinated resistance there, the 6th Division realized that General Ushijima regarded the place as key to his main defense system.

In the May 12 fighting, The 22nd Regiment was brought sharply to a standstill before Sugar Loaf Hill. It was one element of a triangular system of defenses forming the western anchor of the enemy's line, blocking the corridor into Shuri from the west. Southeast of Sugar Loaf lies a hill named Half Moon [or Crescent Hill] and to the south was Horseshoe. The three formed an arrowhead, with Sugar Loaf as its point, aimed at the advancing 6th Division. Holding these three hills, the Japanese felt they had little to fear from any flanking movement from the west, and had organized the terrain strongly in a static defense.

The beautiful, peaceful countryside of the Amekudai plateau, where in times past I had enjoyed riding with General Ushijima, was now steeped in the blood of thousands of soldiers—Japanese and American. Enemy tanks fired at our headquarters, and direct hits echoed ominously throughout the limestone caves. Machine-gun fire day and night was punctuated by the rumble of artillery. As our forward troops withdrew we began to hear friendly fire from Mawashi village to the rear and left of our headquarters. It was gratifying to hear the sound of our own guns, indicating that our troops were fighting bravely, and not just hiding in caves.

The Inoue Battalion was almost totally annihilated, including its leader. As the left flank of the 15th Independent Mixed Regiment began to collapse, it was replaced by expanding the front of the 6th Special Regiment. Individual unit reports kept streaming in: "I can see American troops in the shrine garden." "Thirty enemy tanks are advancing toward the center of Naha." "Our troops are still holding out at the Teacher Training School." Hearing these reports, I knew that the war was finally entering my own garden.

One evening, indomitable Kyoso of our staff went into Naha and met Lieutenant Colonel Hiraga of the 6th Special Regiment. Upon his return to headquarter, he reported a curious incident. "On the way back I saw a platoon from Hiraga's regiment preparing for a night attack. They each carried a pistol in the right hand, a canteen in the left, and wore a bag around their waist containing toilet articles. They really looked strange." Everyone in headquarters laughed at the idea of soldiers garbed as if going on a picnic. But this was no laughing matter. On their mission they might face battle and death at any moment. Naturally they carried personal possessions. My heart went out to them.

The accomplishments of the 6th Special Regiment were good a good example of Colonel Hiraga's bravery and the marvelous spirit of the soldiers he commanded. Despite their lack of training and equipment, they fought brilliantly. On our left flank were the 15th Independent Mixed Regiment, backed up by the 6th Special Regiment and the special Naval Base Forces. The enemy virtually annihilated these units, but the men all fought on to the death.

At headquarters we took encouragement from reports that the enemy was getting "desperate," but the opposite was true. The battle was at fever pitch, but we were losing. Like the last flare of a dying candle, we sent a message asking Imperial Headquarters for more air support: "We have wrought havoc on three enemy divisions, which are disintegrating. Three other enemy divisions are under heavy attack. We have lost many elite troops, but still believe in the immortality of the Empire. We are surrounded by the enemy, but our fighting spirit remains strong. Please continue air operations to destroy all enemy naval forces in the Okinawa area."

Japanese planes had been carrying out special (suicide) attacks against enemy ships since the operation began. There was no reason to think that our urgent message could effect a miracle. This last appeal was little more than an effort to raise our own morale.

Imperial Headquarters had meanwhile changed its view that the land battle of Okinawa was merely an adjunct to aerial strikes. They were now realizing the importance of conserving our remaining soldiers. We were admonished to stick to our fortifications and wage a war of attrition to the end. Our special attack squadrons were striking at enemy ships every evening, and the sounds of their attacks encouraged us. From a tactical viewpoint, however, the air attacks did not contribute materially to our land battle.

On the night of May 24 a special suicide attack squadron plunged down on the enemy-held airfields at Kadena and Yomitan. [the latter being known as Yontan to the United States troops] Captain Okuyama led a force of 120 fearless airmen in this attack. We would have been better off if they had landed at Naha and joined us directly in the land battle.

Nevertheless, on that evening I saw tremendous flares light the sky in the direction of Kadena and Yomitan, and imagined that our special attack squadrons had struck a mighty blow on our behalf. Such nightly attacks did not inflict notable damage on the enemy, but they gave us assurance that we were not alone in

our desperate battle, and I was deeply moved. (In the event, all but one of the troop-carrying aircraft were shot down. When one bomber crash-landed, a squad of men leaped out, firing and hurling grenades as they ran; they managed to damage numbers of American airplanes before they were killed.)

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HEADQUARTERS TENTH ARMY  
Office of the A.C. of S., G-2  
APO 357

CICA/KCL  
6 August 1945

PRISONER OF WAR INTERROGATION REPORT

Tenth Army Interrogation Report #28.

1. PERSONAL DETAILS

Name : YAHARA, Hiromichi  
Rank : Col  
Duty : Senior Staff officer, 32d Army  
Date of Capture : 15 July 1945  
Place of Capture : YABIKU Pref  
Age : 42  
Residence : TOTTORI Pref  
Occupation : Army officer

2. ASSESSMENT

a. Details of Capture:

After attending the dinner preceding the suicides of Generals USHIJIMA and CHO, Col YAHARA, in civilian clothes, proceeded to carry out orders received from General CHO - "After participating in the final defense of OKINAWA Island, Staff Officer YAHARA will proceed and take part in the defense of the homeland". He made his escape from the MABUNI caves in spectacular fashion, rolling over a cliff when observed by Blue troops, inadvertently firing his pistol during the descent. This performance was apparently the basis for rumours that YAHARA had been killed at NABUNI. Alive, though bruised by the fall, Col YAHARA joined a group of civilians in a cave intending to remain with them and to work his way north, hoping eventually to reach Japanese Territory by small boat. When Blue troops approached the cave YAHARA led the group out and accompanied them to the YABIKU civilian compound where he successfully assumed the guise of a school-teacher. Three days on a labor detail depleted YAHARA'S already weakened endurance; he collapsed and spent the next two weeks resting. The presence of an idle but complaining stranger aroused the suspicion and resentment of an alert Okinawan who took Col YAHARA aside and demanded an explanation. YAHARA revealed his identity but appealed to the man's patriotism and begged his silence. To his chagrin the Okinawan immediately reported his presence to local CIC agents who returned and took YAHARA, bitter but unresisting, into custody.

b. Evaluation:

Quiet and unassuming, yet possessed of a keen mind and a fine discernment, Col YAHARA is, from all reports, an eminently capable officer, described by some POWs as the "brains" of the

32d Army.

His life falls into the pattern of many career officers of the Japanese service. The son of a small country land-owner, YAHARA won an appointment to the Military Academy, graduating in 1923. Although promotions came slowly he won some distinction as a junior officer and attended the War College, graduating, according to his account, fifth in his class (officer POW's attribute this to native modesty, holding that YAHARA led his class). His subsequent assignments included duty in the United States, in CHINA, and as a plain clothes agent in SIAM, BURMA, and MALAYA. Col YAHARA attributes his frequent change of duty to a propensity to disagree with superior officers which made him an undesirable among certain old-line officers.

Col YAHARA discusses the OKINAWA operation freely though he has indicated that he will not divulge information which he considers vital to the security of the Empire. There is no reason to believe that he has made any attempt at deception. It should be borne in mind that his observation of the campaign was made from the comparative safety of SHURI castle and that in some instances his narrative may differ from that of front-line troops.

The present report deals only with the OKINAWA operation, making no attempt to delve into the Col's pre-Okinawan experiences.

### 3. INTELLIGENCE

#### a. Chronology

1923

Grad from Military Academy. To 54th Inf Regt (OKAYAMA).

1925

To 63d Inf Regt

1926

Entered Army War College

1929

Grad from War College. Returned to 63d Regt.

1930

To Personnel Dept of War Ministry

1933

To US as exchange officer. Wilmington, Boston, Washington D.C. Att 8th Inf Regt for six months at Fort Moultrie

1935

Returned to Personnel Dept, War Ministry

1937

Appointed as instructor (strategy and tactics) at Army War College.

Three months in China as staff officer with 2d Army (In CHINA Exped Force)

1938

Returned to Army War College as instructor.

1940

Sept-As Japanese agent to Siam, Burma, Malaya.  
Nov-Dec-To General Staff as expert on SE Asia.



1941

July-To Bangkok as Ass't Military Attache.  
15 Nov-Received secret orders to staff of 15th Army  
SAIGON.

Remained at Bangkok and participated in the negotiations for the peaceful occupation of SIAM. Then participated in the BURMA operation with the 15th army.

April- Became ill and returned to Japan. Again assigned to War College as instructor.

1944

16 Mar-To OKINAWA as advisor from Imperial Staff, 32d Army Hq, soon formed and assigned as Senior Staff Officer.

1945

15 Jul-Captured.

b. Pre-L-Day Estimates and Preparations:

The successful US invasion of the MARIANAS convinced staff officers both in the 32d Army and the General Staff that the US would attempt a landing either on TAIWAN, the RYUKYU RETTO, or HONGKONG within the year. The 32d Army staff believed that, because of its strategic position, OKINAWA would certainly be invaded; opinion in TOKYO remained more indefinite, some favoring TAIWAN. The attack was expected either as (a) an immediate landing based from and using troops available in the MARIANAS or (b) an attack mounted from the SOWESPAC area when the tactical situation should permit the withdrawal of troops from that area. The first possibility was regarded as a more dangerous threat since OKINAWA was totally unprepared to repulse enemy landings at that time. The landings on the PALAUS and on LEYTE came as a respite, indicating that US plans did not include an immediate attack in this area. The landing was then expected from late March to June 1945, on the assumption that the situation in the PHILIPPINES would have eased sufficiently by that time to permit the withdrawal of troops and the use of LEYTE as a staging area. The OKINAWA landing was expected to take place before the IWO landing because IWO was considered of lesser importance. Some false confidence was inspired by intelligence reports that not enough troops were available to effect a landing on OKINAWA for some time to come. However, in late Feb reports of shipping concentrations in the MARIANAS and LEYTE convinced the 32d Army staff that the attack would come in late March or early April.

From an early date the principle guiding the Japanese plan of defense was that since it was impossible to defeat the invading enemy, the most successful plan would be that which denied him the use of the island for as long a period as possible and cause him the greatest casualties. The following plans were suggested, the first being that which was adopted.

1. To defend, from extensive underground positions, the SHIMAJURI sector (i.e. that part of OKINAWA S of the NAHA-SHURI-YONABARU line) the main line of defenses being N of NAHA, SHURI, and YONABARU. Landings N of this line will not be opposed; landings south of the line will be met on the beaches. Since it

will be impossible to defend KADENA A/F, 15 cm guns will be emplaced so as to bring fire against the airfield and deny the invaders its use.

2. To defend from prepared positions the central portion of the island, including the KADENA and YONTAN A/Fs.

3. To dispose one Div around the KADENA area, one Div in the southern end of the island, and one Brig between the two Divs. to meet the enemy wherever he lands and attempt to annihilate him on the beaches.

4. To defend the northern part of the island with Army Hq in NAGO and the main line of defense based on Hill 220 NE of YONTAN A/F. The proponents of this course maintained that the terrain in the northern OKINAWA was most favorable for prolonging the defense although, admittedly, the loss of the more highly developed southern section was undesirable.

Although the withdrawal of the 9th Div seriously weakened the forces available for the defense of OKINAWA, the move was not opposed by 32d Army since the Div was removed with the intention of using it to reinforce the PHILIPPINES. Pleas for reinforcements from JAPAN were made in vain to TOKYO. there was a faint hope of getting reinforcements before L-Day, but, Col YAHARA states, none whatsoever thereafter.

The plan which was adopted, i.e. to defend the SHURI line, presupposed Blue occupation of KADENA and YONTAN A/Fs. Although there was some pressure from TOKYO and certain individuals within 32d Army to include KADENA A/F within the zone of defense, this was deemed impractical, due to considerations of terrain. The defense of KADENA would seriously overextend forces barely sufficient for the effective defense of the southern part of the island.

The building of airfields on IE JIMA was criticized, since it was impossible to defend the island for more than a few days. Accordingly, on 10 March demolition of the airfields was initiated. Subsequently, 4.15 cm guns were emplaced in positions on the MOTOBU peninsula from where they could be brought to bear on IE.

The beaches originally considered most probable for Blue landings were (a) the HAGUSHI beaches, (b) the GUSUKWA beaches (i.e. the beaches W of MACHINATO A/F) (c) the coast between NAHA and ITOMAN, (d) the MINATOGAWA beaches and (e) the N. AKAGUSUKU WAN beaches.

By the end of March it was expected that the main Blue strength, probably 6 - 10 Divs would land upon the HAGUSHI beaches, immediately securing the KADENA and YONTAN A/Fs.

It was believed that the invading forces might, following the initial landing, establish beachhead perimeters, each two Divs in strength, 1 1/2 to 3 kilometers in depth, each Div holding 2 km of beach. The perimeters would be maintained until enough supplies had been landed to permit a large-scale attack, using massed tanks and concentrated arty fire. The invaders would rely upon material strength to wear down the defenders rather than making a frontal assault. It was estimated that about ten days would be required to get the HAGUSHI forces in position to attack the main defense line based on SHURI and

move their main force to the SHURI line and that during that time the US hoped to force the Japanese to move their main force to the SHURI line and then to effect a not too costly landing, probably by one Div on the coast some where S of SHURI, probably MINATOGAWA. Additional landings on IE JIMA were expected but the landings on KERAMA came as a surprise, foiling their plans for conducting suicide boat warfare.

Artillery was ordered not to fire upon Blue shipping and divs were instructed not to oppose Blue reconnaissance or initial landings in their sectors until sufficient troops had been brought ashore to render it difficult to effect an escape by boat. The purpose was two-fold, (a) to attempt to deceive Blue intelligence as to the disposition of the Japanese forces (b) to ensure that any attack on Blue beachhead positions would engage and "annihilate" a sizeable force.

The weakest point of the final defense plan was considered to be the CHINEN Peninsula. Landing on CHINEN would give the invaders good observation to direct NGF and a position from which to launch an attack upon the heart of the defensive line.

Accordingly, only the 62d Div, considered to be their best and most experienced outfit, was moved into the SHURI line, leaving the main force prepared to annihilate any enemy force unwise enough to attempt a landing to the south. The 5th Arty Command was ordered to place all its component elements in defense of the MINATOGAWA sector. The Arty Command OP was established near ITOKAZU (TS 8384 R). The initial US diversion on the east coast increased their hopes that a landing would be attempted and contributed to the great reluctance with which troops were drawn from the S to strengthen the SHURI line. Until the end of April enough troops were left in the south to deal a severe blow to any landing. Hope of defending the southern coast was given up following the abortive counter-attack of 4 May. A new plan was devised by which the event of a landing, 2-3000 troops would fight a delaying action while the main force, giving up NAHA and YONABARU, would establish a circular perimeter around SHURI, extending as far south as TSUKAZAN.

The absence of a landing puzzled the 32d Army Staff, particularly after the beginning of May when it became impossible to put up more than a token resistance in the south. Prevailing opinion was that the Tenth Army wished to obtain as cheap a victory as possible by wearing down the SHURI line rather than committing elements to a possible hazardous landing in the South in the interests of bringing the operation to a speedier end.

Plans for fleet support of ground forces in the defense of OKINAWA were contemplated but never emerged from a rather nebulous stage. Co-ordination of such activities was in the hand of the OKINAWA Base Force. 32d Army also maintained direct liaison with the Navy General Staff which actually showed more interest in the campaign than did the Army General Staff. No naval personnel ashore were specifically charged with direction of NGF should fleet units succeed in reaching OKINAWA.

The 32d Army profited from the lesson learned on SAIPAN where Japanese Arty had been wiped out in the first days of the

operation. The overall command of artillery on OKINAWA was in the hands of the 5th Arty Command.

The factors responsible for the failure of Japanese arty in the past were thought to be (1) the lack of cave positions, preferably such that the piece could be fired from inside the cave, and (2) the premature firing, exposing positions before real damage could be done the enemy.

Consequently, under the Arty Command's direction, preparations were made for concealing the guns emplaced in the elaborate system of caves encountered later by Blue forces. Extensive surveying was conducted by the Arty Survey Co, supplying all arty units with data expediting the problem of transfer and massing of fire.

The Japanese realized that ammo was insufficient for a protracted campaign. Impassioned pleas to TOKYO brought only the information that the shipping situation was acute. The Japanese prepared, accordingly, to make the most efficient use of available ammo.

The caliber of the Japanese general officers charged with the defense of OKINAWA was uniformly high. The following comments by Col YAHARA throw some light on the characters of the defeated commanders.

Lt Gen USHIJIMA, Mitsuru, CG, 32d Army: A quiet, reserved but extremely capable officer, held in the highest esteem by all men of his command. He was regarded by some as a latter-day SAIGO Tekemori (a military hero of the time of the MEIJI Restoration). He delegated all authority to his subordinates, yet took the full responsibility for any decisions made by them. Although an able tactician he took little part in the actual planning; his position was, in fact, little more than an eminently suitable figurehead.

Lt Gen CHO, Isemu, C of S, 32d Army: A fiery individual possessed of tremendous energy, CHO was the driving force behind the 32d Army. Quick to anger and demanding, CHO was not universally popular but no one questioned his ability, CHO made no bones about his epicurean tastes; his cellar was well stocked with better brands of SAKE and an ample supply of Scotch whiskey. Col YAHARA believes that USHIJIMA and CHO made a perfect combination, USHIJIMA acting as the balance wheel on CHO's drive.

Lt Gen FUJIOKA, Takeo, CG, 62nd Div: Not a war college graduate, FUJIOKA came up through field commands. Quiet and conservative, he was considered the embodiment of the SAMURAI type. Like USHIJIMA he relied heavily on his C of S.

Lt Gen AMMIYA, Tatsuni, CG, 24th Div: In temperament AMMIYA resembled FUJIOKA, although more inclined to exert his personal authority. Hardworking and competent, he was regarded as an excellent leader.

Maj Gen SUZUKI, Shigeji, CG, 44th IMB: The least respected of the generals, SUZUKI expressed some resentment that FUJIOKA, who graduated below him at the Military Academy, should hold higher rank. He did a competent job though handicapped by lack of experienced staff officers.

### C. Enemy Operations

The tactical direction of the defense resolved itself into a struggle between the conservatives, including Col YAHARA, who advocated strictly defensive warfare, and a group of radicals who proposed that the Japanese take the offensive whenever there seemed to be the slightest possibility of succeeding.

An ill conceived plan for a counter-attack on 8 April was proposed at a staff meeting on 5 or 6 April. At that time the 62d Div alone was on the line, eager to take offensive action. It was proposed to bring up the 24th Div, 44th IMB, and all major arty units and in one massed blow to drive the invaders to the ISHIKAWA isthmus. The 62d Div was to spearhead the attack, having as its objective Hill 220 NE of YONTAN A/F. The 24th Div was to follow, then veer to the east, driving up the east coast. The 44th IMB was to be held in reserve.

The plan met with vigorous opposition of Col YAHARA and other cooler heads among the staff officers who reasoned that even if the attack should succeed initially the Japanese would be at the mercy of Blue NGF and bombing since no positions had been prepared in the area. Also, the south would be left defenseless against possible landings. The plan was accordingly dropped, reluctantly by a group of fire-eaters, the majority deciding that only a madman could envision the success of such a venture. Another factor influencing the decision was a belief that the Blue forces might set up a defensive line S of the AWASE Peninsula, and proceed with the securing of the northern part of the Island, putting off the reduction of the south indefinitely.

The proponents of aggressive action finally were permitted to attempt a counter-attack of sorts on the night of 12 April. The failure of the venture strengthened YAHARA's position as the spokesman of the conservatives.

The 62d Div was still holding the line alone with the 22d Regt of the 24th Div in reserve in the NISHIBARU area. On the night of 9 or 10 April plans were drawn up at a staff meeting calling for 3 Bns of the 22d Regt and 3 Bns of the 62d Div to infiltrate, scattering throughout the area between the lines and the objective line, 1500 yards north of FUTEMA. The sector lines ran through the center of the island, with the 62d Div on the west and the 22d Regt on the east. Within each sector one Bn was to occupy the northern one-third, and the last Bn the southern third. The men were to hide in caves and tombs, awaiting a suitable opportunity to attack on 13 April.

The main advantage of the attack was that it would prevent the use of Blue NGF or arty since the area would be occupied simultaneously by Blue and Japanese troops, thus enabling the Japanese to fight upon their own terms, i.e. hand-to-hand combat. On the other hand, the 22d Regt was unfamiliar with the terrain. As it turned out, this factor accounted for the complete failure of the attack.

Col YAHARA opposed the attack and succeeded in reducing the forces participation to four Bns.

The attack was launched as scheduled. As Col YAHARA had predicted, the Bns of the 22d Regt were bewildered by the terrain and by dawn had made only 500 yards. They were forced to

retire after suffering heavy casualties. The 62d Div Bns fared somewhat better, one Bn advancing to TA 8378, remaining there throughout the day of 13 April and returning that night with low casualties.

On about 20 April, after the loss of TANABARU, the Japanese began to move troops north in anticipation of a Blue landing in the YONABARU area. The 62d Div, reinforced on the right (east) flank by the 22d Regt was holding a line from OMAGA-KOCKI hill 187 to the MACHINATO A/F. Even the blindest staff officer was growing aware that Blue forces would eventually break through any defenses the Japanese could establish. As yet the Japanese had not suffered crippling casualties and in the opinion of many officers the time was ripe to strike a "decisive" blow.

Gen CHO, always a proponent of aggressive action, was instrumental in the decision to stage the counter-attack. CHO was vigorously supported by FUJIOKA, CG of the 62d Div, who expressed the general desire of his men to fight the decisive action in the 62d Div's zone of defense. Col YAHARA opposed the attack as being premature but was over-ridden.

The plan was ambitious. The 23d and 26th Shipping Engineer Regts were to effect counter-landings on the west and east coast respectively during the night of 3-4 May. On 4 May the 24th Div (89th Regt on the east, 22d Regt in the center, and 32d Regt on the west) were to launch an attack with FUTEMA as the objective. The 44th IMB was to follow the 24th Div, bearing west to the coast, thus cutting off the 1st Mar Div. The 62d Div did not participate in the attack.

It was Col YAHARA's opinion, the decisive action of the campaign. The Japanese were so weakened by its failure that they lost all hope of taking any further offensive action. On 5 May Gen USHIJIMA called Col YAHARA to his office and, with tears in his eyes, declared that he would, in the future, be guided by YAHARA's decisions.

On about 20 May it became apparent to the 32d Army Staff that the line north of SHURI would be soon untenable. The pressure exerted upon the line from both Sugar Loaf and Conical Hill forced a decision as to whether or not to stage the last ditch stand at SHURI. The capture of Sugar Loaf Hill alone could have been solved by the withdrawal of the left flank to positions S of NAHA and, in Col YAHARA's opinion would not have seriously endangered the defense of SHURI. However, the loss of remaining positions on Conical Hill in conjunction with the pressure in the west rendered the defense of SHURI extremely difficult.

On the night of 21 May a conference attended by all Div and Brig CGs was held in the 32d Army Hq caves under SHURI Castle. Three possible courses of action were proposed: (1) to make the final stand at SHURI, (2) to withdraw to the CHINEN Peninsula, and (3) to withdraw to the south. The first plan was favored by the 62d Div which was reluctant to withdraw from what they thought of as their own territory. Other factors favoring the adoption of this plan were the presence of large quantities of stores in SHURI and a general feeling that a withdrawal would not be in the best traditions of the Japanese Army. It was

recognized that to stay would result in a quicker defeat and consequently it was discarded in accord with the 32d Army policy of protracting the struggle as long as possible. A retreat to CHINEN was regarded with no great favor by anyone and was deemed unfeasible due to the difficulties of transportation over rough and mountainous terrain. The discussion resolved in a decision to conduct an ordered retreat to the south, influenced to a great extent by the presence of 24th Div positions and stores in that area.

The transport of supplies and wounded began on the night of 22 May. The burden of the operation was in the hands of the 24th Tpt Regt, an unusually proficient organization commanded by a Col NAKAMUR who later received a commendation for the masterful way in which the operation was carried out. While in CHINA the Regt had been intensively trained in night driving, apparently with some success.

The occupation of YONABARU on 22 May came as a surprise to the Japanese who did not expect such a move during the inclement weather prevailing at that time, assuming that Blue infantry would be unwilling to attack without tanks which were thought to be immobilized by the mud. On 23 May elements of the 24th Div were despatched to retake the town. The attack continued with no success on the 24th and 25th May.

At this time the 62 Div sector consisted only of less than a 2000 yd front north of SHURI held by one Bn. The main force, consisting of about 3000 men was in SHURI, several hundred yards to the rear. Since the pressure directly north of SHURI was relatively light it was decided to place the Bn on the line under the command of the 24th Div and to send the rest of the 62d Div to assist the 24th Div in the attack on YONABARU. On 25 May the 62d Div left SHURI and travelling by a circuitous route approached YONABARU from the South, three days being required for the maneuver. The arrival of the 62d Div failed to relieve the situation.

The mass retreat from SHURI took place during the night of 29 May. Combat units left one-fifth to one-third of their troops behind to hold the line for another day with orders to retreat the night of the 30th. A temporary line from the mouth of the KOKUBA GAWA on the west coast running N of TSUKAZN to TA 8069 and then bearing south through KARADERA to hill 157 in TA 8367 was occupied on 1-2 June with the 44th IMB manning the sector from the west coast to KOKUBA, the 24th Div from KOKUBA to CHAN, and the 62nd Div from CHAN to the east coast.

The 44th IMB retreated through ITOMAN, then bore east going north of MAKABE and through MEDEERA to occupy the western portion of the line based on YAEJU DAKE, arriving on 3 June. The remnants of the 62d Div (2500 men) fell back through TAMAGUSUKU MURA and GUSHIGAN MURA occupying the sector south of MAKABE and west of MABUNI DAKE on 4 June. The 24th Div (7-8000) men withdrew through the center of the island, taking up the east flank on 4 June.

The message from General Buckner, offering USHIJIMA an opportunity to surrender did not arrive at 32d Army Hq until 17 June, a week after it had been dropped behind the Japanese lines.

Col YAHARA states that the delay was normal for front-line to Hq communications at that stage of the operation. The message was delivered to Col YAHARA who bucked it to Gen CHO, after showing it to his staff officers. The staff officers were unimpressed and treated the matter lightly. Gen USHIJIMA's reaction is not recorded.

#### D. Enemy Intelligence

32d Army intelligence was admittedly poor. Although a staff officer was charged with intelligence he was hampered by assignment to other duties and by the general lack of interest in intelligence among front-line troops. Div staff officers looked upon intelligence as a minor matter; below division there were no personnel concerned with intelligence. Col YAHARA admits that an unfortunate attitude that intelligence work belonged properly on to officers incompetent for operations work prevailed even in the highest echelon.

Col YAHARA states that the greatest single source of intelligence was US news broadcasts identifying units on the island and describing the general progress of the operation. Such broadcasts were monitored in TAIWAN and transmitted from there to OKINAWA.

Practically the only other source of intelligence was documents taken from bodies and wrecked tanks. Although a civil service official supposedly qualified in the English language was assigned to Army Hq, he proved himself incompetent and Col YAHARA read captured documents personally. A tank destroyed shortly after the 27th [U.S.] Div came into the line yielded an OpPlan of that Div. The document was taken to 32d Army Hq where it was examined by Col YAHARA. Most of the document was not of immediate interest, however, the "Estimate of Enemy Capabilities" aroused great interest and amusement. On 5 May a Marine enemy situation map, captured during the 4 May counter-attack caused great consternation because of its accurate appraisal of Japanese dispositions. Some valuable OB information was taken from addresses on personal letters taken from Blue dead. The presence of the 1st Mar Div on the southern line were discovered in this fashion.

The only US POWs of which Col YAHARA admits knowledge are one navy ensign or Lt (jg) shot down off KERAMA, and 2 or 3 unidentified flyers captured in March. The first POW was interrogated on OKINAWA and apparently revealed movements of his task force (it is not known how accurately; the Japanese accepted his account at face value) but when questioned as to future operations [the flyer] advised his interrogators to consult Admiral Nimitz. This POW was subsequently flown to TOKYO for more intensive interrogation. Col YAHARA can furnish no information on the POWs captured in March, beyond the fact that he thinks they were flown to TOKYO immediately to be worked over by competent interrogators. No POWs were reported to 32d Army Hq during the operation; if any were taken they were dealt with on the spot. Orders directing units to attempt to take prisoners were issued with no results. Several Okinawans suspected of acting as US agents were turned in, but without exception, they



acting as US agents were turned in, but without exception, they were found to be insane.

Occasionally staff officers listened in on Blue voice transmission but, due to their imperfect English, gained no information of any value.

Indicative of the character of Japanese intelligence are two reports received at Army Hq. The first, received shortly after the 1st Mar Div moved into the southern line stated that Chinese and Negro marines had been observed being driven to the front by tanks, presumably to prevent their desertion. A second report, received from an infiltration team, described a gala party, complete with orchestra, chinese lanterns and dancing girls, which had purportedly been seen in progress at FUTEMA.

#### E. Battle Lessons

The 32d Army staff was somewhat puzzled by certain phases of Blue tactics which were in conflict with accepted Japanese tactical doctrine.

The Blue attack against the Japanese line was often characterized by the exertion of uniform pressure against the entire line. When weak points were discovered in the Japanese line they were generally probed by Blue patrols yet no efforts were made to effect a break-through, if only to gain a temporary advantage. This seemed at variance with what the Japanese considered sound tactics, which would advise an attack in force upon weak points with the objective of causing the enemy heavy casualties, if not of disrupting his defense. The seemingly over-cautious policy came as a disappointment to many Japanese staff officers who had hoped to force a decision once the Blue forces had engaged the SHURI defense line and before the Japanese had been appreciably reduced in strength.

Col YAHARA and other staff officers became of the opinion that the 10th Army had been committed to taking the island as cheaply as possible. In retrospect he declares that the policy was probably wise, insofar as it reduced total casualties, although more aggressive action would probably have shortened the campaign appreciably.

Blue methods of tank warfare also came as a surprise to the Japanese. Col YAHARA expressed the belief of the Japanese that OKINAWA was ideally suited to large-scale tank warfare, at least in comparison with the home-islands of JAPAN. (In this connection, Col YAHARA remarked that the CHIBA Peninsula was probably the only area in JAPAN suited by terrain for armored warfare. The Japanese themselves find difficulty in conducting maneuvers on terrain characterized by paddy fields and irrigation systems.) The Japanese envisioned Blue tank attacks comparable in scale to those of the European war, involving 5 or 6 waves of 100 tanks each. Indications that such attacks were not contemplated came as a great relief to the Japanese. Col YAHARA is, however, of the opinion that Blue superiority in tanks was the single factor most important in deciding the battle of OKINAWA.

The Japanese were forced to admit that their counter-measures were ineffective; AT guns were of little use in well-

concealed positions and were soon destroyed if moved to positions with better fields of fire, suicide attacks by personnel bearing explosive charges were disappointing, while bringing arty fire against tanks was difficult because of poor communication and the undesirability of firing during the daytime when under air observation. Some comfort was derived from the observation that tanks would sometimes withdraw in the face of a show of strength or when accompanying infantry were fired upon.

