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2D RAIDER BATTALION
AUGUST 1942

BOUGAINVILLE
2D PROVISIONAL RAIDER REGIMENT
NOVEMBER 1943

RUSSELL ISLANDS
3D RAIDER BATTALION - FEBRUARY 1943

TULAGI
1ST RAIDER BATTALION - AUGUST 1942

GUADALCANAL
1ST RAIDER BATTALION - SEPTEMBER 1942
2D RAIDER BATTALION - NOVEMBER 1942
4TH MARINES - FEBRUARY 1944
22D MARINES - APRIL 1944
29TH MARINES - SEPTEMBER 1944
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SAMOA
1ST RAIDER BN - APR. 1942
3D RAIDER BN - DEC. 1942
22D MARINES - JUNE 1942

NEW GEORGIA
1ST PROVISIONAL RAIDER REGIMENT
JULY 1943

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HISTORY OF THE SIXTH MARINE DIVISION

Easter Sunday, 1 April 1945: Armored amphibians head for Red and Green Beaches in the initial landing on Okinawa, Ryukyu Islands.

HISTORY OF

The Sixth Marine Division

Edited By
BEVAN G. CASS

WASHINGTON
INFANTRY JOURNAL PRESS

First Edition

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES IN COMBAT
IN WORLD WAR II
THIS HISTORY IS REVERENTLY
DEDICATED

Contents

Maps

Major General Lemuel Cornick Shepherd, Jr., Commanding General, Sixth Marine Division.

Foreword

THE HISTORY OF THE SIXTH MARINE DIVISION ON OKINAWA AND OF THE operations of its organic units during their campaigns throughout Melanesia, Micronesia, and the Orient in World War II has been ably recorded in this volume.

The account of the exploits of the brave Marines of the Striking Sixth who fought so valiantly on Okinawa will be of especial interest to those of you who participated in these stirring events and will also serve as a reminder to posterity of the glorious accomplishments of the Sixth Marine Division.

The bloody, hard-fought battle for Okinawa may be recorded in history as the decisive campaign of the Pacific War. It broke the cordon of defenses surrounding the Japanese homeland and clearly demonstrated the superiority of American arms and the quality of our fighting men over the best the enemy could muster. The fact that the collapse of Japan followed closely the Okinawa victory strongly indicates that the results of this battle influenced the Emperor's decision to sue for peace. To have participated as a member of the Sixth Marine Division in the final great battle of the Pacific War is a distinction of which every man can be justly proud.

The deeds of valor of our comrades-in-arms who made the supreme sacrifice for Corps and Country will live forever in the memory of those of us whom God has spared. The equally gallant men who bear the scars of war likewise deserve the everlasting gratitude of their countrymen. They, too, placed honor above life.

To have been your leader is the greatest honor that has come to me. I am intensely proud of the men who fought with the Sixth Marine Division and of the officers who led them. I thank you for your unfailing loyal support and commend your devotion to duty. My best wishes go with you throughout the years to come.

Lemuel C. Shepherd Jr.

Major General, U. S. Marine Corps

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Preface

THIS HISTORY IS THE OFFICIAL RECORD OF THE ACTIONS OF THE SIXTH MARINE DIVISION during World War II. It has not, however, been prepared with the view of making this volume solely an operation report. When it was directed that the history of the Sixth Marine Division be prepared, the purpose of its publication was carefully outlined. That purpose is threefold in nature.

First, extensive research and scrupulous care were exercised in gathering facts in order that an accurate tactical account of the operations of the Division might be of value to students of military science. It is only natural that details obtained from operation orders and special action reports are not as complete a picture of the action as is gained by those who were on the ground. As a consequence, every effort was made to contact Marines who took part in the fighting to fill in pertinent details where those details were missing from official records. Besides supplying the factual data required, members of the Division also supplied the human interest anecdotes which personalize this volume throughout.

Secondly, there is little opportunity for the Marine in the rifle squad to understand the overall purpose of the maneuvers of his particular squad or company as they fit into the larger plan of operations of his regiment or division. He is acutely aware only of what his fire team is doing to engage the enemy in battle and defeat him. This history, then, has been designed to recount the actions of the smaller units and show just how those actions made possible the accomplishments of the operation plans of the higher echelons of command. In Marine lingo, this is the "big picture" correlated to the actions of the rifleman.

The final purpose of this history is to tell a story to the families and friends of all Marines who served with the Sixth Division; the story of their brothers, sons and husbands in combat. Most important, it is our privilege to be able to forward this volume to the next of kin of our comrades who have found their final resting place high above Green Beach looking westward to the China Sea, that they might know the part their loved ones played in the history of our Corps and Country.

There are many officers and men of the Sixth Division who are responsible for this publication, who willingly and untiringly lent their valuable assistance in preparing the text. Mr. Fletcher Pratt, an able and well known military historian, was called upon to edit the final manuscript, and much credit is due him for his excellent work. To all of them grateful acknowledgment is made.

In the final analysis, however, the real credit for this history must go to you men who made it possible. This is a story not only for you, but of you. It tells of your meeting the enemy on his own terms and conquering him, of your friends and comrades who fought and died at your side; it is your biography.

BEVAN G. CASS
First Lieutenant, U. S. Marine Corps

Honorable Mention

AS STATED IN THE PREFACE, MANY OFFICERS AND MEN CONTRIBUTED valuable assistance in the preparation of this history. The following individuals, however, by their untiring efforts were largely responsible for the publication of this volume and to them is due special commendation:

Captain Phillips D. Carleton, USMCR, assigned to the Sixth Marine Division from the Historical Section, Headquarters Marine Corps, for the Okinawa campaign, conducted and recorded interviews with personnel of all ranks and grades with regard to combat operations and later wrote the original manuscript of the Division history.

Staff Sergeant Wayne F. Young, USMCR, of the Public Information Section contributed additional material to Captain Carleton's story and assisted in the editing of his manuscript.

Lieutenant Colonel Victor H. Krulak, USMC, checked the text against the official operation reports to insure its authenticity, and contributed materially by rewriting various sections and in the final phases of editing.

Major John J. Capolino, USMC, through his professional skill is responsible for the colored photographs reproduced in this volume.

First Lieutenant Bevan G. Cass, USMC, gave unstintingly of his time and with consuming interest attended to the many details connected with the assembly, printing and distribution of the Sixth Division History. His painstaking care in the arduous work of compiling the mailing list, in the preparation of the sketched maps, and in preparing and editing the book for publication is especially praiseworthy.

LEMUEL C. SHEPHERD, JR.,
Major General, U. S. Marine Corps

HISTORY OF THE SIXTH MARINE DIVISION

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From the Raider Battalions on Tulagi and Guadalcanal to the Sixth Marine Division assaulting the shores of Okinawa, amphibious landings were progressively perfected.

Chapter 1: The Sixth Marine Division

DURING THE SIEGE OF NAHA ON OKINAWA in May 1945 the Japanese continued to publish a daily newspaper in the ruined and flaming city. Its last issue contained this editorial:

> This Sixth Marine Division is a fresh unit. Among the badly mauled enemy it is a tiger's cub and their morale is high. Therefore in the heart of Shuri our forces and the enemy will lock in mortal struggle that will gradually mount in fury. If we deal the Sixth Marine Division a mortal blow, we will probably be able to control the enemy's destiny.
>
> The fierce attacks of our strong, bold troops, knowing no distinction between night and day, will daily inflict great damage on the Sixth Marine Division, and before long they will probably be annihilated. With a final great effort the situation will progress to our advantage.

The men of the Sixth have taken a not unreasonable pride in the fact that the defenders of Okinawa considered that the defeat of the Division would save the Island; for the unit had been activated only seven months before the campaign began, under the command of Major General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., who had crowned a career reaching back to World War I by leading the hard-fighting First Marine Brigade on Guam.

When the Division was assembled for the first time at Guadalcanal in September 1944, its component parts were mostly veteran; it was the only Marine division to be thus organized almost entirely around battle-tried units. The three infantry regiments were the 4th Marines, made up from the Raider Battalions, whose history reached back to Guadalcanal; the 22d Marines, which fought at Eniwetok; and a battalion of the 29th Marines, that saw fire in the fierce fighting for Mount Tapotchau on Saipan. Its artillery was the 15th Marines; the tank, engineer, pioneer, motor transport, service, and medical battalions all bore the numeral 6, as befitting their division, and included men with battle experience across the whole Pacific.

The last fact was reflected in the Division's shoulder patch—of a design suggested by General Shepherd himself—a circle of blue upon which a gold "6" covers a Crusader's sword of silver, with a red border bearing the words *Melanesia, Micronesia,* and *Orient.*

The special reference to Melanesia is to those islands and atolls of the South Pacific where the Raider Battalions did so well. The 1st Raider Battalion fought at Tulagi and Guadalcanal, the 2d at Makin Island and New Georgia, the 3d at New Georgia and Bougainville, the 4th at Bairoko and Viru Harbor on New Georgia, and the four were joined together as the 4th Regiment at Emirau.

Micronesia geographically comprises the islands that spray like stars across the Central Pacific. In this area the 22d Marines gained its battle experience at Eniwetok; the 1st Battalion of the 29th Marines on Saipan, and the First Provisional Marine Brigade (including the 4th and 22d Regiments) on Guam.

Orient, on the border of the patch, refers to the gallant stand at Bataan and Corregidor made by the old 4th Marines, "the China Regiment"; and when it was added to the patch, represented a hope as well as a history—the hope of carrying the war to the Japanese homeland.

In the fulfillment of that hope, Orient became the most significant of the trio of names; for at Okinawa the Sixth Division fought in the last great campaign of the war, and when it was over, the new 4th Marine Regiment was chosen as one of the two units to make the first conqueror's landing on Japanese shores in three thousand years of history. Shortly after the occupation the remainder of the Division embarked for the Shantung Peninsula in North China to assist the Chinese government in accomplishing the surrender and repatriation of Japanese troops in the Tsingtao area. The task was ended on April 1, 1946, and on that date, in the Orient, the Sixth Marine Division was inactivated—the only Marine Corps division that never saw the United States—formed overseas, fighting overseas, and disbanding overseas.

The 1st Battalion, 29th Marines, first met the enemy on the heavily fortified shores of Saipan.

Chapter 2: Origins of the Division Units

THE FACT THAT THE SIXTH MARINE DIVISION was brought together out of units already in the field lends more than ordinary interest to the story of its formation.

4TH MARINE REGIMENT

The history of the original 4th Regiment, "the Old 4th," goes back to March 1911, when it was organized at Camp Thomas, California, under the command of Colonel C. A. Doyen. It was reorganized in April 1914, and embarked that same month for the west coast of Mexico to stand off the cities of Acapulco, Mazatlán, and Guymas, ready for landing in case of emergency. It was back in the States by July and the following year the 1st and 2d Battalions were sent to the Exposition at San Francisco to set up two model camps.

After expeditionary service in Santo Domingo (1916), where the troops skirmished their way from Monte Cristi, D. R., to Santiago, personnel of the regiment served in the cities of Puerto Plata, Moca, La Vega, Sanchez, San Francisco de Macoris, and Monte Cristi until the withdrawal of American forces of occupation, in August 1924. The 4th Marines was dispatched to Shanghai, China, in 1927, on the heels of a series of "incidents" there. It remained on duty in the International Settlement until November 28, 1941, by which time it was known throughout the service as the "China Regiment." By that date Tojo's government had come into power in Japan, the nation was in control of French Indo-China and was engaged in movements so aggressive that it was clear only an unexpected change of heart could avert hostilities. The 4th was ordered to the Philippines, where it arrived December 2, less than a week before Japan attacked, and the troops of the 1st Separate Battalion, already on duty in the Islands, were merged with it, bringing the regiment's total strength from 48 officers and 718 enlisted to 72 officers and 1,490 enlisted.

The regiment fought all through the Bataan campaign, and was still holding the enemy back from the beaches of Corregidor on that last sad day in May 1942, when Lieutenant General Jonathan Wainwright announced that further resistance was useless. Lieutenant General Thomas Holcomb was Commandant of the Marine Corps at that time and he immediately announced that a new 4th Regiment would be formed during the next two years from those Marine units which distinguished themselves most highly in combat.

By January 1944, the hour had come to make the choice, and it fell on the four Marine Raider Battalions. They were a type of organization new in name, if not in spirit, to the Marine Corps, the 1st being formed at Quantico, Virginia, in February-March, 1942, chiefly of men drawn from the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, with the then Lieutenant Colonel Merritt A. Edson in command. The Raiders supplied the need for fast, hard-hitting troops, particularly fitted for landings on beaches ordinarily regarded as inaccessible. Their success was dependent on the element of surprise and they were prepared to operate from submarines, destroyers, air transports, or regular Navy transports. They also were used for guerrilla operations behind enemy lines as troops capable of sustaining themselves for a long period of time without access to established lines of communication.

By April 1, organization and preliminary training were complete; the battalion sailed for Samoa and intensive combat training. The July 4 that followed was one of the gloomiest in American history. A great victory had been won at Midway, but the German submarines were at their peak in the Atlantic, the German armies were hurrying toward the Volga and the Nile, and the best opinion held that it would take ten to fifteen years to beat Japan. On that date and under those auspices, the new Raider Battalion embarked for a place whose name few of its men had ever heard—the island of Tulagi, across a twenty-mile channel from the equally unfamiliar island of Guadalcanal.

They struck the Tulagi beach on August 7, 1942, while General Vandegrift's First Marine Division was attacking the larger island. The initial landing was accomplished easily and at light cost, but then the Raiders for the first time came up against those typical Japanese defenses that called upon them to make good their boast that they would, under Edson, "charge hell with a teacup of water." There were caves and blockhouses which could only be

Marine Raiders crossing a stream on Guadalcanal.

attacked on foot, defended by enemies who genuinely fought to the last man, and who sortied for savage counterattacks under cover of darkness. When it was over, the Raiders realized they had come triumphantly through some of the most desperate fighting in the history of war; yet it was only a tentative first round of the main campaign.

For our forces had lost control of the sea in the Battle of Savo Island on the night of August 8; the Japanese counter-invaded Guadalcanal in great force, and Edson's Raiders were called across the channel to be the keystone of the American defense in the "Battle of Bloody Ridge," on the night of September 13-14. In that struggle, which lasted almost continuously for forty-eight hours, the Raiders and the 1st Parachute Battalion were together under the command of Colonel Edson. They broke the strength of the Japanese brigade, and their commander won the Medal of Honor, as did his executive, Major Kenneth Bailey, who was killed at the Matanikau before receiving his decoration.

Colonel Edson was now assigned to command the 5th Marine Regiment and command of the battalion passed to Lieutenant Colonel Samuel B. Griffith, who led the organization through more hard jungle fighting until October 14, when the 1st Raiders were withdrawn to New Caledonia, worn by wounds and malaria.

The 2d Raider Battalion had been organized at the same time as the 1st, but at Jacques Farm, near Camp Elliott, California, under Lieutenant Colonel Evans F. Carlson, an "old China hand," long and lean. They had a battle-cry—*Gung Ho!* which is Chinese for "Work together." Actually, this organization was at the front before the 1st Battalion, sailing for Hawaii in April of 1942 and being sent to Midway to bolster the defenses there in anticipation of the Japanese attack.