At one point there was a rather wistful discussion of the possibility of retrieving damaged US tanks and after repairing them to use in the field. The scheme soon proved to be impractical. A light AT weapon such as the bazooka is badly needed by the Japanese.

The tactical maneuver causing the greatest concern to the Japanese was the so-called "horseback attack" (UMAMORI KOGEKI), i.e. the double envelopment of cave positions. Although the Japanese positions were constructed to as to be mutually self-supporting, certain unexpected factors entered the picture. It was discovered that double-envelopment tactics had been successful not so much because of inherent defects in the construction of the positions but simply because troops in nearby positions were reluctant to endanger their own safety by opening fire on positions which had been enveloped. Orders were issued that an officer or NCO would remain on watch at all times in each position and that there would be no delay in opening fire upon Blue troops attacking other positions.

Flame-throwers were countered by constructing caves with the main passages at right angles to the entrance. To further minimize the effect of flame-throwers, entrances were covered with blankets, shelter-halves, or other heavy materials thoroughly wetted. Col YAHARA believes that those measures were fairly successful against brief attacks, although admittedly unable to withstand prolonged attack.

Blue night attacks were particularly effective, taking the Japanese completely by surprise. The Japanese had so accustomed themselves to ceasing organized hostilities at nightfall, and, except for the ubiquitous KIRIKOMITAI, reorganizing and relaxing during the night that attacks in those hours caught them both physically and psychologically off-guard. Col YAHARA believes that such attacks could have been successfully exploited to a much greater extent than they were.

The 32d Army had experienced considerable bombing and were reasonably certain that their cave positions gave adequate protection. There was, however, general consternation at the prospect of being under NGF. Col YAHARA was informed by an arty officer that on BB had firepower equivalent to the arty of 7 Inf Divs; this naturally caused him some anxiety which was relieved only when, after the first naval bombardment of the island, he inspected the results and found that well constructed cave positions were vulnerable only to direct hits. The following conclusions were drawn as to the effectiveness against NGF, bombing and arty fire.

1. NFG, bombing, and arty directed against an area the size of OKINAWA will not have much effect against disciplined troops

in well-constructed cave positions. Important positions must be such that no amount of bombing or shelling will destroy them.

2. After positions have been overrun or destroyed by the enemy, dispersion is vital. All movements must be at night.

3. The final result will be by hand-to-hand combat.

The enemy's first taste of Blue arty was the bombardment by pieces emplaced on KEISE SHIMA, which caused the enemy no little annoyance, particularly since they had not anticipated any such move. Counter-battery brought against those batteries was believed to be partially successful.

The effectiveness of Blue arty was countered, successfully to a great extent, by the elaborate system of under-ground fortifications. Heavy bombardments, such as came before attacks caused relatively low casualties.

Blue observation planes were a constant threat to the Japanese. They learned quickly that the presence of an observation plane overhead usually presaged enemy fire. And, although they appeared to present fine targets, observation planes were tantalizingly hard to hit with small arms. Observation planes were, therefore, treated with great respect, all movement being kept to an absolute minimum while these planes were overhead.

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Jap Diary  
1 May 1945 to 21 May 1945  
Taken from G-2 report, 1 August 1945  
Article furnished by Frank H. Haigler, L/3/22/6

The following is the translation of a diary taken from the body of a Japanese soldier found dead in the vicinity of Naha. Through the medium of this diary it is possible to obtain a picture of the conditions which confronted enemy troops in the devastated city. Furthermore, it is possible to derive an insight into the mind of the Japanese soldier when he finds himself in an irretrievably hopeless situation.

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1 May Well, May has come at last. We are eating foreign food; dried potatoes gritty with sand. We are not working (on fortifications) today. We heard that at last Germany has surrendered unconditionally.

2 May Enemy planes appeared for about one hour this morning, but after that it started to rain and enemy aircraft activity ceased entirely. Thinking the enemy might make a landing at Tomari, We made preparations for battle, but the enemy landing failed to materialize so we ate dinner and hit the sack.

3 May I borrowed Shimizu's razor and shaved. There was no night work so I rested, but it was hot and there were so many fleas and lice that I could not sleep a wink.

4 May I ate five bean buns. Naval gunfire is getting more and more severe. American planes came unexpectedly.

5 May There was a concentration of naval gunfire nearby. Four civilians were killed. Seventeen or eighteen horses were also killed. There were a lot of enemy planes today. Nothing doing tonight, so we slept.

6 May Last year at this time mother was on the brink of death. Right now she is probably feeling fine. It seems that the enemy's strategy consisted of simultaneous landings at Okinawa, Korea, and China but they say his ships are destroyed and that he has failed here.

7 May The fields at home have been sown by now. It drizzled a bit this afternoon. According to an enemy handbill, Hitler has been assassinated, Mussolini and his staff have been sentenced to death, the battleship Yamato was sunk and Japan has no new-style battleships left.

8 May The news is becoming more and more unfavorable and it seems that death is to be our fate. It certainly is a shame but nothing can be done about it. Enemy planes did not show up today because of rain. It was my turn for a bath today and I got in the hot water. Then I borrowed a pair of clippers and had

Shimizu give me a haircut. According to the news from Maeoka, dispatched on the 23d, they had sunk 30 enemy cargo ships the night before. The talk is that victory or defeat will be decided in the next two weeks. We have mined the inner harbor.

9 May Due to good weather, enemy planes came and bombed us heavily. We are moving our troops again.

10 May At 0500 we moved to new positions about 500 yards away and I am with about 6 fellows from the 3d and 4th squads. Strafing by enemy planes is becoming severe.

11 May We moved again before dawn---the 3rd and 4th squads, the boat personnel, in fact, the entire force. Naval gunfire has become intense and the positions we were in before received a direct hit. Thank God our lives were saved.

12 May Clear weather today. The enemy is near. We changed positions this night. We used cloth sandals; use of shoes was forbidden. We heard that the army has been ordered to defend this island to the death. All the ship's crew have been put into the army as 2nd Class Privates. We got two sacks of dry bread today. Miyakawa went into the Suicide Unit and was killed. This area is devastated.

13 May Today I keep thinking of the festival at Kamogawa. The enemy fire is terrific. It looks like the end.

14 May Since we entered Naha Harbor two months ago, conditions have continuously deteriorated. The trouble is that victory depends upon control of the air but no friendly airplanes are in the skies. One of the ship's crew went out for vegetables but was killed by shellfire. Enemy planes came in large numbers. This morning, since the word was that we would move before dawn, I went up to establish communications but was prevented from doing so by fire.

15 May We got some tobacco issued as a present from the Emperor and some cakes. I got one cigarette, about a quarter of one cake, and two packages of nutrition ration. It looks like we are to die at last. The enemy has halted at a distance of about 1,000 yards from us. We have some type 38 rifle ammunition left and also 65 rounds of type 3 ammunition for use in machine-guns.

16 May We have placed our machine-guns in position on the high ground. Our food is only half-cooked and filled with sand. I can see the figures of enemy soldiers within 1,500 yards of us.

17 May Eating canned food. I am on duty as an observer of enemy activity. Two or three hand grenades per man have been issued. One of the Ishi platoons was annihilated by enemy naval gunfire. At best, a concentration of 60 rounds dropped within an area 30 feet square is extremely deadly. There is talk that the Grand Fleet will come and destroy the enemy by Navy Memorial

Day.

18 May Our forces are without planes, warships or tanks. Because we are abandoned we have no hope other than to die resisting. This is said to be the resolution of everyone from the army commander down. Our medium artillery is destroyed and we have not even one piece left. ("Juho" is usually translated as "Medium Artillery" but in this case may mean 240mm pieces). Since we are serving our daily allotment of food in two meals, we are hungry. We have come to our end in this despicable land. How I would like to return safely!

19 May After a drizzle of rain, a suicide unit of six or seven men entered my cave under cover of the clouds and darkness. They left at 2000. Maruyama and Nishtai were there also. They say that a letter of commendation of the suicide units has been sent to headquarters.

20 May We moved positions before dawn, leaving our packs behind and stopped with the 6th Regiment at dusk. We moved again after dark and four men went to the suicide unit but returned almost immediately. There is news of a landing on Amami O Shima. Five hundred of our troops were killed in one night. (This refers to troops on Okinawa).

21 May The order came to move up to the front lines at dawn but the enemy's artillery bombardment was awe-inspiring and so we returned to our positions and rested.



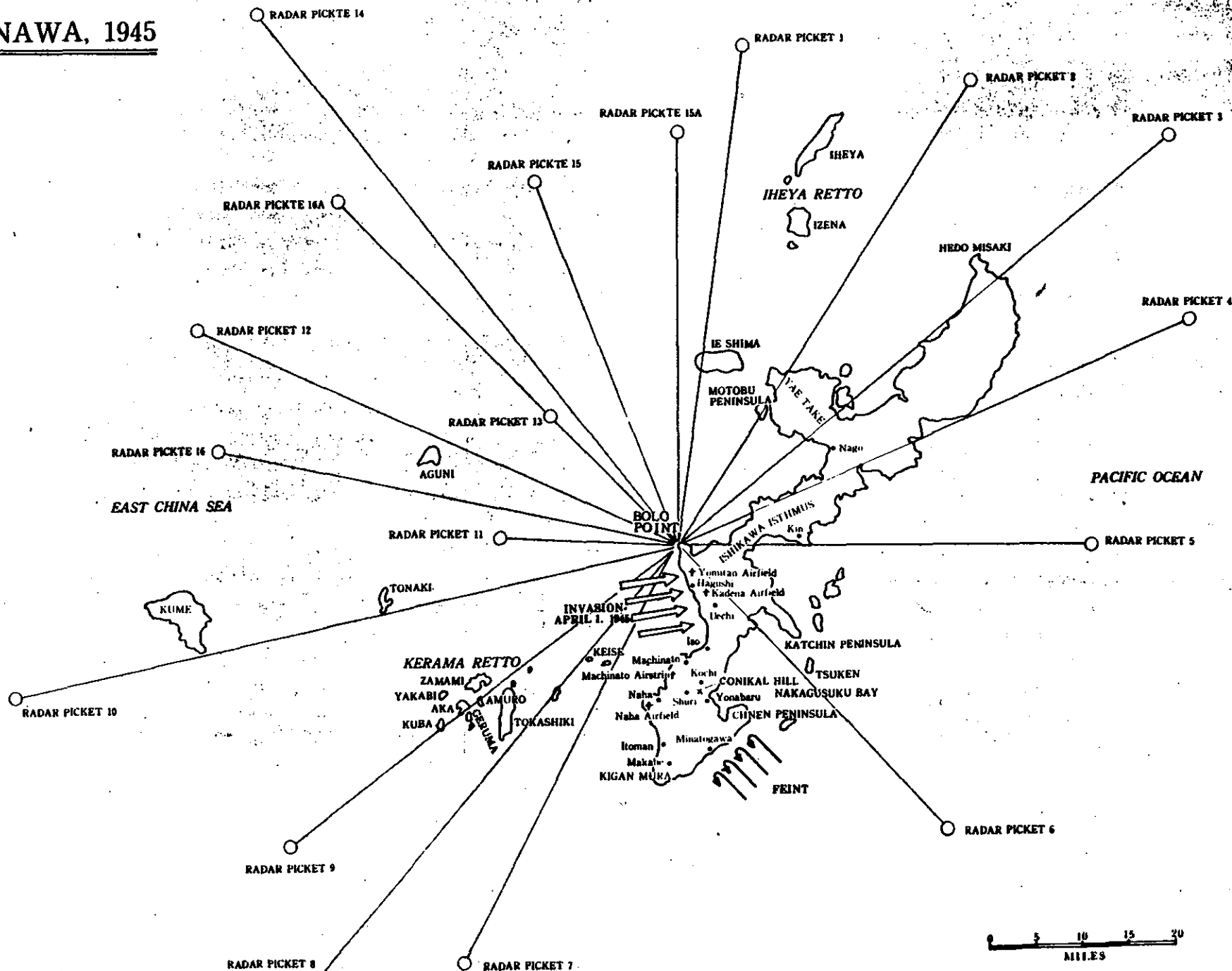
Pictured above is Iva Toguri, better known as "Tokio Rose" awaiting trial in a Yokohama prison cell. She was charged and convicted of treason for undermining the moral of American service men. She was sentenced to ten years imprisonment.

Her Tokyo broadcasts were listened to by all Marines who had access to a radio. She usually indicated where outfits were going and at times the names of officers and men in those outfits. At times her comments would be sexually oriented such as... "Your wives and girlfriends are getting theirs and I'm getting mine...are you getting yours?" I remember the music she played was from the Big Band Era and covered all of the popular songs of the time and thoroughly enjoyed by most of the Marines.

KJL



# OKINAWA, 1945



# LEGEND

Density of Construction in Urban Areas  
 Dense Moderate Sparse

- Navy Lookout Tower
- Factory
- Bank
- Powder Magazine
- Water Wheel or Mill
- Generating Plant
- Masonry Wall
- Fences
- Bamboo Fences
- Stone Wall
- Earthen Wall
- Hedge
- Cemetery
- Ditches
- Shrine Gate
- Stone Lantern
- Monument
- Statue
- Signpost
- Stone Steps
- Crane
- Oil Well
- Mileage Marker
- Stumps
- Isolated Trees
- Chimney
- Triangulation Point
- Secondary Control Point
- Bench Mark
- Spot Elevation
- Old Battlefield
- Spring
- Tomb
- Castle Site
- Volcano
- Mineral Spring
- Material Dump
- Mine
- Boundary Marker
- Shrine
- Temple
- Grave
- Pagoda
- Church
- Japanese Government Building
- Foreign Government Building
- Military Reservation
- Naval Reservation
- Division Headquarters
- Brigade Headquarters
- Fortress and Defense Headquarters
- Battalion Headquarters and Garrison
- Regimental Headquarters
- Naval Station
- Secondary Naval Station
- Naval Camp
- Army Camp
- Shipyard
- Prefectural Seat
- Sub-prefectural, Island-office or Gun Seat
- City Office
- Town, Village or Ward Office
- School
- Hospital
- Isolation Hospital
- Gendarmerie Post
- Police Station
- Court of Appeals
- Prison
- Customs House
- Tax Office
- Forestry Office
- Mining Office
- Government Monopoly Bureau Office or Factory
- Office of Maritime Affairs
- Meteorological Station
- Post Office (with Telegraph and Telephone service)
- Post Office
- Telegraph Office
- Telephone Office

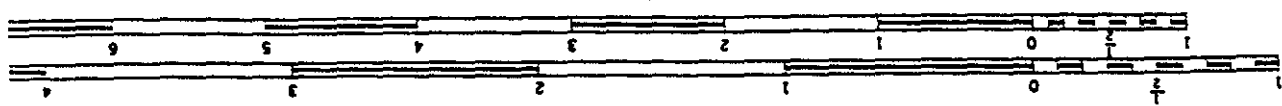
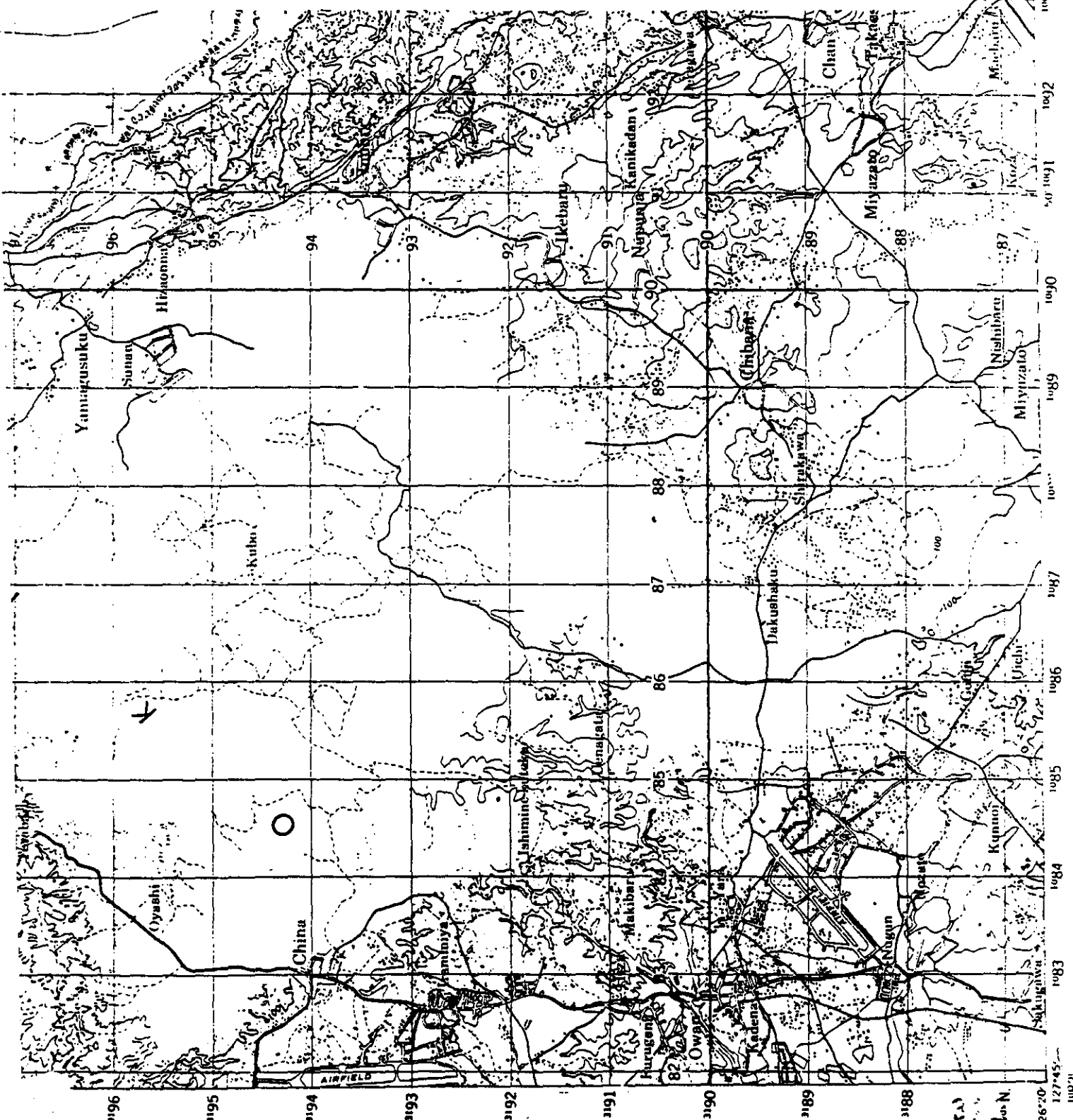
All above Sea Level

- National Highway
- Main Prefectural Roads
- More than 3 Meters Wide
- More than 2 Meters Wide
- More than 1 Meter Wide
- Less than 1 Meter Wide
- Impassable for Carts
- Tree-lined Roads: (A) Narrow (B) Wide
- Power Lines along Road: (A) Ordinary (B) High Tension
- Government Railways: (A) Two Tracks (B) Single Track
- Feeder Railways: (C) Station (D) Double (E) Single
- Boundaries: International
- Prefectural (A) Fixed (B) Approximate Province (Obsolete)
- Gun, shi or Sub-prefectural Ward, Machi or Mura (A) Fixed (B) Approximate
- Government Lands
- Property Lines (A) Fixed (B) Approximate
- (A) Iron Bridge
- (B) Wooden Bridge
- (C) Foot Bridge
- (D) Foot Ford
- (E) Vehicular Ford
- (F) Passenger Ferry (Single Boat)
- (G) Passenger and Horse Ferry (Two Boats)
- (H) Steam Ferry
- Lighthouse
- Radio Mast
- Warning Signal
- Boat Anchorage
- Ship Anchorage
- Anchorage
- Commercial Port
- Fixed Beacon
- Fixed Beacon (Lightless)
- Buoy (Lightless)
- (A) Flower Garden
- (B) Grove
- (C) Truck Garden
- (A) Orchard
- (B) Tea
- (C) Mulberry
- (D) Cultivated marsh
- (E) Irrigated rice field
- (F) Dry Rice Field
- (A) Wild Land
- (B) Palm
- (C) Bamboo
- (D) Conifers
- (E) Broad-leaf Trees
- (F) Grass Land
- (A) Cliff
- (B) Rock Outcropping
- (C) Scattered Rock
- (D) Talus Slope
- (E) Depression
- (F) Ravine, Gully
- (G) Crumbling Bank

To read grid and target area references on this sheet:

Figures, ignore the smaller figures printed around the margin of the map. Use only the two larger figures for both East-West and North-South references.

-381-



26°20' N  
127°45' E  
310  
1082

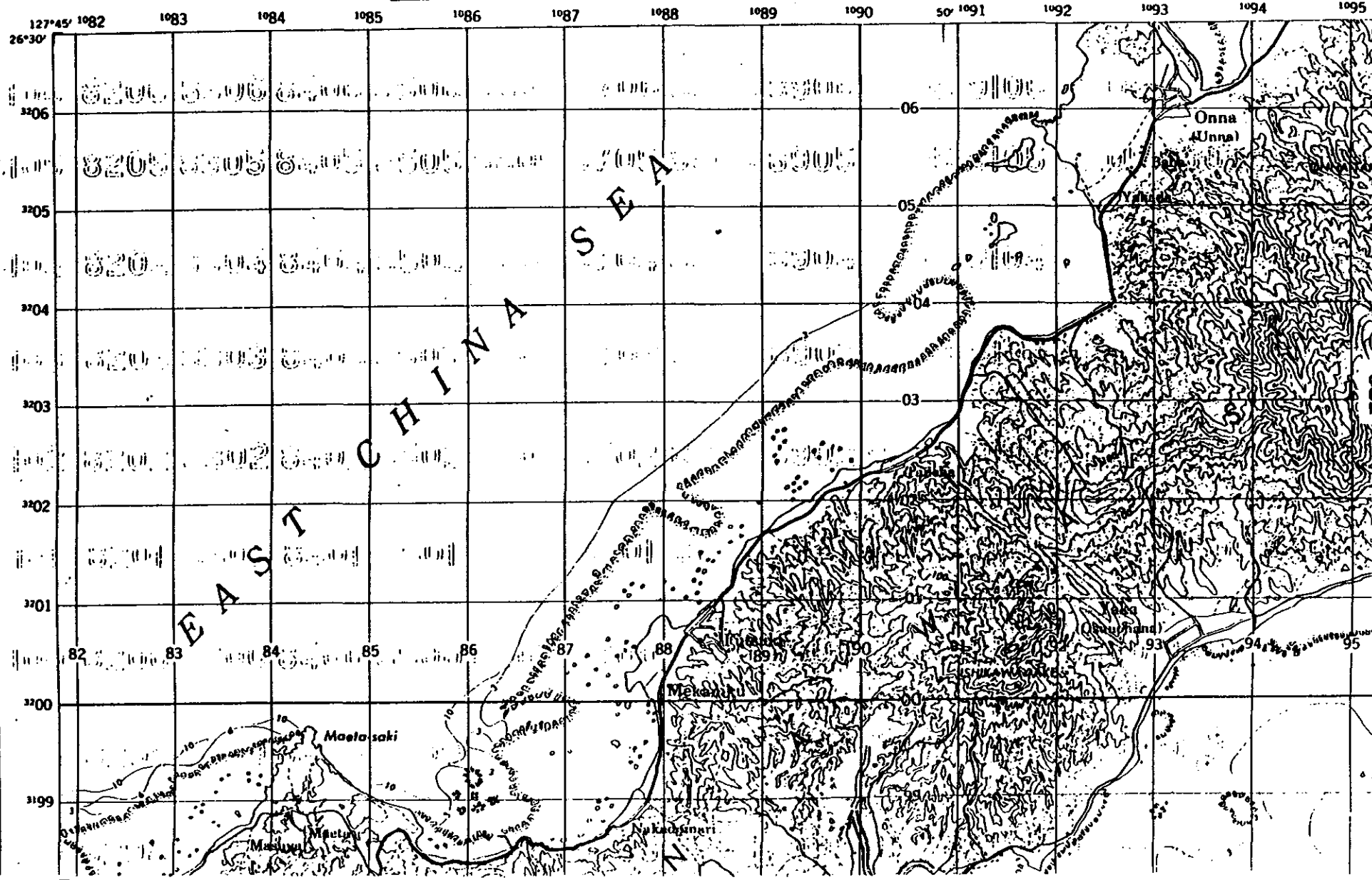
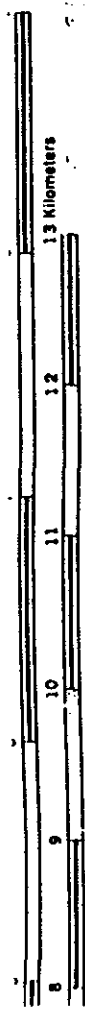
1082

RYUKYU-RETTO 1:50,000

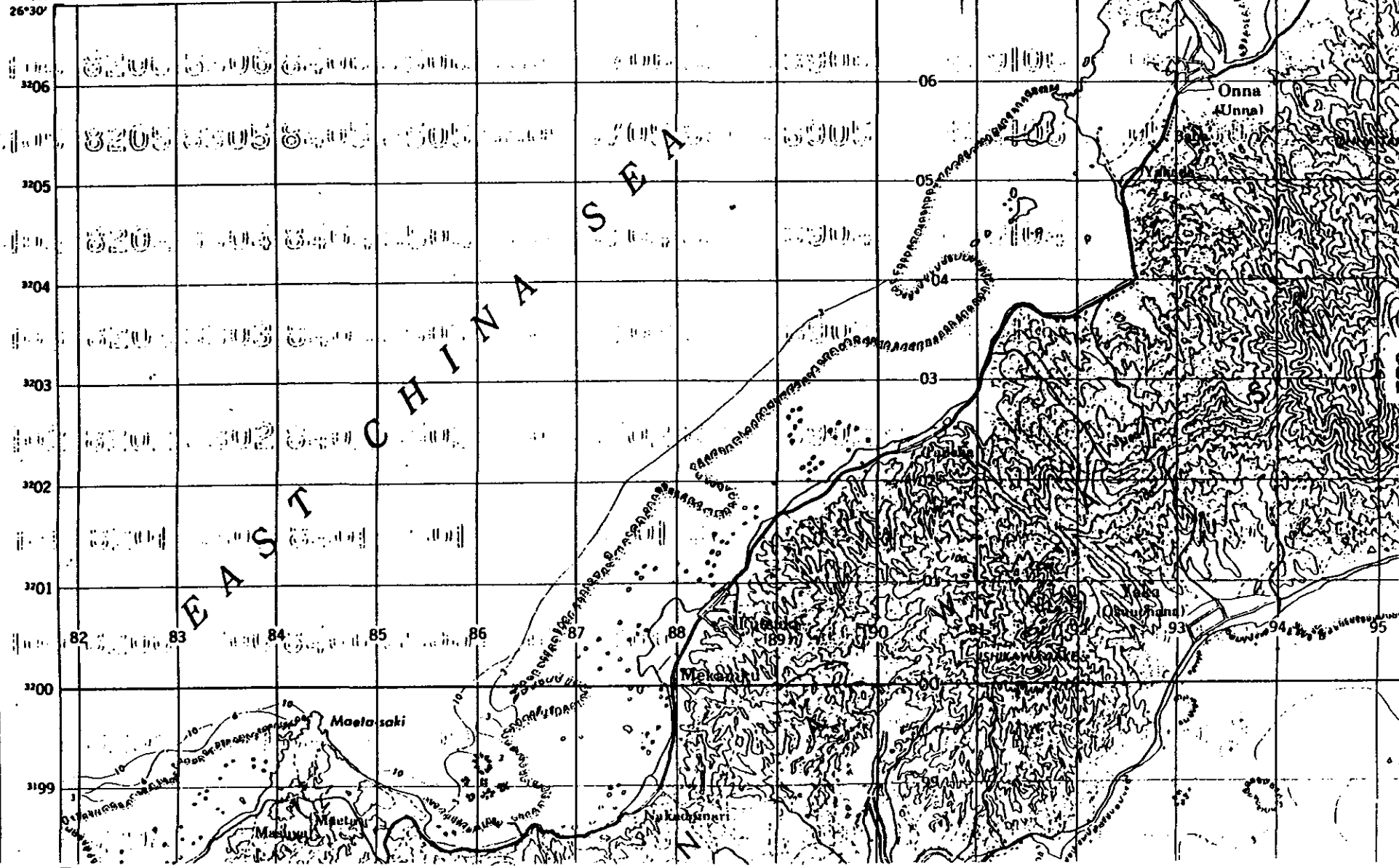
For use by War and Navy Department Agencies only  
Not for sale or distribution

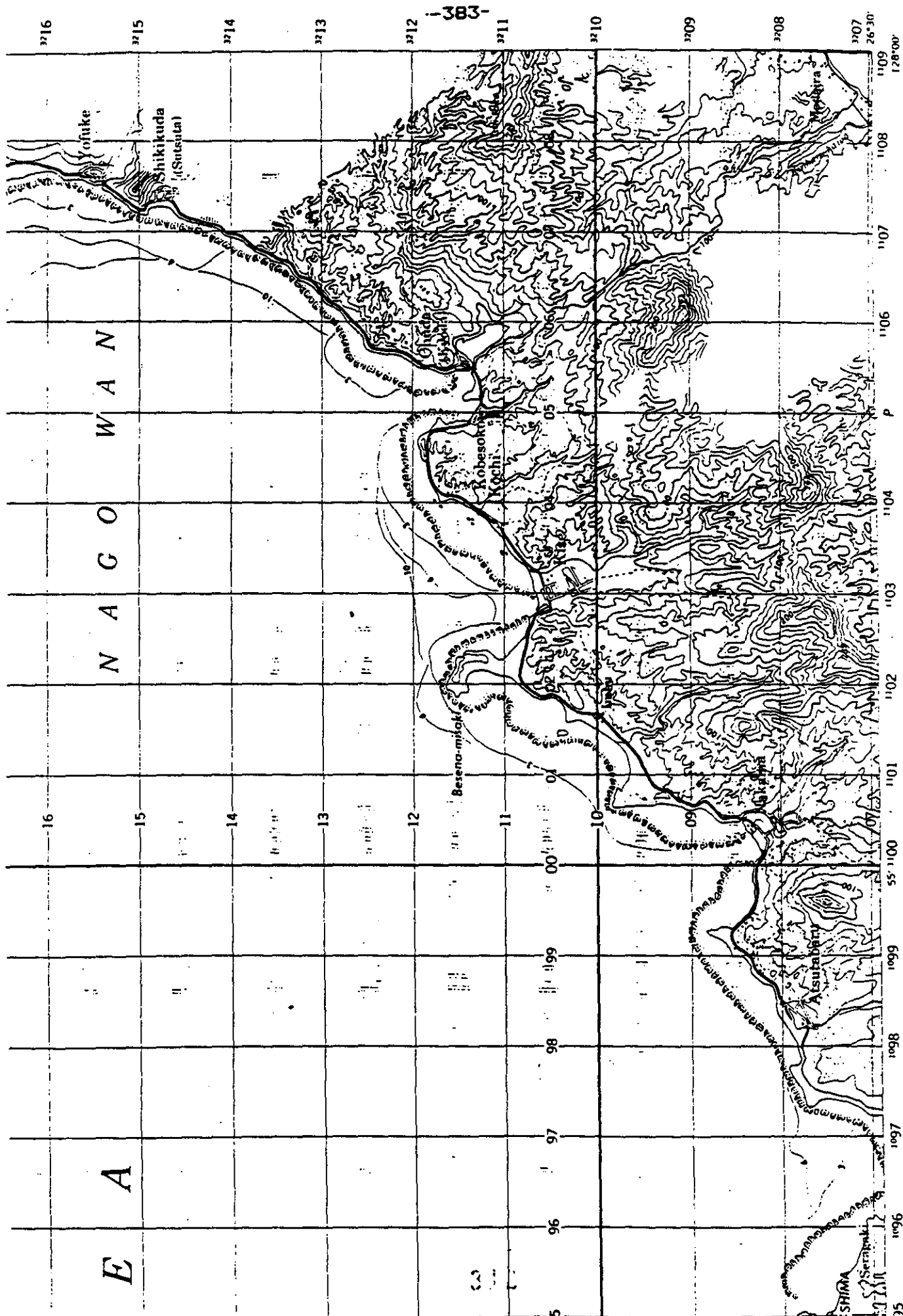
K

311



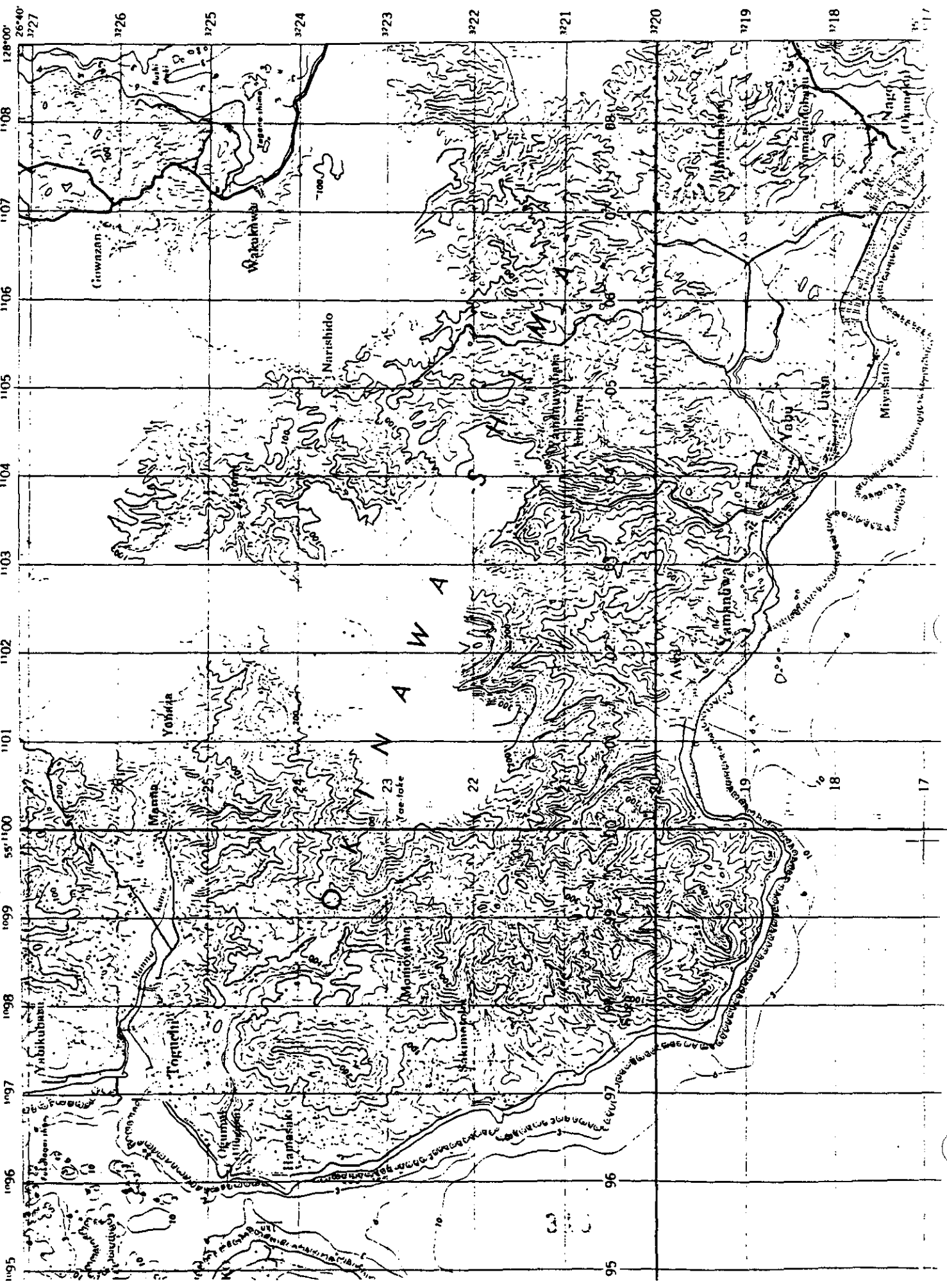
127°45' 1082 1083 1084 1085 1086 1087 1088 1089 1090 50' 1091 1092 1093 1094 1095





Scale 1:50,000

6° 5' 4" 3" 2" 1" 0"

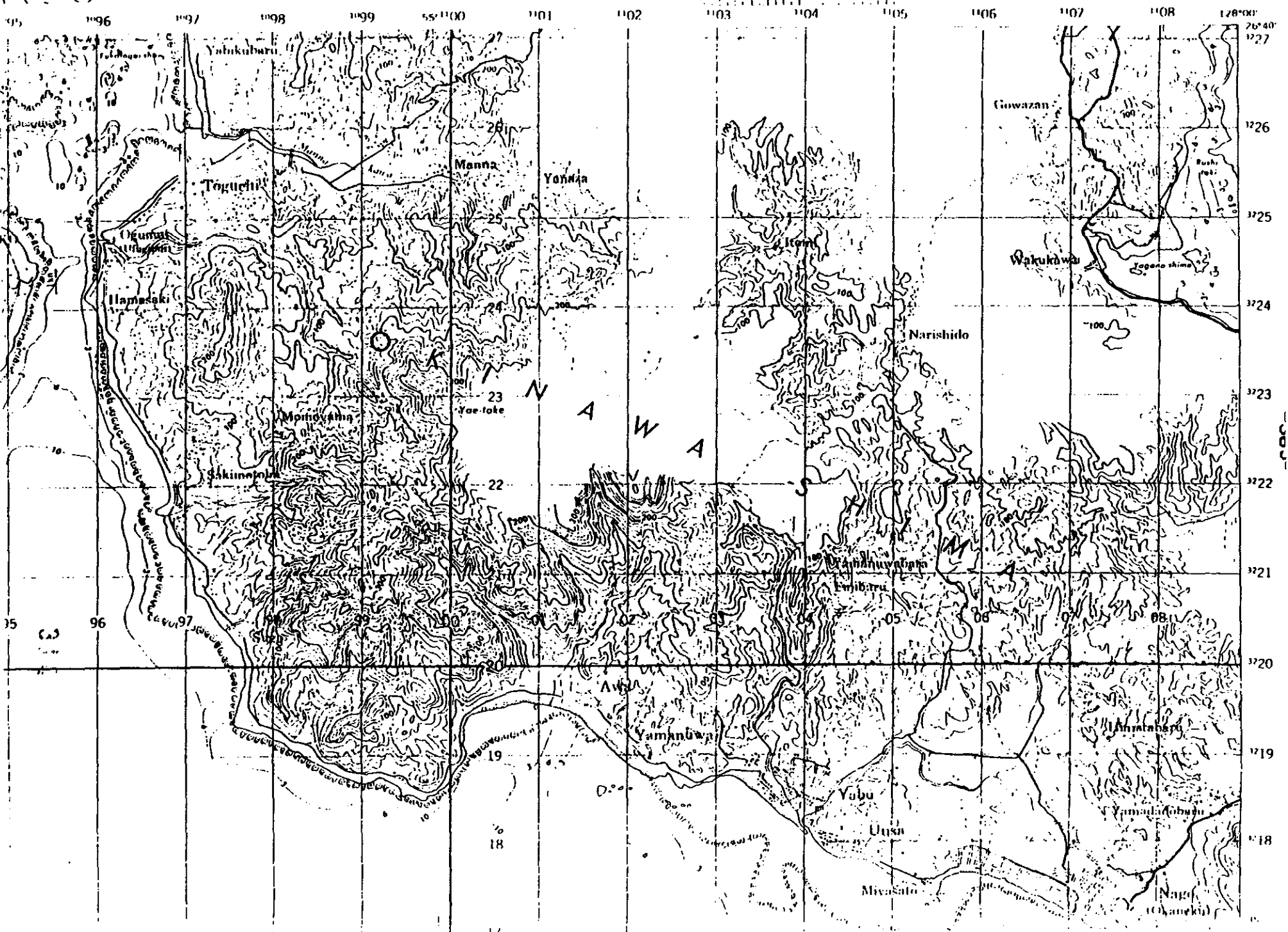


1584

AGC

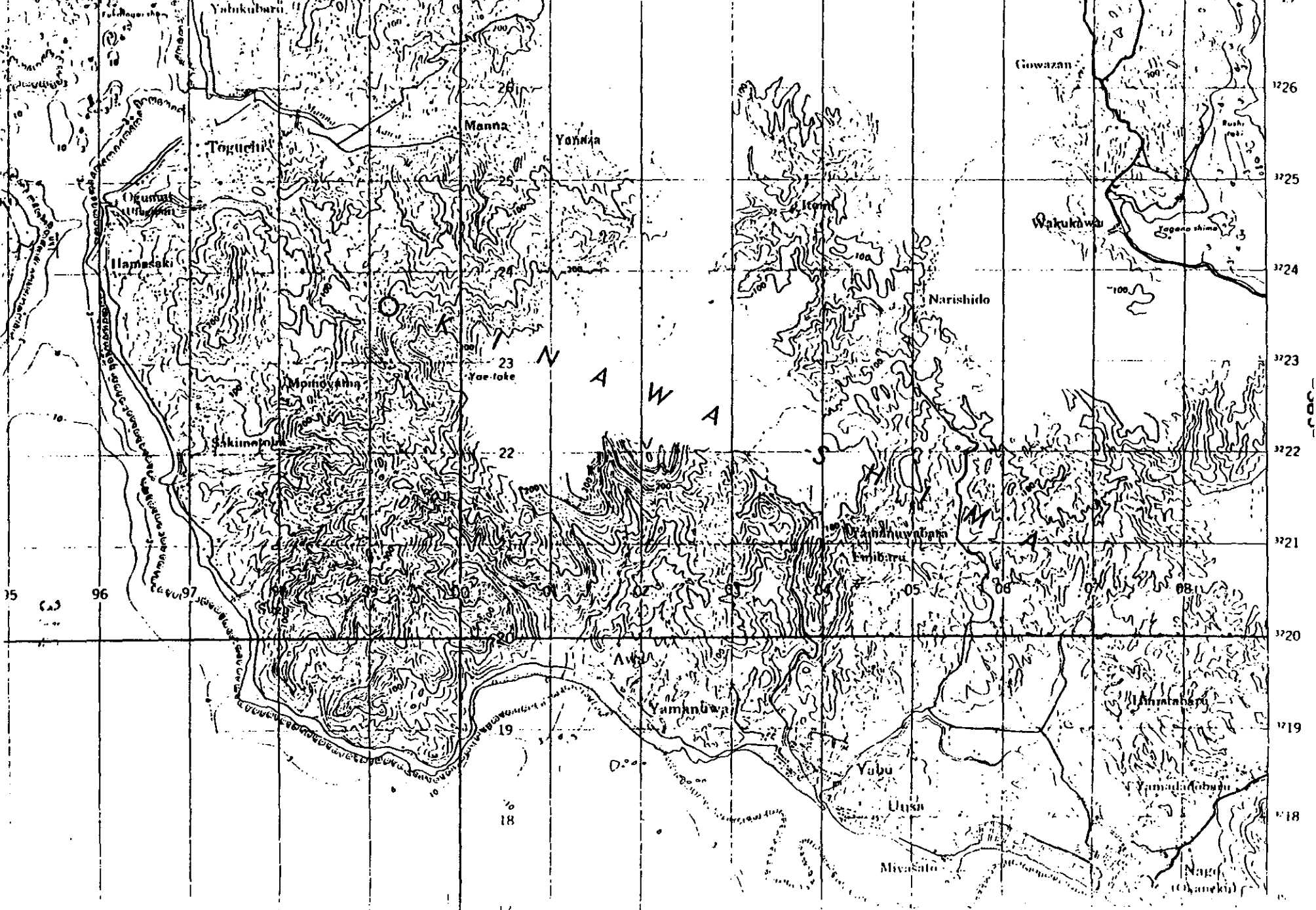
TYPE A - AMS 1

SHL 3626-1



128°00' 128°01' 128°02' 128°03' 128°04' 128°05' 128°06' 128°07' 128°08' 128°09'

32°27' 32°26' 32°25' 32°24' 32°23' 32°22' 32°21' 32°20' 32°19' 32°18'

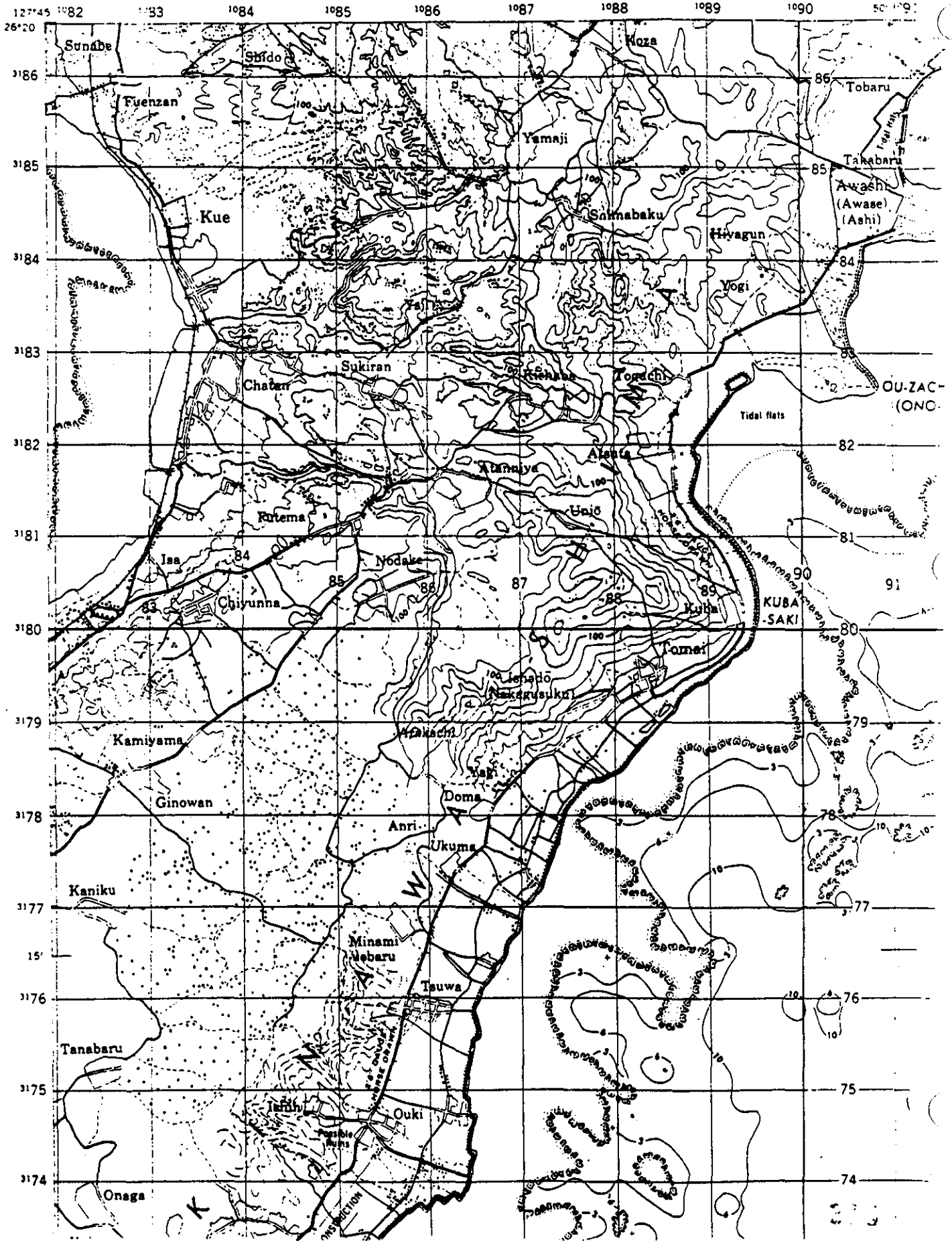


128°00' 128°01' 128°02' 128°03' 128°04' 128°05' 128°06' 128°07' 128°08' 128°09'

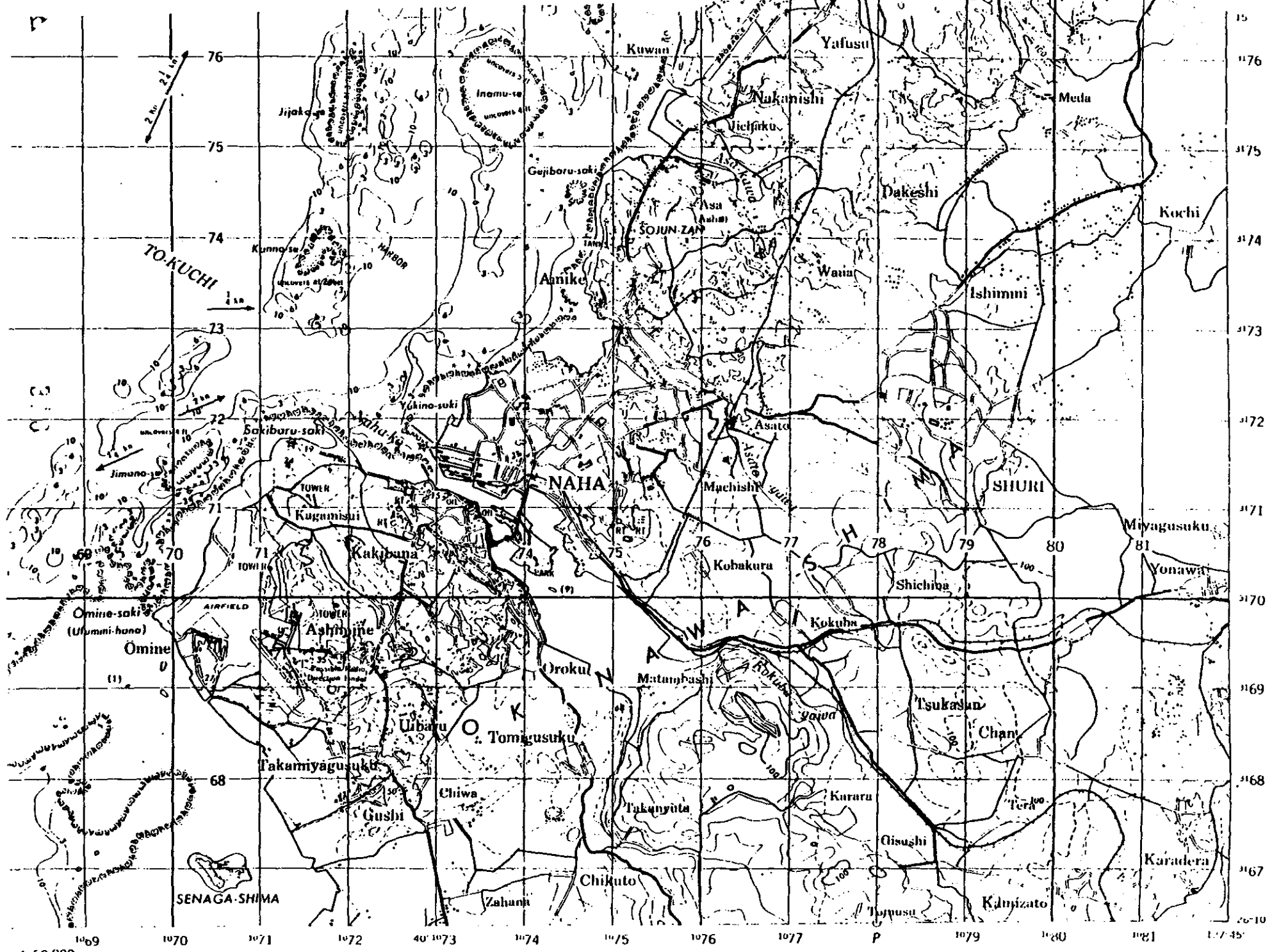
32°27' 32°26' 32°25' 32°24' 32°23' 32°22' 32°21' 32°20' 32°19' 32°18'

# RYUKYU-RETTO 1:50,000

For use by War and Navy Dept  
Not for sale or





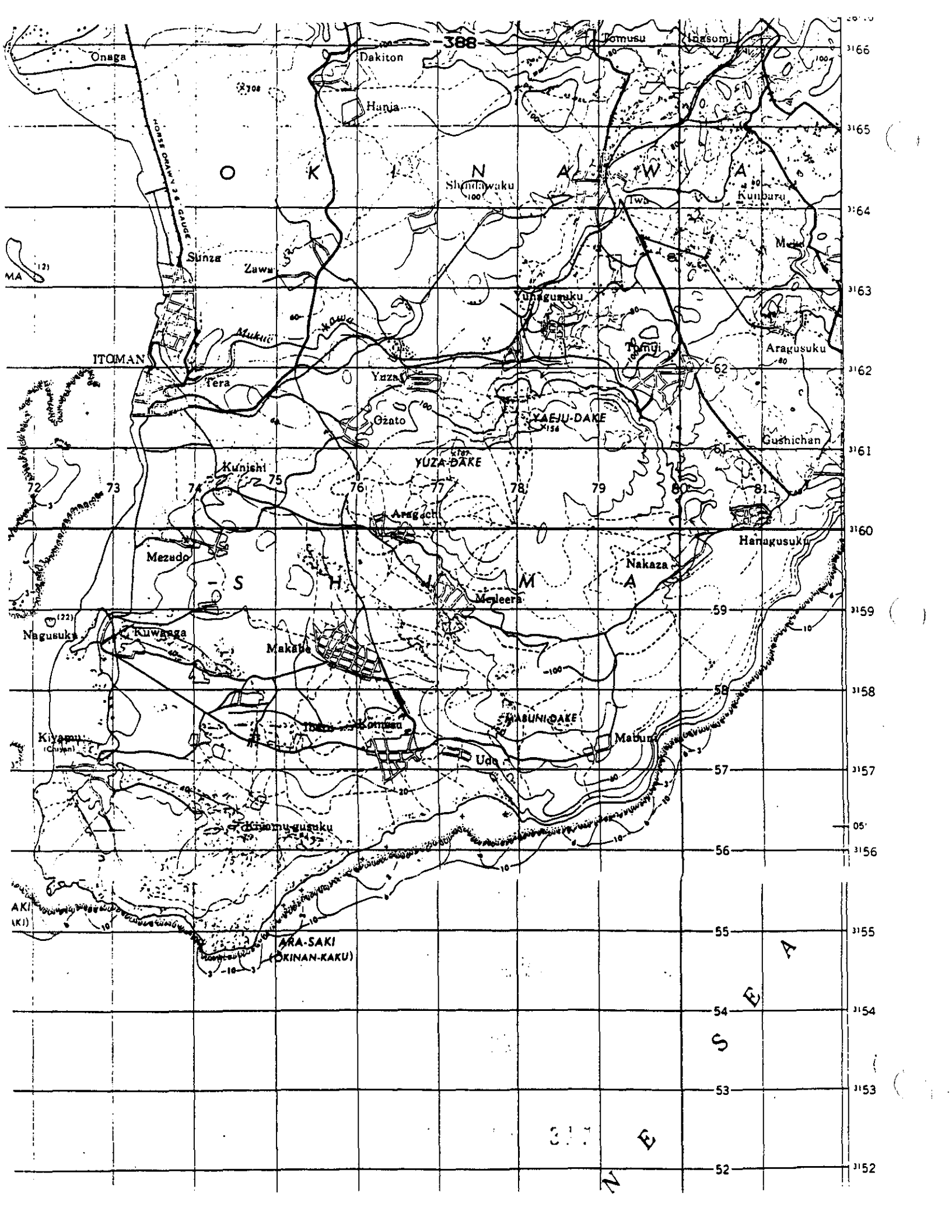


387-

1:50,000

1 2 1 Miles

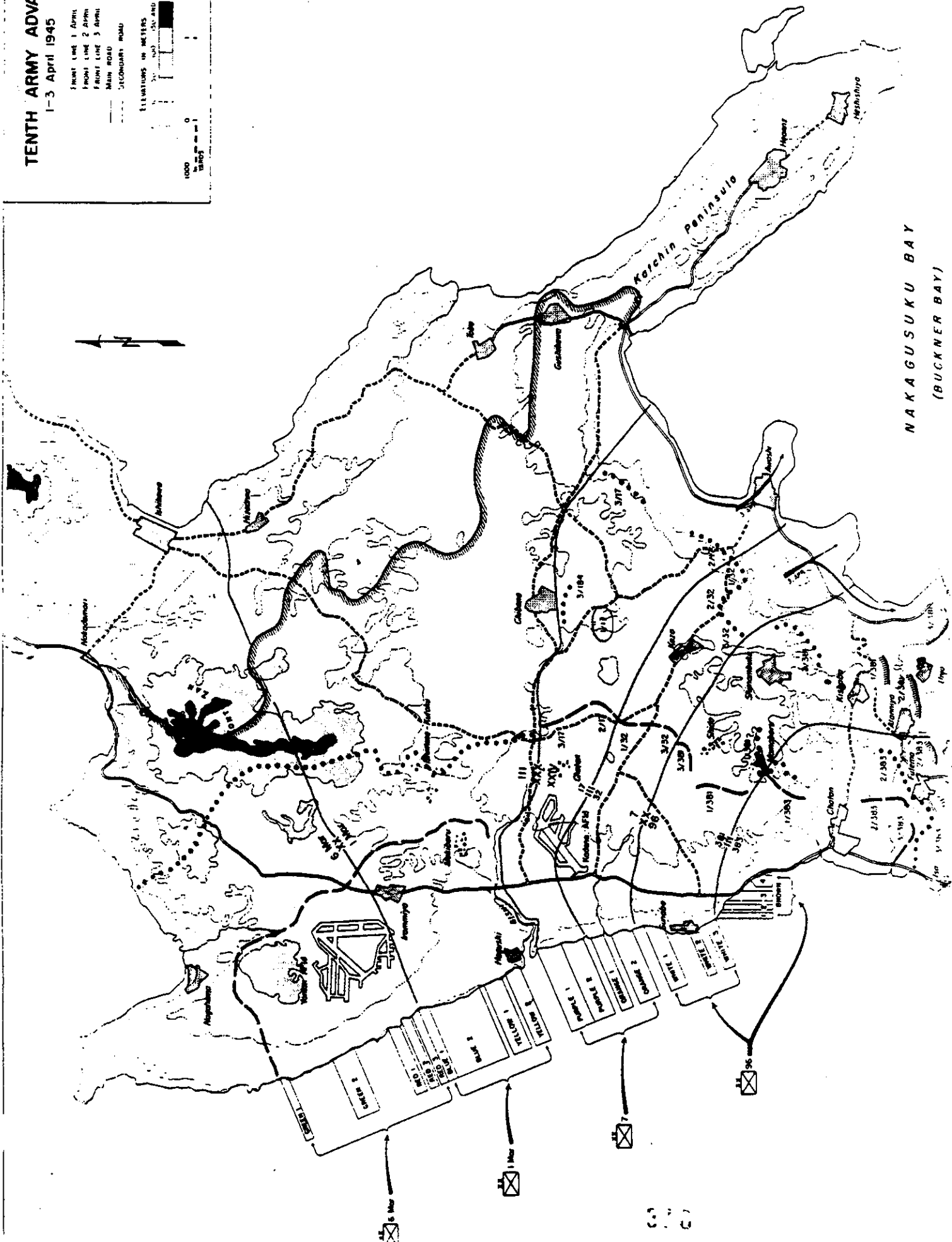
ARMY MAP NO. 11, 11, ARMY OF JAPAN, 1944



# TENTH ARMY ADVANCE

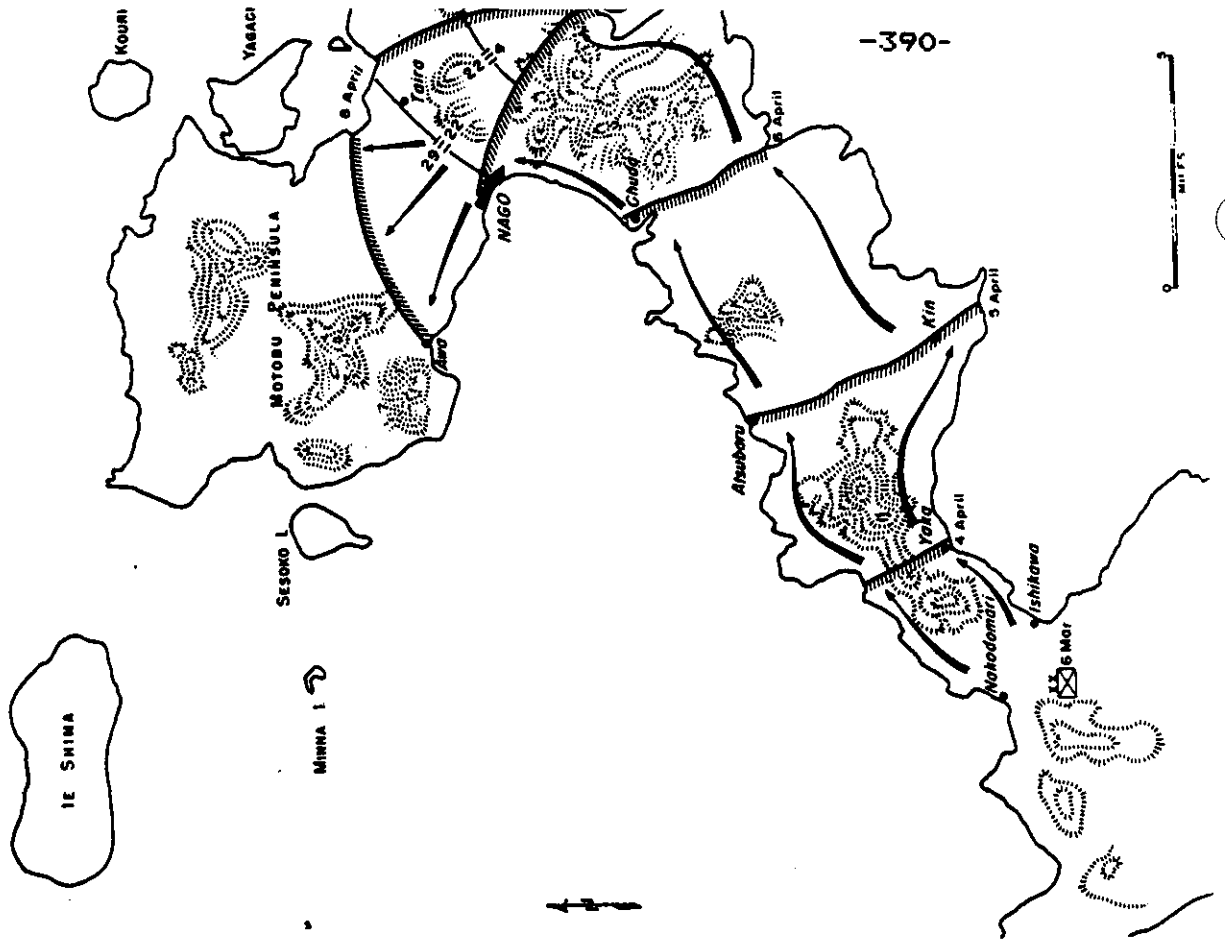
1-3 April 1945

- FRONT LINE 1 APRIL
- FRONT LINE 2 APRIL
- FRONT LINE 3 APRIL
- MAIN ROAD
- SECONDARY ROAD

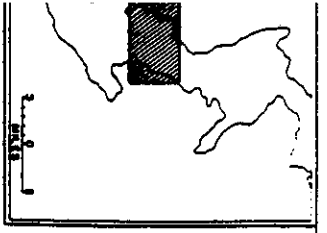


NAKAGUSUKU BAY  
(BUCKNER BAY)