That attack was beaten off at sea. As soon as it was clear that it would never reach the beaches two companies of Carlson's men were embarked on submarines for a raid on Makin Island, as a cover and diversion for the attack on Guadalcanal–Tulagi farther south. They landed early in the morning of August 17 from rubber boats, wiped out the Japanese garrison and destroyed all its installations, including the radio station. After a brief period of rest in the Hawaiian area the battalion was moved down to Guadalcanal. There it operated for thirty-seven days behind the Japanese lines in thickest jungle, cost the enemy more casualties than its own total strength, and in December was withdrawn to Espíritu Santo Island for a needed rest.

The 1st and 2d Raiders were already in action when the 3d was being formed in Samoa under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Harry B. Liversedge. Their first combat assignment was the attack on the Russell Islands, west of Guadalcanal, four

Marines of the 2d Provisional Raider Regiment get a firm toehold on the jungle-covered beach at Bougainville.

months later, but the Japanese had left only outposts there and the conquest was almost bloodless. This battalion joined the 2d Battalion in September 1943, to form the 2d Provisional Raider Regiment under Lieutenant Colonel Alan Shapley, who had succeeded Colonel Carlson at the head of the 2d Raiders.

The first action of the new regiment was on Bougainville in the northern Solomons, where, attached to the 3d Marine Division, it landed with them on November 1, 1943. This was one of the most difficult of all amphibious operations, in which Nature more than cooperated with the 50,000 Japanese of the garrison. The landing beach was so narrow that even jeeps encountered difficulties; inland were waist-deep mangrove swamps, tangled jungle, and incoherent ridges. Ammunition dumps disappeared from sight; even the light pack howitzers went down under water; there was no means of transportation but the backs of the men; and to cap all, enemy air raids were frequent.

Conditions improved when our troops worked through to higher, drier ground on December 10 and spread out in the campaign that ultimately secured the whole area around Empress Augusta Bay. While Bougainville was never completely occupied till the war ended, the 2d Provisional Raiders were withdrawn to Guadalcanal in January 1944.

Lieutenant Colonel James Roosevelt had been the executive officer of Carlson's 2d Raiders during the Makin attack. He formed the 4th Raider Battalion at Camp Pendleton, California, and it was promptly incorporated with the 1st Raider Battalion and two Army battalions (3d Battalion, 145th Infantry and 3d Battalion, 148th Infantry) in June 1943, to form the 1st Provisional Raider Regiment, with Colonel Liversedge in command. Colonel Griffith still had the 1st Battalion, and Lieutenant Colonel Michael Currin took over the 4th.

Exactly a year after the 1st Raiders embarked from Tulagi, on Independence Day of 1943, the 1st Raider Regiment sailed from Guadalcanal for New Georgia. Colonel Currin's battalion landed on the southern shore of the island to secure the outlying posts of Segi, Vangunu and Wickham Anchorage, while Colonel Griffith's men, supported by two Army units, was slipped around into Kula Gulf to go ashore in the heart of the Japanese positions at Rice Anchorage in the dark hours of July 5. Their first objective was an enemy post at Enogai Inlet.

Captain Clay A. Boyd had conducted two recon-

Torrential rains and knee-deep mud further complicated the difficult jungle fighting on Bougainville.

naissance missions here, the second from June 14 to July 5, making arrangements with natives to guide the raiders. In landing the troops took a circuitous route to trap Jap forces in the area; they encountered tropical rain, forest, swollen streams that could be crossed by only one man at a time, and were forced to carry all their supplies. Their march was one of the most difficult experienced by a Marine unit during the war.

Enogai was taken on July 11 after a hard fight. The two Army battalions were brought up to join the 4th, and all together pushed on toward Bairoko in order to cut off the only escape and supply route for the enemy now besieged in the Munda area to the south. After this action, the battalions were withdrawn to New Caledonia, until the 2d Provisional Raider Regiment completed its assignment on Bougainville. The four battalions were then brought together on Guadalcanal, becoming the 4th Marine Regiment, under the command of Colonel Shapley.

It was a football-tinged regiment. Colonel Shapley had led the Naval Academy team to a national championship in 1926, and had been widely named for the mythical All-American team, while in his command were at least ten others from the All-American lists, including Lieutenants Dave Schreiner, Al Bauman, Max Belko, Al Hofer, Bill Lazetich and Robert Herwig. If Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton, there is at least something to be said for the idea that Okinawa was captured by an off-tackle smash.

In the new 4th Marine Regiment the 1st and 4th Raider Battalions became its 1st and 2d battalions, the 3d Raiders its 3d battalion, while the old 2d Raider Battalion was reorganized into the Regimental Weapons Company. The Raiders had been lightly armed throughout for swift movement; now they received the heavier weapons that served as standard Marine regiment equipment. An artillery battalion was brought in from the 3d Division; tank, medical, engineer, and service units were attached.

The camp of the new regiment was not an easy place to live in, between the necessity of hacking everything out of the jungle and the constant

Men of the 22d Marines hug the ground on Eniwetok awaiting tank support prior to moving forward in attack.

shortages of all types of material caused by the fact that the build-up for the European invasion had top priority. Even before the regiment got things satisfactorily arranged it was called away for a new combat mission, the capture of Emirau.

Emirau is a spot of coral, four miles long and half a mile wide, covered with heavy tropical undergrowth, and situated only 75 miles from the Japanese base at Kavieng, New Ireland, and 430 from the still more important operations center at Truk. The high command, looking over its charts, had discovered that in this little place they would have what they needed to close a pincers on the great bases of Kavieng and Rabaul, putting them effectively out of the war.

With Brigadier General A. H. Noble in charge of the Task Force, the 4th Marines were given thirty-six hours' notice to "get ready for an operation." Rumor had it would be an attack on Kavieng, a very desperate undertaking. While Lieutenant Noble Ferran, the Regimental Quartermaster, was sweating out the problem of loading supplies and equipment on such short notice, Colonel Shapley and his Operations Officer, Major Orville Bergren, were studying maps and photos of an island they had hardly heard of. It was only twenty-four hours before sailing time that Emirau was designated as the target.

On March 1, 1944, the regiment went ashore—to be greeted by friendly natives, all Seventh Day Adventists, who had bitterly resented Japanese interference with their peculiar way of life when the enemy had landed patrols there a month or more previously. There were none of the Japs left on the island at the time the 4th landed, and hence the capture of the island became known as the "jawbone campaign." In the strategy of the Pacific War, however, there were few places more important, for Emirau became an air base from which Truk, Rabaul and Kavieng were placed under effective attack.

The Japanese were in occupation of St. Matthias Island, twelve miles northwest of Emirau, but the forty-six enemy soldiers there left aboard a pair of native outrigger canoes before a patrol of the 4th Marines could reach the place. One of the canoes, with twenty-six aboard, was blown out of the water by a destroyer supporting the landing, and on Emirau the regiment settled down to the discovery that this operation was not quite so easy as it had seemed.

The place was so close to a network of Japanese air bases that transports could only be safely kept in the area for eight hours, and the regiment had to live on what it could get ashore in that time. "We weren't too happy right then," Lieutenant Spencer V. Silverthorne has related. "There we were, sitting on an island which was pretty well surrounded by Japanese bases. It was humid and hot, raining all the time, and it was almost impossible to find a comfortable place to sleep among the jagged coral rocks. Emirau might look like a pushover now, but it didn't look like one to us at the time." He might have added that the only

Eniwetok: Marines dig in, determined to hold the ground so dearly gained.

naval support came from destroyers; there was too much Japanese aviation in the area to risk larger ships. But everything worked out all right, and in the middle of April the 4th Marines returned to its unfinished camp at Guadalcanal to await the next assignment.

22d Marine Regiment

The 22d was the first Marine regiment organized for independent duty after America's entry into the war. It was formed early in 1942 at Linda Vista, a tent camp near San Diego, California, under the command of Colonel John T. Walker, later Chief of Staff of the First Provisional Brigade, who was to win a Navy Cross as its commander. The cadres around which it was organized, approximately one-third of the whole, came from the 6th Regiment, and had served with that organization in Iceland.

Not long after its formation in June 1942, the regiment was sent to garrison duty in Samoa, where it remained for eighteen months. This outpost duty produced some scattering of units—two battalions to Upolu, the 3d to Wallis Island and a small group to Savii—but did not in the least interfere with an energetic and arduous program of training for war under jungle conditions, carried on at the separate posts. Unfortunately, it was also accompanied by the attack of numerous tropical diseases, particularly filariasis, and numerous replacements were necessary before the regiment received its first battle order.

On November 1, 1943, the 22d Marines were brought together at Maui in Hawaii under orders to prepare for action, with tanks, engineers, a medical company and service units added, and the 2d Separate Pack Howitzer Battalion attached as supporting artillery.

The regiment's first assignment was as reserve for the V Amphibious Corps in its assault on Kwajalein Atoll. The place was taken without the necessity of employing reserves and the 22d accordingly was detailed for the attack on Eniwetok in the northwestern Marshalls, together with the 106th Infantry from the Army's 27th Division. Both were under the command of Brigadier General Thomas E. Watson, later to become commander of the Second Marine Division.

Eniwetok is a typical Central Pacific atoll, nearly circular in form, with numerous small islets flanking the principal islands of Eniwetok, Parry and Engebi. The 22d's assignment was the capture of the last of these, at the northern rim of the atoll, where the Japanese had built a 4,000-foot runway. The supporting fleet steamed into the lagoon on February 17, 1944, and patrols from the regiment seized the islands lying off Engebi, where artillery was emplaced in support of the main attack, scheduled for the next morning.

The assault was made with the 1st and 2d Battalions abreast, going in across the beaches on the southern face of the island with one company of the 3d Battalion on their extreme right flank. A

Marines of the 22d rush by open ports in destroyed Jap pillboxes on Eniwetok, ferreting out hidden snipers.

devastating preliminary bombardment and the tactical surprise of landing where the defenses were weakest drove the Japs into well concealed positions under ground and made resistance relatively light in the beginning. This made the mopping-up operation a costly and hazardous task, and although the remainder of the 3d Battalion was committed to this phase, it was called on the next day when the Army troops encountered unexpectedly heavy resistance on Eniwetok Island.

With this reinforcement the American forces cut across the latter island at its waist, the Army troops swinging in one direction to sweep it to the end, while the Marines cleared the way in the other direction, in fighting that lasted two days. Parry Island remained. Air reconnaissance and photos had shown it apparently lightly held, but it proved to be the Japanese headquarters, more heavily fortified than either of the others, with coconut-log revetments that almost bade defiance to naval gunfire.

The 1st and 2d Battalions landed abreast on the northern end of the island, followed closely by the 3d Battalion, which was committed by noon of the first day.

At 1:00 P.M. the 2d and 3d Battalions had entered a maze of undergrowth in which it was impossible to see Japanese snipers or even their emplacements more than a few yards distant. The fighting was bitter and nearly two days were required to complete the conquest of the island. One notable tactical innovation, much used in later operations, appeared when destroyers lying off shore fired star shells all night to put a damper on the favorite Japanese tactic of infiltrating under cover of darkness. Between 1,500 and 2,000 Japs died in defense of Eniwetok; the 22d's casualties were 184 killed, 540 wounded. Months later, as the men of the 22d staged through the island on their way to the Guam attack, they had an opportunity to judge the value of the hard fighting they had done, and to see how unrecognizable the Seabees had rendered the torn ground.

The regiment was not yet through with the Marshalls, however. The group is composed of literally dozens of atolls, on most of which the Japanese had small outposts or observation posts, and the task of mopping up these fell to the 22d. Before the regiment sailed for its new base on Guadalcanal in April, 1944, its troops had made no less than twenty-six amphibious landings, many of them against opposition.

At Guadalcanal the 22d joined the 4th Regiment and began that endless and laborious task of building

Top: *Fallen logs and blasted stumps provide protection against fire from Japanese emplacements for Marines of the 1st Provisional Brigade on Guam.* Bottom: *Close coordination within the fire team resulted in the effective destruction of the Jap pillboxes on Guam.*

The corpsman had to swim ashore to the fire-swept Saipan beach when his amphibian tractor received a direct hit from shore batteries.

another camp. The job was completed while the 4th was in Emirau; when the latter returned, the two were brought together in the First Provisional Marine Brigade with General Shepherd arriving to take command.

29th Marine Regiment

The 29th was the last infantry regiment formed by the Marine Corps during the war, being activated (except for its 1st Battalion) at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, in May 1944, by Colonel Victor F. Bleasdale. The officers and non-coms, hand-picked from returned veterans, were mostly instructors in various training schools. The two battalions and their supporting elements embarked August 1 for Guadalcanal, where they were attached to the First Provisional Brigade, pending formation of the Sixth Division.

The 1st Battalion was formed in the spring of 1944, around cadres from the Second Marine Division—men who had fought at Guadalcanal and Tarawa. Under command of Lieutenant Colonel Guy E. Tannyhill it was originally called the 2d Separate Infantry Battalion, the designation being changed to 1st Battalion, 29th Marines, in June 1944, when it was already aboard transports, en route to join the Second Division in the assault on Saipan. In the hard fighting on this island the battalion was the first to force its way to the summit of Mount Tapotchau, which was so tough a nut to crack. Lieutenant Colonel Rathvon M. Tompkins led the battalion in this latter assault. Over fifty per cent of the battalion's personnel fell casualties in the 24-day campaign before it was relieved and sent down to Guadalcanal to join the other two battalions and await formation of the new division.

15th Marine Regiment

The 15th Marines, artillery regiment of the Division, was activated at Guadalcanal in October 1944, from the artillery battalions attached to the 4th, 22d, and 29th Regiments. Colonel Robert B. Luckey, who had been through the Guadalcanal and Cape Gloucester campaigns with the First Division, took command.

Sixth Division Special Troops

The 6th Tank, Engineer, Pioneer, Motor Transport, Medical, Service, and Headquarters Battalions were formed from the reinforcing units of the three infantry regiments. The changes were mainly organizational, as these troops had participated in the operations of their parent units, and were well versed in their own specialties.

Command Post of the First Provisional Marine Brigade north of Agana, Guam.

Chapter 3: The Brigade at Guam

THE FIRST PROVISIONAL MARINE BRIGADE was formed on Guadalcanal late in March 1944, by joining two veteran reinforced regiments, the 4th and 22d, under command of General Shepherd. The 4th had recently returned from its occupation of Emirau and the 22d from the seizure of Eniwetok Atoll. The two regiments immediately began training as a team for the attack on Guam.

The brigade staff, hastily formed at Pearl Harbor during the early part of April, consisted of Colonel John T. Walker, Chief of Staff; Lieutenant Colonel Robert S. Shaw, G-2; Lieutenant Colonel Thomas A. Culhane, Jr., G-3; and Lieutenant Colonel August Larson, G-4. Major Addison B. Overstreet, G-1, joined the brigade staff at Guadalcanal on April 23. The staff had little over a month in which to perfect the organization of the brigade and to prepare plans for the coming operation.

On the other side of the world the invasion of Europe was just getting under way as the brigade's troops moved upon the southernmost of the Marianas in a mission that was also one of liberation, prepared to avenge the loss of the small Marine garrison that had fallen there in the early days of the Pacific War.

The landing was originally planned to take place three days after the attack on Saipan, June 15, 1944. The difficulties encountered by the V Amphibious Corps on Saipan and the approach of the Japanese Fleet forced a postponement of the Guam landing, and the brigade was ordered to remain afloat as a mobile reserve. The last two weeks of June and the first part of July were thus spent cruising around "Point Oak," one hundred miles off Saipan. When finally released by the Amphibious Force commander, the ships in which the brigade was embarked returned to Eniwetok for logistical replenishment. The opportunity to stretch their legs on the beach was joyfully welcomed by the men aboard the crowded APAs and LSTs, who had been aboard for over a month.

The scheme of maneuver of the III Amphibious Corps, commanded by Major General Roy S. Geiger, called for the landing of the Third Marine Division on the northwest coast of Guam in the vicinity of Asan, with the mission of establishing a beachhead and seizing the dominating Mount Tenjo, prepared for further operations to the north. The First Provisional Marine Brigade was to land on the mountainous southwest coast of the island, between Agat and Bangi Point, secure a beachhead extending south of Facpi Point; then turn north to capture the Orote Peninsula. The 305th Regimental Combat Team of the Army's 77th Division, in Corps reserve, was initially attached to the brigade.

W-Day was July 21, 1944; as the transports rounded the southern tip of Guam on that hot, breathless morning, the rugged mountain range forming the backbone of the western part of the island rose forbiddingly from the palm-dotted lowlands which bordered the coast line. The fringing reefs, across which the troops would have to reach the beach, were the widest and most difficult yet to be encountered in the Navy's advance across the Pacific. Japanese guns mounted on the rugged headland of Orote commanded the landing beaches at Agat, only three thousand yards away. The experience of Tarawa was still fresh in the minds of all, and General Shepherd's first concern was whether his men could get ashore through the murderous fire the defenders were capable of delivering on the beaches. His second was whether, if they were successful in establishing a beachhead, they could be supplied across the five hundred yards of surf-covered reef.

For ten days supporting ships and aircraft had pounded the beach defenses; for three days Navy demolition teams had been working at the removal of underwater entanglements and mines along the reefs, making openings through which our LVTs could pass. Promptly at 6:30 A.M. the barrage along the coastline lifted and beach-strafing planes swerved inland, shifting to targets on the hills beyond. Swordgrass burned furiously as the assault landing craft furrowed the sea in their dash to the reef's fringe. At the seaward edge of the reef, the men of the brigade transferred into amphibious tractors, which bucked their way over jagged coral and through potholes, while Jap small-arms fire spattered around them. Artillery and automatic weapons emplaced on Gaan and Bangi points brought heavy fire on the landing waves.

Amphibian tractors destroyed by Japanese shore batteries as they carried Marine assault troops ashore on Guam.

The beach defense of the Japanese was well organized. Concrete pillboxes were built in the coral cliffs and an elaborate trench system extended along the water's edge. Machine-gun emplacements and tank traps bolstered the defenses and several 70mm guns in concrete blockhouses enfiladed the beaches, which were pocked with mines and studded with booby-traps.

One amphtrac took three hits from an antiboat gun and six of its occupants were killed before reaching shore, while the seventh Marine, blown clear of the wreckage, went forward with the remainder of the platoon, though unarmed and with a badly torn finger.

Jap crossfire from Gaan Point and Yona Island raked Yellow Beach 2, a 300-yard strip of sand, where the bodies of 75 Marines were later counted. A shell from a 75mm field gun on Yona burst in the midst of an aid-station party as it was debarking. The group's only uninjured member tended the wounded for more than four hours, until additional medical personnel came ashore.

Sergeant George Weber was one of the few survivors of an amphtrac (amphibian tractor) bearing a platoon of the 22d, when it was blown up fifty yards from the beach. He managed to make his way in, in spite of a bad head wound, crawled into a shell crater near a Japanese gun that was sweeping the reef and began tossing grenades, with which he silenced the piece. This would have been enough for most

A squad leader passes the word to "Move out!" as the Marines rush forward to recapture Guam.

Marines of the 1st Brigade throw their grenade "calling cards" at Jap emplacements hidden in the coconut grove.

men but not for Weber; he worked his way along the coral bluff and repeated the grenade attack on an enemy machine gun bearing on the beach, then picked up a rifle and joined a squad advancing inland. The sum of his activities brought him a Navy Cross.

Assault troops of the 22d Marines moved rapidly ahead under Colonel Merlin F. Schneider, with the successive waves mopping up pockets of enemy resistance. Two hours after the first men were on the beach, the brigade had advanced one thousand yards inland between the southern outskirts of Agat and Bangi Point. As the attack swung north, the town of Agat, reduced to rubble by the pre-invasion bombardment, was overrun.

An incident which illustrates the character of the fighting took place at an insignificant mound above Agat, called Bob's Hill. At 3:00 in the afternoon a unit of the 22d commanded by Captain Charles F. Widdecke attempted to flank the position, but withering machine-gun fire from the beach fifty yards away forced a withdrawal to a series of narrow trenches near the base of the hill. Our troops were pinned down for an hour while machine guns swept the ground around them. Reinforcements arriving, the attack was renewed, but again Japanese fire from weapons concealed in a maze of underbrush brought the attack to a halt. As darkness fell, the men began digging in for the night. Then occurred one of those inexplicable incidents familiar to every Marine who has fought Japanese. Down a trail leading to the center of the trench occupied by Widdecke's men marched twelve Jap soldiers. They carried machine guns—three heavies and a light—which had held up the company's advance all afternoon. The Japs were promptly riddled by our bullets. "Those Nips were so heavy with slugs we couldn't lift them," said one of the men, and the delay on Bob's Hill was over.

To the southeast, elements of the 4th Marines under Colonel Shapley worked toward Mount Alifan. While accompanying tanks neutralized pillboxes in front, the infantry eliminated a nest of snipers in a grove of decapitated coconut trees. Beyond this they encountered a rice paddy covered by heavy machine-gun and mortar fire. The regiment infiltrated and reorganized along a power line 1,200 yards inland. Beyond this line, the ridges leading to Alifan were covered with Jap strongpoints. It was poor country for tanks, poor country indeed for the assaulting infantry, who had to make their way up the hillside, clutching roots among the sliding shale. As they reached the approaches to Alifan, they could see swordgrass still burning on the tablelands far below. By night the 4th Marines were along a thin, twisted line, extending 1,600 yards from the beach to Harmon Road.

At 11:30 P.M. Jap reconnaissance patrols began operating in front of our lines, apparently to draw fire, which would reveal our positions. A half hour later a mortar barrage hit the seaward flank of the 4th Regiment's position and the Japs counterattacked, throwing demolition charges and small land mines as though they were hand grenades. Six men were bayoneted in their foxholes before the enemy was turned back. At 1:00 in the morning, July 22, the Japs tried again. This time the attack centered upon Hill 40, three hundred yards from

1st Provisional Marine Brigade landing beaches on Guam, looking south to Bangi and Facpi Points.

Operations of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade on Guam from the assault beaches through the capture of Orote Peninsula. The red line indicates the position where the 77th Infantry Division relieved the Brigade so the latter unit could press forward its attack to capture Orote Peninsula.

the beach, and it was a more serious enterprise. A platoon of Major Barney Green's 1st Battalion suffered heavily and was forced to withdraw, but it reorganized at the base of the hill and retook it, only to be driven out by a second counterattack.

This decision was not final, however; Lieutenant Marvin C. Plock brought help in the form of two squads which were forced to cross four hundred yards of rice paddy covered by enemy fire. The reinforcing group managed to reach the base of Hill 40 without casualty, and joining the men there, took it for the third time. Next morning 63 dead Japs were counted on the heights and 350 between the beach and Hill 40.

At 2:30 A.M. a still more serious counterattack was launched against our positions near a reservoir

Top: *A tank-infantry team moves forward toward Orote Peninsula north of Agat.* Bottom: *Closing in on a concrete pillbox on Guam.*

northwest of Alifan. It was led by tanks and truck-mounted guns, with infantry following. In the uncertain light of flare and gun-flash, punctuated by Banzai screams, a bazooka man of the 4th Marines rose to his feet and knocked out the first three tanks before being shot down. His sacrifice gained enough time for a platoon of General Shermans, led by Lieutenant James R. Williams, to reach the scene and destroy the remaining enemy tanks before they could deploy from the column in which they were approaching down Harmon Road. The loss of their armored support halted the Japs; as the Marines counterattacked them, they retreated behind Alifan.

A second prong of this counterattack hit our line on the lower slopes of the mountain itself under cover of a barrage from knee mortars and machine guns. The Japanese surged through a draw, shouting, swinging Samurai swords and throwing grenades. They were led by an officer waving a battle flag on the end of a bamboo pole to which a long knife was tied. The attack was repulsed by elements of the reserve in fierce fighting before it could reach the brigade's artillery positions, toward which it was directed.

But this by no means ended the enemy's activities for the night. He regrouped in a silence unusual for him on a hill four hundred yards to the south of our lines, while our men watched the dark shadows moving on the skyline under the light of star shells from the ships. Lieutenant Colonel Hoyler's men of the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines,

22d Marines organizing a machine-gun position in a battered house at a road junction north of Agat.

checked their weapons, lined their hand grenades on the edges of their foxholes, watched and waited.

At 3:00 o'clock in the morning the attack came, hammering a wedge westward into the sector where Lieutenant Martin J. (Stormy) Sexton commanded, the Japanese tossing antitank mines as though they were quoits, tumbling into foxholes, bayoneting the wounded. The main attack was halted with casualties heavy for both sides, but Marine ammunition ran low and some small groups of Japs were able to infiltrate into the pack-howitzer positions four hundred yards from the beach, where they had to be mopped up by men from the support elements.

On the north flank, the 22d Marines withstood several abortive night attacks. A few Japanese infiltrated along the front but were located at daylight and liquidated. Under cover of darkness about a company of Jap soldiers reached the vicinity of the regimental command post. At dawn they were detected by sentries, who gave the alarm. Headquarters personnel, including office clerks and runners, seized their weapons and joined the attack. Twenty-five men of the reconnaissance platoon, armed with light machine guns, were led into the fight by Lieutenant Dennis Chavez, Jr., who killed five Japs at point-blank range with a tommy gun. When the smoke of battle cleared, three officers and 66 Imperial soldiers were found dead. Six Marines were wounded.

The last of the counterattacks along the beachhead line ceased at dawn. Our troops pushed forward with local reserves and restored their positions. More than six hundred enemy dead were counted. At 9:00 that morning the 4th Marines resumed their advance up the heights of Alifan. The steep sides of the mountain were covered with thorny

Japanese tanks were no match for the heavier Shermans of the Marine tank companies.

undergrowth. Pandanus trees buttressed the shale with their roots, and vines twined along the trail. Packs had to be left behind; the Marines plodded laboriously up the slopes, killing snipers as they advanced. Coconut-log bunkers were reduced with grenades, their occupants finished off with bullets. With white-phosphorus smoke grenades, Marines flushed the caves which honeycombed the foothills, and by nightfall Mount Alifan had been captured in an advance that had carried forward 1,200 yards.

Under cover of darkness Jap patrols armed with rifle and bayonet attempted to infiltrate the lines of the 4th Marines atop the Alifan hill mass, but star-shell illumination provided by destroyers made them sharp targets for mortar and artillery fire.

While the 4th was engaged on Alifan during that day, July 22, the attack of the 22d Marines north of Agat was meeting moderate resistance, and by late afternoon the regiment had gained its objectives. On the morning of the same day the 305th Regimental Combat Team, which had been landed during the preceding night, attacked to the eastward of the 22d Marines, toward Mount Tenjo. It met with only light resistance and was able to protect the right flank of the 22d, covering the widening front between this regiment and the 4th Marines.

Artillery fire fell in the beach area from the direction of Orote Peninsula during the day, but unloading continued expeditiously, despite the difficulty of transferring equipment at the edge of the reef from boats to amphibian tractors. During the day the 9th Defense Battalion, attached to the brigade, was landed and took up the close-in defense of the beaches, where supplies and equipment were now piling up.

At the close of the second day of combat, the brigade had thus established itself ashore. It was now prepared to direct its main effort to the north, where Orote Peninsula juts ruggedly out of the tropic sea. On July 23, the brigade resumed the attack from positions held the night before. The 22d attacked to the north, while the 305th Infantry, conforming to the Marines' movement, advanced along the ridge north of Maanot Pass. The 4th Marines continued their mopping up operations in the Mount Alifan area and began organization of the southern sector for defense in preparation for relief by the 306th Infantry, yet to land.

The advance of the 22d Marines met heavy resistance from enemy strongholds on a cluster of low hills north of Agat, and it was late afternoon before the final coconut bunker there was neutralized. The attack continued across a broad rice

Marine assault forces press the attack on Guam through the tangled undergrowth.

paddy bordered by waist-high grass, the ground too soft for tanks. Machine-gun fire enfiladed the field; mortar-shell fragments cut the grass like a giant sickle. The assault elements advanced by rushes through the coarse weeds. Units exposed to enemy fire in a sparse clearing at the center of the line were unable to advance, and two of our tanks were disabled before they could withdraw from terrain that deprived them of mobility. A company on the right, hidden by weeds, succeeded in flanking the paddy, and was able to reestablish contact with troops on the left and to reform the line. Now they encountered another rice paddy, also swept by mortar and small-arms fire. As dusk was already falling, the forward elements were withdrawn from their exposed positions to the line of hills four hundred yards to the rear. The enemy counterattacked along this part of the front during the night, but discouraged by our infantry and artillery fire, gave up the attempt after an hour.

During the afternoon the 306 Regimental Combat Team landed and the following day relieved the 4th Marines on the south flank in the vicinity of Facpi Point. Upon the arrival of the 77th Division headquarters ashore, on July 24, units of that organization attached to the brigade were released, and the 77th Division took over the defense of the brigade beachhead from Alifan south to Facpi Point.

In view of the difficulties experienced by the 22d Marines in attempting to cross the open rice paddies north of Agat on July 23, the brigade commander revised the plan of attack for the next day. He ordered the 22d to attack to the northward, with the battalions initially echeloned in depth. The 1st Battalion was directed to attack along the coast line until the advance had cleared the open ground where heavy casualties had been incurred on the previous day. The 2d Battalion was to attack to the northeast along the "Old Agat Road" and seize the high ground overlooking the southern shore of Apra Harbor. This maneuver was planned to outflank the Jap strongpoints covering the rice paddies and to bottle up the Japs in Orote Peninsula.

At 9:00 A.M. the 22d Marines jumped off under a heavy preparation by aircraft, artillery, and naval gunfire. The 1st Battalion, under command of Lieutenant Colonel Walfried H. Fromhold, led the advance up the Agat–Sumay road. The avenue of approach was mined with aerial bombs and bracketed by enemy mortar and artillery fire. Five enemy tanks came out to contest the advance, but were rapidly destroyed by Marine Shermans, which then silenced enemy fire from concrete pillboxes and coconut-log barricades. As the attack developed, Lieutenant Colonel Clair W. Shisler's 3d Battalion, following the 1st, swung eastward across the hills overlooking the rice fields, and overran the Jap strongpoints which had caused them so much trouble on the previous day. Dozens of mines were encountered here, too, but by nightfall the 1st and 3d Battalions were deployed across the base of Orote Peninsula, and had made contact with the 2d Battalion under command of Lieutenant Colonel Donn C. Hart, which had gained its objective on the southern shore of Apra Harbor.