**ADVANCE IN THE NORTH**  
**6TH MARINE DIVISION**  
**4-8 April 1945**



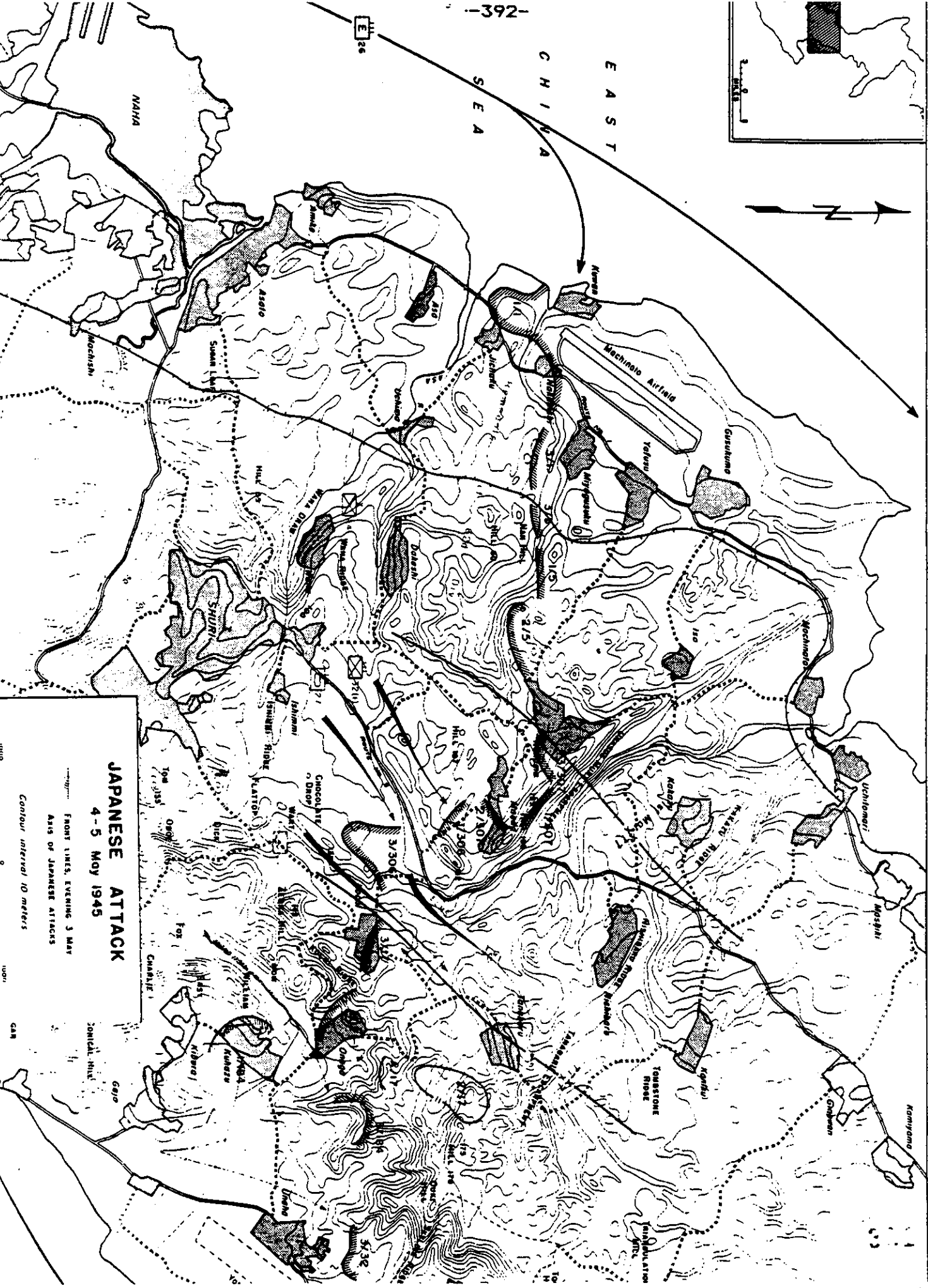




EAST CHINA SEA

-392-

E 1:25,000

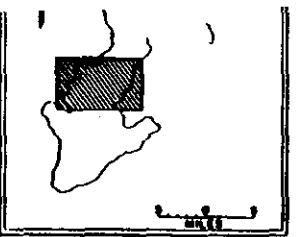


**JAPANESE ATTACK**  
 4-5 MAY 1945

FRONT LINES, EVENING 3 MAY  
 AXIS OF JAPANESE ATTACKS

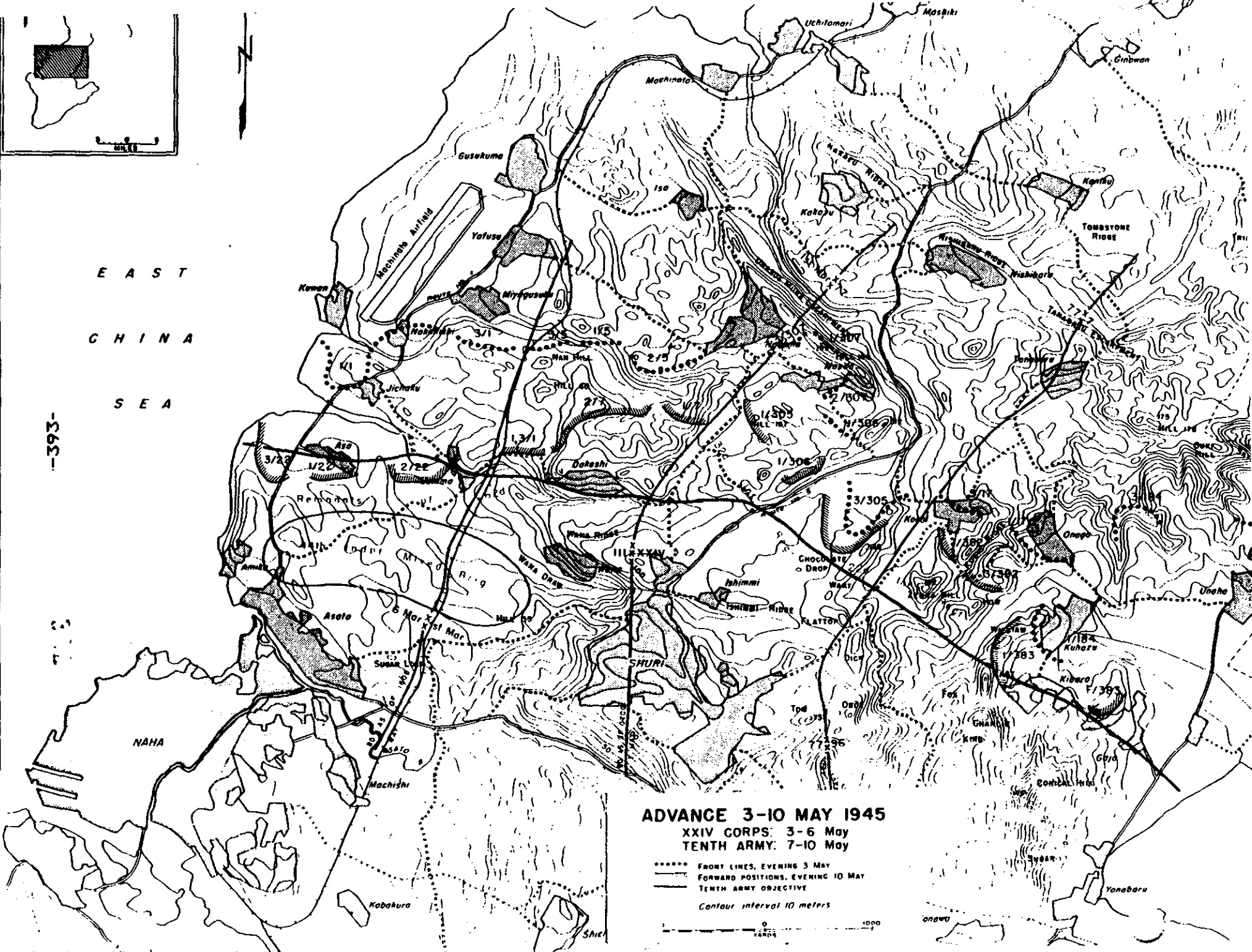
Contour interval 10 meters

1000  
 900  
 800  
 700  
 600  
 500  
 400  
 300  
 200  
 100  
 0



EAST  
CHINA  
SEA

-393-

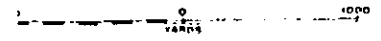


**ADVANCE 3-10 MAY 1945**

XXIV CORPS: 3-6 May  
TENTH ARMY: 7-10 May

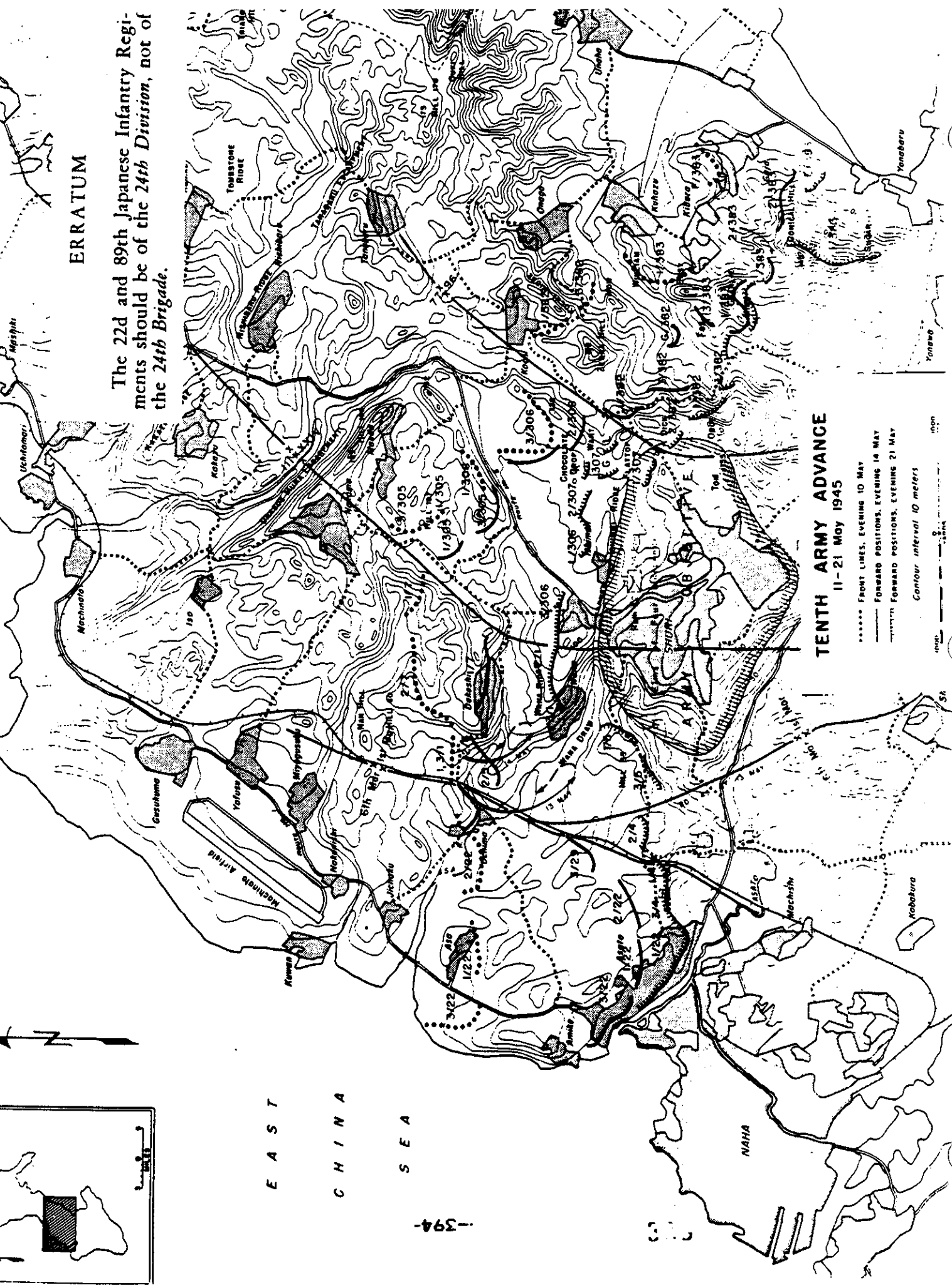
- ..... FRONT LINES, EVENING 3 MAY
- ..... FORWARD POSITIONS, EVENING 10 MAY
- TENTH ARMY OBJECTIVE

Contour interval 10 meters



# ERRATUM

The 22d and 89th Japanese Infantry Regiments should be of the 24th Division, not of the 24th Brigade.



## TENTH ARMY ADVANCE 11-21 May 1945

- ..... FRONT LINES, EVENING 10 MAY
- FORWARD POSITIONS, EVENING 14 MAY
- ..... FORWARD POSITIONS, EVENING 21 MAY

Contour interval 10 meters

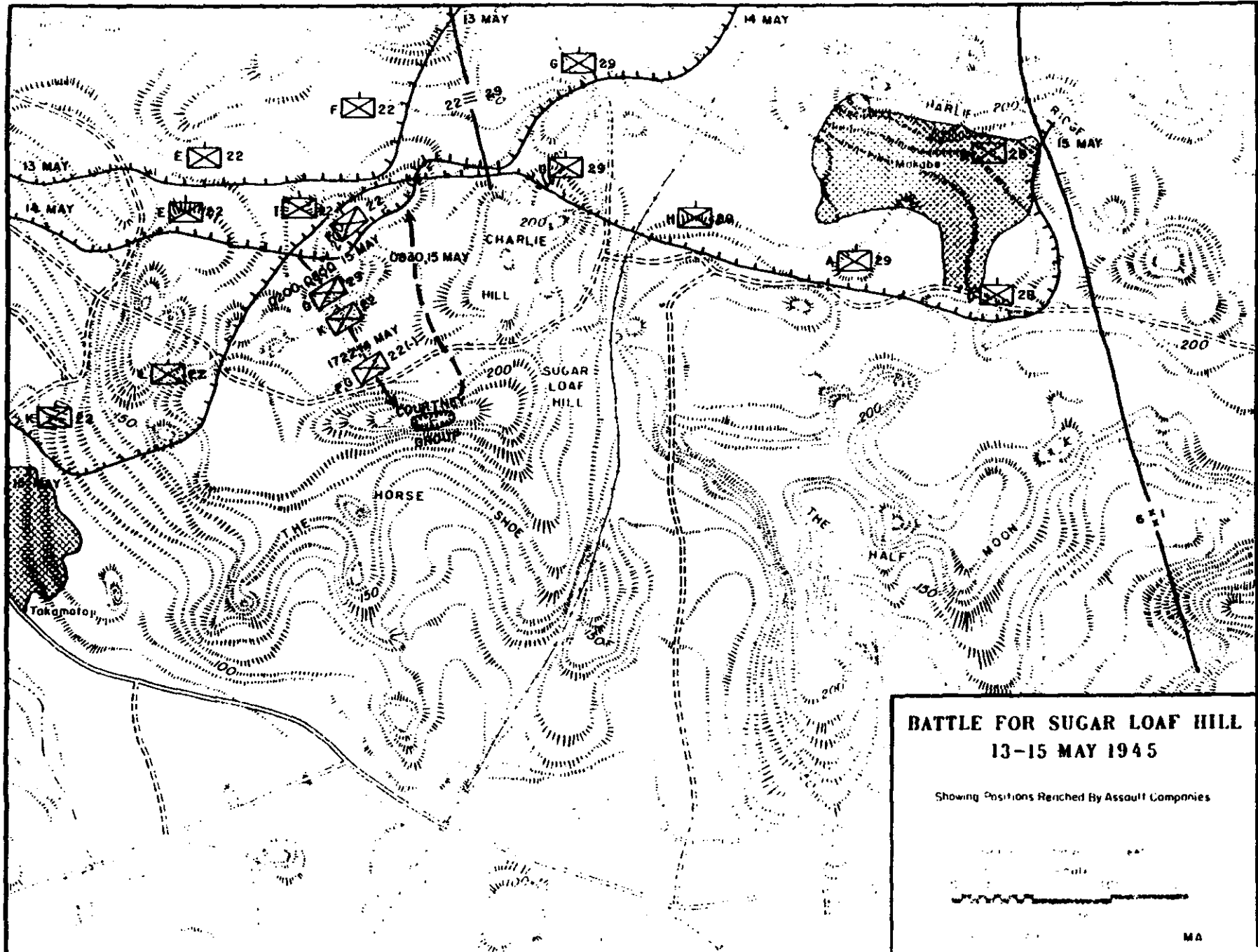
0 5 10 KM

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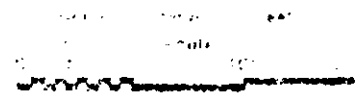
Kobachura

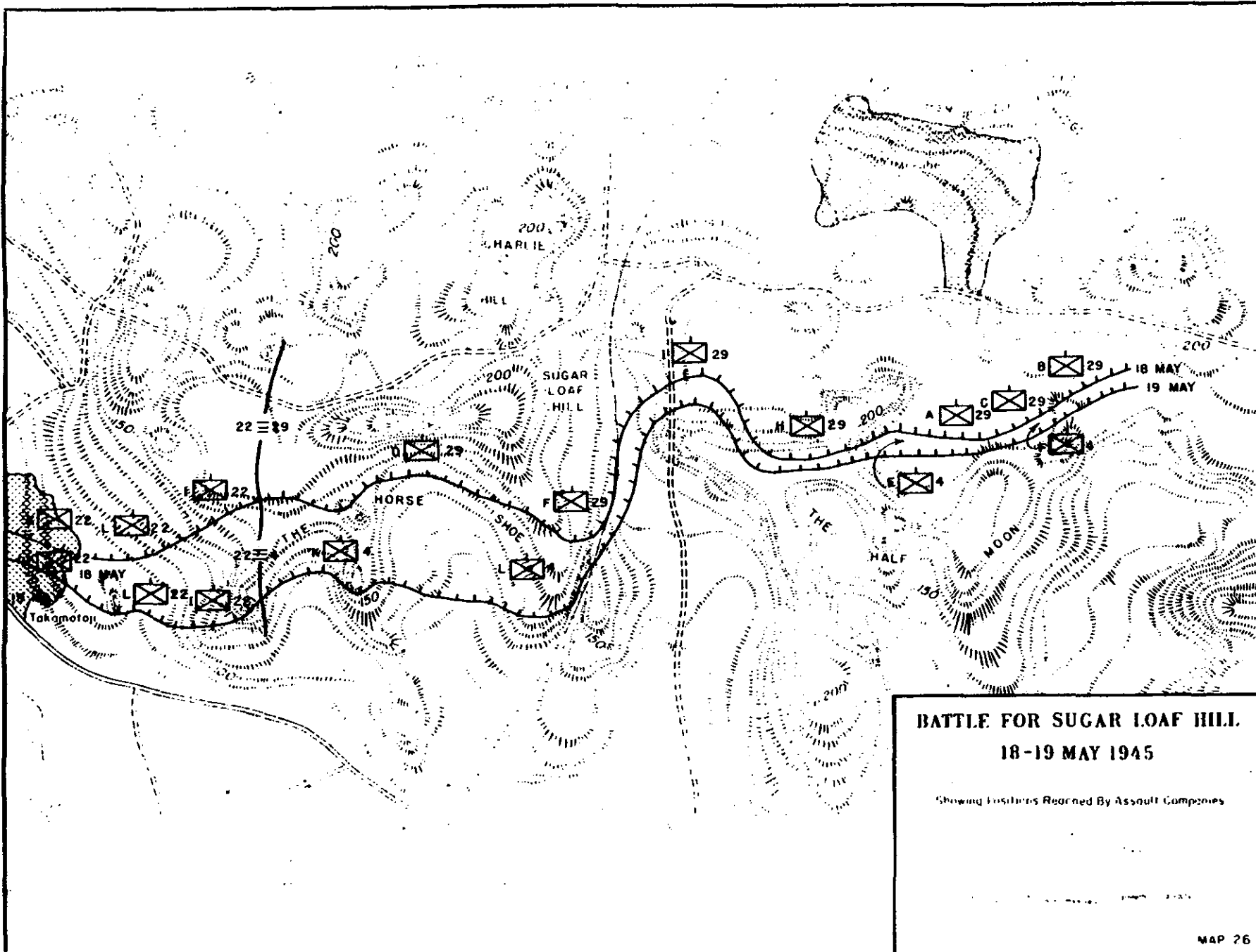




**BATTLE FOR SUGAR LOAF HILL  
13-15 MAY 1945**

Showing Positions Reached By Assault Companies

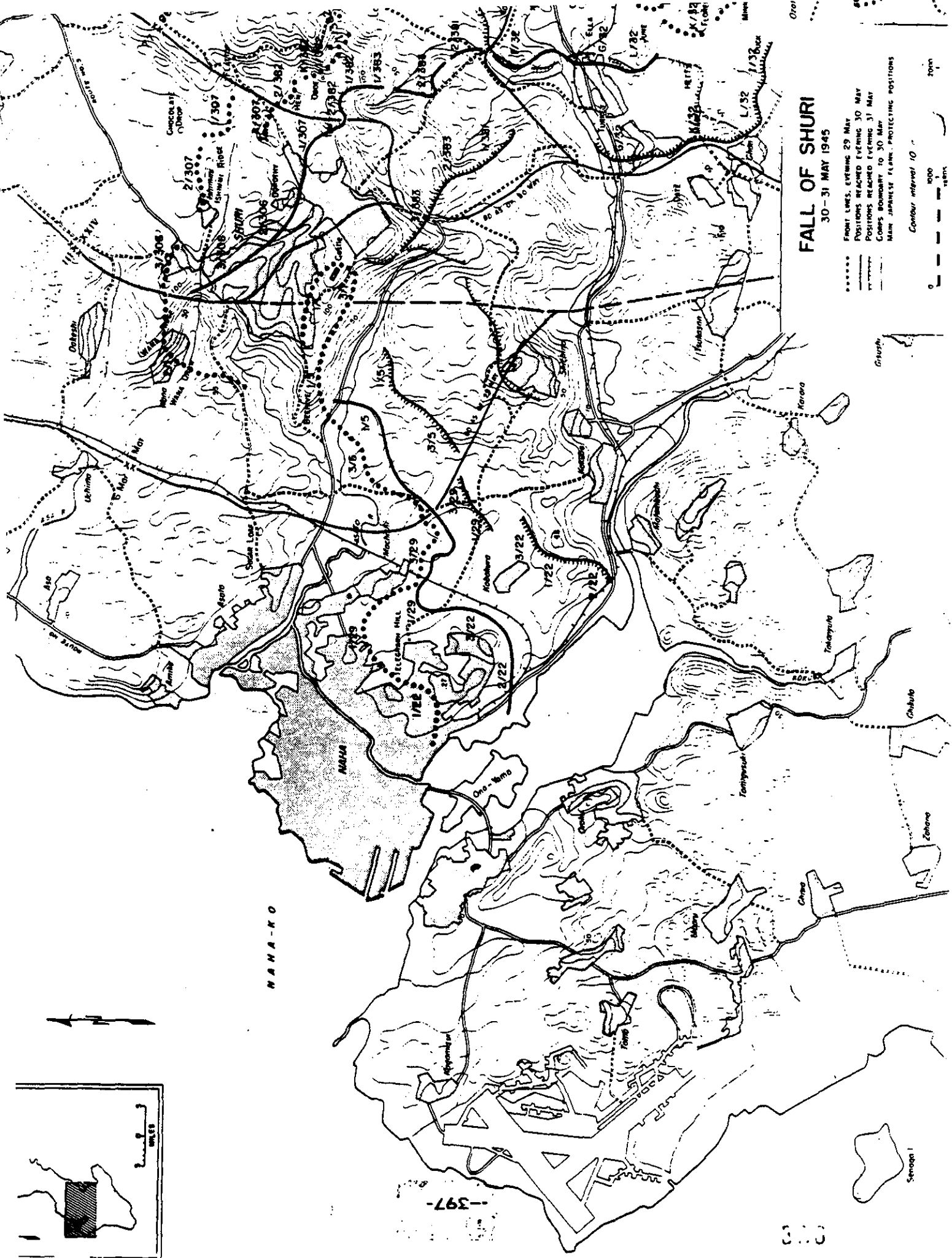
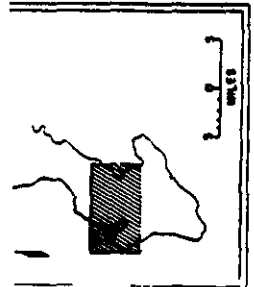




**BATTLE FOR SUGAR LOAF HILL.**  
**18-19 MAY 1945**  
 Showing Positions Reached By Assault Companies

MAP 26

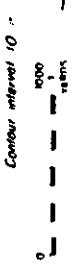
53.5



# FALL OF SHURI

30-31 MAY 1945

- ..... FRONT LINES, EVENING 29 MAY
- ..... POSITIONS REACHED EVENING 30 MAY
- ..... POSITIONS REACHED EVENING 31 MAY
- COMBAT BOUNDARY TO 30 MAY
- MAIN JAPANESE FLANK PROTECTING POSITIONS