After dark the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines, led

by Major John S. Messer, was brought up to fill a gap between the battalions and to block the enemy's last avenue of escape from Orote. The defensive positions for the night were consolidated, and the infiltrating Jap reconnaissance patrols endeavoring to locate the Marine lines were driven off without disclosure of our positions—whereupon the Japs adopted the curious device of screaming "Help!" in English. It was futile against the excellent fire discipline prevailing all along the line. "We didn't shoot unless we were sure of results," said Captain Archie B. Norford, who was there.

The First Provisional Marine Brigade had now been in continuous action for four days and stood in some need of replacements and reorganization. Nevertheless the men prepared for an immediate assault up the Orote Peninsula. The 22d Marines resumed their attack at 8:30 the following morning. They hammered at the base of the peninsula, where Japanese foot troops continued the fight with the rashness but without the enthusiasm that had marked their previous resistance, depending upon pillboxes to delay the American advance and upon tanks to drive it back. Along the coastal lowlands bordering Apra Harbor, in the zone of action of the 3d Battalion, the emplacements were well camouflaged in the tangled vegetation, with numerous machine-gun nests supporting the concrete strongpoints; in the center of the peninsula the Marines found themselves advancing with no cover and little concealment, over an area whose coral subsoil was impervious to entrenching tools. Eight Jap tanks counterattacked shortly after the attack began, but they were held off by bazookas until our tanks repelled them. Casualties were heavy during the morning. The 1st Battalion's assault elements were desperately depleted, but its reserve company stormed the Japanese positions and gutted them with flamethrowers and demolitions. By late afternoon the area between Apra Harbor and Agat Bay was secured and the intervening ground had been mopped up. The jaws of the pincers were closing; unless the Japanese could break through the trap their main body was sealed on Orote.

The enemy commander, whoever he was, seems to have anticipated such a development. At 3:00 that afternoon he attempted to get some of his troops out in barges through Apra Harbor from the vicinty of Sumay. The attempt was broken up by aviation and artillery fire. The exit by sea was emphatically slammed shut and now the Japs had only the choice of being annihilated on the peninsula or making a suicidal Banzai charge. They chose the latter.

As darkness fell a heavy rain began to come down, and the brigade dug in across the neck of the peninsula, organizing its position as much as possible in depth. Even so it was vulnerable to a mass attack. To the right front, facing the 3d Battalion, 22d, a heavy mangrove swamp sheltered a Jap concentration of battalion strength. At nightfall the Marines in the front lines heard the shrieks of the enemy as they drank sake and worked themselves up to the right emotional pitch for suicide. It was imperative to smother the impending attack with fire.

Accordingly, artillery and mortar concentrations were called down on the localities where it was thought the Japs were concentrating. It did not prevent the counterattack, which came on with great fury at about 10:30 P.M. along the entire front of the 3d Battalion. Artillery and mortar barrages were immediately called for and delivered; fire was intense, and the first onslaught was finally frustrated in hand-to-hand combat. Company officers spotted artillery fire, which assisted materially in disorganizing the enemy and lessening in some degree the impact of his assault; and along the whole line men fought tenaciously, clinging to their positions. The outstanding example of this is in the case of Captain Robert Frank, whose company bore the impact of the heaviest attack.

Throughout the action Frank exposed himself to enemy fire, seeking the most advantageous position from which to observe the effect of our own. He relayed his spots from Company L through Company E to 2d Battalion headquarters and thence to regiment. There Lieutenant Colonel Woodhouse, regimental S-2, personally relayed the spots to the fire direction center. It was an indirect and somewhat cumbersome method, made necessary because direct wire and radio communications between the artillery liaison teams and the batteries had gone out early in the night.

Another example of improvisation born of necessity was the work of Marine Gunner Nick Schevchenko and his crew of wiremen, who felt their way through the thorny underbrush, under the heavy downpour, to mend broken wire in L Company's sector. Shortly before 11:30 P.M. Schevchenko's group spliced a pair of broken wires, over which

Men of the 22d Marines approach the shell-torn Marine Barracks on Guam.

Lieutenant Paul J. Dunfey, leader of a special-weapons platoon, who was on the high ground above the Japanese concentration at the edge of the swamp, was able to relay his observations to Lieutenant Walter G. Barrett, at the left extremity of the 3d Battalion front.

At 11:45 Dunfey specified artillery targets at the edge of the marsh and it was none too soon, for only ten minutes later the Japs came swarming forth, carrying machine guns as well as rifles and grenades, headed for Dunfey's unit. Colonel Edwin C. Ferguson, Brigade Artillery Officer, gave the order to commence firing with every battery available in the area and a barrage of shells burst among the advancing enemy. As they still came on our artillery fire was drawn in closer and closer toward our front lines; 26,000 shells were thrown into the pocket between midnight and 3:00 A.M. "Arms and legs flew like snowflakes," said Lieutenant Dunfey later.

At about 12:30 A.M. the attack subsided along the whole front, and there was opportunity to evacuate some of the wounded, to reorganize the lines and to replenish ammunition. The torrential rain was as persistent as the Japs; the terrain had become such a quagmire that transportation could not operate, and casualties had to be taken out by hand.

At 1:30 A.M. the Japanese launched another attack. Artillery concentrations were again fired, but the final issue was once more decided in hand-to-hand conflict. The Marines fought it out where they stood. At about 3:00 A.M. this second attack subsided and throughout the remainder of the night relative calm prevailed. Despite every effort to evacuate the wounded, the job could not be completed until the following morning.

As daylight came on the results could be plainly observed. Over four hundred enemy dead lay in front of our lines. Within the lines there were many instances of Japanese and Marines lying side by side, mute evidence of the violence of that last struggle. The ground was slick with blood and the foxholes were filled with a reddish muddy liquid.

The night's heavy fighting did not disrupt or change the plan for resuming the attack from our side in the morning. After a well coordinated preparation by aviation, naval gunfire and artillery, the brigade jumped off at 7:00 on the morning of July 26, 1944, with the 22d Marines on the right of the Agat–Sumay road and the 4th Marines on the left. Assault elements of the 4th moved speedily forward. During the afternoon, however, they met increasing resistance from enemy emplacements with well prepared fire lanes cut through the foliage. Heavy machine guns and knee mortars emplaced on a hill two hundred yards to the right front held up the advance for two hours before they were reduced by our own mortars and automatic weapons.

On the other flank, the 1st Battalion of the 22d skirted the swamp where the Japs had concentrated the night before; swung right and made their main effort up the Piti–Sumay road on a narrow front, with armor in the lead. Mines delayed the advance, and as it moved slowly forward, machine-gun and small-arms fire suddenly poured into the leading elements from the high ground occupied by the old Marine Barracks, as well as from a mutually supporting system of eight emplacements, cunningly concealed in the underbrush, each buttressed by dirt-filled oil drums.

The emplacements were located at ten-yard inter-

The shell-shattered remains of the old Marine Barracks stand beneath the American flag symbolic of a hard-won victory on the Orote Peninsula.

vals, on a hummock overlooking the trail junction, firing at pointblank range, and for a few minutes took a heavy toll of casualties; then our tanks and halftracks pushed forward and demolished them all in fifteen minutes of fierce firing. It was in this phase of the engagement that Pfc. John P. Cadden and his fellow bazooka operator were hit by shrapnel. Leaving the bazooka with his wounded comrade, Cadden went on with his company and was halfway across a rice paddy when the unit came under machine-gun fire. Though wounded, Cadden ran back for the bazooka and later recrossed the field twice to bring up additional ammunition for his weapon. His only remark, as he received medical treatment was: "All I remember was that I was scared stiff as I was running across that field with the bullets flying."

That night there were no counterattacks; at 7:15 on the morning of the 27th, the brigade resumed its advance up the peninsula, encountering increasingly determined resistance as the day wore on. The rolling terrain, covered with dense undergrowth, interspersed with swamps, restricted the avenues of approach to the mined Sumay road. While explosives accounted for relatively few casualties, the advance was slowed until demolition units were able to neutralize the area. Pillboxes and bunkers, mutually supporting, were arranged in depth on both sides of the road, supplemented by automatic weapons and field guns concealed in slits in the thorny vegetation.

Assault elements fought yard by yard up the peninsula as the enemy utilized every natural object to forestall their advance. A platoon under Lieutenant Lester J. Markusen killed fifteen Japs tunnelled under the roots of a banyan tree; a wounded Marine and the Corpsman who was treating him were killed by a burst of automatic fire from a native shack. Lieutenant Colonel Samuel D. Puller, Executive Officer of the 4th Marines, was killed by fire from a hidden machine gun.

On the right, elements of the 2d Battalion, 22d Marines, used antitank grenades to flush pillboxes on the forward slope of a ridge. Twenty Japs ran out of one ripped emplacement and converged on a part of the line held by a platoon under Lieutenant Marvin Perskie.

"We were ready for them," Perskie said. "We had a field day for a few minutes."

Beyond the ridge a fuel dump in the coconut grove was encountered, with oil drums burning smokily and pillboxes arranged in a geometric pattern. Tanks took care of the emplacements, but on the far side the grove rose to a high ridge where the Japs had their heaviest installations, covered by interlocking fields of automatic-weapons fire. Here the advance was held up at a point called Road Junction 15, and the brigade commander himself came forward to study the situation.

He ordered all tanks present in the forward area into one groupment for a tank-infantry thrust on a narrow front, reinforced by a platoon of Army tanks to be brought forward from the brigade reserve. The coordinated attack succeeded and with the breakthrough the main Jap line across Orote Peninsula was gone. But this neither eliminated all the Japs nor their last line of defense. As the brigade reached the vicinity of the former Marine Reserva-

Sharp-eyed Marines cautiously advance toward Orote Airfield.

tion it came under fire from a position along the rifle range and the high ground above Sumay. Many of the positions there had been blown out by the pre-landing shelling. However, they had been re-occupied by Jap infantry, and in addition there were a number of pillboxes on the heights which no shell had touched. At 4:30 in the afternoon the situation appeared grimmer than ever for the battle-fatigued men of the First Brigade.

With one last effort the 3d Battalion of the 22d, at 6:00 P.M. pushed through the edge of the mangrove swamp bordering Apra Harbor and by a flanking movement, gained the top of the high ground overlooking the site of the old Marine Barracks. The Japanese forces broke and fled. This was the turning point of the battle; from the high ground above Sumay our troops were now in a position to flank the Jap line extending along the rifle range and airfield. Control of the Agat–Sumay road enabled supplies and ammunition to be distributed to front-line units and the wounded to be evacuated.

From the time the Marines had hit the beach a week before, Japanese resistance had grown in fury, yet the drive of the brigade was never halted. They broke Banzai charges, stormed fortresses, swept hills, and flushed strongpoints. Their relentlessness eventually undermined *Bushido* and the Jap spirit faltered. Defeat was inevitable and the Japanese accepted it, often with suicidal cooperation.

Forty Japs in full battle array marched down the Sumay road in the late afternoon, led by an officer carrying a battle flag. Though the turret guns of every tank and the rifle of every infantryman in the area opened up on them, the Japs came on until they were annihilated.

At another point in the line twelve Japs attacked Corporal (later Lieutenant) Webster J. Bachelot,

Bulldozers kept the routes of supply open close behind the rapidly advancing assault units.

Jr., who killed three of them with his bayonet before he himself was stabbed in the chest. The other nine were killed by rifle fire. Despite his wound, Bachelot went on to take a security post ahead of the front lines.

The Jap defense of Orote airfield and vital Apra Harbor was broken, but isolated knots of fanatic resistance continued to hold out. The brigade resumed the attack at 8:30 A.M. on July 28 to seize the airfield on the eastern end of the peninsula. The enemy was dug in in fortified caves along the steep bluffs south of Sumay. The Marines sealed the caves with demolitions while tanks and infantry units from the 22d circled the ghost town to enter it from the northwest without opposition.

West of the airfield the 4th Marines, supported by tanks, pressed forward through the thick vegetation. Suddenly the enemy opened up from a line of pillboxes arranged in depth in rear of the rifle range, where the tanks, their visibility blurred by the foliage, were unable to register their flat-trajectory fire. On foot, Marine Gunner Oliver W. Ostmeyer led the tanks to open terrain where, within view of the enemy, he was charged by a sword-swinging Jap officer. Ostmeyer shot him as the tanks blazed out at the pillboxes and the accompanying infantrymen flanked the strongpoints and picked off Japs as they scrambled from the twisted emplacements.

Three platoons lost their lieutenants; in another, the platoon leader, platoon sergeant, platoon guide, and two squad leaders were casualties. The command of this unit finally fell to the third-ranking squad leader, Sergeant Lavarre Tierman.

The 4th Marines continued to encounter heavy resistance throughout the day but finally at 4:00 P.M., with the help of massed Army and Marine tanks, the assault elements broke through the enemy positions east of the rifle range and killed its defenders. Approximately 250 pillboxes and emplacements were counted in this area after the attack.

The 22d Marines encountered moderate resistance throughout the morning and at 1:40 P.M. captured the former Marine Barracks at Sumay. Fighting continued in the town of Sumay and along the cliffs southeast of the town facing Apra Harbor during the remainder of the day.

The attack had now closed in far enough for direct assault on the airfield, and at 8:00 on the morning of July 29 it began, with the usual accompaniment of air and artillery support. Toward the west the 4th Marines made rapid progress, using flamethrowers freely and capturing one thick-walled concrete tower where 125 Japs were killed in a group. As the advance reached the tip of the peninsula and mop-up operations in the rear began the usual symptoms of a Japanese break-up appeared; some of the enemy leaped to their death from cliffs; others destroyed themselves by holding grenades close to their chests; while still others attempted to escape by swimming to Fort Santa Cruz in the harbor.

The 1st Marine Brigade on the march to participate in the operations on the northern part of Guam.

At 3:00 o'clock that afternoon, though sporadic firing was still going on and the horizon was still pocked with smouldering fires and blistered steel, the United States flag was raised over the ruins of the former Marine Barracks. The 22d Marines, who had captured the site, furnished a guard of honor. Troops in the vicinity, both regimental commanders, Admiral Raymond Spruance, commander of the Fifth Fleet, and Lieutenant General Holland M. Smith, commander of the Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, were all there. It was a solemn moment when the Brigade commander paid tribute to the Marines of the Guam garrison who were overwhelmed by the Japanese landing forces during the first week of the war. Colors were sounded on a Japanese bugle and the Stars and Stripes were raised on an improvised masthead.

"On this hallowed ground," General Shepherd said, "you officers and men of the First Marine Brigade have avenged the loss of our comrades who were overcome by a numerically superior enemy five days after Pearl Harbor. Under our flag this island again stands ready to fulfill its destiny as an American fortress in the Pacific."

Orote Peninsula was ours but there were still snipers in the wooded areas and caves around Sumay. The process of mop-up began on the morning of July 30 and was conducted by patrols from the 22d Marines. It was a difficult task to seal the cave openings with demolitions, as dense vegetation and rocky terrain made it impossible to approach the entrances without drawing heavy enemy fire. Operations on the side of the promontory facing Apra Harbor were assisted by fire from rocket launchers on Navy support craft.