NAMAKO

-397-

0 0

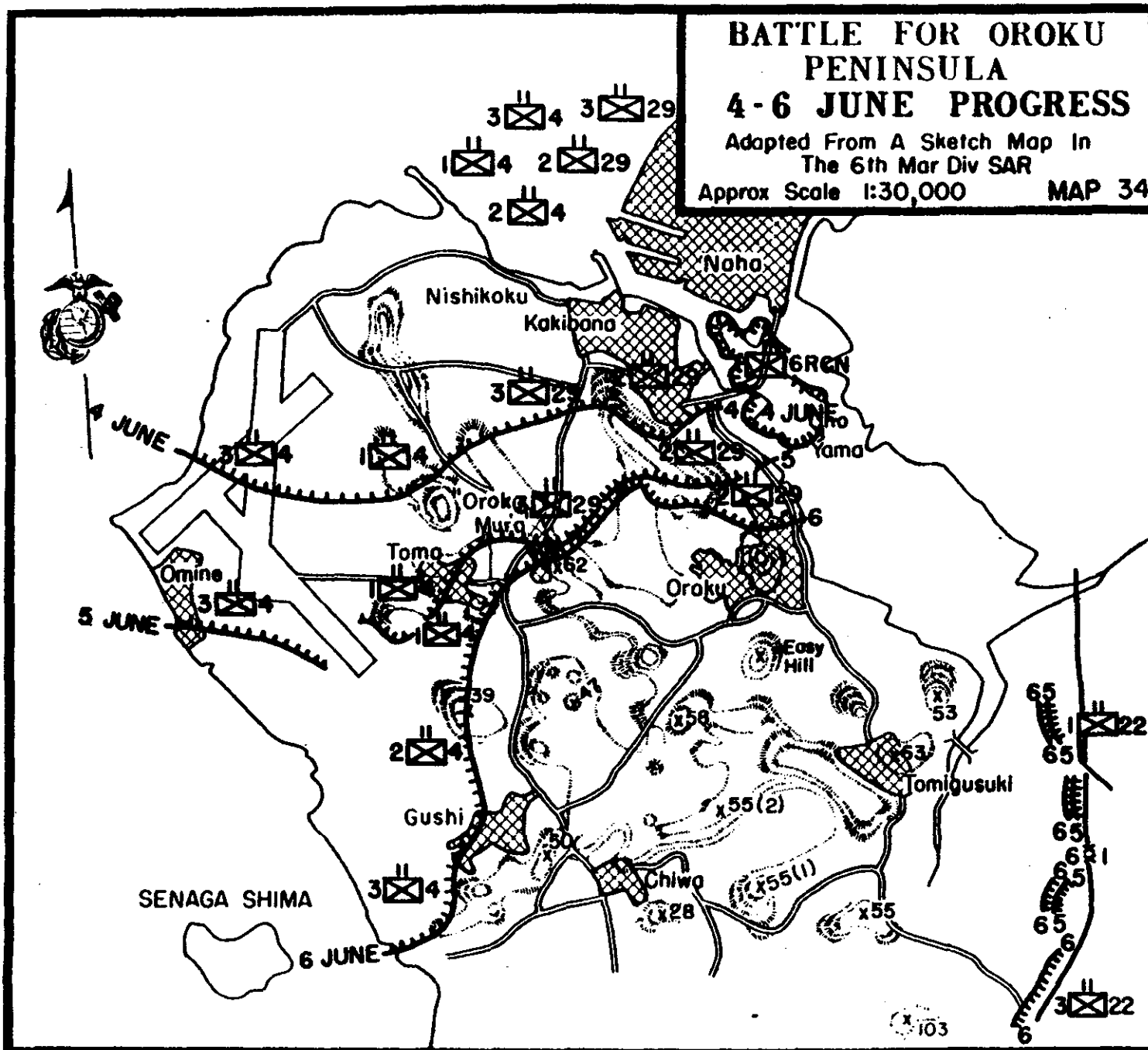
Senaga I

# BATTLE FOR OROKU PENINSULA 4-6 JUNE PROGRESS

Adapted From A Sketch Map In  
The 6th Mar Div SAR

Approx Scale 1:30,000

MAP 34

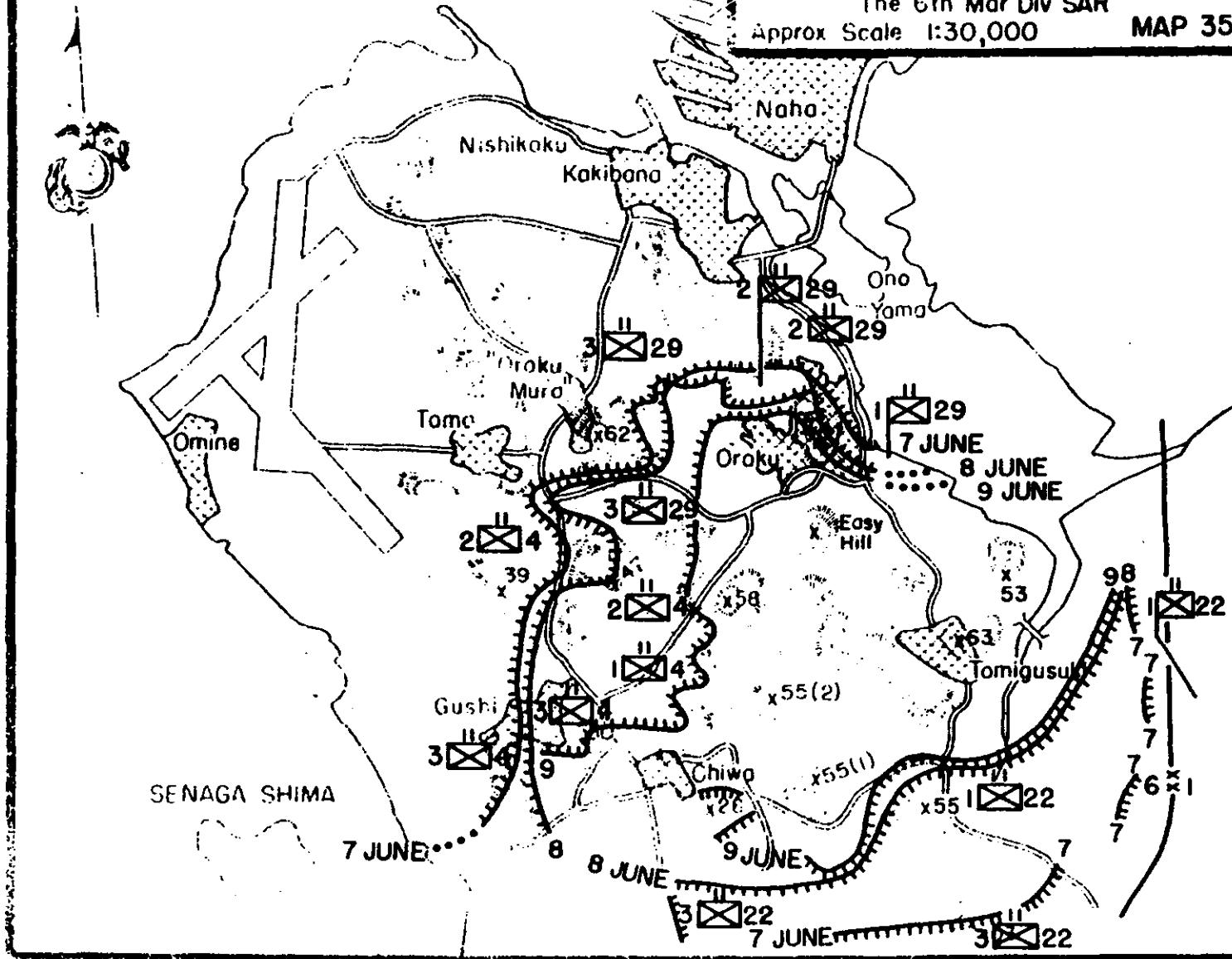


# BATTLE FOR OROKU PENINSULA 7-9 JUNE PROGRESS

Adapted From A Sketch Map In  
The 6th Mar Div SAR

Approx Scale 1:30,000

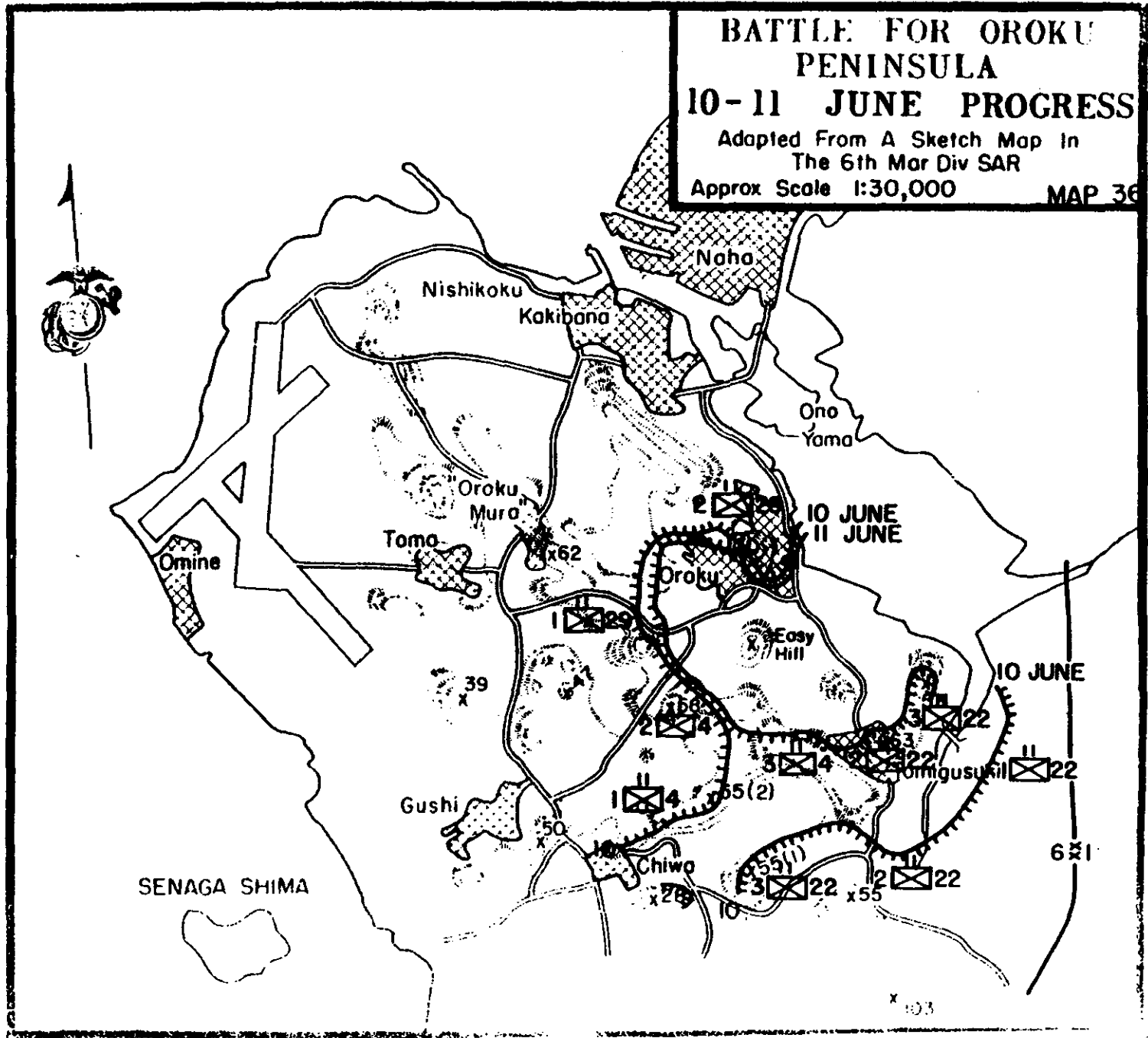
MAP 35



# BATTLE FOR OROKU PENINSULA 10-11 JUNE PROGRESS

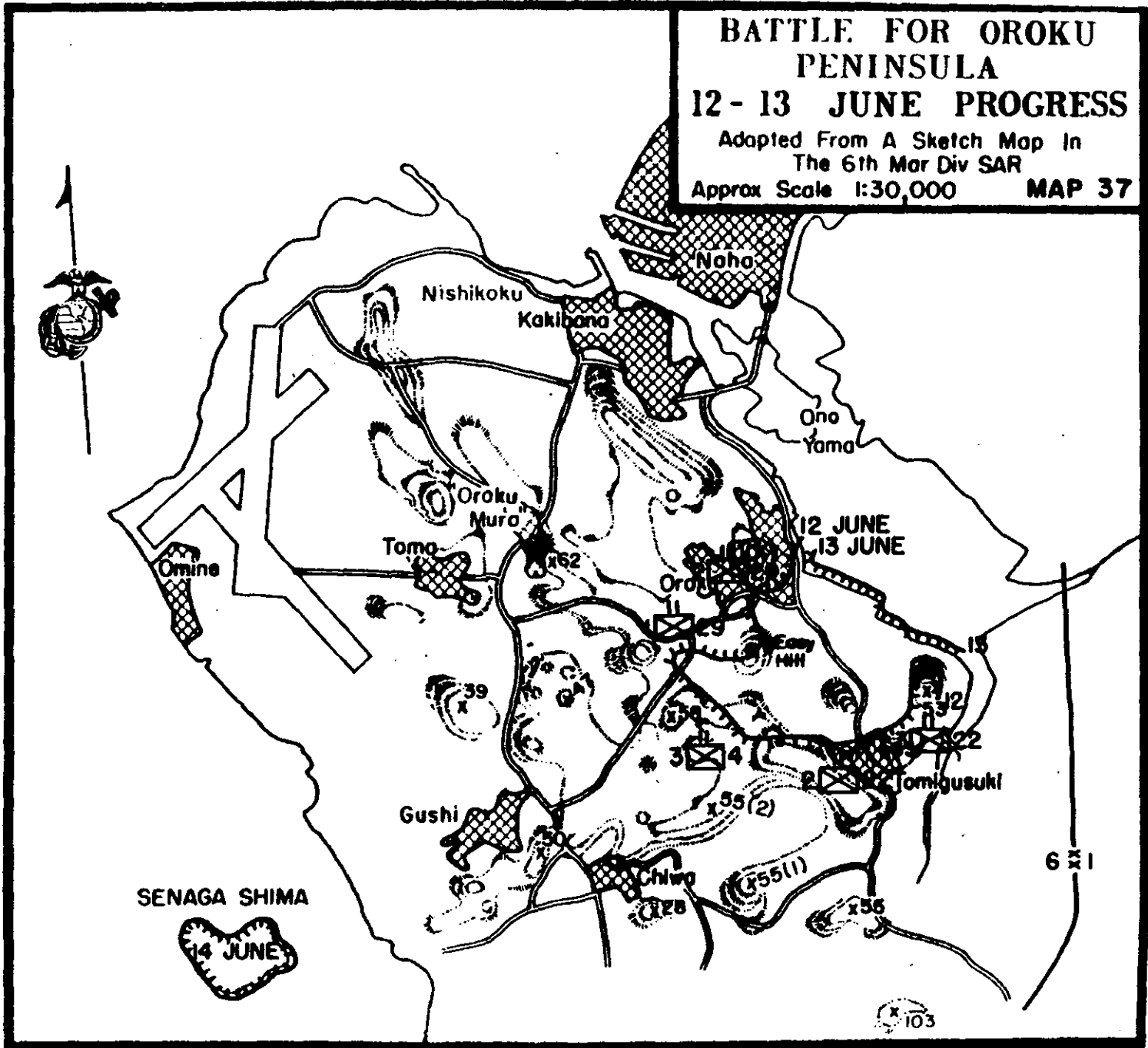
Adapted From A Sketch Map In  
The 6th Mar Div SAR  
Approx Scale 1:30,000

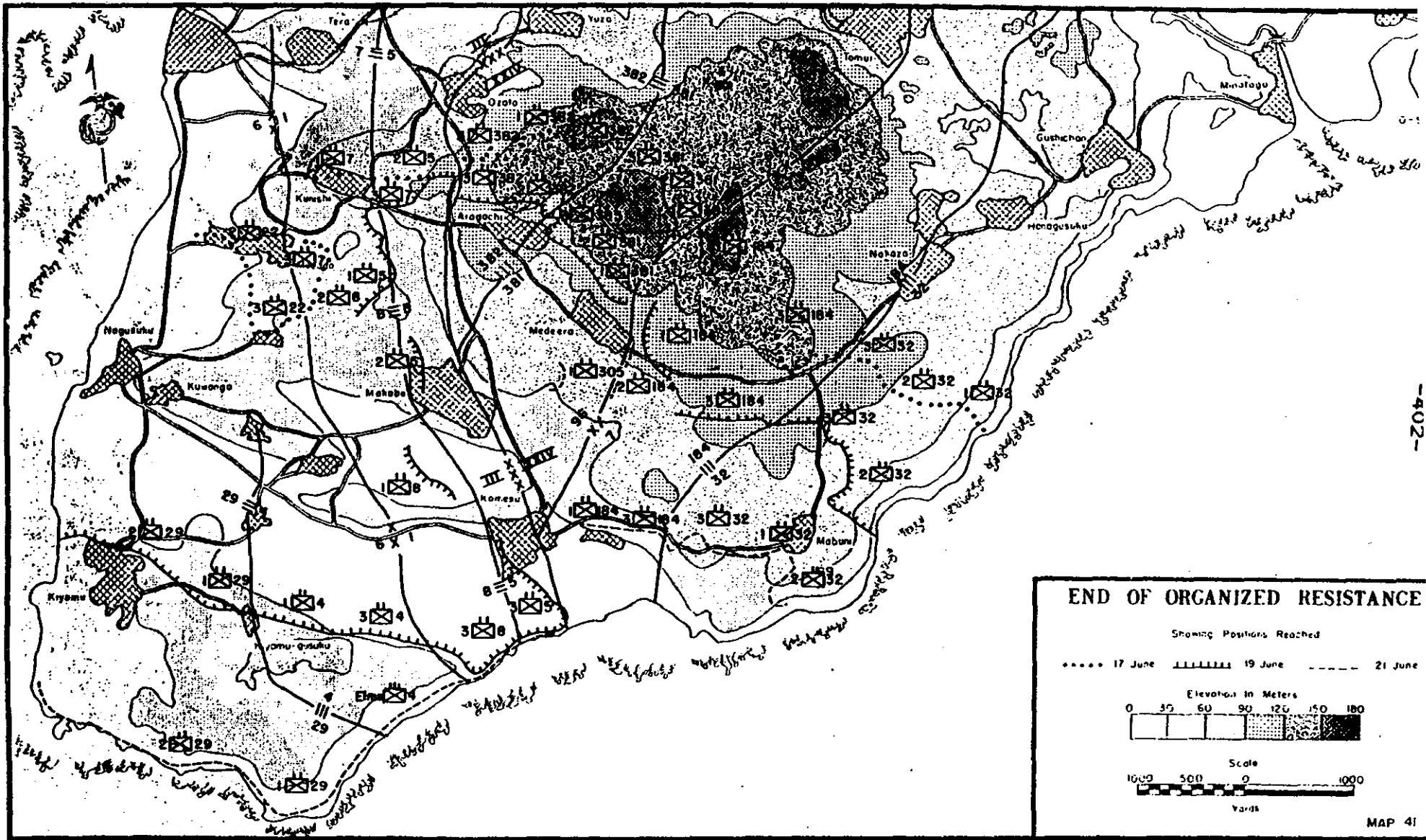
MAP 36



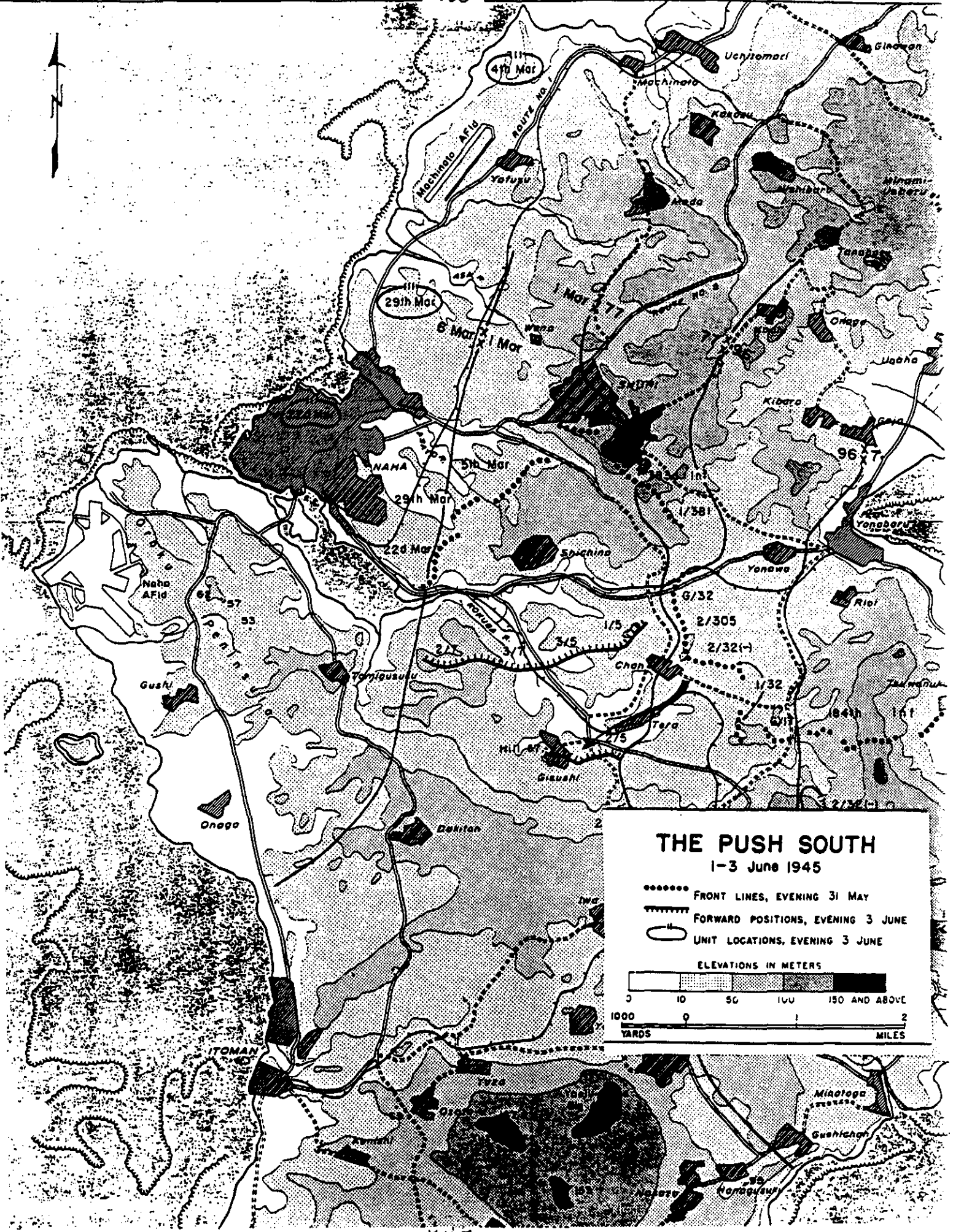
**BATTLE FOR OROKU  
PENINSULA  
12-13 JUNE PROGRESS**

Adapted From A Sketch Map In  
The 6th Mar Div SAR  
Approx Scale 1:30,000 **MAP 37**









### THE PUSH SOUTH

1-3 June 1945

- ..... FRONT LINES, EVENING 31 MAY
- - - - - FORWARD POSITIONS, EVENING 3 JUNE
- UNIT LOCATIONS, EVENING 3 JUNE

ELEVATIONS IN METERS





## OKINAWA: VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC

### APPENDIX II

# Chronology

---

#### 1944

2 January----- U. S. Army troops land at Saidor, New Guinea.

31 January-  
7 February----- U. S. forces assault and capture Kwajalein and Majuro Atolls in the Marshalls.

16-17 February----- Task Force 58 strikes Truk, revealing weakness of that base.

17-22 February----- U. S. forces assault and capture Eniwetok Atoll in the Marshalls.

29 February--

28 March----- U. S. forces assault and capture the main islands of the Admiralties.

6 March----- 1st Marine Division lands near Talasea on New Britain in the Bismarcks.

22 April----- U. S. Army troops land at Aitape and Hollandia in northern New Guinea, beginning drive up the coast.

6 June----- Allied troops invade the continent of Europe in Normandy.

15 June-9 July----- U. S. forces assault and capture Saipan in the Marianas.

19-20 June----- Battle of the Philippine Sea. Japanese naval air arm suffers decisive defeat.

21 July--

10 August----- U. S. forces assault and capture Guam in the Marianas.

24 July--  
1 August----- V Marine Amphibious Corps assaults and captures Tinian in the Marianas.

30 July----- Westward drive reaches end of New Guinea at Sansapor Point.

15 September----- U. S. Army troops assault and capture Morotai, Netherlands East Indies.

15-30 September----- U. S. forces assault and capture Peleliu and Anguar in the Palaus.

23 September----- U. S. Army troops seize Ulithi Atoll in the Western Carolines.

10 October----- First carrier raid on Okinawa.

20 October----- U. S. Army troops land on Leyte in the Philippines.

23-26 October----- Battle of Leyte Gulf. Elimination of the Japanese surface fleet as a major threat.

25 October----- CinCPOA issues Joint Staff Study outlining plans for the Okinawa operation (ICEBERG).

24 November----- Saipan-based B-29's bomb Tokyo in the first attack on the enemy capitol by land-based planes.

15 December----- U. S. Army troops invade Mindoro in the Philippines.

25 December----- Leyte declared secure.

#### 1945

6 January----- Tenth Army issues Tentative Operation Plan 1-45 for ICEBERG.

9 January----- U. S. Army troops land on Luzon in the Philippines.

25 January----- First support mission flown by Marine dive bombers in the Philippines.

19 February--  
16 March----- V Marine Amphibious Corps assaults and captures Iwo Jima in the Volcano-Bonins.

|             |  |               |  |
|-------------|--|---------------|--|
| 11 March    | General Buckner puts Tenth Army Operation Plan 1-45 into effect by dispatch.   | 30 April      | 77th Infantry Division relieves the 96th Infantry Division in southern Okinawa.  |
| 21 March    | Western Islands Attack Group carrying assault troops of the 77th Infantry Division sorties from Leyte Gulf for the opening phase of ICEBERG.   | 1 May         | 1st Marine Division relieves the 27th Infantry Division in southern Okinawa.   |
| 24 March    | Southern Tractor Flotilla carrying assault troops of the XXIV Corps sorties from Leyte Gulf for ICEBERG.<br>Planes and battleships of Task Force 58 open the preliminary bombardment of Okinawa. | 4 May         | 27th Infantry Division relieves 6th Marine Division in northern Okinawa.   |
| 25 March    | Northern Tractor Flotilla carrying assault troops of the III Amphibious Corps sorties from Ulithi for ICEBERG.   | 4-6 May       | XXIV Corps repulses major Japanese counterattack.  |
| 26-31 March | 77th Infantry Division assaults and captures Kerama Retto and Keise Shima.   | 7 May         | IIIAC takes over the western sector of the Tenth Army front in southern Okinawa.   |
| 27 March    | Transport and covering forces of the Joint Expeditionary Force sortie from Leyte Gulf and Ulithi for ICEBERG.<br>Demonstration Group carrying troops of the 2d Marine Division leaves Saipan.    | 8 May         | First elements of the 6th Marine Division enter the lines on the southern front.   |
| 1 April     | Tenth Army makes an unopposed landing on the Hagushi beaches of Okinawa.   | 9-10 May      | 96th Infantry Division replaces the 7th Infantry Division on the eastern coast.  |
| 2 April     | Forward elements of the 7th Infantry Division reach the eastern coast of Okinawa, severing the island.   | 11 May        | Tenth Army all-out attack on the inner Shuri defenses.   |
| 6-7 April   | First of ten major <i>Kamikaze</i> attacks on ships in Okinawan waters.  | 17 May        | Admiral Turner relieved by Admiral Hill as Commander Task Force 51. General Buckner now directly responsible to Admiral Spruance for operations of Tenth Army. |
| 7 April     | Planes of Task Force 58 sink the Japanese super-battleship <i>Yamato</i> , a cruiser, and four destroyers, ending all chance of a sea attack on Okinawa.   | 21 May        | 7th Infantry Division recommitted on the east coast to encircle Shuri.   |
| 9-10 April  | 3/105 of the 27th Infantry Division assaults and captures Tsugen Shima, the only defended position in the Eastern Islands.   | 27 May        | Third Fleet relieves Fifth Fleet and General Buckner now directly responsible to CinCPOA for operations of Tenth Army.   |
| 10 April    | 27th Infantry Division lands on Okinawa to reinforce the XXIV Corps.   | 30 May-4 June | Bulk of the Japanese Thirty-second Army withdraws under cover of rain from the Shuri bastion to new positions in the Kiyamu Peninsula.                         |
| 16-21 April | 77th Infantry Division assaults and captures Ie Shima.   | 31 May        | 5th Marines capture Shuri Castle.  |
| 19 April    | XXIV Corps makes an all-out attack against the outer ring of Shuri defenses.   | 3-4 June      | 8th Marine Combat Team secures Iheya Shima.  |
| 20 April    | The end of organized resistance on Motobu Peninsula in the 6th Marine Division zone of action.   | 4 June        | 6th Marine Division assaults Oroku Peninsula.  |
|             |  | 9 June        | 8th Marine Combat Team secures Aguni Shima.  |
|             |  | 18 June       | General Buckner killed watching progress of 8th Marines' first attack on Okinawa; General Geiger assumes temporary command of Tenth Army.                      |
|             |  | 21 June       | End of organized resistance on Okinawa.  |
|             |  | 22 June       | Official flag-raising at Tenth Army Headquarters marking capture of Okinawa.   |
|             |  | 23 June       | General Stilwell assumes command of Tenth Army.  |

|                 |   |                  |  |
|-----------------|---|------------------|--|
| 24-30 June----- | FMF Reconnaissance Battalion secures Kume Shima.  | 6 August-----    | First atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima.  |
| 30 June-----    | Completion of the mop-up sweep of southern Okinawa.   | 9 August-----    | Second atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki.  |
| 1 July-----     | Task Force 31 dissolved by CinCPOA: General Stilwell assumes responsibility for defense and development of Okinawa Gunto. | 10 August-----   | Japan sues for peace.  |
| 5 July-----     | Philippines campaign declared ended.  | 14 August-----   | End of war in the Pacific.   |
| 4 August-----   | 27th Infantry Division reaches Hedo Misaki ending three and a half month mopping-up action in northern Okinawa.           | 2 September----- | Formal surrender of the Japanese Empire on board the <i>Missouri</i> in Tokyo harbor.  |
|                 |   | 7 September----- | General Stilwell accepts the surrender of Japanese Ryukyus garrisons signifying the beginning of American political hegemony in Okinawa. |



OKINAWA: VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC

# Command and Staff List of Marine Units on Okinawa

## APPENDIX III

1 APRIL-22 JUNE 1945<sup>1</sup>

### *Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion, FMFPac*

CO..... Maj James L. Jones  
 ExO..... Maj Earl R. Marquardt  
 S-3..... 1stLt Leo B. Shinn  
 HqCo..... 1stLt James R. Bentley  
 A Co..... Capt Merwin H. Silverthorn, Jr.  
 B Co..... 1stLt Russell E. Corey

### III AMPHIBIOUS CORPS

#### *III Amphibious Corps Headquarters*

CG..... LtGen Roy S. Geiger  
 CofS..... BrigGen Merwin H. Silverthorn  
 G-1..... Col Gale T. Cummings  
 G-2..... Col Charles C. Brown  
 G-3..... Col Walter A. Wachtler  
 G-4..... Col Francis B. Loomis, Jr.  
 G-5..... Col Elmer H. Salzman

#### *III Amphibious Corps Troops*

CO..... Col Edward G. Hagen (CO, Rear-Ech)  
 ExO..... LtCol William F. Whitaker  
 S-3..... Maj Julius H. Flagstad

#### *III Amphibious Corps Headquarters and Service Battalion*

CO..... LtCol Harry A. Traffert, Jr.  
 ExO..... Maj Harold C. Howard (To 6J)  
           Maj Robert J. Kennedy (From 7J)  
 S-3..... Capt Andrew Dura  
 HqCo..... Capt Andrew Dura (FwdEch)

<sup>1</sup> Compiled from unit muster rolls available at Headquarters Marine Corps. Only those officers who are officially listed as having held the indicated command and staff positions are included. Ranks shown are those held on 22Jun45.

MP Co..... Capt Thomas G. Barry, Jr.  
 SerCo..... 1stLt Worthen Brooks  
 1st BomDispCo..... Capt Donald J. Merriman  
 1st SepTopoCo..... Capt Byrl W. Munger (FwdEch)

#### *III Amphibious Corps Medical Battalion*

CO..... LCdr Maurice A. Diehr, (MC)  
           (To 29A)  
           LCdr Donovan C. Blanchard,  
           (MC) (29A-18J)  
           Cdr Robert Mazet, Jr. (MC)  
           (From 19J)  
 ExO..... Lt William H. Hanna, (MC)  
           (From 1J)  
 S-3..... (Not shown)  
 H&S Co..... (Not shown)  
 A Co..... Lt William H. Hanna, (MC)  
 B Co..... Lt Thomas A. Glass, (MC)  
 C Co..... Lt Albert W. Diddle (MC)

#### *III Amphibious Corps Signal Battalion*

CO..... Col Robert L. Peterson  
 ExO..... LtCol Alan Sutter  
 S-3..... Capt. Carlton E. Tripp  
 HqCo..... Capt Herbert D. Raymond, Jr.  
 A Co..... 1stLt Lloyd "E" Watson  
 B Co..... Capt Edmund J. Anderson  
 C Co..... Capt Roscoe E. Cole

#### *1st Military Police Battalion*

CO..... LtCol Alfred H. Marks  
 ExO..... Capt Ralph L. Robinson  
 S-3..... 1stLt Russell M. Roberts (To 30A)  
           1stLt Harold B. Moe (From 1M)  
 HqCo..... Capt Paul B. Doster (To 14M)  
           Capt Kenneth J. Becker (From 15M)

A Co----- Capt Kenneth J. Becker (To 14M)  
 1stLt Walter S. Metzger (From 15M)  
 B Co----- 1stLt Thomas J. Donoghue (To 25M)  
 1stLt Arthur L. Seay, III (From 26M)  
 C Co----- 1stLt Joseph F. Carney  
 D Co----- 1stLt Horace E. Curtis

*1st Separate Engineer Battalion*

CO----- LtCol Alonzo D. Gorman  
 ExO----- Maj William C. Mikell  
 S-3----- Capt George S. Sinnicks  
 H&S Co----- Capt John E. Bibby (To 26M)  
 Capt Edward A. Menezes (From 27M)

A Co----- Capt Morgan P. Hammer  
 B Co----- Capt Robert J. Bobber (To 26M)  
 Capt John E. Bibby (From 27M)  
 C Co----- Capt Franklin J. Blythe, Jr.