On August 1 the brigade received orders to relieve the 77th Infantry Division of the defense of the southern portion of the Force beachhead line and to conduct distant patrolling in the southern part of Guam. For the next five days patrols from the 4th and 22d Marines reconnoitered the southern part of the island from Pago Bay on the east coast to Facpi Point on the west coast. By this extensive patrolling, Japanese stragglers were cleared from the area and

The cemetery is dedicated on Guam.

grateful Guamanians came out of hiding in the jungles to return to their homes.

On August 6 the brigade marched north through Agaña to join the Third Marine Division in a coordinated attack to rid the remainder of the island of the enemy. Though the backbone of the Japanese forces was already broken, there were a number of sharp clashes in the rugged jungle area in the northern part of the island. Our troops pressed their advantage relentlessly, never giving the Japanese an opportunity to reorganize, and on the afternoon of June 8, elements of the brigade reached Ritidian Light, northernmost point of Guam. By this time the remaining Japanese were concealed in caves in the heavily wooded cliffs along the coastline and all units had to send out patrols for the mop-up. This task was by no means ended when at 7:00 o'clock on the evening of August 10, the Corps commander announced that organized resistance on Guam had ceased, and although the island was officially declared secure, elements of the brigade continued systematic patrolling of assigned areas for the remainder of the month. Frequent contacts were made with isolated groups of Japanese and many stragglers were killed or taken prisoner. Our patrols also suffered losses in this guerrilla warfare. This last period was particularly trying since the rainy season had begun and all trails and roads were deep in mud; the men had to live in such shelter as they could contrive from ponchos and shelter halves.

Units of the brigade began leaving Guam on August 22, and by early September all troops had reached their rehabilitation base at Guadalcanal. Here they were joined by the 29th Marines, Reinforced, recently arrived from the States, and on September 7, 1944, orders were received from the Commandant of the Marine Corps directing that the First Provisional Marine Brigade be redesignated the Sixth Marine Division with General Shepherd in command.

The services of the brigade in its brief career received full recognition. Both the infantry regimental commanders, Colonels Shapley and Schneider, received the Navy Cross, and General Shepherd, the Navy Distinguished Service Medal. The brigade itself received the Navy Unit Commendation.

Victory on Guam. The American flag is once again raised over the ruins of the old Marine Barracks.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the

FIRST PROVISIONAL MARINE BRIGADE

for service as follows:

"For outstanding heroism in action against enemy Japanese forces during the invasion of Guam, Marianas Islands, from July 21 to August 10, 1944. Functioning as a combat unit for the first time, the First Provisional Marine Brigade forced a landing against strong hostile defenses and well camouflaged positions, steadily advancing inland under the relentless fury of the enemy's heavy artillery, mortar and small arms fire to secure a firm beachhead by nightfall. Executing a difficult turning movement to the north, this daring and courageous unit fought its way ahead yard by yard through mangrove swamps, dense jungles and over cliffs and, although terrifically reduced in strength under the enemy's fanatical counterattacks, hunted the Japanese in caves, pillboxes and foxholes and exterminated them. By their individual acts of gallantry and their indomitable fighting teamwork throughout this bitter and costly struggle, the men of the First Provisional Marine Brigade aided immeasurably in the restoration of Guam to our sovereignty."

James Forrestal

Secretary of the Navy

All personnel serving in the First Provisional Marine Brigade, comprised of: Headquarters Company; Brigade Signal Company; Brigade Military Police Company; 4th Marines, Reinforced; 22nd Marines, Reinforced; Naval Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 515; and 4th Platoon, 2nd Marine Ammunition Company, during the above-mentioned period are hereby authorized to wear the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION Ribbon.

The beached and sunken Japanese Transport Kyusyu Maru, destroyed in the battle for Guadalcanal, stands as a silent tribute to the victory of American forces.

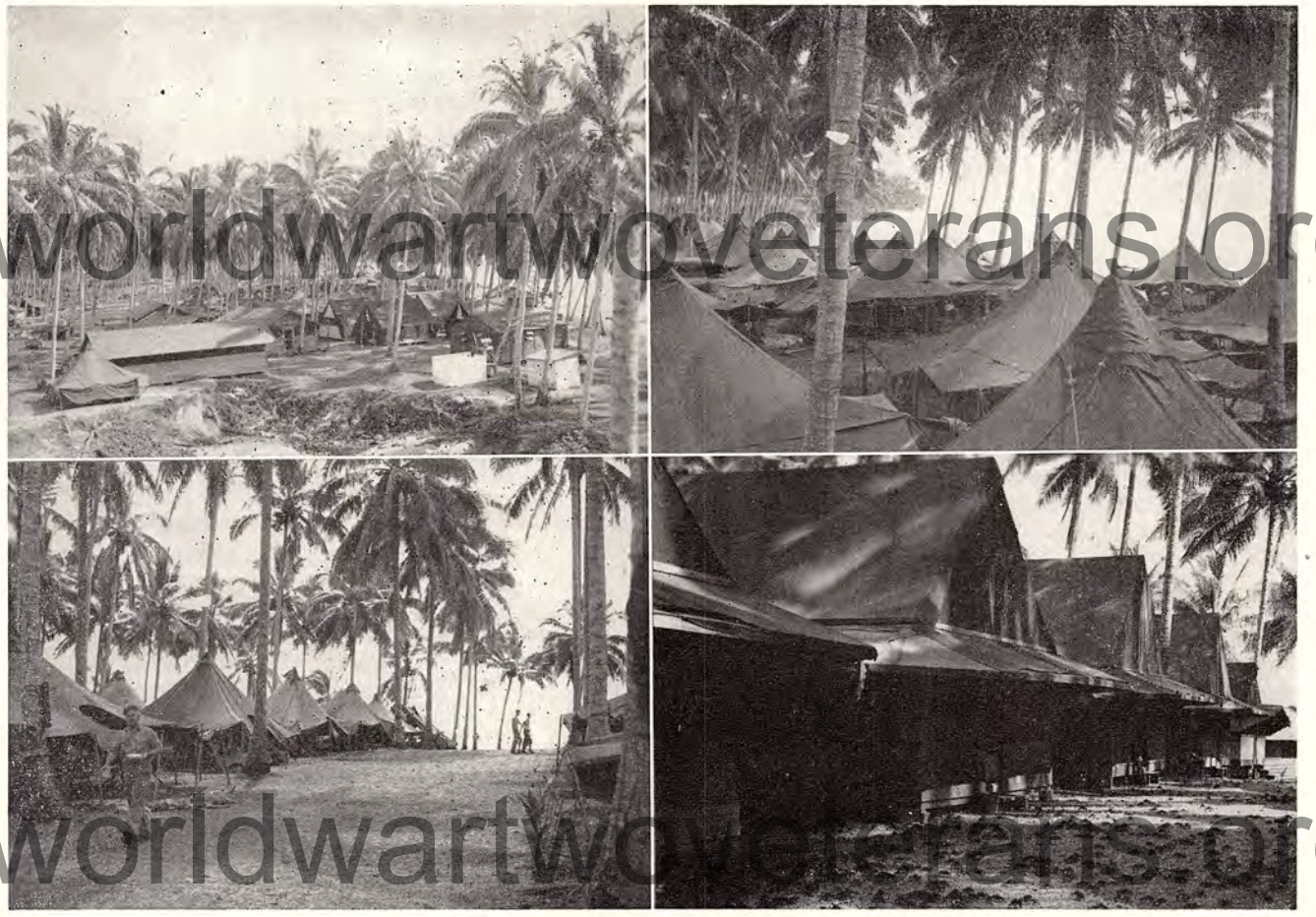
Chapter 4: Training the Division at Guadalcanal

LESS THAN A MONTH AFTER ITS ACTIVATION the Division embarked on a strenuous training program that was to last five and a half months. It is doubtful whether anyone in the organization had sure knowledge of the unit's next target when the program began, but it was clear it would be some point in the inner defense system of the Japanese Empire. According to the oft-repeated Japanese boast, that "sacred soil" had never been touched by an invader. It was not difficult to picture the fanatical character of the resistance that would be encountered.

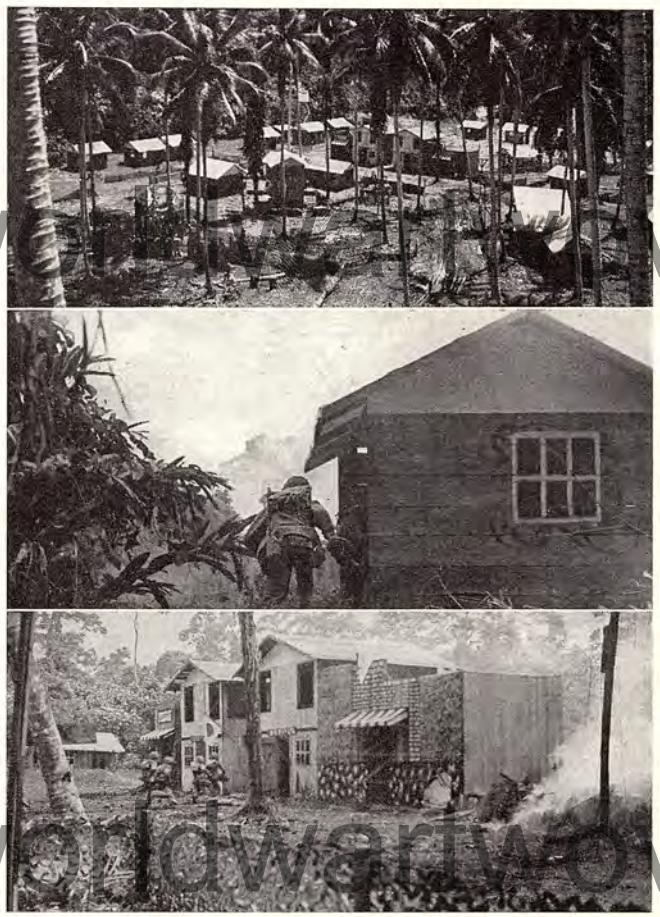
It was also evident that the Division could expect to meet the best of Japan's well trained, well equipped troops, fighting on ground with which they were thoroughly familiar and which they had had ample opportunity to prepare for defense. The islands of the inner defense system were known to be rough and rugged, with poor roads and a high incidence of exotic diseases; yet fighting in towns and villages could likewise be expected. In contrast to conditions elsewhere in the Pacific, the Division was certain to find an unfriendly native population.

The Tassafaronga area of Guadalcanal was selected as most nearly meeting the Division's training requirements. Here areas were assigned to each regiment, and provided with the caves and systems of trench and barbed wire that were standard Japanese practice.

The program was administered by tough, wiry



Familiar scenes in the Division camp bordering the Guadalcanal shore line.



Bonegiville—a complete village painstakingly constructed to provide a realistic locale for street-fighting training.

Lieutenant Colonel Victor H. Krulak, now Division G-3, but General Shepherd and his Assistant Division Commander gave it their closest personal supervision, and it was not at all unusual for them to appear in the midst of the remotest field exercises.

The initial steps of the process were centered on the individual Marine, almost as though he were again undergoing his first training. A rifle range was built and formal range firing was conducted. Infantry units went through a combat infiltration course as well as frequent conditioning marches. From this point training progressed to the perfection of teamwork in small units, with emphasis on the fire power and striking force of fire teams and squads. Each unit was given problems requiring the application of tactical principles for their solution. Techniques of the employment of flamethrowers and demolitions in the attack of fortified positions received great stress. Problems were formulated which involved the establishment of fire superiority, advance by rushes and infiltration, final assault of the position, consolidation and pursuit.

As the training progressed to company and battalion exercises the process resembled more and more the assembly of the parts of a gigantic jigsaw puzzle. Tanks, aircraft, and artillery were brought into the picture. The 15th Marines practiced delivery of close supporting fires until the infantry achieved that confidence in the marksmanship of the gunners without which the two arms cannot function together efficiently. Tank and infantry units worked together over the rolling and hilly terrain, thoroughly learning each other's capabilities and limitations. The Division's air wing consisted of two planes salvaged from surveyed material on Henderson Field, but functioned admirably in drilling the troops in the intricacies of close air support and in teaching them air defense techniques. All told, there were fifty battalion-landing-team exercises, each lasting from two to three days, and ten exercises for regimental combat teams.

While the elements of the Division were being trained as units and teams, more detailed schools were conducted for officers and specialists, such as those in flamethrowers, demolitions, camouflage, mines and booby-traps, chemical warfare and combat swimming. These produced officer and noncommissioned instructors who returned to their units to pass their newly acquired knowledge down

Formal officers' schooling formed an important part of the Division's training. The school building could accommodate four hundred officers.

through the ranks. Special demonstration teams handled intricate combat situations under the eyes of larger groups, such as tank-infantry operations, reduction of fortified localities, and combat in towns. To culminate this last form of special training, the 58th Seabees skillfully assembled a village of forty wooden buildings, some of two stories, complete with bank, grog shop and *geisha* house. Named Bonegiville for its situation on the banks of the Bonegi River, it was destined to fall time after time to the combined arms of the Division.

Finally, a six-week Staff and Command School was conducted at Division Headquarters for subordinate unit staffs throughout the Division, standardizing the techniques of planning and staff functioning.

The G-2 section, meanwhile, was not only conducting a one-month school for personnel of the intelligence sections throughout the Division, but was also engaged in maintaining studies of all possible theaters of operations, under the guidance of Lieutenant Colonel Thomas E. Williams.

The 15th Regiment had been equipped with new 105mm howitzers and expanded to its full four-battalion strength. After much work on fire-direction-center operation, forward-observer training and massed fires, the regiment fired a 14-battalion exercise in conjunction with the First Marine Division and III Corps artillery units. The time-on-target (TOT) method was employed, in which the time of flight is computed for each participating battery and fire is massed on a split-second schedule so that all projectiles arrive on a target simultaneously. The Japanese who were under that fire on the Oroku Peninsula of Okinawa could best tell how effective it was—those of them who were left to tell.

Training included long periods of work in gas masks.

The Division chapel on Guadalcanal.

The 6th Engineer and the 6th Pioneer Battalions went through the normal course of infantry training, then split off for the schooling of machine operators and artisans in their specialties of combat demolitions and construction, road building and supply handling. The 6th Tank Battalion received its new M4A3 tanks, a late model Sherman with a 75mm gun, fitted them with extra armor, and after perfecting individual tanks and operators, trained with the larger infantry units. The new T–6 flota-

Recreational football had the aspect of "all-star" games, with numerous college All-Americans playing for each team.

tion gear, pontons installed on tanks to make them amphibious vehicles, was fitted on one company prior to departure. The 6th Medical Battalion set up its Division Hospital and operated under field conditions, tagging simulated casualties and handling them through the complete chain of evacuation.

It rarely occurs to most people, even within the services, how great is the degree of effort and careful planning involved in providing such elementary necessities as postal service, clothing, ammunition, and food for a rapidly moving division. While the training process was going on, Lieutenant Colonel August Larson, Division G-4, was toiling with the latter problem and supervising the training of quartermaster, transport and ordnance personnel; Major Addison B. Overstreet, G-1, was setting up his standing operating procedures covering such

Melanesians, so familiar to Marines who tramped the Guadalcanal jungle trails.

The regimental band of the 29th Marines.

matters as graves registration, the marking of equipment and the handling of enemy prisoners.

These two members of the staff were not infrequently called upon to deal with rather spectacular emergencies, as on the occasion when Colonel Larson observed during a maneuver a regimental operations officer, whose dungaree trousers had been unable to withstand the combined ravages of the Guadalcanal terrain and his own considerable beam. Covered with confusion and not much else he was trying to expose the current situation to visiting generals without exposing himself. Nothing was said, but in less than thirty minutes a jeep arrived with a message and a new pair of trousers for the unhappy S-3.

It was observable that all hands became increasingly aware of the magnitude of the impending operation as training progressed toward the date when a full-scale division maneuver was undertaken. For three days command and administrative personnel worked on a full-scale command post exercise in the field, including a simulated landing. The troops were then ordered into an initial position corresponding with that reached during the command post exercise. Supplies were landed within the captured beachhead area, dumps established by shore party personnel, and the Division quartermaster supplied the troops in the field under service conditions, while for four days all units advanced through the rough jungles of western Guadalcanal. The maneuver was made as realistic as possible; the only thing lacking was Japanese fire. Forced marches, river crossings, night operations, were included, and at every step there were careful critiques to search out and remedy weak spots.

During the final polishing period following the big maneuver, worn clothing and equipment were replaced, weapons were checked and rechecked, and units embarked on special training programs designed to eradicate whatever weakness had appeared, while speculation ran through every echelon as to where the blow would fall. Mounds of equipment began to appear on the Guadalcanal beaches, ready for embarkation, and then finally, the Division moved down and aboard its transports. "No more outgoing mail until further notice" was the word passed; invasion currency—"funny money" to the troops—was issued in exchange for American dollars, and the men of the Striking Sixth Marine Division knew they were on their way to strike.

Elements of the III Amphibious Corps load out for the Okinawa operation.

Chapter 5: The Division Sails

On March 15, the division sailed. Aboard ship there were detailed briefings and final preparations; the men knew now they were bound for Okinawa, a place that to most of them was a spot on the map of which they had never heard. They received the news with that paradoxically dual attitude which is familiar to those who have seen a Marine division sailing for combat. On one hand there was general agreement that this would be one of the most difficult and bitter struggles in the whole history of the Marine Corps; on the other an atmosphere of gayety that would have been appropriate to a pleasure cruise. Songs grew up almost spontaneously, based on terrible puns. "After Rabaul is Over" and "Tarawa Boom-de-Ay" were replaced by "Goodbye Mama, I'm off to Okinawa," with makeshift orchestras furnishing the accompaniment to off-key quartettes. Men loafed, read, played cards, wrote letters; on one ship they watched a pet monkey tease the vessel's mascot—an amiable but slow-thinking Scottie. There were boxing matches and movies. There were good food and plenty of fresh water—luxuries to troops who had been on some of the earlier trips. But underlying feelings came through when the veterans began talking about the war. Said one, who had been on New Georgia and Guam: "It's always the same—the whole business seems unreal until the shells begin exploding around you. Going in to the beach—even then it seems like just another maneuver. The first enemy fire always surprises me somehow. I can't explain it."

At one of the frequent briefings a platoon sergeant gazed at the map. "This is the last of the little hellholes that nobody has heard of," he said. "We're stuck with it, but there will be only one more after this one. That will be Japan or China. We have heard of those places and we know that when we get a crack at them, we will be practically on our way home and the damned war will be over."

But this briefing was serious. Corporal Albert E. Biscansin, for instance, typically instructed his machine-gun squad: "Watch for snipers. They love machine gunners—dead; and don't shout names. A Nip hears a Marine's name and a minute later

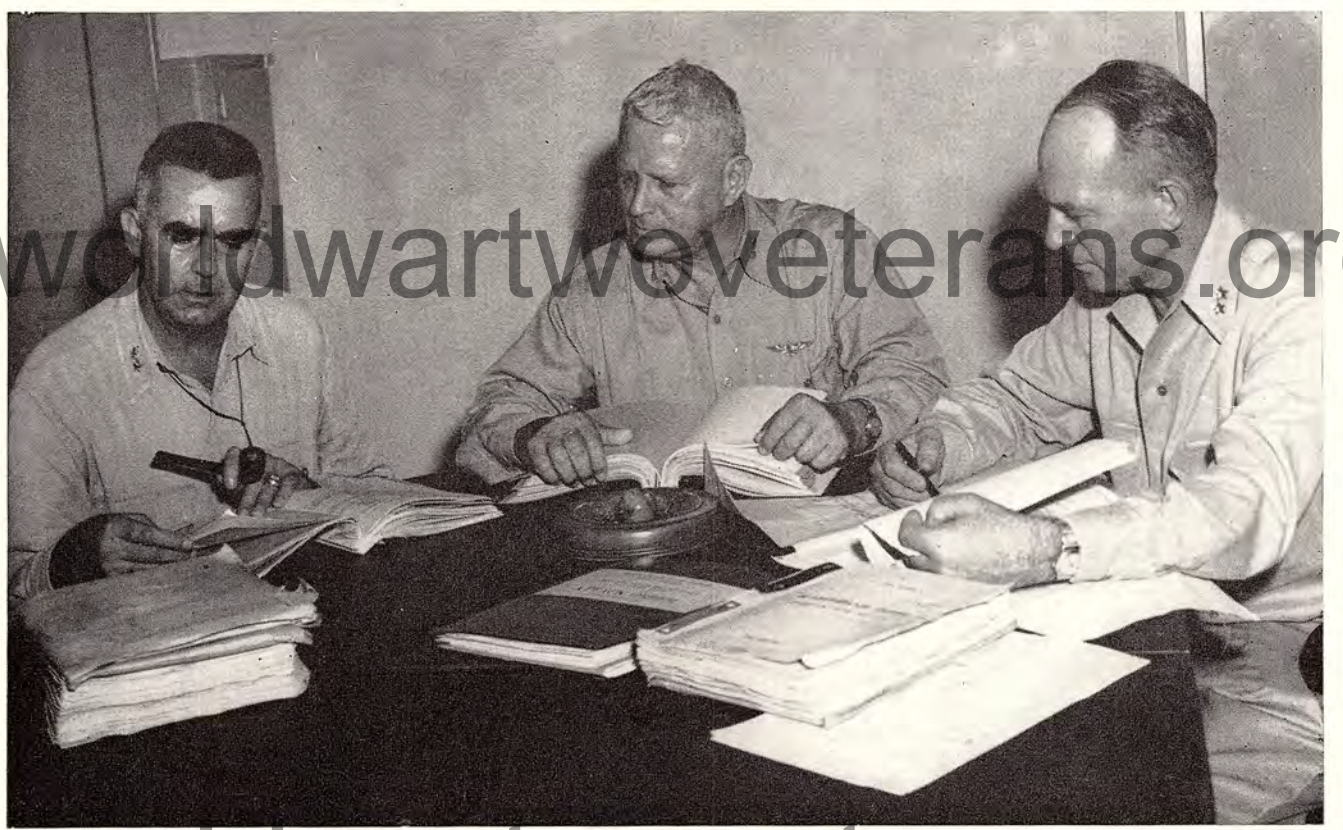
Men of the Division embark on transports for the long trip to the objective.

Services were held often en route to the target.

shouts it back. The Marine sticks up his head for a look and gets a slug between the eyes. Don't be trigger-happy. The Japs scream and yell to draw fire. They spot automatic weapons that way. Don't go haywire in a Banzai attack. Hold your fire until you see their buck teeth—then cut them down. And the last thing—when you aren't moving up or firing, keep your head and tail down. The GI Bill of Rights doesn't mean a thing to a dead Marine."

There was elaborate instruction about the island where they were going—a pretty place to look at, it seemed, but with a good many other things that would not be so pretty, according to the intelligence reports. Running true to form for islands destined for Marine attack, it had malaria, dengue, leprosy, plague, typhus, dysentery, filariasis and virtually every skin disease afflicting mankind—plus two of the world's most deadly snakes, the Habu and Kufau. Though they were assured that the chance of any individual being bitten was about one in twenty thousand, the veteran Marine fighters seemed more uneasy about them than about the world's deadliest Japs.

There were flies by the million, mosquitoes and a climate claimed to be made uncomfortable by one of the highest average humidity rates of the world, though the temperature was only about that of the southern United States. The annual rainfall averaged 120 inches. The troops were to land in the "dry" season, but might expect six inches of rain



Major General del Valle, commanding the 1st Marine Division, Lieutenant General Geiger, Corps commander, and Major General Shepherd, confer on last-minute details en route to Okinawa.

during the first month ashore and nine inches during the next—an expectation which, it is worth noting, was fully met.

The inhabitants were poor, and most of the approximately 400,000 were engaged in agriculture, growing chiefly sweet potatoes, sugar cane and rice as cash crops, though onions, cabbage and tomatoes were also raised for home consumption. There was no live-stock industry, but almost every one of the 92,000 families living on the land had a few horses, cattle, hogs and chickens.

Most Okinawans lived in small villages of thatch-roofed huts, with the more prosperous citizens in stone houses roofed with tile. The island's capital and largest city, near the southern end, was named Naha; around it were a number of small workshops where lacquer ware, pongee and panama hats had been produced before the war. There were also several large canneries and a brewery.

The northern end of the island held high, sheer mountains of some scenic beauty, honeycombed with caves, and accessible only over narrow trails on which vehicular traffic could not move. In the south the hills were more rolling and the terrain frequently broken by limestone escarpments; there were many ravines and hills in this area, also reported to be filled with caves. All around the shore Okinawa lay behind reefs extending 200–400 yards at the landing beaches and as far as one thousand yards in other places.

Reports on the political institutions ashore were naturally less detailed, but the latest information had it that there was only one party, The Imperial Rule Assistance Association, which was the Japanese equivalent of the National Socialist Party of Germany. As among the Nazis the inhabitants were allowed to vote, but only for candidates officially selected; and no matter what their representatives wished, an absolute veto rested in the hands of a governor sent from Japan.

The controlled press had printed little about the United States and that little was well calculated to

Aboard the command ship Panamint en route to Okinawa, members of III Phib Corps staff discuss the operation plans with Corps commander, Lieutenant General Roy S. Geiger (third from left).

make the natives both frightened and hostile. They expected death in fantastic forms from American forces, one of the commoner beliefs being that we tied our prisoners in the roads and ran over them with bulldozers.

Freedom of religion was allowed to a certain extent, and in 1938, the last year for which the statistics were reliable, the island held 9,335 Shintoists, 22,208 Buddhists and 1,207 Christians. Practically all the remainder professed a form of ancestor worship, apparently stemming from both Chinese custom and that of the Ryukyu Islands, of which Okinawa is one. The people built elaborate stone and concrete tombs, in which to inter the bones of their families, which were worshipped at a series of annual festivals. The Japanese had a lively interest in maintaining this custom, and were expected to use the tombs as fortifications.

Racially, the Okinawans were an even more complex mixture than is usual in the East. It was believed that the first inhabitants were Ainus and Kemasoes, like the aboriginal stock of Japan; but the island's position on the sea routes had brought in many other strains—Malay, Korean, Chinese and Japanese. The result is a short, dark people, black-haired and predominantly Japanese in appearance.

The history of Okinawa begins about 850 years before Columbus discovered America, at which date the Chinese recorded emigrations to the island, and at which time the reign of Tinsunshi, the first Okinawan king, began. By 1372 the Chinese were receiving tribute from the little kingdom, whose rulers nevertheless acknowledged the overlordship of Japan and maintained friendly relations with that power. This bond lasted until the end of the sixteenth century, when the current Okinawan king failed to help Japan in a war with the Koreans. The result was that the Prince of Satsuma descended on the island

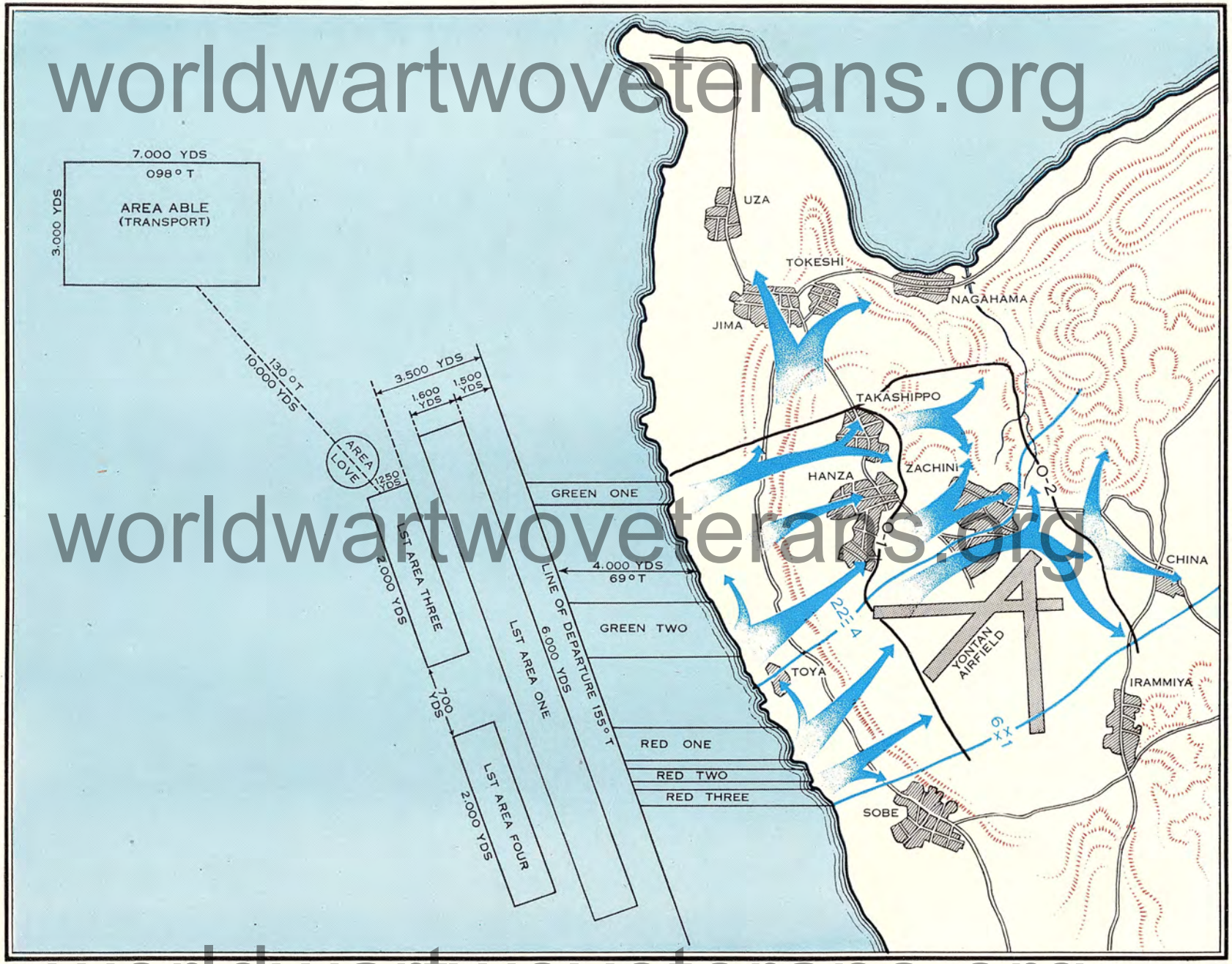
A battleship cuts loose with a broadside as the fleet lashes Jap installations during the pre-invasion bombardment.

and forced the King to acknowledge a more direct rule. The Okinawans continued to pay some tribute to China until 1879 when the Japanese began to consolidate the nearby independent states into their Empire and put a stop to it. China's protest was unavailing, and when that country lost Formosa after being crushed in the war of 1894-95, the influence of Nippon on Okinawa became paramount.