*11th Motor Transport Battalion*

CO----- Lt Col Franklin A. Hayner  
 ExO----- Maj Kenneth E. Murphy  
 S-3----- 1stLt Thomas H. Prestridge  
 HqCo----- Capt Bowen Asserson, Sr.  
 A Co----- Capt John H. L'Estrange  
 B Co----- 1stLt Hugh F. Ferguson  
 C Co----- 1stLt Richard P. Jones  
 Corps TransCo----- 1stLt John Bookhout

*7th Service Regiment*

CO----- Col Harold E. Rosecrans  
 ExO----- LtCol Edwin D. Partridge  
 S-3----- (Not shown)  
 CO, HqBn----- LtCol Kenneth L. Moses  
 ExO, HqBn----- Maj Ben F. Dixon, III  
 S-3, HqBn----- (Not shown)  
 HqCo----- Capt William M. Milne, Jr.  
 EngCo----- Maj Clarence M. Thomas  
 GenSupCo----- Capt Adrian F. Pilliod, Jr.  
 MP Co----- Capt Lester J. Putney  
 OrdCo----- Capt Arthur P. Bretherick, Jr. (To 9J)  
 Maj George G. Pafford (From 10J)  
 SigCo----- Capt Albert N. Hunt  
 TransCo----- Capt Frederick P. Traill, Jr.  
 1st MarAmmoCo----- Capt Price R. Ashton  
 3d MarAmmoCo----- Capt Louis P. Shine  
 12th MarAmmoCo----- Capt Albert Shapiro (To 5J)  
 1stLt Kenneth E. Moyer (6-9J)  
 Capt Arthur P. Bretherick, Jr. (From 10J)  
 5th MarDepCo----- 1stLt Edmond C. Forehand  
 18th MarDepCo----- Capt William M. Barr  
 19th MarDepCo----- Capt Orville A. LaMotte

20th MarDepCo----- Capt William C. Adams  
 37th MarDepCo----- 1stLt William A. Hodrick  
 38th MarDepCo----- 1stLt John W. O'Donoghue

**III AMPHIBIOUS CORPS ARTILLERY**  
*III Amphibious Corps Artillery Headquarters*

CG----- BrigGen David R. Nimmer  
 CofS----- Col John A. Bemis  
 G-1----- LtCol Frederick W. Miller  
 G-2----- Maj Paul O. Engelder  
 G-3----- LtCol Frederick P. Henderson (To 15M)  
 LtCol Ernest P. Foley (From 16M)  
 G-4----- LtCol Llewellyn Powell, Jr.  
 HqBtry----- 1stLt Walter T. Anderson

*1st Provisional Antiaircraft Artillery Group*

CO----- Col Kenneth W. Benner  
 ExO----- LtCol Willard C. Fiske  
 S-3----- LtCol John F. Dunlap (To 11J)  
 LtCol Jack H. Brown (From 11J)  
 HqBtry----- 1stLt Leon H. Huttner (To 11J)  
 1stLt William D. Rummans, Jr. (From 11J)

*2d Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion*

CO----- LtCol Max C. Chapman  
 ExO----- LtCol Charles W. May (To 5J)  
 LtCol Norman E. Sparling (From 6J)  
 S-3----- Maj Walter L. Eddy, Jr. (To 4M)  
 Maj John W. Graves (From 5M)  
 H&S Btry----- Capt Carl E. Fulton  
 HAA Grp----- LtCol Charles T. Hodges  
 LAA Grp----- Maj Emile P. Moses, Jr.  
 S/L Btry----- Capt Lewis A. Huddle (To 8J)  
 Capt John L. Buckley (From 9J)

*5th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion*

CO----- LtCol Harry O. Smith, Jr.  
 ExO----- LtCol Charles J. Siebert, II  
 S-3----- Capt Ralph W. Nicholson (To 21J)  
 Maj Monson J. McCarty (From 22J)  
 H&S Btry----- Maj Monson J. McCarty (To 21J)  
 Capt Herbert B. Gross (From 22J)  
 HAA Grp----- Maj Donald T. Regan (To 20A)  
 Maj Robert M. White, II (Actg 21A-4M)  
 Maj Donald T. Regan (5M-14J)  
 Maj Robert M. White, II (From 15J)  
 LAA Grp----- LtCol Arthur B. Hammond, Jr.  
 S/L Btry----- Capt Sylvan J. Naughtrip, Jr.

*8th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion*

CO..... LtCol James S. O'Halloran  
ExO..... LtCol Robert F. Scott  
S-3..... Maj Howard S. Nelson (To 8J)  
          Maj Arthur J. Bachhuber (From  
          9J)  
H&S Btry..... Capt Robert J. Granger  
HAA Grp..... LtCol William R. Dorr, Jr. (To  
          8J)  
          Maj Raymond F. Aton (From  
          9J)  
LAA Grp..... LtCol John D. Mattox (To 7J)  
          Maj John W. Graham (From  
          14J)  
S/L Btry..... Capt Paul N. Ierardi

*16th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion*

CO..... LtCol August F. Penzold, Jr.  
          (To 18J)  
          LtCol Charles T. Tingle (From  
          19J)  
ExO..... LtCol Edward N. Rydalch  
S-3..... Maj Robert A. Merchant, Jr.  
H&S Btry..... Capt Robert H. Twisdale (To  
          18M)  
          Capt John J. Dyer (From 14M)  
HAA Grp..... Maj Robert G. Baumann  
LAA Grp..... Maj Edward H. Gartside (To  
          20M)  
          Capt John D. Briggs (21M-8J)  
          LtCol John D. Mattox (From  
          8J)  
S/L Btry..... Capt George Anderson (To 13J)  
          1stLt Claude R. Laplant (From  
          14J)

*2d Provisional Field Artillery Group*

CO..... LtCol Custis Burton, Jr.  
ExO..... LtCol John S. Twitchell (To  
          10M)  
          Maj Alfred L. Owens (11M-20J)  
          LtCol John S. Twitchell (From  
          21J)  
S-3..... LtCol Ernest P. Foley (To 20A)  
          LtCol John S. Twitchell (21A-  
          7M)  
          Maj Alfred L. Owens (From 8M)  
HqBtry..... Capt Jacob J. Fortunato

*1st 155mm Howitzer Battalion*

CO..... LtCol George H. Ford  
ExO..... Maj William H. Atkinson  
S-3..... Capt Eugene C. Swift  
H&S Btry..... Capt Michael T. Harbrook  
A Btry..... 1stLt Roy E. Moffett  
B Btry..... Capt Grant E. Rose  
C Btry..... Capt Owen H. Blexrud

*3d 155mm Howitzer Battalion*

CO..... LtCol Robert C. Hiatt  
ExO..... Maj James H. Tatsch

S-3..... Capt David L. Moberly  
H&S Btry..... Capt Elwyn D. Siefert  
A Btry..... Capt William W. Wander, Jr.  
B Btry..... Capt Robert W. Besch  
C Btry..... Capt Alexander B. Sharpe

*6th 155mm Howitzer Battalion*

CO..... LtCol Lewis A. Jones  
ExO..... Maj Alfred L. Owens (To 7M)  
          Capt John V. Downs (Actg  
          From 7M)  
S-3..... 1stLt Charles H. Berkmeier  
H&S Btry..... 1stLt Samuel M. Rogers  
A Btry..... 1stLt Ira E. Steele  
B Btry..... 1stLt Cornelius J. Kelleher, Jr.  
          (To 13A)  
          Capt Matthew J. Lynott, Jr.  
          (From 14A)  
C Btry..... 1stLt George H. Goldsborough  
          (To 13A)  
          Capt John V. Downs (14A-6M)  
          1stLt George H. Goldsborough  
          (Actg From 7M)

*7th 155mm Gun Battalion*

CO..... LtCol Guido F. Verbeck, Jr.  
ExO..... LtCol Francis W. Benson  
S-3..... Capt Phillip Ahwesh (To 20A)  
          1stLt George N. Parks, Jr (21A-  
          21J)  
          Maj William N. Taft (From  
          22J)  
H&S Btry..... Capt Warren R. Loney (To 20A)  
          Capt Phillip Ahwesh (From 21A)  
A Btry..... Capt Richard H. Pearson (To  
          9M)  
          1stLt James V. Gurge (From  
          10M)  
B Btry..... Capt Gilbert N. Powell  
C Btry..... Capt Andrew W. Bisset (To 8M)  
          1st Lt Edward L. Fossum (From  
          9M)

*8th 155mm Gun Battalion*

CO..... LtCol George V. Hanna, Jr.  
ExO..... Maj Robert F. Meldrum  
S-3..... Maj Richard A. Vanderhoof  
H&S Btry..... Capt Richard A. Schaefer  
A Btry..... Capt Harry "E" Dickinson  
B Btry..... 1stLt Herbert H. Johnson  
C Btry..... 1stLt James W. McJunkin

*9th 155mm Gun Battalion*

CO..... LtCol Merritt Adelman  
ExO..... Maj Raymond D. Wright  
S-3..... 1stLt Howard W. Lull  
H&S Btry..... Capt James D. Owens (To 2M)  
          Capt Gilbert J. Geiser (From  
          3M)  
A Btry..... 1stLt Albert E. Leonard  
B Btry..... Capt Harry E. Kipp  
C Btry..... Capt Thomas L. Weyandt

**FIRST MARINE DIVISION (REINFORCED)**

*1st Marine Division Headquarters*

CG..... MajGen Pedro A. del Valle  
 ADC..... BrigGen Louis R. Jones  
 CofS..... Col Robert O. Bare  
 G-1..... LtCol Harold O. Deakin  
 G-2..... LtCol John W. Scott, Jr.  
 G-3..... LtCol Russell E. Honsowetz  
 G-4..... LtCol Harvey C. Tschirgi

*1st Marine Division Headquarters Battalion*

CO..... LtCol James S. Monahan (To  
 20M)  
 Col Kenneth B. Chappell (24-  
 31M)  
 ExO..... Maj Lewis M. Andrews  
 S-3..... 2dLt William G. Porter  
 HqCo..... Capt John E. Williams  
 1st NP Co..... 1stLt Lawrence E. Kindred  
 ReconCo..... 1stLt Robert J. Powell, Jr.  
 1st SigCo..... Capt Thomas J. Flynn, Jr.  
 1st ASCO..... LtCol John E. Morris  
 3d AmphTruckCo..... Capt Grammer G. Edwards

*1st Engineer Battalion*

CO..... Maj Theodore E. Drummond  
 ExO..... Maj William A. Swinerton  
 S-3..... Capt Robert C. Snyder  
 H&S Co..... Capt William H. Owens, Jr.  
 (To 2M)  
 Capt John N. Rathwell (From  
 3M)  
 A Co..... Capt Daniel J. McLellan  
 B Co..... Capt Charles A. Hamilton  
 C Co..... Capt John G. Aldworth

*1st Medical Battalion*

CO..... LCdr Francis Giuffrida, (MC)  
 ExO..... (Not shown)  
 S-3..... (Not shown)  
 H&S Co..... Lt Roger Stevenson, (MC)  
 A Co..... Lt Charles E. Schoff, (MC) (To  
 1J)  
 Lt Lloyd F. Sherman, (MC)  
 (From 1J)  
 B Co..... Lt Rupert B. Turnbull, (MC)  
 C Co..... Lt David S. Slossberg, (MC)  
 D Co..... LCdr Joseph C. Fremont, (MC)  
 E Co..... LCdr Edwin B. Murchison,  
 (MC)

*1st Motor Transport Battalion*

CO..... LtCol Marion A. Fawcett (To  
 15A)  
 LtCol Calvin C. Gaines (From  
 18A)  
 ExO..... Maj Henry D. Shields  
 S-3..... 1stLt Walter M. Greenspan  
 H&S Co..... 1stLt Edwin J. Sehl  
 A Co..... Capt Ben Sutts

B Co..... Capt Francis I. Ford, Jr.  
 C Co..... 1stLt Wayne "W" Miller

*1st Pioneer Battalion*

CO..... LtCol Robert G. Ballance  
 ExO..... Maj Warren S. Sivertsen  
 S-3..... 1stLt William J. Selfridge, Jr.  
 H&S Co..... Capt Benjamin T. Cocke (To  
 1J)  
 1stLt Darrell A. Watson (From  
 1J)  
 A Co..... Capt Stanley W. Slowakiewicz  
 B Co..... Capt John M. Kennedy  
 C Co..... 1stLt John H. Heussner

*1st Service Battalion*

CO..... LtCol Calvin C. Gaines (To  
 17A)  
 Col John Kaluf (WIA 6A,\*  
 From 18A)  
 ExO..... Capt Edwin B. Glass (To 14M)  
 Maj William F. Belcher (15-  
 17M)  
 Capt Alton C. Bennett (From  
 20M)  
 S-3..... (Not shown)  
 HqCo..... 1stLt Harry L. Tovani  
 OrdCo..... Capt Edward P. Faulkner  
 S&S Co..... 1stLt Herbert R. Peterson

*1st Tank Battalion*

CO..... LtCol Arthur J. Stuart (WIA  
 13J)  
 ExO..... Capt Richard A. Munger (To  
 18J)  
 Maj Robert M. Neinsan (From  
 19J)  
 S-3..... 1stLt Lester T. Chase  
 H&S Co..... Capt John K. Galeski  
 A Co..... 1stLt Howard R. Taylor, Jr.  
 B Co..... Capt Jack R. Munday  
 C Co..... 1stLt George E. Jerue

*3d Armored Amphibian Battalion (Provisional)*

CO..... Lt Col John I. Williamson, Jr.  
 (To 7M)  
 Maj Arthur M. Parker, Jr.  
 (From 8M)  
 ExO..... Maj Arthur M. Parker, Jr. (To  
 7M)  
 Capt Wilfred S. LeFrancois  
 (From 8M)  
 S-3..... Capt Marvin E. Mitchell (To  
 19J)  
 H&S Co..... Capt. Whitley A. Cummings, Jr.  
 (From 22A, FwdEch)  
 A Co..... 1stLt Norman C. Bray, Jr.  
 B Co..... 1stLt Harold A. Ipson  
 C Co..... Capt Wilfred S. LeFrancois (To  
 7M)  
 D Co..... 1stLt Hillard "D" Thorpe

\* WIA, Records show returned to duty.



*1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion*

CO..... LtCol Maynard M. Nohrden  
ExO..... Maj Victor J. Harwick  
S-3..... 1stLt Harold F. Harman  
H&S Co..... Capt John A. Lockwood, Jr.  
A Co..... 1stLt Paul Phillips  
B Co..... 1stLt William H. Blatti  
C Co..... 1stLt Harry O. Lee

*8th Amphibian Tractor Battalion*

CO..... LtCol Charles B. Nerren (To  
13A)  
Maj Bedford Williams (14-17A)  
LtCol Charles B. Nerren (From  
18A)  
ExO..... Maj Bedford Williams (To 13A)  
Maj Bedford Williams (From  
18A)  
S-3..... 1stLt John R. Tull  
H&S Co..... 1stLt Robert W. Caveney  
A Co..... Capt Robert P. Rapp  
B Co..... Capt William D. Evans  
C Co..... 1stLt Norman Haweell

*Headquarters, 1st Marines*

CO..... Col Kenneth B. Chappell (To  
5M)  
Col Arthur T. Mason (From 6M)  
ExO..... LtCol Richard P. Ross, Jr. (To  
20M)  
LtCol James S. Monahan (From  
21M)  
S-3..... Maj Bernard T. Kelly (WIA  
5A,\* To 21A)  
Maj Jonas M. Platt (From 22A)  
H&S Co..... 1stLt Walton M. Rock (To 21A)  
1stLt Eustace C. M. Waller  
(22A-1J)  
Capt Wayne B. Davis (From 1J)  
WpnsCo..... Capt Lawrence K. Hennessy (To  
21A)  
Maj Robert W. Burnette (From  
22A, WIA 3J)  
Capt Francis D. Rineer (From  
19J)

*1st Battalion, 1st Marines*

CO..... LtCol James C. Murray, Jr.  
(WIA 9M)  
LtCol Richard P. Ross, Jr. (10-  
12M)  
LtCol Austin C. Shofner (From  
13M)  
ExO..... Maj Jonas M. Platt (To 22A)  
Maj Henry G. Baron (23A-14M)  
Capt Thomas K. Greer (14M-  
10J)  
Maj Franklin B. Nihart (From  
11J)  
S-3..... 1stLt Fendall W. Yerxa (To  
18J)  
Maj Leon Goldberg (From 19J)

HqCo..... Maj William F. Belcher (To  
14M)  
1stLt Richard M. Highsmith, Jr.  
(14-20M)  
1stLt Marion G. Truesdale  
(From 21M)  
A Co..... 1stLt Paul E. Burke (WIA 6J)  
1stLt James R. Currier (From  
6J)  
B Co..... Capt Francis D. Rineer (WIA  
30A,\* To 29M)  
Capt Richard A. Poe (29M-6J)  
Capt Francis D. Rineer (7-18J)  
1stLt Fendall W. Yerxa (From  
19J)  
C Co..... 1stLt Weldon M. Longbotham  
(WIA 14M)  
Capt Richard A. Poe (15-28M,  
WIA 24M\*)  
1stLt Francis T. Burke (29M-  
3J)  
Capt Richard A. Poe (From 7J,  
WIA 11J)  
Capt Thomas K. Greer (From  
11J)

*2d Battalion, 1st Marines*

CO..... LtCol James C. Magee, Jr.  
ExO..... Maj Raymond C. Portillo (To  
21A)  
Maj Bernard T. Kelly (From  
22A)  
S-3..... Maj Robert W. Burnette (To  
21A)  
Maj Raymond C. Portillo (From  
22A)  
HqCo..... Capt George L. Dacy (To 14M)  
1stLt William K. Hunt (From  
16M)  
E Co..... 1stLt Robert W. Schmitt (WIA  
7M)  
1stLt Richard B. Watkins (From  
7M, WIA 13M\*)  
F Co..... Capt Edward B. Tiscornia (KIA  
2M)  
1stLt Walter E. Burke (From  
3M)  
G Co..... 1stLt Fay K. Kolner, Jr. (WIA  
14M)  
1stLt Jim "J" Paulos (15-17M)  
1stLt John J. Cavanaugh (17M-  
1J)  
1stLt Marcus H. Jaffe (From  
2J)

*3d Battalion, 1st Marines*

CO..... LtCol Stephen V. Sabol (To  
20M)  
LtCol Richard P. Ross, Jr.  
(From 21M)  
ExO..... Maj Frederick W. Lindlaw (To  
18M)

Capt Wayne B. Davis (19-25M)  
 Maj Leon Goldberg (26M-6J)  
 Maj John V. Kelsey (7-18J)  
 Maj Frederick W. Lindlaw  
 (From 19J)  
 S-3----- Capt Wayne B. Davis (To 21A)  
 Capt James M. Marshall (22A-  
 18J)  
 HqCo----- Maj John V. Kelsey (From 19J)  
 1stLt Eustace C. M. Waller  
 (To 21A)  
 Capt Wayne B. Davis (22A-1J)  
 1stLt James D. Currie (1-18J)  
 1stLt Charles J. Kohler, Jr.  
 (From 19J)  
 I Co----- 1stLt William A. Young, Jr.  
 (To 21A)  
 Capt Lawrence K. Hennessy  
 (From 22A, KIA 21M)  
 1stLt Elmer L. Cochran (21M-  
 1J)  
 1stLt William A. Young, Jr.  
 (From 2J)  
 K Co----- 1stLt William O. Sellers  
 I Co----- Capt Alton C. Bennett (To 13M)  
 1stLt James J. Haggerty (13-  
 15M)  
 1stLt Harry L. Ziegler (From  
 16M, WIA 4J)  
 1stLt Eustace C. M. Waller  
 (From 4J)

*Headquarters, 5th Marines*

CO----- Col John H. Griebel  
 ExO----- LtCol John D. Muncie  
 S-3----- Maj James H. Flagg  
 H&S Co----- Capt Nicholas R. Goche  
 WpnsCo----- Capt Carl H. Lockard

*1st Battalion, 5th Marines*

CO----- LtCol Charles W. Shelburne  
 ExO----- Maj. Frank W. Poland, Jr. (To  
 16M)  
 Maj Reed F. Taylor (From 17M)  
 S-3----- Capt Lloyd E. Howell  
 HqCo----- 2dLt Lewis J. Schott (1-30A)  
 A Co----- Capt Julian D. Dusenbury (WIA  
 10M,\* 18J)  
 B Co----- 1stLt Walter R. Wilson  
 C Co----- 1stLt Walter E. Lange

*2d Battalion, 5th Marines*

CO----- LtCol William E. Benedict (To  
 20J)  
 Maj Richard T. Washburn  
 From 21J)  
 ExO----- Maj Richard T. Washburn (To  
 20J)  
 1stLt Martin F. Fritz (From  
 21J)  
 S-3----- Maj John R. Hogan (WIA 4M)

1stLt Ward M. Wilcox (From  
 1J)  
 HqCo----- 2dLt Richard F. Simpson (To  
 30A)  
 1stLt Martin F. Fritz (From  
 1M)  
 E Co----- 1stLt Michael D. Benda (WIA  
 29M)  
 Capt Franklin D. Sills (From  
 29M, WIA 13J\*)  
 F Co----- 1stLt William A. Taylor (WIA  
 3M)  
 1stLt Joseph H. Bowling (From  
 4M, WIA 10M)  
 1stLt Robert F. Fry (From  
 11M, WIA 17M)  
 1stLt William A. Brougher  
 (From 17M)  
 G Co----- 1stLt Richard R. Breen (WIA  
 7M\*)

*3d Battalion, 5th Marines*

CO----- Maj John H. Gustafson (WIA  
 1A)  
 LtCol John C. Miller, Jr. (4A-  
 16M)  
 Maj Frank W. Poland, Jr.  
 (17M-8J)  
 LtCol Robert E. Hill (From 9J)  
 ExO----- Maj Martin C. Roth  
 S-3----- Capt George S. Sharp (WIA  
 14M)  
 Capt Edwin B. Glass (From  
 15M)  
 HqCo----- Capt William Flynn  
 I Co----- Capt James P. O'Laughlin  
 (WIA 7M,\* WIA 24M)  
 1stLt John A. Fredenberger  
 (From 24M, WIA 28M)  
 1stLt Carrol R. Wilson (From  
 28M, KIA 2J)  
 1stLt Richard H. Sengewald  
 (From 3J)  
 K Co----- 1stLt Thomas J. Stanley (To  
 24M)  
 1stLt George B. Loveday (From  
 25M)  
 L Co----- Capt Robert P. Smith (To 8J)  
 1stLt Robert D. Metzger (From  
 9J)

*Headquarters, 7th Marines*

CO----- Col Edward W. Snedeker  
 ExO----- LtCol James M. Masters, Sr.  
 S-3----- Maj Walter Holomon (To 22M)  
 LtCol Stephen V. Sabol (23M-  
 19J)  
 H&S Co----- Maj John W. Arnold (To 4A)  
 1stLt Maurice J. Cavanaugh, Jr.  
 (From 5A)  
 WpnsCo----- Capt Welton H. Bunger, Jr.

*1st Battalion, 7th Marines*

CO..... LtCol John J. Gormley  
ExO..... Maj Hector R. Migneault (WIA  
14M)  
Capt Don P. Wyckoff (14-17M)  
Maj Henry G. Baron, Jr. (18M-  
9J)  
Maj Harold C. Howard (From  
10J)  
S-3..... Capt Don P. Wyckoff  
HqCo..... Capt Robert L. Gibson (To 31M)  
1stLt Russell R. Feazell (From  
1J)  
A Co..... 1stLt Robert Romo (KIA 14M)  
1stLt Ernest McCall (From  
15M)  
B Co..... 1stLt Roger A. Golden (To 18M)  
Capt Leonard R. Heller (19M-  
11J)  
Capt Lee W. Langham (From  
12J)  
C Co..... Capt Richard E. Rohrer (To  
17J)

*2d Battalion, 7th Marines*

CO..... LtCol Spencer S. Berger  
ExO..... Maj Louis G. Ditta  
S-3..... 1stLt Harry E. Wheeler (To  
18J)  
Maj James M. Robinson (From  
19J)  
HqCo..... Capt Lee W. Langham (To 10M)  
1stLt Joseph W. Kensik, Jr.  
(From 11M)  
E Co..... Capt Paul C. Beardslee, Jr.  
(KIA 1A)  
1stLt William G. Hudson, Jr. (1-  
15A)  
Capt Robert J. Noonan (From  
16A, WIA 2J)  
1stLt William G. Hudson, Jr.  
(From 2J, WIA 11J)  
1stLt Franklin W. Myers (From  
12J)  
F Co..... Capt Harold E. Grasse (DOW  
12M)  
Capt Lee W. Langham (11M-  
11J)  
1stLt John W. Huff (From 12J)  
G Co..... Capt Kirt W. Norton

*3d Battalion, 7th Marines*

CO..... LtCol Edward H. Hurst (WIA  
19J)  
LtCol Stephen V. Sabol (From  
19J)  
ExO..... Maj John F. Corbett (To 18M)  
Maj William F. Belcher (19-  
22M)  
Maj Walter Holomon (From  
23M)

S-3..... Maj James E. Kirk, Jr. (To  
15M)  
Capt Henry J. Guinivan, Jr.  
(From 19M)  
HqCo..... Capt James G. Triebel (To 2SA)  
Capt Henry J. Guinivan, Jr.  
(30A-15M)  
1stLt Arius C. Henderson (16-  
17M)  
Maj William F. Belcher (From  
18M, KIA 14J)  
Maj Alexander W. Chilton  
(From 14J)  
I Co..... Capt Robert I. Owen (To 30A)  
1stLt Peter I. McDonnell (From  
1M, KIA 18M)  
Maj John F. Corbett (From  
18M, WIA 19M)  
2dLt Emory A. Bauer (19M)  
1stLt Charles E. Crow (20M-  
20J)  
Capt Robert I. Owen (From  
21J)  
K Co..... 1stLt Robert B. Morton (1-18A)  
1stLt Charles R. Hickox (19-  
20A)  
1stLt Robert B. Morton (21-  
23A)  
1stLt Robert W. Dalrymple  
(From 24A, WIA 16M)  
Maj James E. Kirk, Jr. (From  
16M)  
L Co..... Capt Roland H. Collins (WIA  
9M,\* 16M)  
Capt Henry J. Guinivan, Jr.  
(16-18M)  
Capt Roland H. Collins (From  
19M)

*Headquarters, 11th Marines*

CO..... Col Wilburt S. Brown  
ExO..... LtCol Edson L. Lyman  
S-3..... Maj Charles D. Harris  
H&S Btry..... 1stLt Joseph Ermenc

*1st Battalion, 11th Marines*

CO..... LtCol Richard W. Wallace  
Exo..... LtCol George M. Lhamon  
S-3..... Maj Ernest E. Schott  
H&S Btry..... Capt Glenn E. Morris  
A Btry..... Capt Neal C. Newell  
B Btry..... Capt Maurice L. Cater  
C Btry..... Maj Lawrence A. Tomlinson, Jr.

*2d Battalion, 11th Marines*

CO..... LtCol James H. Moffatt, Jr.  
Exo..... Maj John L. Donnell  
S-3..... Maj William C. Givens  
H&S Btry..... 1stLt Martin R. Bock, Jr.  
D Btry..... Capt James T. Pearce  
E Btry..... Capt Lorenzo G. Cutlip (WIA  
22J)

F Btry..... Capt Fritz Stampeli (From 22J)  
 Capt Robert S. Preston

*3d Battalion, 11th Marines*

CO..... LtCol Thomas G. Roe  
 ExO..... LtCol Samuel S. Wooster  
 S-3..... Capt Benjamin H. Brown (To  
 6J)

H&S Btry..... Maj Robert E. Collier (From 7J)  
 2dLt Charles E. Edwards (WIA  
 12A)

Maj Everett W. Smith (12-26A)  
 Capt Edward T. Haislip (From  
 27A)

G Btry..... Capt Charles W. Fowler

H Btry..... Capt William R. Miller

I Btry..... 1stLt John L. McDonald, Jr.  
 (WIA 4A\*)

*4th Battalion, 11th Marines*

CO..... LtCol Leonard F. Chapman, Jr.

ExO..... Maj Andre D. Gomez

S-3..... Capt James A. Crottinger (To  
 12J)

Maj Lewis D. Baughman (From  
 13J)

H&S Btry..... Capt Randall L. Mitchell (To  
 30A)

Capt Thomas F. Moran (1-31M)  
 1stLt Gordon C. Petersen (From  
 1J)

K Btry..... Maj Lewis F. Treleaven (WIA  
 28A\*)

L Btry..... Capt Richard M. Moordale

M Btry..... Capt George S. Nixon

**STH COMBAT TEAM, 2D MARINE DIVISION  
 (1-22 JUNE)**

*Headquarters, 8th Combat Team*

CO..... Col Clarence R. Wallace  
 ExO..... LtCol Martin S. Rabiser  
 S-3..... Maj William C. Chamberlin  
 (WIA 18J)

H&S Co..... Capt Bob S. Griffin

WpnsCo..... Maj David V. Van Evert

ReconCo, 2d MarDiv. Maj John R. Nelson

C Co, 2d EngBn..... Capt Osman B. Latrobe

E Co, 2d MedBn..... Lt Richard L. French. (MC)

B Co, 2d MT Bn..... 1stLt Paul A. Schott

A Co, 2d PionBn..... Capt James B. Finley

A Co, 2d TkBn..... Capt Edward L. Bale, Jr.

2d AmphTruckCo..... Capt James L. George

*1st Battalion, 8th Marines*

CO..... LtCol Richard W. Hayward

ExO..... Maj Robert L. Holderness

S-3..... Capt William H. Pickett (WIA  
 22J)

HqCo..... Capt August W. Berning

A Co..... Capt Joseph F. Haley, Jr.

B Co..... Capt John C. Lundrigan

C Co..... Capt Harry P. Anderson

*2d Battalion, 8th Marines*

CO..... LtCol Harry A. Waldorf

ExO..... Maj William H. Junghans, Jr.

S-3..... Capt Martin F. Barrett (To  
 18J)

HqCo..... (Not shown)

E Co..... Capt Robert H. Rogers

F Co..... Capt Donald L. Walls

G Co..... 1stLt Thurman L. Perkins

*3d Battalion, 8th Marines*

CO..... LtCol Paul E. Wallace

ExO..... Maj Byron V. Thornton

S-3..... Maj John I. Warner, Jr.

HqCo..... Capt Paul Cook (To 19J)

1stLt Winfield S. Wallace, Jr.  
 (From 19J)

I Co..... Capt George S. Skinner

\*K Co..... Capt John Adrian, Jr. (WIA  
 3J)

1stLt David V. Carter (Actg  
 From 4J)

L Co..... Capt Joseph A. Zielinski (WIA  
 20J)

*2d Battalion, 10th Marines*

CO..... LtCol Richard G. Weede

ExO..... Maj Kenneth C. Houston

S-3..... Capt William M. Spencer, III

H&S Btry..... Capt Richard M. H. Harper, Jr.

D Btry..... Capt Robert W. Anderson

E Btry..... Capt Ralph E. Myer

F Btry..... Capt Robert H. Hensel

*2d Amphibian Tractor Battalion*

CO..... Maj Fenton A. Durand

ExO..... Capt Eugene A. Siegel

S-3..... Capt William H. Houseman, Jr.