The reasons for ending that influence and seizing the island from Japan by an act of war were evident to anyone from a glance at the map. American forces would sit astride Japanese communication lines to the stolen empire in the south; the enemy would be hard pressed to send troops or planes out or the needed rubber and oil in. Finally, possession of the place would give us free access to the coasts of China.

While they were learning all this about their objective, the men of the Division were moving up to the staging point at Ulithi, which was reached on March 22. Ashore on the island of Mog Mog they played baseball, pitched horseshoes, listened to a Navy band; drank beer, ate fried chicken and ham sandwiches and enjoyed themselves.

On March 27, 1945, all aboard again, the convoy sailed for Okinawa. Four days later the Marines checked weapons and quietly attended religious services. The next day, April 1, and also Easter Sunday, they would be thrown on the beaches of Okinawa. The Division's zone of action was on the left flank of the Tenth Army, and its initial objective the capture of the vital Yontan Airfield. Within the Division the 22nd Regiment was assigned to land on the left and strike inland to the town of Hanza. On the right the 4th would drive straight inland to Yontan. The 29th Marines were in Corps reserve for the III Amphibious Corps, which comprised the First as well as the Sixth Division.



Scheme of maneuver for the Sixth Division's part in the assault of Okinawa and the capture of Yontan Airfield, D-day, 1 April 1945, H-hour, 0830. Assault battalions of the 22d Marines struck the Green Beaches and the 4th Marines quickly secured the Red Beaches.

Chapter 6: The Landing on Okinawa

THAT EASTER DAWN WAS HAILED BY THE crash of guns from some 1,200 ships, the largest war fleet that ever sailed, with the heavy artillery of battleships and cruisers concentrating on the sloping ground from the beach to Yontan Airfield, 1,200 yards inland. With that fierce music ringing in their ears, Leathernecks crawled from their bunks and went to the messhalls for a breakfast of oranges, steak and eggs, ice cream, coffee cake and hot coffee. By 5:30 they were topside, watching the bombardment.

Japanese planes began to attack in the early morning light, at first only the local reserves, apparently, for their efforts were not well coordinated and though there were several narrow escapes from bombs or suicide attacks, there were no hits and at least five planes were shot down. Meantime the gunfire had changed direction slightly, and our own carrier-based aircraft were blasting fortifications along the shore and inland toward the airfield.

The bright sunlight of the spring morning was considered a good omen for the coming battle as the assault troops in amphibian tractors headed for the beach to make their landing at 8:30 A.M., April 1, 1945, the designated H-hour. For the first time in the Pacific our tanks swam in with their own flotation gear. It was actually 8:37 when the first waves reached the beach, the 22nd Marines near Hanza on the series of beaches designated as Green, the 4th Regiment on the Red beaches opposite Yontan Airfield.

Veterans of Saipan, Bougainville and Guam received the surprise of their lives as they leaped from the amphtracs and began climbing into the rising, terraced ground dotted with concrete tombs which they had expected to find full of machine guns manned by suicidal Japs. There seemed to be no Japs; the deadly grazing fire of machine guns and the bursts of mortars were alike absent. Aboard the ships officers could hardly believe their ears as the first radio reports came in. The desperate and bloody resistance at the water-line that had marked every other invasion of the Pacific was entirely wanting. Easter services could have been held in the open on a beach that had loomed in advance as one of the toughest of them all.

Neither Colonel Schneider's 22nd Regiment nor Colonel Shapley's 4th wasted time trying to solve the mystery or congratulating themselves. They pushed inland rapidly but cautiously; by 9:12 A.M. the 22nd had moved five hundred yards forward through sugar-cane fields, and by 10:30 both regiments had reached the day's objective with only a few casualties. There was still too much good daylight to be wasted; the orders were to continue the advance with all possible vigor.

Beyond Hanza the troops began to meet their first natives; frightened, undersized individuals who

Love-day: The horizon was hidden by ships as far as the eye could see. (Life photo by J. R. Eyerman.)

1—Men did little talking as they headed for shore in the landing craft. 2—Long, thin lines of the reserve battalions cross the coral reef at low tide coming ashore to support the assault units. 3—An LSM (landing ship, mechanized) drops its human cargo on the edge of the jagged coral reef fringing the Okinawa beaches.

A view of the Green Beaches as seen by Marines of the 29th Regiment as they come ashore in corps reserve.

looked up at the giant invaders, then grinned and bobbed their heads rapidly when asked "Okinawa? Okinawa?" which was as near as most of the Marines could come to saying something in a language these people understood. It was still early afternoon when the 22nd reached Castle Hill, named for an old Chinese castle that was supposed to have occupied its summit at some time in the past. We had not expected to take this point for two days, but there was still no organized resistance.

In their zone the men of the 4th Marines were making equally rapid progress. A few minutes after landing, Major Barney Green's 1st Battalion was three hundred yards inland, and it was still early morning when the 3rd Battalion of Lieutenant Colonel Bruno Hochmuth reached the first line of tombs, eight hundred yards from the beach, which the schedule called for it to reach late in the afternoon. There were a few scattered shots from Japanese stragglers, but within the hour the 4th was on Yontan Airfield; and to make the lack of resistance all the more astonishing, it had passed several systems of interlocking caves, some of them well stocked with ammunition.

The airfield itself they found deserted except for camouflaged bamboo poles arranged in emplacements to look like antiaircraft guns, damaged planes rigged to appear operational, and a number of cleverly constructed dummy aircraft. They had expected that as much as three days would be required to seize this objective.

That evening, as the Marines were cooking their suppers, a Japanese plane circled the field, swung seaward, then turned back to a smooth landing. The pilot cut his motor, wriggled out of his parachute pack, climbed down and started to walk away in full view of the Marines; then halted in amazement and reached for his pistol as he noted signs of the field's change of ownership. It was the last thing he ever did. As one Marine inspected the bullet-riddled plane, he remarked philosophically: "Well, there's always that ten per cent that doesn't get the word."

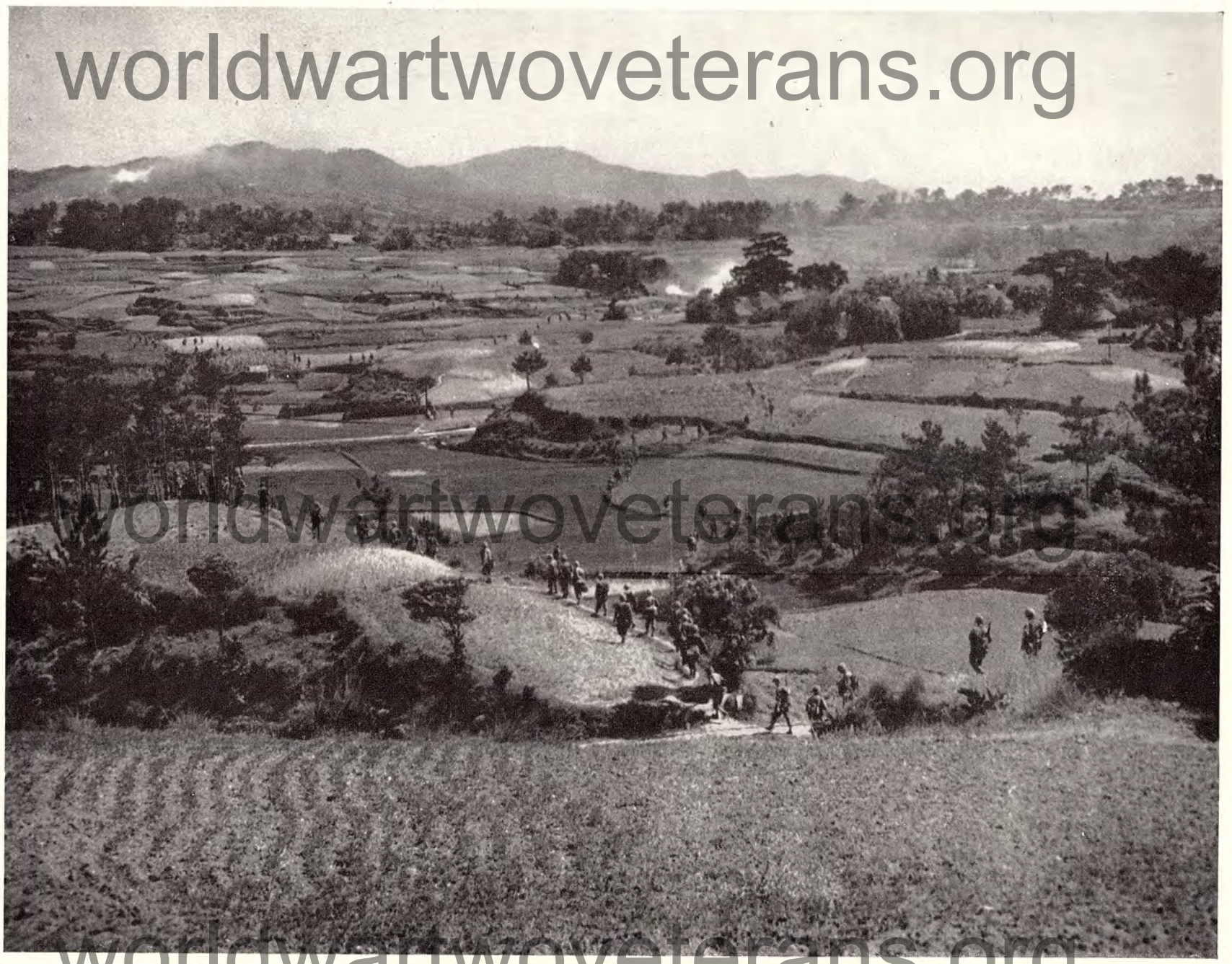
The unexpected lack of resistance led to a stepping up of the landing schedule. By late afternoon, when the Jap pilot was cut down, equipment was pouring across the beaches and bulldozers were busy carving out new roads. By the evening of the first day Colonel Bleasdale's 29th Regiment, in corps reserve,

Men of a 37MM Platoon unload their weapons on the Okinawa Beach.

Top: *Yontan Airfield—prize of the Division's first day of assault on Okinawa.* Bottom: *Some people just don't get the word. A jap plane landed on Yontan Airfield after it was securely in the hands of the 4th Marines.*

had joined the others on the beach, the Reconnaissance Company had pushed one thousand yards out onto Zanpa Misaki (Zanpa Cape) on the Division's left flank, and elements of the assault regiments had reached the line scheduled for seizure on Love plus 2.

A review of the day's activities showed the operation successful beyond all expectation except that the movement of supplies was hampered by the fringing reefs, which were even worse than anticipated. The 22nd Marines spent a quiet night, subjected to only a few and scattered attempts at infiltration. On the front of the 4th there was intermittent machine-gun and mortar fire throughout the night.



Marines of the Sixth Division spread fan-like over the rice paddies pressing the attack toward the high hills of the Ishikawa Isthmus in the background.

Chapter 7: The Drive Up Ishikawa

At 7:15 the next morning the attack was resumed to seize the Love plus 5 line and to clear Zanpa Misaki, which was considered a menace to the Division's left flank. The 22d moved forward against insignificant resistance, but on the front of the 4th the opposition began to pile up during the afternoon. The action of Company L, of the 3rd Battalion, was typical.

This unit entered a ravine with a small stream winding down its center between high, sheer ridges covered by a heavy growth of brush and scrub pine. At one point the surrounding ridges pinched the ravine to a width of ten yards, beyond which it widened out to a rice paddy surrounded by hills. As the company moved into the ravine, a single Japanese ran from a cave, fired a shot, and leaped back into hiding. First Sergeant James Brogdon led several men up the ridge, where they fired a few bursts into the cave, then tossed in a grenade. There was no further sign of the enemy as the column paused at the neck of the ravine while patrols were sent to the top of the ridge.

The 1st Platoon, under Lieutenant Marvin C. Plock, moved out along the left, where the ridge sloped down into the ravine, two hundred yards above the neck. Lieutenant Everett A. Hedahl similarly led the 3rd Platoon along the ridge to the right, while the 2nd Platoon, under Lieutenant Daniel B. Brewster, moved through the neck and the company commander, Captain Nelson C. Dale, moved at the head of the column up the ravine.

Brewster's platoon had barely cleared the neck of the ravine when the whole hillside above the rice paddy blazed with fire from scores of cleverly concealed caves in the almost vertical cliffs. Captain Dale was severely wounded and six other Marines fell at his side; on the left Plock's platoon was pinned down by small-arms fire, and on the right the 3rd Platoon ran into heavy machine-gun fire as it gained the crest of the ridge. Hedahl was hit and evacuated; First Sergeant Elmer P. Imus took command.

A machine-gun team which crossed the ridge found itself faced by a Jap-manned cave not visible from above, and a Marine who ran toward the cave with a grenade was killed before he could throw it. The entire machine-gun team was destroyed before it could fire a shot.

Lieutenant Charles W. Flanery moved his headquarters platoon up behind the 3rd Platoon, while Lieutenant Marvin D. Perskie took command of the company and attempted to redeploy the platoons,

Supplies were unloaded in record time on the Division beaches, and were able to keep up with the rapidly advancing assault units.

Top: *Marine war dogs and their handlers were an efficient team in tracking down hidden Jap snipers.* Bottom: *A flamethrower burns the enemy in their underground emplacements.*

Left: *A mortar section presses rapidly forward through an Okinawa village.* **Right:** *Japanese cavalry mounts were confiscated to lighten many heavy loads of the advancing Marines.*

but Brewster's group was hopelessly pinned down in the center of the ravine and all contact with it lost. Six Marines were killed trying to reestablish communications with Brewster before Sergeant Otis Thorpe succeeded in crawling forward to within shouting distance and brought back the information that Captain Dale was dying, but that the lieutenant had succeeded in moving his men into a small indentation in the hillside which afforded some measure of cover.

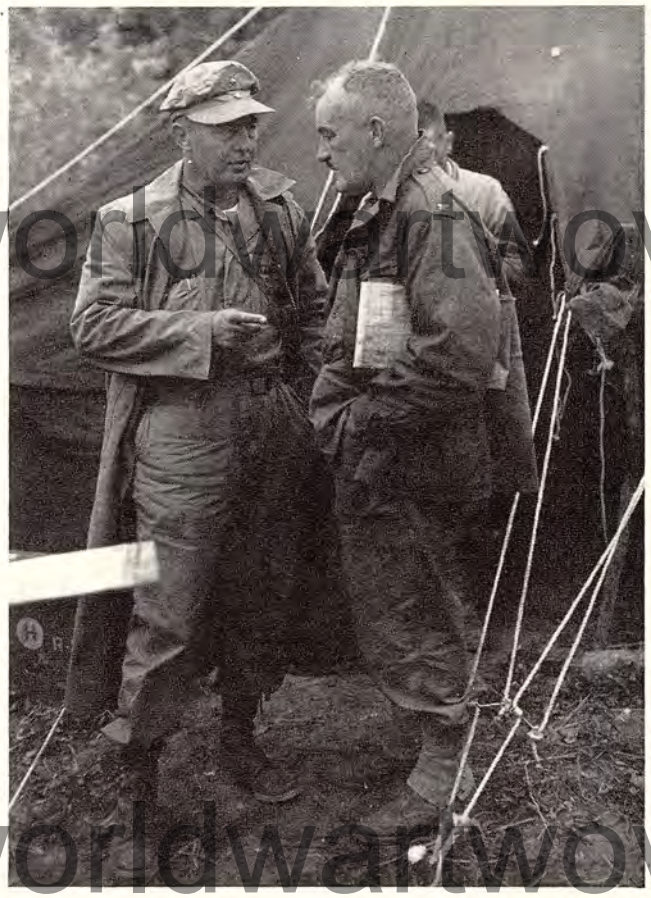
Plock's platoon managed to withdraw under the cover of smoke grenades, but all efforts to move in on Brewster were fruitless. The acting company commander called for artillery support, but the guns were unable to deliver fire into the deep ravine without endangering the 2nd Platoon, and by this time Brewster himself had been twice hit. Pfc. Anthony Caso volunteered to attempt a breakout and achieved it by dropping into the stream that skirted the rice paddy, whence he crawled back to the headquarters platoon with information as to the enemy dispositions.