H&S Co..... Capt Wilfred A. Ronck

A Co..... Capt James F. Perry

B Co..... Capt Phillip T. Chaffee

C Co..... Capt Wallace E. Nygren

**6TH MARINE DIVISION (REINFORCED)**

*Headquarters, 6th Marine Division*

CG..... MajGen Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr.  
 (WIA 16M\*)

ADC..... BrigGen William T. Clement

CofS..... Col John C. McQueen

G-1..... Maj Addison B. Overstreet

G-2..... LtCol Thomas E. Williams

G-3..... LtCol Victor A. Krulak

G-4..... LtCol August Larson (To 16M)

LtCol Wayne H. Adams (From  
 17M)

*Headquarters Battalion, 6th Marine Division*

CO..... LtCol Floyd A. Stephenson

ExO..... Maj Ralph W. Bohne

S-3----- Maj Ralph W. Bohne  
 HqCo----- Capt Donald J. McCaffrey (To  
 5A)  
 ReconCo----- Maj John M. Downey (From 6A)  
 Maj Anthony Walker (To 14J)  
 1st Lt William J. Christie (From  
 15J)  
 6th ASCO----- Capt Alfred C. Griffin  
 6th MP Co----- Maj John M. Downey (To 5A)  
 Capt Donald J. McCaffrey  
 (From 6A)  
 6th SigCo----- Maj George W. Carr (To 4J)  
 LtCol William C. Moore (From  
 4J)  
 6th AmphTruckCo--- 1stLt David Astor (To 30M)  
 1stLt Murrel S. Hansen (From  
 31M)

*6th Engineer Battalion*

CO----- Maj Paul F. Sackett  
 ExO----- Maj Robert S. Mayo  
 S-3----- Capt James H. Cooper  
 H&S Co----- 1stLt William M. Graham, Jr.  
 A Co----- Capt John W. McCuiston  
 B Co----- Capt Noel E. Bengier  
 C Co----- Capt Burt A. Lewis, Jr.

*6th Medical Battalion*

CO----- Cdr John S. Cowan, (MC)  
 ExO----- Lt Joseph M. Shelton, (MC)  
 S-3----- (Not shown)  
 H&S Co----- (Not shown)  
 A Co----- LCdr Owen W. E. Nowlin, (MC)  
 B Co----- LCdr Gerald Flaum, (MC) (To  
 27A)  
 Lt Burton V. Scheib, (MC)  
 (From 27A)  
 C Co----- LCdr Aaron A. Topcik, (MC)  
 (To 27A)  
 LCdr Robert J. Crawley, (MC)  
 (27A-17M)  
 Lt John C. Wilson, (MC) (18M-  
 9J)  
 LCdr Robert J. Crawley, (MC)  
 (From 10J)  
 D Co----- LCdr Horace B. McSwain, (MC)  
 (To 18M)  
 LCdr Gerald Flaum, (MC)  
 (19M-3J)  
 Lt Michael T. Michael, (MC)  
 (From 4J)  
 E Co----- Lt Charles M. Ihle, (MC)

*6th Motor Transport Battalion*

CO----- LtCol Ernest H. Gould  
 ExO----- Maj Robert E. McCook  
 S-3----- 1stLt Robert E. Wagoner  
 H&S Co----- Capt Albert Hartman  
 A Co----- Capt Hershel J. Hall  
 B Co----- Capt William F. A. Trax  
 C Co----- Capt Willis M. Williams

*6th Pioneer Battalion*

CO----- LtCol Samuel R. Shaw (To  
 10M)  
 Maj John G. Dibble (Actg  
 11M-8J)  
 LtCol Samuel R. Shaw (9-18J)  
 Maj John G. Dibble (From 19J)  
 ExO----- Maj Olin L. Beall (To 23A)  
 Maj John C. Dibble (24A-19J)  
 Capt Harry B. Smith (From  
 19J)  
 S-3----- 1stLt Harold L. Manley  
 H&S Co----- 1stLt John G. Wintersohle  
 A Co----- Maj John C. Dibble (To 23A)  
 1stLt Charles T. Robertson, III  
 (From 24A)  
 B Co----- Capt Harry B. Smith (To 18J)  
 Capt Richard J. Morrissey  
 (From 19J)  
 C Co----- Capt Russell J. Lutz

*6th Service Battalion*

CO----- LtCol George B. Bell (To 25A)  
 LtCol Alexander N. Entringer  
 (From 26A)  
 ExO----- (Not shown)  
 S-3----- 1stLt William F. Ragan (To  
 9M)  
 Capt Charles A. Harper, Jr.  
 (From 12M)  
 HqCo----- 2dLt Warren A. Lee (To 26A)  
 Capt Ira E. Hamer (From 27A)  
 OrdCo----- Capt Oscar C. Miller  
 S&S Co----- Capt William L. Batchelor

*6th Tank Battalion*

CO----- LtCol Robert L. Denig, Jr.  
 ExO----- Maj Harry T. Milne  
 S-3----- Maj Henry Calcutt (WIA  
 18M\*)  
 H&S Co----- 2dLt Robert E. Wren (To 23A)  
 1stLt James C. Vail (From  
 24A)  
 A Co----- Capt Philip C. Morell  
 B Co----- Capt Robert Hall (WIA 10M)  
 Capt James R. Williams, Jr.  
 (From 10M, WIA 21M\*)  
 C Co----- Capt Hugh Corrigan (WIA  
 15M)  
 Capt John H. Clifford (From  
 16M)

*1st Armored Amphibian Battalion*

CO----- LtCol Louis Metzger (To 21J)  
 Maj Richard G. Warga (From  
 22J)  
 ExO----- Maj Richard G. Warga (To  
 21J)  
 Capt William L. Eubank (From  
 22J)

S-3..... 1stLt Thomas M. Crosby  
H&S Co..... 1stLt Clyde E. Browers  
A Co..... Capt Thomas J. Garfield  
B Co..... Capt Edgar S. Carlson  
C Co..... Capt William L. Eubank (To  
21J)  
Capt Theodore A. Burge (From  
22J)  
D Co..... Capt Robert E. McDowell, Jr.

*4th Amphibian Tractor Battalion*

CO..... LtCol Clovis C. Coffman  
ExO..... Maj Arnold S. Dane  
S-3..... Capt Ralph J. Parker, Jr.  
H&S Co..... Maj Harold L. Oppenheimer  
A Co..... 1stLt Frank Dayes  
B Co..... 1stLt Theodore M. Garhart  
C Co..... Capt David E. Skipper

*9th Amphibian Tractor Battalion*

CO..... Maj Theodore E. Watson  
ExO..... Maj Francis J. Farias  
S-3..... 1stLt Clair C. Edmondson  
H&S Co..... WO Glenn M. Matthieu  
A Co..... Capt Robert H. Lage  
B Co..... Capt Ellwood P. Varner  
C Co..... 1stLt Gerald G. Palaia

*Headquarters, 4th Marines*

CO..... Col Alan Shapley  
ExO..... LtCol Fred D. Beans (To 14A)  
LtCol Fred D. Beans (From 1M)  
S-3..... Maj Orville V. Bergren  
H&S Co..... Capt Robert B. Corey (To 26A)  
1stLt Russell A. Thompson  
(From 27A)  
WpnsCo..... Capt Raymond L. Luckel

*1st Battalion, 4th Marines*

CO..... Maj Bernard W. Green (KIA  
15A)  
LtCol Fred D. Beans (15A-1M)  
LtCol George B. Bell (From 1M,  
WIA 4J\*)  
ExO..... Maj Robert V. Allen  
S-3..... Capt Frank A. Kemp (To 22M)  
Maj John R. Kerman (From  
22M)  
HqCo..... 1stLt George Proechel, Jr. (To  
5J)  
2dLt John M. Keeley (From 6J)  
A Co..... Capt Clinton B. Eastment (WIA  
8J)  
1stLt David N. Schreiner (From  
8J, DOW 21J)  
1stLt Joseph I. Deal (From 21J)  
B Co..... 1stLt Thad N. Dodds (KIA 2A)  
1stLt Charles E. James (From  
2A)  
C Co..... 1stLt James G. Washburn (WIA  
15A)

1stLt William H. Carlson (From  
15A, WIA 23M,\* 27M,\* KIA  
5J)  
1stLt Lawrence S. Bangser  
(From 5J)

*2d Battalion, 4th Marines*

CO..... LtCol Reynolds H. Hayden (To  
26M)  
Maj Edgar F. Carney, Jr. (From  
27M)  
ExO..... Maj Roy C. Batterton (WIA  
15A)  
Maj Edgar F. Carney, Jr. (15A-  
26M)  
Maj Lincoln N. Holdzcom (From  
27M)  
S-3..... Maj Lincoln N. Holdzcom (To  
26M)  
Capt Wayne L. Edwards (27M-  
0J)  
1stLt James E. Brown (7-19J)  
Capt Wayne L. Edwards (From  
20J)  
HqCo..... Maj Edgar F. Carney, Jr. (To  
14A)  
2dLt Ernest L. Tongate, Jr.  
(1-7M)  
2dLt Gerald Fitzgerald (8-17M)  
Capt Wayne L. Edwards (18-  
26M)  
1stLt Merrill F. McLane (From  
27M)  
E Co..... Capt. Leonard W. Alford (To  
24M)  
1stLt Robert J. Herwig (25-  
29M)  
Capt Leonard W. Alford (30M-  
11J, DOW 17J)  
1st Lt Robert J. Herwig (From  
11J, WIA 21J)  
1stLt Lester J. Markusen (From  
21J)  
F Co..... Capt Eric S. Holmgren  
G Co..... Capt Archie B. Norford (KIA  
15A)  
1stLt Leo J. Gottsponer (From  
15A)

*3rd Battalion, 4th Marines*

CO..... LtCol Bruno A. Hochmuth  
ExO..... Maj Thomas E. Beeman (To  
16A)  
Maj Carl E. Conron, Jr. (From  
16A, KIA 20M)  
Maj Wilson E. Hunt (From  
20M)  
S-3..... Maj Carl E. Conron, Jr. (To  
15A)  
Maj Rade Enich (From 20A,  
WIA 23M)

Capt Martin J. Sexton (1-14J)  
 Maj Clay A. Bond (From 15J)  
 HqCo----- Capt Robert B. Corey (27A-14J)  
 I Co----- Capt Robert G. McMaster (WIA 21J)  
 K Co----- Capt Martin J. Sexton (To 1J)  
 Capt Vernon Burtman (1-13J)  
 Capt Martin J. Sexton (From 15J)  
 L Co----- Capt Nelson C. Dale, Jr. (WIA 2A)  
 1stLt Marvin D. Perskie (From 2A)

*Headquarters, 22d Marines*

CO----- Col Merlin F. Schneider (To 16M)  
 Col Harold C. Roberts (From 17M, KIA 18J)  
 LtCol August Larson (From 18J)  
 ExO----- Col Karl K. Louthier (To 16M)  
 LtCol August Larson (17M-17J)  
 LtCol John B. Baker (18-20J)  
 LtCol Samuel R. Shaw (From 21J)  
 S-3----- LtCol John B. Baker (To 17J)  
 LtCol Walter H. Stephens (18-20J)  
 LtCol John B. Baker (From 21J)  
 H&S Co----- Capt David E. Cruikshank  
 WpnsCo----- Maj George B. Kantner (To 2M)  
 LtCol Gavin C. Humphrey (4-16J)  
 Capt Francis D. Blizard, Jr. (From 17J)

*1st Battalion, 22d Marines*

CO----- Maj Thomas J. Myers (KIA 15M)  
 Maj Earl J. Cook (From 15M, WIA 17J)  
 LtCol Gavin C. Humphrey (From 17J)  
 ExO----- Maj Earl J. Cook (To 14M)  
 Maj Edward G. Kurdziel (15M-15J)  
 Maj Norman R. Sherman (From 16J)  
 S-3----- Maj Edward G. Kurdziel  
 HqCo----- Capt Charles P. DeLong (To 20A)  
 Capt Eldon W. Autry (23A-19M)  
 Capt Alfred H. Benjamin (From 20M)

A Co----- Capt Walter G. Moeling, III (WIA 15M)  
 1stLt Thomas J. Bobannon (From 15M, WIA 31M)  
 1stLt Leland J. Gulligan (1-3J)  
 2dLt Ralph R. Desso (From 4J, WIA 9J)  
 2dLt Robert T. Johnson (9-15J)  
 1stLt Evan L. Wolcott (From 16J)

B Co----- 1stLt Ernest George (1-9A)  
 1stLt Thomas Parran, Jr. (Actg 10-20A)  
 Capt Charles P. DeLong (From 21A, WIA 15M)  
 1stLt Thomas Parran, Jr. (From 15M)

C Co----- Capt Warren F. Lloyd (To 17M)  
*2d Battalion, 22d Marines*

CO----- LtCol Horatio C. Woodhouse, Jr. (KIA 30M)  
 LtCol John G. Johnson (From 31M)

ExO----- Maj Henry A. Courtney, Jr. (WIA 9M, \* KIA 14M)

S-3----- Maj Glenn E. Martin (To 21J)  
 Capt Charles S. Robertson (From 22J)

HqCo----- Capt John C. Deal, Jr.  
 E Co----- 1stLt Frank E. Gunter  
 F Co----- Capt Maurice F. Ahearn, Jr. (WIA 13M)  
 Capt William L. Sims (From 1J, WIA 9J)

1stLt Robert O. Hutchings (From 9J)

G Co----- Capt Owen T. Stebbins (WIA 12M)  
 1stLt Hugh T. Crane (From 12M)

*3d Battalion, 22d Marines*

CO----- LtCol Malcolm "O" Donohoo (WIA 16M)  
 Maj George B. Kantner (16-19M)  
 LtCol Clair W. Shisler (From 20M)

ExO----- Maj Paul H. Bird (KIA 11A)  
 Maj George B. Kantner (2-15M)  
 Maj Roy D. Miller (16-19M)  
 Maj George B. Kantner (From 20M)

S-3----- Maj Roy D. Miller  
 HqCo----- Capt Frank H. Haigler, Jr. (To 15M)  
 1stLt Buenos A. W. Young (16M-21J)  
 2dLt Leo M. Humphrey (From 22J)

I Co..... 1stLt Arthur E. Cofer (To 20A)  
 Capt John Marston, Jr. (From 21A)

K Co..... Capt Joseph P. Dockery (WIA 10M)  
 1stLt Reginald Fincke, Jr. (From 11M, KIA 15M)  
 1stLt James D. Roe (From 16M)

L Co..... Capt John P. Lanigan (WIA 16M)  
 Capt Frank H. Haigler, Jr. (From 16M)

*Headquarters, 29th Marines*

CO..... Col Victor F. Bleasdale (To 14A)  
 Col William J. Whaling (From 15A)

ExO..... LtCol Orin K. Pressley

S-3..... LtCol Angus M. Fraser (To 14J)  
 LtCol George W. Killen (From 14J)

H&S Co..... 1stLt Robert E. Stinson

WpnsCo..... Capt James G. Petrie

*1st Battalion, 29th Marines*

CO..... LtCol Jean W. Moreau (WIA 16M)  
 Maj Robert P. Neuffer (16-25M)  
 LtCol Samuel S. Yeaton (26M-14J)  
 LtCol Leroy P. Hunt, Jr. (From 15J)

ExO..... Maj Robert J. Littin (To 21A)  
 Maj James H. Brock (24A-26M)  
 Maj Robert P. Neuffer (From 26M)

S-3..... Maj James H. Brock (To 23A)  
 Capt Ernest P. Freeman, Jr. (24A-27M)  
 Maj James H. Brock (From 28M)

HqCo..... Capt Ernest P. Freeman, Jr. (To 23A)  
 1stLt Elliot L. Walzer (24A-15M)  
 Capt Ernest P. Freeman, Jr. (From 1J)

A Co..... 1stLt Raymond J. Kautz (To 21A)  
 Capt Jason B. Baker (24A-15J)  
 1stLt Warren B. Watson (From 16J)

B Co..... Capt Lyle E. Specht (WIA 17M)  
 1stLt Charles P. Gallagher (18-22M)  
 1stLt Griffith E. Thomas (From 24M, WIA 28M)  
 1stLt Robert H. Neef (From 1J)

C Co..... Capt Edwin H. Rodgers (WIA SA)

Capt George Heiden (From 10A, WIA 15M)  
 Capt Jack F. Ramsey (From 16M, WIA 28M)  
 1stLt Eugene T. Lawless (From 28M, WIA 15J\*)

*2d Battalion, 29th Marines*

CO..... LtCol William G. Robb (WIA 19A\*)

ExO..... Maj Thomas J. Cross

S-3..... Maj Robert P. Neuffer (To 16M)  
 Capt Robert B. Fowler (From 16M, KIA 12J)  
 Maj Wallace G. Fleissner (From 14J)

HqCo..... Capt Billie Musick (To 21A)  
 Capt Martin J. Harrington (22A-22M)  
 Capt Ralph D. Porch, II (23M-18J)

D Co..... Capt Howard L. Mable (WIA 16A\*)

E Co..... Capt Alan Meissner

F Co..... Capt Robert B. Fowler (WIA 15A\*, To 15M)  
 1stLt George S. Thompson (From 15M, WIA 8J)  
 1stLt Robert J. Sherer (From 8J)

*3d Battalion, 29th Marines*

CO..... LtCol Erma A. Wright (To 14J)  
 LtCol Angus N. Fraser (From 15J)

ExO..... Maj Crawford B. Lawton (WIA 9A)  
 Maj Everett W. Whipple (9-21A)  
 Capt Walter E. Jorgensen (From 24A, WIA 16M)  
 Capt Thomas P. Tomasello (17-22M)  
 Capt Walter E. Jorgensen (1-13J)  
 Maj Anthony Walker (From 15J)

S-3..... Maj Everett W. Whipple (To 8A)  
 Capt James R. Stockman (9A-6J)  
 Capt Richard M. Haynes (6-13J)  
 Maj Merlin Olsen (From 14J)

HqCo..... Capt James R. Stockman (To 8A)  
 1stLt Leroy W. Noyes, Jr. (9A-13J)  
 Capt Walter E. Jorgensen (From 14J)



G Co..... Capt Thomas J. Blanchet (To 17M)  
 1stLt John J. Keating (17-22M)  
 Capt William P. Tomasello (From 23M, WIA 9J)  
 1stLt Robert M. Hontz (From 10J)

H Co..... Capt William P. Tomasello (To 16M)  
 Capt William A. Gamble (From 17M, WIA 5J\*)

I Co..... Capt Walter E. Jorgensen (To 23A)  
 Capt Phillip J. Mylod (From 24A, WIA 14M)  
 1stLt Harvey F. Brooks (From 14M, WIA 15M)  
 1stLt John P. Stone (From 15M)

*Headquarters, 15th Marines*

CO..... Col Robert B. Luckey  
 ExO..... LtCol James H. Brower  
 S-3..... Maj William H. Hirst  
 H&S Btry..... 1stLt Lawrence I. Miller

*1st Battalion, 15th Marines*

CO..... Maj Robert H. Armstrong  
 ExO..... Maj William T. Box  
 S-3..... 1stLt William N. Larson, Jr.  
 H&S Btry..... 1stLt Paul K. Lynde  
 A Btry..... 1stLt Benjamin S. Read (To 19A)  
 1stLt John J. O'Connor (From 20A)  
 B Btry..... 1stLt James H. Boyd  
 C Btry..... Capt Herbert T. Fitch

*2d Battalion, 15th Marines*

CO..... Maj Nat M. Pace  
 ExO..... Maj Edward O. Stephany (To 13A)  
 Maj William C. Roberts (From 14A)  
 S-3..... Maj Robert P. Yeomans  
 H&S Btry..... 2dLt Henry H. Lawler (Rear Ech)  
 D Btry..... 1stLt Henry C. Schlosser  
 E Btry..... Capt McCuthen G. Atkinson (WIA 13A)  
 1stLt Joseph A. Edwards (Actg From 13A)  
 F Btry..... Capt John L. Noonan

*3d Battalion, 15th Marines*

CO..... LtCol Joe C. McHaney  
 ExO..... Maj Benedict V. Schneider, Jr.  
 S-3..... Maj Hugh C. Becker  
 H&S Btry..... Capt Edward C. O'Donnell  
 G Btry..... Capt Harris H. Barnes, Jr.  
 H Btry..... 1stLt Charles F. Petet, Jr.  
 I Btry..... Capt Louis D. Abney, Jr.

*4th Battalion, 15th Marines*

CO..... LtCol Bruce T. Hemphill  
 ExO..... Maj Francis F. Parry  
 S-3..... Capt Benjamin F. Spencer  
 H&S Btry..... Capt Robert D. Lackland  
 K Btry..... 1stLt Robert T. Patterson  
 L Btry..... Capt John "T" Haynes, Jr.  
 M Btry..... Maj Robert F. Irving

**2D MARINE AIRCRAFT WING**

CG..... MajGen Francis P. Mulcahy (To 10J)  
 MajGen Louis E. Woods (From 11J)  
 CofS..... Col Hayne D. Boyden  
 G-1..... Capt Robert E. Coddington  
 G-2..... Maj David B. Decker  
 G-3..... Col Perry O. Parmelee  
 G-4..... LtCol Charles T. Young, III (WIA 20A)  
 Capt William L. Woodruff (From 11J)  
 HqSq-2..... Capt Richard F. Hyland  
 VMO-3..... Capt Wallace J. Slappey, Jr.  
 VMO-6..... Capt. Donald R. Garrett  
 VMO-7..... Capt William A. Seward

*Air Defense Command*

CG..... BrigGen William J. Wallace  
 CofS..... Col Ford O. Rogers  
 G-3..... Col Boeker C. Batterton

*Marine Aircraft Group 14 (1-22 June)*

CO..... Col Edward A. Montgomery  
 ExO..... LtCol Curtis E. Smith, Jr.  
 S-3..... LtCol Robert H. Richard  
 HqSq-14..... Capt Robert M. Crooks  
 SMS-14..... Maj Francis H. Smythe (To 7J)  
 Maj Julius W. Ireland (From 8J)  
 VMF-212..... Maj John P. McMahon  
 VMF-222..... Maj Harold A. Harwood  
 VMF-223..... Maj Howard E. King

*Marine Aircraft Group 22 (1-22 June)*

CO..... Col Daniel W. Torrey, Jr.  
 ExO..... LtCol Elmer A. Wrenn  
 S-3..... Maj Thomas C. Colt, Jr.  
 HqSq-22..... Capt Linsay K. Dickey  
 SMS-22..... Maj Bruce Prosser  
 VMF-113..... Maj Hensley Williams  
 VMF-314..... Maj Robert C. Cameron  
 VMF-422..... Maj Elkin S. Dew  
 VMF(N)-533..... LtCol Marion M. Magruder  
 VMTB-131..... Maj Douglas H. Bangert

*Marine Aircraft Group 31*

CO..... Col John C. Munn  
 ExO..... LtCol Gordon E. Hendricks (To 20J)  
 LtCol Kirk Armistead (From 22J)

S-3----- LtCol Kirk Armistead (To 21J)  
 Maj Charles M. Kunz (From 22J)  
 HqSq-31----- Maj Leon A. Danco (To 14M)  
 1stLt Frederick L. Donnelly (From 14M)  
 SMS-31----- Maj Archibald M. Smith (To 28A)  
 Maj Paul T. Johnston (29A-1J)  
 Maj Joseph A. Gray (From 2J)  
 VMF-224----- Maj James W. Poindexter (To 30M)  
 Maj Robert C. Hammond, Jr. (31M-14J)  
 Maj Allan T. Barnum (From 15J)  
 VMF-311----- Maj Perry L. Shuman (To 15J)  
 Maj Michael R. Yunck (From 15J)  
 VMF-441----- Maj Robert O. White (To 19J)  
 Maj Paul T. Johnston (From 20J)  
 VMF(N)-542----- Maj William C. Kellum (To 22M)  
 Maj Robert B. Porter (From 24M)

*Marine Aircraft Group 33*

CO----- Col Ward E. Dickey  
 ExO----- LtCol James L. Beam  
 S-3----- LtCol Eschol M. Mallory

HqSq-33----- Capt Richard Kilbourne  
 SMS-33----- Maj Hugh P. Calahan  
 VMF-312----- Maj Richard M. Day (MIA 14M)  
 Maj Hugh I. Russell (14-24M)  
 Maj Frank "J" Cole (From 25M)  
 VMF-322----- Maj Frederick M. Rauschenbach (To 30M)  
 Maj Walter E. Lischeld (From 31 F)  
 VMF-323----- Maj George C. Axtell, Jr. (To 14J)  
 Maj Martin E. W. Olerich (From 16J)  
 VMF(N)-543----- Maj Clair "C" Chamelin (To 17J)  
 Maj James B. Maguire, Jr. (From 18J)  
 VMTB-232----- Maj Allen L. Feldmeier

*Marine Aircraft Group 43*

CO----- LtCol Robert O. Bisson  
 ExO----- (Not shown)  
 S-3----- LtCol Radford C. West  
 HqSq-43----- Maj William F. Feasley  
 AWS-1----- Capt Edward R. Stainback  
 AWS-6----- Capt Clarence C. Gordon  
 AWS-7----- Capt Paul E. Bardet  
 AWS-8----- Maj Frank B. Freese  
 AWS-11----- Capt John L. Carnegie



OKINAWA: VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC

## APPENDIX IV

# III Amphibious Corps Task Organization<sup>1</sup>

### III AMPHIBIOUS CORPS . . . MajGen Roy S. Geiger

#### I. *Corps Troops* . . . . . LtCol William F. Whitaker

Headquarters and Service Battalion

Signal Battalion

3d Separate Radio Intelligence Platoon, Mobile  
Communication Unit 43D, Detachment, Air  
Warning Squadron

1st Military Police Battalion, FMFPac (less  
Company D)

Company A, 1st Provisional Military Police Bat-  
talion (USA)

Landing Force Air Support Control Unit No 1

Medical Battalion

Corps Evacuation Hospital No 2

Corps Evacuation Hospital No 3

Corps Engineer Group

44th Naval Construction Regiment (less 58th  
Naval Construction Battalion, 130th Naval Con-  
struction Battalion, 145th Naval Construction  
Battalion, and 11th Special Naval Construction  
Battalion, reinforced)

71st Naval Construction Battalion

1st Separate Engineer Battalion

802d Aviation Engineer Battalion (USA)

Corps Service Group

Headquarters, Service Group

Headquarters, Shore Party

Company D, 1st Military Police Battalion,  
FMFPac

11th Motor Transport Battalion, FMFPac

7th Field Depot, reinforced

1st Bomb Disposal Company (less 2d and 3d  
Platoons)

1st Laundry Company (less 1st, 2d, and 3d  
Platoons)

Detachment B-8, Military Government

Detachment C-1, Military Government

G-10 Dispensary No 12

G-6 Hospital No 1

#### II. *Corps Artillery* . . . . . BrigGen David R. Nimmer

Headquarters Battery, Corps Artillery

6th 155mm Howitzer Battalion

8th 155mm Gun Battalion

9th 155mm Gun Battalion

Headquarters Battery, 2d Provisional Field Artil-  
lery Group

1st 155mm Howitzer Battalion

3d 155mm Howitzer Battalion

7th 155mm Gun Battalion

456th Amphibian Truck Company (USA)

Marine Observation Squadron 7

#### III. *Corps Antiaircraft Artillery* . . . Col Kenneth W. Benner

Headquarters, 1st Provisional Antiaircraft Artil-  
lery Group

2d Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion

5th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion

8th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion

16th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion

#### IV. *Corps Reserve* . . . . . Col Victor F. Bleasdale

29th Marines

Company A, 6th Tank Battalion

Company C, 6th Engineer Battalion

Company C, 6th Pioneer Battalion

Company C, 6th Motor Transport Battalion

Company C, 6th Medical Battalion

3d Platoon, 6th Military Police Company

3d Platoon, Ordnance Company, 6th Service  
Battalion

3d Platoon, Service and Supply Company, 6th  
Service Battalion (less Post Exchange Section)

<sup>1</sup> IIIAC OpPlan No 1-45, 1Feb45, 1-3; 1st MarDiv  
OpPlan 1-45, 10Feb45, 1-3; 6th MarDiv OpPlan No  
1-45, 10Feb45, 1-3; 29th Mar SAR, Ph I&II, Chap II,  
1-2.

3d Band Section  
 Detachment, 6th Amphibian Truck Company  
 Detachment, 11th Special Naval Construction  
 Battalion  
 Detachment, 26th Replacement Draft  
 Detachment, 33d Replacement Draft  
 3d Shore Fire Control Party, 6th Joint Assault  
 Signal Company  
 3d Air-Ground Liaison Party, 6th Joint Assault  
 Signal Company  
 3d Shore Party Communication Team, 6th Joint  
 Assault Signal Company  
 1st War Dog Platoon  
 1st Marine Division (Reinforced) . . MajGen Pedro  
 A. del Valle  
 Division Troops  
 Headquarters Battalion (less 1st Military Police  
 Company)  
 1st Medical Battalion (less Companies A, B,  
 and C)  
 4th Joint Assault Signal Company (less de-  
 tachments)  
 454th Amphibian Truck Company (USA) (less  
 detachments)  
 Detachment A-1, Military Government  
 Detachment B-1, Military Government  
 G-10 Dispensary No 17  
 G-10 Dispensary No 18  
 Assault Air Warning Teams  
 4th Provisional Rocket Detachment  
 4th War Dog Platoon  
 Combat Team 1  
 1st Marines  
 Company A, 1st Engineer Battalion  
 Company A, 1st Pioneer Battalion  
 Company A, 1st Medical Battalion  
 Company A, 1st Motor Transport Battalion  
 Detachment, Ordnance Company, 1st Service  
 Battalion (Attached: 2d Platoon, 1st Bomb  
 Disposal Company, less 2d and 3d Squads)  
 Detachment, Service and Supply Company, 1st  
 Service Battalion  
 1st Platoon, 1st Military Police Company  
 Detachment, 4th Joint Assault Signal Company  
 Detachment, 454th Amphibian Truck Company  
 (USA)  
 Combat Team 5  
 5th Marines  
 Co B, 1st Engineer Battalion  
 Co B, 1st Pioneer Battalion  
 Co B, 1st Medical Battalion  
 Co B, 1st Motor Transport Battalion  
 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion (less detach-  
 ments)  
 Detachment, Ordnance Company, 1st Service  
 Battalion  
 (Attached: 3d Squad, 2d Platoon, 1st Bomb  
 Disposal Company)  
 Detachment, Service and Supply Company, 1st  
 Service Battalion

2d Platoon, 1st Military Police Company  
 Detachment, 454th Amphibian Truck Company  
 (USA)  
 Detachment, 4th Joint Assault Signal Company  
 Combat Team 7  
 7th Marines  
 Co C, 1st Engineer Battalion  
 Co C, 1st Pioneer Battalion  
 Co C, 1st Medical Battalion  
 Co C, 1st Motor Transport Battalion  
 8th Amphibian Tractor Battalion (less detach-  
 ments)  
 Detachment, Ordnance Company, 1st Service  
 Battalion (Attached: 2d Squad, 2d Platoon,  
 1st Bomb Disposal Company)  
 Detachment, Service and Supply Company, 1st  
 Service Battalion  
 3d Platoon, 1st Military Police Company  
 Detachment, 454th Amphibian Truck Company  
 (USA)  
 Detachment, 4th Joint Assault Signal Company  
 Artillery Group  
 11th Marines  
 3d Amphibian Truck Company  
 Detachment, 454th Amphibian Truck Company  
 (USA)  
 Marine Observation Squadron 3  
 Detachment, 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion  
 Detachment, 8th Amphibian Tractor Battalion  
 Armored Amphibian Tractor Group  
 3d Armored Amphibian Tractor Battalion (Pro-  
 visional)  
 Tank Group  
 1st Tank Battalion  
 Detachment, 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion  
 Detachment, 8th Amphibian Tractor Battalion  
 Tank Maintenance Platoon, Ordnance Company,  
 1st Service Battalion  
 Engineer Group  
 1st Engineer Battalion (less Companies A, B,  
 and C)  
 145th Naval Construction Battalion (less de-  
 tachments)  
 Shore Party Group  
 1st Pioneer Battalion (less Companies A, B,  
 and C)  
 One-half, 11th Special Naval Construction Bat-  
 talion  
 Detachment, 145th Naval Construction Battalion  
 Detachment, 4th Joint Assault Signal Company  
 Replacement Group  
 Service Group  
 1st Service Battalion (less detachments)  
 1st Motor Transport Battalion (less Companies  
 A, B, and C)  
 2d Platoon, 1st Laundry Company  
 Military Police Group  
 1st Military Police Company (less 1st, 2d, and  
 3d Platoons)  
 Company B, 1st Provisional Military Police Bat-  
 talion (USA)

VI. 6th Marine Division (Reinforced) . . . MajGen  
Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr.

Division Troops

Headquarters Battalion (less detachments)  
Company C, 1st Provisional Military Police Battalion (USA)  
6th Joint Assault Signal Company (less detachments)  
6th Amphibian Truck Company (less detachments)  
Detachment A-3, Military Government  
Detachment B-3, Military Government  
Corps Artillery Liaison Teams  
Early Air Warning Team

Combat Team 4

4th Marines (less 2d Battalion (less Company E))  
Company A, 6th Engineer Battalion (less 2d Platoon)  
Company A, 6th Pioneer Battalion (less 2d Platoon)  
Company A, 6th Motor Transport Battalion (less 2d Platoon)  
Company A, 6th Medical Battalion (less one collecting section)  
Detachment, 26th Replacement Draft  
Detachment, 33d Replacement Draft  
1st Platoon, 6th Military Police Company (less detachment)  
1st Platoon, Ordnance Company, 6th Service Battalion (less detachment)  
1st Platoon, Service and Supply Company, 6th Service Battalion (less Post Exchange Section and detachment)  
Detachment, 58th Naval Construction Battalion  
Detachment, 11th Special Naval Construction Battalion  
Detachment, 6th Amphibian Truck Company  
1st Band Section (less detachment)  
1st Shore Fire Control Party, 6th Joint Assault Signal Company (less detachment)  
1st Air-Ground Liaison Party, 6th Joint Assault Signal Company (less detachment)  
1st Shore Party Communication Team, 6th Joint Assault Signal Company (less detachment)  
1st Section, 3d Platoon, 1st Bomb Disposal Company

Combat Team 22

22d Marines  
Company B, 6th Engineer Battalion  
Company B, 6th Pioneer Battalion  
Company B, 6th Motor Transport Battalion  
Company B, 6th Medical Battalion  
Detachment, 26th Replacement Draft  
Detachment, 33d Replacement Draft  
2d Platoon, 6th Military Police Company  
2d Platoon, Ordnance Company, 6th Service Battalion

2d Platoon, Service and Supply Company, 6th Service Battalion (less Post Exchange Section)

Detachment, 58th Naval Construction Battalion  
Detachment, 11th Special Naval Construction Battalion

Detachment, 814th Amphibian Truck Company (USA)

5th Provisional Rocket Detachment

2d Band Section

3d Platoon, 1st Bomb Disposal Company (less 1st Section)

2d Shore Fire Control Party, 6th Joint Assault Signal Company

2d Air-Ground Liaison Party, 6th Joint Assault Signal Company

2d Shore Party Communication Team, 6th Joint Assault Signal Company

Division Artillery Group

15th Marines

Detachment, 6th Amphibian Truck Company

Detachment, 814th Amphibian Truck Company (USA)

Marine Observation Squadron 6

Armored Amphibian Group

1st Armored Amphibian Battalion

3-9-A Unit

Tank Group

6th Tank Battalion (less Company A)

Tank Maintenance Platoon, Ordnance Company, 6th Service Battalion

1st Amphibian Tractor Group

9th Amphibian Tractor Battalion

2d Amphibian Tractor Group

4th Amphibian Tractor Battalion

Engineer Group

6th Engineer Battalion (less detachments)

58th Naval Construction Battalion (less detachments)

Shore Party Group

6th Pioneer Battalion (less detachments)

26th Replacement Draft (less detachments)

33d Replacement Draft (less detachments)

Detachment, 6th Joint Assault Signal Company

814th Amphibian Truck Company (less detachments)

One-half, 11th Special Naval Construction Battalion (less detachments)

Service Group

6th Service Battalion (less detachments)

6th Motor Transport Battalion (less detachments)

6th Medical Battalion (less detachments)

(Attached: G-10 and G-11 Dispensary Units)

Division Reserve

2d Battalion, 4th Marines (less Company E)

2d Platoon, Weapons Company, 4th Marines

2d Platoon, Company A, 6th Engineer Battalion

2d Platoon, Company A, 6th Pioneer Battalion

2d Platoon, Company A, 6th Motor Transport  
Battalion  
Detachment, Collection Section, Company A, 6th  
Medical Battalion  
Detachment, 28th Replacement Draft  
Detachment, 33d Replacement Draft  
Detachment, 11th Special Naval Construction  
Battalion  
Detachment, 1st Band Section  
Detachment, 1st Platoon, 6th Military Police  
Company

Detachment, 1st Platoon, Ordnance Company,  
6th Service Battalion  
Detachment, 1st Platoon, Service and Supply  
Company, 6th Service Battalion  
Detachment, 1st Shore Fire Control Party, 6th  
Joint Assault Signal Company  
Detachment, 1st Air-Ground Liaison Party, 6th  
Joint Assault Signal Company  
Detachment, Shore Party Communication Team,  
6th Joint Assault Signal Company



OKINAWA: VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC

APPENDIX V

Japanese Order of Battle<sup>1</sup>

| ARMY UNITS                               |          | Unit  | Strength |
|--|----------|---|----------|
| Unit                                     | Strength |   |          |
| Thirty-second Army Troops                |          | 1st Field Hospital.....                       | 174      |
| Headquarters.....                        | 1,070    | 2d Field Hospital.....                        | 181      |
| Ordnance Depot.....                      | 1,498    | 62d Infantry Division                         |          |
| Ordnance Duty Unit.....                  | 150      | Headquarters.....                             | 65       |
| Field Freight Depot.....                 | 1,167    | 63d Brigade Headquarters.....                 | 129      |
| 36th Signal Regiment.....                | 1,912    | 11th Independent Infantry Battalion.....      | 1,091    |
| Okinawa Army Hospital.....               | 204      | 12th Independent Infantry Battalion.....      | 1,085    |
| 27th Field Water Purification Unit.....  | 244      | 13th Independent Infantry Battalion.....      | 1,058    |
| Well Digging Unit.....                   | 34       | 14th Independent Infantry Battalion.....      | 1,085    |
| Defense Construction Unit.....           | 108      | 273d Independent Infantry Battalion.....      | 683      |
| 7th Fortress Construction Duty Company.. | 322      | 64th Brigade Headquarters.....                | 121      |
| 2d Field Construction Duty Company.....  | 366      | 15th Independent Infantry Battalion.....      | 1,076    |
| 24th Infantry Division                   |          | 21st Independent Infantry Battalion.....      | 1,080    |
| Headquarters.....                        | 267      | 22d Independent Infantry Battalion.....       | 1,071    |
| 22d Infantry Regiment.....               | 2,796    | 23d Independent Infantry Battalion.....       | 1,089    |
| 32d Infantry Regiment.....               | 2,870    | 272d Independent Infantry Battalion.....      | 683      |
| 89th Infantry Regiment.....              | 2,809    | Engineer Unit.....                            | 255      |
| 42d Field Artillery Regiment.....        | 2,321    | Signal Unit.....                              | 350      |
| 24th Reconnaissance Regiment.....        | 346      | Transport Unit.....                           | 300      |
| 24th Engineer Regiment.....              | 777      | Field Hospital.....                           | 371      |
| 24th Transport Regiment.....             | 1,158    | Veterinary Hospital.....                      | 22       |
| Signal Unit.....                         | 275      | 44th Independent Mixed Brigade                |          |
| Decontamination Training Unit.....       | 77       | Headquarters.....                             | 63       |
| Ordnance Repair Unit.....                | 57       | 2d Infantry Unit.....                         | 2,046    |
| Veterinary Hospital.....                 | 11       | 15th Independent Mixed Regiment.....          | 1,885    |
| Water Supply and Purification Unit.....  | 241      | Artillery Unit.....                           | 330      |
|  |          | Engineer Unit.....                            | 101      |
|  |          | 5th Artillery Command                         |          |
|  |          | Headquarters.....                             | 147      |
|  |          | 1st Medium Artillery Regiment (-).....        | 856      |
|  |          | 23d Medium Artillery Regiment.....            | 1,143    |
|  |          | 7th Heavy Artillery Regiment.....             | 526      |
|  |          | 100th Independent Heavy Artillery Battalion.. | 565      |
|  |          | 1st Independent Artillery Mortar Regiment     |          |
|  |          | (-).....                                      | 613      |
|  |          | 1st Light Mortar Battalion.....               | 633      |
|  |          | 2d Light Mortar Battalion.....                | 615      |

<sup>1</sup> The order of battle is based on a listing compiled by Tenth Army G-2 contained in *IntelMono*, Part I, Sect B, Chap II, 3. Obvious discrepancies in this list have been corrected with the aid of *POW InterrSum* Nos 1-10 and *CICAS Trans* No 212, Extracts from 32d Army Order of Battle, mid-March 1945. Units are listed by their original designation with the strengths they are believed to have had just prior to the American landings.





| <i>Unit</i>  | <i>Strength</i> |
|--|-----------------|
| Students.....  | 600             |
| Regular Conscripts Not Included Under Army<br>Units..... | 2,000           |
| <i>Okinawan Total</i> .....                              | 23,350          |
| <i>Grand Total (Rounded Out)</i>                         |                 |
| <i>Army Units</i> .....                                  | 67,000          |
| <i>Navy Units</i> .....                                  | 9,000           |

| <i>Unit</i>                               | <i>Strength</i> |
|---|-----------------|
| <i>Okinawans</i> .....                    | 24,000          |
| <u>Japanese Strength On Okinawa</u> ..... | <u>*100,000</u> |

\*Final figures have been rounded out to avoid the appearance of exactness. Thirty-second Army's peak combat strength may have been anywhere between 95,000 and 105,000.



OKINAWA: VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC

APPENDIX VI

# Marine Casualties

1 APRIL-22 JUNE 1945

| MARINE CASUALTIES           | KIA     |          | DOW     |          | WIA     |          | MIAPD   |          | CF      |          | TOTAL   |          |
|-----------------------------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|
|                             | Officer | Enlisted | Officer | Enlisted | Officer | Enlisted | Officer | Enlisted | Officer | Enlisted | Officer | Enlisted |
| ReconBn, FMFPac.....        |         | 3        |         |          | 2       | 10       |         |          |         | 3        | 2       | 16       |
| IIIAC Troops                |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| H&S Bn.....                 |         | 7        | 1       | 2        | 11      | 36       |         |          |         | 4        | 12      | 49       |
| MedBn.....                  |         |          |         |          |         | 4        |         |          |         | 6        |         | 10       |
| SigBn.....                  |         | 4        |         |          | 1       | 25       |         |          | 1       |          | 2       | 29       |
| 1st MP Bn.....              |         | 5        |         |          |         | 21       |         |          |         | 2        |         | 28       |
| 1st SepEngBn.....           |         | 1        |         | 1        |         | 22       |         |          | 1       | 12       | 1       | 36       |
| 11th MT Bn.....             |         |          |         | 1        |         | 12       |         |          |         | 2        |         | 15       |
| 7th ServRegt.....           |         | 1        |         |          | 2       | 28       |         |          |         | 8        | 2       | 37       |
| IIIAC Artillery             |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| HqBtry.....                 | 1       | 1        | 1       | 1        | 2       | 9        |         |          |         |          | 4       | 11       |
| HqBtry, 1st ProvAAAGrp..... |         | 1        |         | 1        |         | 3        |         |          |         |          |         | 5        |
| 2d AAA Bn.....              |         |          |         |          | 1       | 11       |         |          |         | 4        | 1       | 15       |
| 5th AAA Bn.....             |         | 1        |         |          | 1       | 10       |         |          |         | 1        | 1       | 12       |
| 8th AAA Bn.....             |         |          |         | 1        | 2       | 8        |         |          |         |          | 2       | 9        |
| 16th AAA Bn.....            |         | 2        |         | 2        |         | 32       |         |          |         | 2        |         | 38       |
| HqBtry, 2d ProvFAGrp.....   |         |          |         |          |         | 2        |         |          |         | 1        |         | 3        |
| 1st 155mm HowBn.....        |         | 1        |         | 1        |         | 27       |         | 1        |         | 1        |         | 31       |
| 3d 155mm HowBn.....         |         | 2        |         | 2        | 3       | 16       | 1       |          |         | 3        | 4       | 23       |
| 6th 155mm HowBn.....        |         | 1        |         | 2        | 1       | 25       |         |          |         | 1        | 1       | 29       |
| 7th 155mm GunBn.....        |         |          |         | 1        |         | 2        |         |          |         |          |         | 3        |
| 8th 155mm GunBn.....        |         |          |         |          |         | 9        |         |          |         | 4        |         | 13       |
| 9th 155mm GunBn.....        |         | 1        |         |          | 1       | 10       |         |          |         | 1        | 1       | 12       |
| 1st Marine Division         |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| HqBn.....                   | 2       | 22       |         | 3        | 11      | 117      |         |          | 1       | 10       | 14      | 152      |
| 1st EngBn.....              | 1       | 11       |         | 5        | 6       | 119      |         |          | 1       | 5        | 8       | 140      |
| 1st MedBn.....              |         |          |         |          | 2       | 12       |         |          |         |          | 2       | 12       |
| 1st MT Bn.....              |         | 1        |         |          |         | 25       |         |          | 1       | 1        | 1       | 27       |
| 1st PionBn.....             |         | 1        |         | 2        | 1       | 28       |         |          |         | 4        | 1       | 35       |
| 1st ServBn.....             |         | 2        |         |          |         | 39       |         |          |         | 6        | 1       | 47       |
| 1st TkBn.....               | 2       | 12       | 1       | 1        | 15      | 135      |         |          |         | 3        | 18      | 151      |
| 3d LVT(A) Bn.....           |         | 1        |         | 1        | 3       | 43       |         |          |         | 3        | 3       | 48       |

See footnote at end of table.

| MARINE CASUALTIES             | KIA     |          | DOW     |          | WIA     |          | MIAPD   |          | CF      |          | TOTAL   |          |
|-------------------------------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|
|                               | Officer | Enlisted | Officer | Enlisted | Officer | Enlisted | Officer | Enlisted | Officer | Enlisted | Officer | Enlisted |
| 1st Marine Division—Continued |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| 1st LVT Bn.....               |         | 1        |         | 1        | 5       | 24       |         |          |         | 4        | 5       | 30       |
| 8th LVT Bn.....               |         | 3        |         |          | 2       | 22       |         |          |         |          | 2       | 25       |
| 1st MarRegt                   |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| H&S and WpnsCos.....          |         | 8        |         |          | 3       | 53       |         |          |         | 3        | 3       | 64       |
| 1st Bn.....                   | 11      | 109      |         | 10       | 25      | 635      |         |          |         | 108      | 36      | 862      |
| 2d Bn.....                    | 5       | 126      |         | 15       | 22      | 630      |         |          | 1       | 76       | 28      | 847      |
| 3d Bn.....                    | 3       | 89       |         | 15       | 25      | 673      |         |          |         | 77       | 28      | 854      |
| 5th MarRegt                   |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| H&S and WpnsCos.....          |         | 8        | 1       |          | 1       | 52       |         |          |         | 3        | 2       | 63       |
| 1st Bn.....                   | 2       | 117      | 1       | 14       | 28      | 572      |         |          |         | 30       | 31      | 733      |
| 2d Bn.....                    | 5       | 113      | 2       | 14       | 27      | 540      |         |          |         | 34       | 34      | 701      |
| 3d Bn.....                    | 4       | 79       | 1       | 12       | 21      | 405      |         |          |         | 43       | 26      | 539      |
| 7th MarRegt                   |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| H&S and WpnsCos.....          | 2       | 17       |         | 2        | 7       | 105      |         | 1        |         | 4        | 9       | 129      |
| 1st Bn.....                   | 5       | 91       | 2       | 9        | 28      | 557      |         |          |         | 42       | 35      | 699      |
| 2d Bn.....                    | 4       | 125      | 2       | 21       | 27      | 608      |         | 1        |         | 29       | 33      | 784      |
| 3d Bn.....                    | 6       | 83       | 1       | 14       | 26      | 475      |         |          |         | 34       | 33      | 606      |
| 11th MarRegt                  |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| H&S Btry.....                 |         | 1        |         | 1        | 3       | 10       |         |          |         | 1        | 3       | 13       |
| 1st Bn.....                   | 1       | 3        | 1       | 1        | 2       | 47       |         | 1        |         |          | 4       | 52       |
| 2d Bn.....                    |         | 5        |         | 5        | 6       | 52       |         |          |         |          | 6       | 62       |
| 3d Bn.....                    |         | 3        | 1       | 2        | 9       | 64       |         |          |         | 1        | 10      | 70       |
| 4th Bn.....                   | 3       | 5        |         | 1        | 5       | 52       |         |          |         | 1        | 8       | 59       |
| 8th CT                        |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| H&S and WpnsCos.....          |         | 1        |         | 2        | 2       | 15       |         |          |         | 1        | 2       | 19       |
| 1st Bn.....                   | 1       | 3        |         |          | 1       | 50       |         |          |         | 1        | 2       | 54       |
| 2d Bn.....                    |         | 13       |         | 3        | 1       | 115      |         |          |         | 12       | 1       | 143      |
| 3d Bn.....                    |         | 16       |         | 4        | 4       | 99       |         |          |         | 7        | 4       | 126      |
| Reinforcing Units.....        |         | 3        |         | 2        | 3       | 38       |         |          | 1       | 7        | 4       | 50       |
| 6th Marine Division           |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| Hq Bn.....                    | 1       | 25       | 1       | 3        | 22      | 165      |         |          | 1       | 64       | 25      | 257      |
| 6th Eng Bn.....               |         | 10       |         | 6        | 10      | 146      |         |          |         | 15       | 10      | 177      |
| 6th Med Bn.....               |         |          |         |          |         | 8        |         |          |         | 1        |         | 9        |
| 6th MT Bn.....                |         |          |         | 1        | 7       | 17       |         |          |         | 1        | 7       | 19       |
| 6th Pion Bn.....              |         | 4        |         |          | 3       | 50       |         |          |         | 9        | 3       | 63       |
| 6th Serv Bn.....              |         | 9        |         |          |         | 32       |         |          |         | 5        |         | 46       |
| 6th Tk Bn.....                | 1       | 7        |         | 2        | 19      | 105      |         |          |         | 2        | 20      | 116      |
| 1st LVT(A) Bn.....            |         | 2        |         | 1        |         | 39       |         | 1        |         | 4        |         | 47       |
| 4th LVT Bn.....               |         | 1        |         | 1        | 2       | 26       |         |          |         | 3        | 2       | 31       |
| 9th LVT Bn.....               |         | 3        |         | 1        |         | 48       |         |          |         | 2        |         | 54       |
| 4th MarRegt                   |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| H&S and WpnsCos.....          |         | 16       | 1       | 6        | 6       | 101      |         |          | 1       | 5        | 8       | 128      |
| 1st Bn.....                   | 13      | 113      | 4       | 28       | 38      | 699      |         | 3        |         | 42       | 55      | 885      |
| 2d Bn.....                    | 7       | 120      | 2       | 32       | 30      | 799      |         | 1        | 1       | 45       | 40      | 997      |
| 3d Bn.....                    | 3       | 128      | 2       | 25       | 33      | 735      |         |          |         | 67       | 38      | 955      |
| 22d MarRegt                   |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| H&S and WpnsCos.....          | 1       | 7        |         | 9        | 5       | 71       |         |          | 1       | 13       | 7       | 100      |
| 1st Bn.....                   | 9       | 143      |         | 21       | 38      | 582      |         |          | 1       | 158      | 48      | 904      |
| 2d Bn.....                    | 6       | 127      | 3       | 26       | 31      | 555      |         |          | 2       | 190      | 42      | 898      |
| 3d Bn.....                    | 3       | 101      |         | 33       | 34      | 659      |         |          | 1       | 141      | 38      | 934      |

See footnote at end of table.

| MARINE CASUALTIES             | KIA     |          | DOW     |          | WIA     |          | MIAPD   |          | CF      |          | TOTAL   |          |
|-------------------------------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|
|                               | Officer | Enlisted | Officer | Enlisted | Officer | Enlisted | Officer | Enlisted | Officer | Enlisted | Officer | Enlisted |
| 6th Marine Division—Continued |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| 29th MarRegt                  |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| H&S and WpnsCo.....           |         | 14       |         |          | 4       | 71       |         |          | 1       | 6        | 5       | 91       |
| 1st Bn.....                   | 9       | 133      | 1       | 31       | 40      | 679      |         | 1        | 1       | 47       | 51      | 891      |
| 2d Bn.....                    | 10      | 129      |         | 16       | 20      | 583      |         | 4        |         | 52       | 30      | 784      |
| 3d Bn.....                    | 3       | 175      | 3       | 27       | 26      | 676      |         |          | 2       | 57       | 34      | 935      |
| 15th MarRegt                  |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| H&S Btry.....                 |         |          |         |          |         | 6        |         |          |         | 2        |         | 8        |
| 1st Bn.....                   | 2       | 9        | 1       | 1        | 7       | 55       |         |          |         | 5        | 10      | 70       |
| 2d Bn.....                    | 1       | 9        |         | 1        | 6       | 66       | 1       |          | 1       | 5        | 9       | 81       |
| 3d Bn.....                    |         | 3        |         |          | 5       | 29       |         |          |         |          | 5       | 32       |
| 4th Bn.....                   | 2       | 5        |         | 3        | 2       | 39       |         |          |         | 3        | 4       | 50       |
| 2d Marine Air Wing            |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| HqSqn.....                    | 1       | 1        |         |          | 8       | 11       |         |          | 2       |          | 11      | 12       |
| VMO-3.....                    |         |          |         |          | 2       | 1        | 1       |          |         |          | 3       | 1        |
| VMO-6.....                    | 1       | 1        |         |          | 1       |          | 1       |          |         |          | 3       | 1        |
| VMO-7.....                    |         |          |         |          | 1       |          |         |          |         |          | 1       |          |
| MAG-14                        |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| HqSqn-14.....                 |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         | 1        |         | 1        |
| SMS-14.....                   |         |          |         |          |         | 1        |         |          |         |          |         | 1        |
| VMF-212.....                  | 2       |          |         |          |         | 1        | 3       |          |         |          | 5       | 1        |
| VMF-222.....                  |         |          |         |          | 1       |          | 1       |          |         |          | 2       |          |
| VMF-223.....                  |         |          |         |          | 2       |          | 2       |          |         | 1        | 4       | 1        |
| MAG-22                        |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| HqSqn-22.....                 |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| SMS-22.....                   |         |          |         |          | 1       | 1        |         |          |         | 1        | 1       | 2        |
| VMF-113.....                  |         | 6        |         | 1        | 5       | 24       | 1       |          |         | 1        | 6       | 32       |
| VMF-314.....                  | 1       |          |         |          | 2       |          | 1       |          |         |          | 4       |          |
| VMF-422.....                  | 1       |          |         |          | 1       | 3        |         |          |         |          | 2       | 3        |
| VMF(N)-533.....               |         |          |         |          | 1       |          |         |          |         |          | 1       |          |
| VMTB-131.....                 |         | 1        |         |          |         | 1        | 1       | 2        |         | 1        | 1       | 5        |
| MAG-31                        |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| HqSqn-31.....                 |         |          |         |          | 1       | 18       |         |          |         | 1        | 1       | 19       |
| SMS-31.....                   |         |          |         |          | 2       |          |         |          |         |          | 2       |          |
| VMF-224.....                  | 1       |          |         |          | 1       | 8        | 1       |          |         |          | 3       | 8        |
| VMF-311.....                  | 4       | 1        |         |          | 2       | 4        |         |          |         | 1        | 6       | 6        |
| VMF-441.....                  | 3       |          |         |          | 3       | 1        | 5       |          |         |          | 11      | 1        |
| VMF(N)-542.....               |         |          |         |          |         | 9        | 2       |          |         |          | 2       | 9        |
| MAG-33                        |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| HqSqn-33.....                 |         |          |         |          |         | 2        |         |          |         |          |         | 2        |
| SMS-33.....                   |         | 1        |         | 2        |         | 9        |         |          | 1       |          | 1       | 12       |
| VMF-312.....                  | 2       | 1        |         |          | 5       | 1        | 2       |          | 2       | 1        | 11      | 3        |
| VMF-322.....                  | 2       |          |         |          | 2       | 8        | 2       |          |         | 1        | 6       | 9        |
| VMF-323.....                  | 2       |          |         |          | 2       | 3        | 2       |          |         | 1        | 6       | 4        |
| VMF(N)-543.....               | 3       |          |         |          | 2       | 4        | 2       |          |         |          | 7       | 4        |
| VMTB-232.....                 | 1       | 3        |         |          | 3       | 20       | 1       | 1        |         |          | 5       | 24       |
| MAG-43                        |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |         |          |
| HqSqn-43.....                 |         | 4        |         | 2        | 1       | 13       |         |          |         | 2        | 1       | 21       |
| AWS-1.....                    |         |          |         |          |         | 1        |         |          |         |          |         | 1        |
| AWS-6.....                    |         |          |         |          |         | 3        |         |          |         |          |         | 3        |
| AWS-7.....                    |         | 2        |         | 3        | 1       | 8        |         |          |         |          | 1       | 13       |
| AWS-8.....                    |         |          |         | 1        | 1       | 7        |         |          |         |          | 1       | 8        |

See footnote at end of table.

| MARINE CASUALTIES   | KIA        |              | DOW       |            | WIA        |               | MIAPD     |           | CF        |              | TOTAL        |               |
|---|------------|--------------|-----------|------------|------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
|   | Officer    | Enlisted     | Officer   | Enlisted   | Officer    | Enlisted      | Officer   | Enlisted  | Officer   | Enlisted     | Officer      | Enlisted      |
| Replacement Drafts <sup>2</sup> .....                               | 1          | 157          | 1         | 28         | 9          | 735           |           | 1         | 1         | 34           | 12           | 955           |
| Miscellaneous Air <sup>3</sup> .....                                | 4          |              | 1         |            | 9          | 11            | 4         |           |           |              | 18           | 11            |
| Miscellaneous Ground <sup>4</sup> .....                             |            | 16           |           | 8          |            | 117           |           |           | 3         | 14           | 3            | 155           |
| <b>Total Casualties</b> .....                                       | <b>158</b> | <b>2,590</b> | <b>35</b> | <b>494</b> | <b>806</b> | <b>14,799</b> | <b>34</b> | <b>18</b> | <b>29</b> | <b>1,609</b> | <b>1,062</b> | <b>19,510</b> |
| Marine Ship Detachments.....  | 1          | 47           |           | 1          | 8          | 97            |           | 10        |           | 5            | 9            | 160           |
| Marine Carrier Air Detachments.....                                 | 10         | 40           |           |            | 7          | 6             | 2         |           | 1         | 1            | 20           | 47            |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL, MARINE CASUALTIES</b> .....                         | <b>169</b> | <b>2,677</b> | <b>35</b> | <b>495</b> | <b>821</b> | <b>14,902</b> | <b>36</b> | <b>28</b> | <b>30</b> | <b>1,615</b> | <b>1,091</b> | <b>19,717</b> |
| Naval Medical Personnel Attached to Marine Units <sup>5</sup> ..... | 1          | 108          |           | 9          | 12         | 430           |           |           |           |              | 13           | 547           |

<sup>1</sup> These final casualty figures for World War II were compiled from records furnished by Statistics Unit, Personnel Accounting Section, Personnel Department, Headquarters Marine Corps. They are audited to include 28Aug52. The key to the abbreviations used at the head of columns in the table follows: KIA, Killed in Action; DOW, Diew of Wounds; WIA, Wounded in Action; MIAPD, Missing in Action, Presumed Dead; CF, Combat Fatigue.

<sup>2</sup> Most members of replacement drafts who became casualties did so as members of regular combat units. In many instances, these men were hit before official notice of their transfer reached Headquarters Marine Corps, and therefore, they are carried on the casualty rolls as members of the various drafts.

<sup>3</sup> Included in the miscellaneous categories are those men whose personnel records still showed them as members of units not part of Tenth Army when the report of their becoming a casualty reached Headquarters Marine Corps.

<sup>4</sup> This category includes the casualties suffered by the 2dMarDiv while it was in the Okinawa area.

<sup>5</sup> Because of the method of reporting casualties used during World War II a substantial number of DOW figures are also included in the WIA Total.

<sup>6</sup> Compiled from NavMed P-5021, *The History of The Medical Department of the Navy in World War II*, vol 2, (Washington, 1953). Personnel MIAPD are included in the KIA total; no breakdown of combat fatigue cases is provided.

AMOUNT OF AMMO EXPENDED DURING THE BATTLE OF OKINAWA:  
 BY THE U.S. ARMY, U.S. MARINE CORPS AND THE U.S. NAVY:

|                      |            |      |                    |
|----------------------|------------|------|--------------------|
| 75MM HOWITZER        | 166,068    | FIRE |                    |
| 105MM HOWITZER       | 1,104,630  | "    |                    |
| 155MM HOWITZER       | 346,914    | "    |                    |
| 155MM GUN            | 129,624    | "    |                    |
| 8 INCH HOWITZER      | 19,116     | "    |                    |
| <hr/>                |            |      |                    |
| HAND GRENADES        | 368,734    |      |                    |
| RIFLE GRENADES       | 25,670     | FIRE |                    |
| .45 CAL. SUB M.G.    | 1,461,180  | "    | (INCLUDES PISTOLS) |
| .30 CAL. CARBINE     | 2,009,597  | "    |                    |
| .30 CAL. RIFLE       | 9,267,923  |      | (INCLUDES B.A.R.)  |
| .30 CAL. MACHINE GUN | 18,285,499 | "    |                    |
| .50 CAL. MACHINE GUN | 786,754    | "    |                    |
| <hr/>                |            |      |                    |
| 75 MM GUN            | 104,893    | "    |                    |
| 57 MM GUN            | 21,997     | "    |                    |
| 37 MM GUN            | 87,193     | "    |                    |
| 81 MM MORTAR         | 443,589    | "    |                    |
| 60 MM MORTAR         | 521,301    | "    |                    |
| <hr/>                |            |      |                    |
| 5 INCH STAR SHELLS   | 66,653     | FIRE | BY U.S. NAVY       |
| 5 INCH HC            | 432,008    | "    |                    |
| 6 INCH HC            | 46,020     | "    |                    |
| 8 INCH HC            | 32,180     | "    |                    |
| 12 INCH HC           | 2,700      | "    |                    |
| 14 INCH HC           | 16,046     | "    |                    |
| 16 INCH HC           | 4,411      | "    |                    |