April 2 was now drawing to an end. Marines wounded in the isolated platoon were dying for lack of care and several Navy Corpsmen had been killed while trying to treat the injured. Brewster's platoon was in danger of being destroyed and the position of the entire company was jeopardized. "We had to get those men out of there," Perskie said. "It was nearly dark and everything we had tried until then had failed. The only thing to do was attack."

He gave the order, and shouting "Let's go, men!" started down the ravine toward the caves where the bodies of a number of Japs could be seen. The Leathernecks immediately drove forward, Plock's platoon in front, Imus and his men following, while Flanery set up his machine guns and fired over the heads of the advancing Marines.

The sudden sweep caught the Japs off balance and the attack went right through, flamethrower men firing caves as they went past, phosphorus and fragmentation hand grenades being thrown into others, while the Japs who emerged were taken under effective small-arms fire. "Banzai," cried one of them weakly. "Banzai, hell," replied one of the Marines as he cut him down with an autorifle. In a few minutes the fight in the fading light was over, with approximately 150 Japanese dead scattered about the ravine. Only ten men of Brewster's platoon walked out.

The 1st Battalion, 4th Marines, was caught in a similar desperate fight, about 250 Japs being killed in the two strongpoints on the battalion front before



Brigadier General Clement confers with Colonel Schneider, 22d Marines commander, on the day's operations.

the attack was halted at 4:30 P.M., with the lines advanced one thousand yards.

Zanpa Misaki on the left was cleared during the day by the 1st Battalion, 29th Regiment, which found only a few Japs in the area and quickly liquidated those, but the advance of the Division as a whole had considerably slowed down, and now it was up against the rough and rising terrain that covers the approaches to the Yontan Zan massif. That night, the night of April 2–3, was quiet in all sectors except that of the 3rd Battalion, 4th. As on the preceding night this unit received intermittent mortar and machine-gun fire, with frequent infiltration attempts, mostly on a small scale.

Meanwhile, the supporting echelons were having their troubles, due to the unprecedented advance, the difficult character of the reef and the inadequacy of the road net. There was a narrow coastal road running from one tip of the island to the other, but the routes across the island from east to west were little more than trails, not designed for heavy wheeled traffic, winding through narrow ravines and over mountainous terrain. Most of the bridges were out; Marine engineers and Navy Seabees were required to do some remarkable jobs of construction in preparing the miserable trails to carry the needed food, water and ammunition to the front lines.

Despite the hard fighting some units had met, it was clear that the main body of enemy troops was still ahead, and constant probing in several directions was undertaken to develop the situation. This duty fell largely to the lot of Major Anthony J. (Tony) Walker's 140-man Reconnaissance Company, usually supported by tanks. On the second day of the campaign (April 2) this company crossed the neck of Zanpa Misaki and took the small town of Nagahama, and the following day, mounted on its tanks, made a push along the coastal road to the base of the Ishikawa Isthmus, meeting only scattered resistance.

This made it clear that the Division could move rapidly toward the east coast. The Division Commander was very desirous of pressing the advance for a number of reasons. He felt it most important to locate and destroy the main body of the enemy before

Marines pause during the drive up the Ishikawa Isthmus and observe results of artillery fire to the front.

he could organize his defenses; to obtain the ports along the coast as security against Japanese counter-landings; to seal off any enemy forces in the northern part of the island and thus to protect the Tenth Army's left flank; and to occupy strategic areas of the island, from which anticipated attempts at guerrilla warfare could be broken up by patrolling.

On L plus 3, the Division continued its advance. The 4th and 22nd Regiments crossed the mid-island watershed and worked well down into the foothills on the opposite slope. The difficulties of the 22nd were mainly with the rough country; the 4th plunged into a region of sharp ridges and deep, wooded gullies, where it found a few scattered Japanese, probably the remnants of the battalion that had been stationed near the airfield.

By April 4 the Division had reached the east coast and had established a line across the base of the Ishikawa Isthmus, from Nakodomari to Ishikawa. The two assault regiments came down out of the foothills and, swinging slightly to the northeast, advanced toward the isthmus. They were now in a rolling, grassy land with only a few trees near dwellings or on ridges. Houses were deserted; only now and then there was a smattering of fire from our advance units as they ran into scattered groups of Japanese, who fought only enough to make the advance delay and move cautiously, but it did not observably slow the drive of the Marines, who reached their L plus 15 objectives within five days.

The standard of living of the Okinawans was not high, and many household duties were performed in a primitive manner.

The weight of a Marine Sherman tank was too much for this Okinawa bridge.

This swift advance caused the plans of the III Amphibious Corps commander to be modified, and the modification brought orders for the Sixth Division to sweep on to the northward up the Ishikawa Isthmus, seize the seaport town of Nago; then drive on to the Motobu Peninsula and the northern tip of the island.

On April 6 the attack was resumed with the 4th Marines advancing along the east coast of the Ishikawa Isthmus, while the 29th passed through the 22nd and moved up the west coast. The 3rd Battalion, 29th (Lieutenant Colonel Erma A. Wright) moved rapidly along the coastal road, accompanied by tanks and meeting only scattered enemy resistance. On the east coast there was a supply road of somewhat less importance, along which the

Every available piece of mechanized equipment was employed as a troop carrier to press the advantage of the rapidly moving assault units up the Ishikawa Isthmus.

enemy had destroyed most of the numerous bridges, leaving small pockets of resistance behind, which caused some delay till they were dealt with by detachments from the main body. Meanwhile the 22nd, now in Division reserve, combed the area behind the assault regiments.

The 6th Engineer Battalion, which had by this time turned the work on Yontan Airfield over to the 58th Seabees (the first plane came in there on the night of L plus 2—a Hellcat making an emergency landing), was close behind the assault elements, improving the roads and constructing bridges as the need arose.

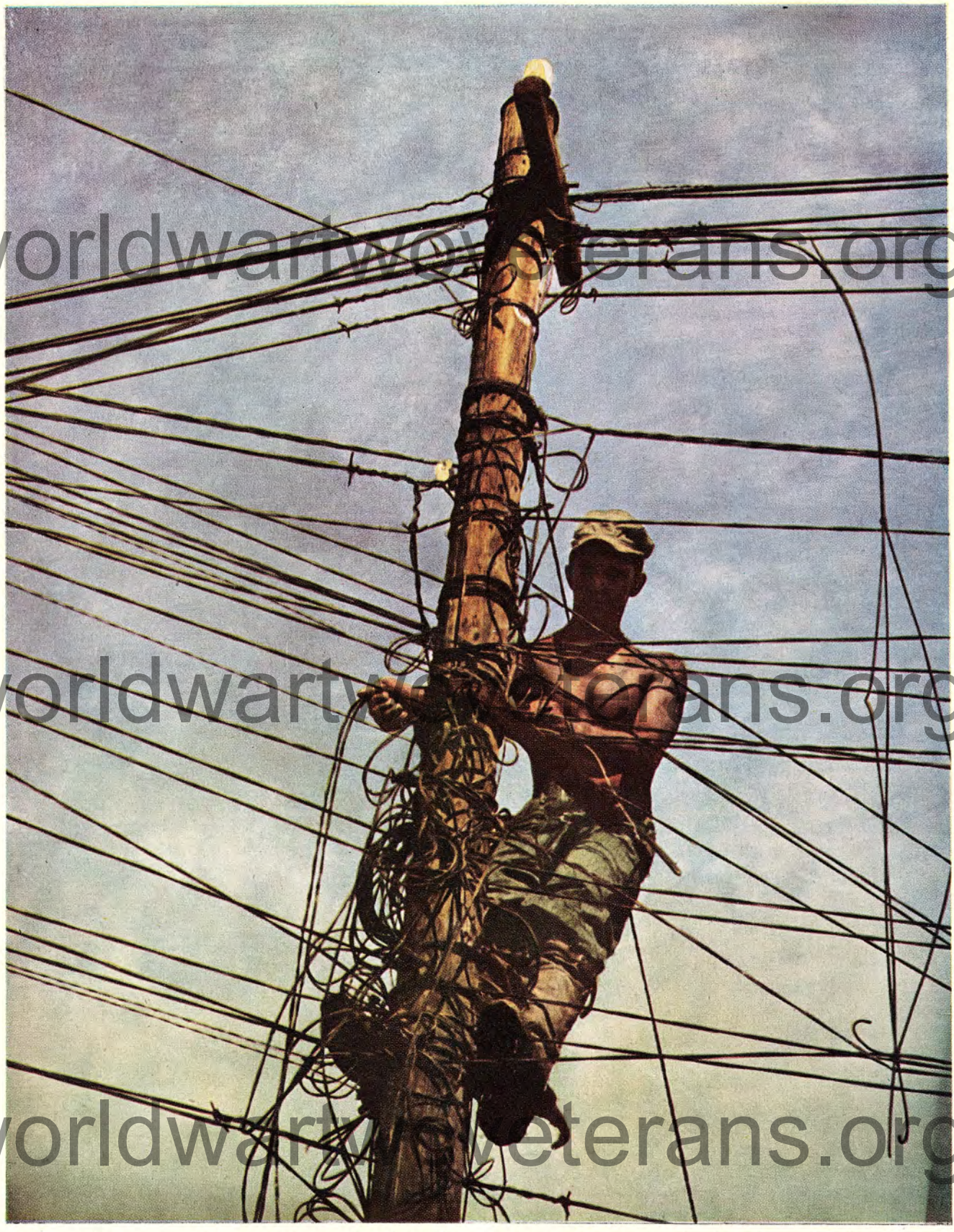
The Reconnaissance Company with its usual accompaniment of tanks, meanwhile moved out ahead of the advance up the west coast road as far as Awa, then returned to Nago and swung north to cross the base of Motobu Peninsula as far as the smaller town of Nakaoshi. There were more Japs here than farther south, and the company had quite a few sharp actions. As the reconnaissance extended westward it became evident that the enemy had

The Okinawa natives, old and young alike, were both surprised and grateful for the consideration shown them by American troops.

probably selected the Peninsula's mountainous area as his final defensive position in the north.

It would have to be taken; but before beginning the assault, the Division paused to reorganize. On April 8, the 22nd Regiment was deployed across the island from Nakaoshi to Ora to block off the extreme northern area and cover the rear of the 29th, which was committed to the task of seeking out and fixing the enemy position on the Peninsula. The 4th was assembled in the vicinity of Ora, ready to move in to assist either of the other two regiments, and supplied some elements for the probing advances to the northward made by the 22nd.

Company K of the 4th, for example, went on an extended foot and amphibian tractor patrol, moving rapidly up the east coast, while the 2nd Battalion, 22nd, under Lieutenant Colonel Horatio C. Woodhouse, with a battery of artillery and Company A, 6th Tank Battalion, moved north by forced marches along the west coast of the island. The battalion reached Hedo Misaki on April 14 after beating down scattered and ineffective resistance, and secured the northern tip of Okinawa. An advanced base was set up here and patrols were sent southward to make contact with similar patrols from the 4th. There was no major fighting, but a good many minor skirmishes with enemy stragglers, mainly by night, as the Japs tried to infiltrate through our lines, apparently with the object of joining their forces on Motobu.



Division communications personnel performed miracles in maintaining the ever-extending lines of communication.

Chapter 8: Battle for Mount Yaetake

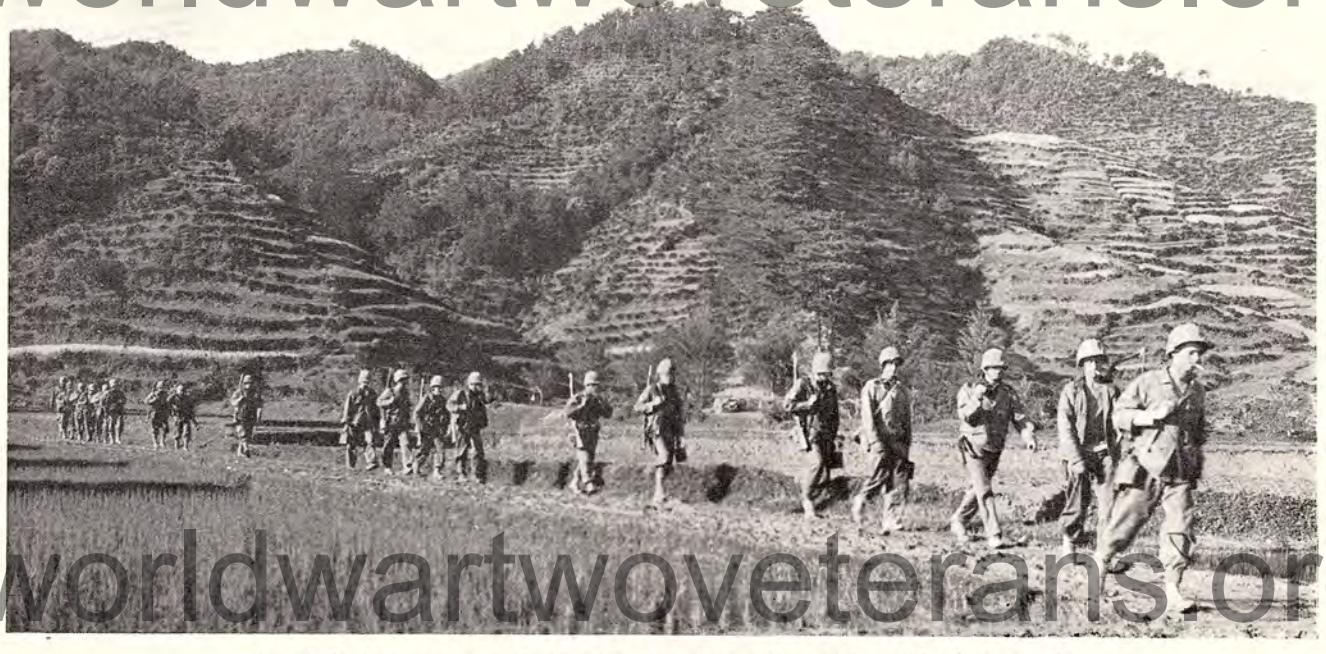
MOTOBU PENINSULA IS A DISTINCTIVE AND individualized portion of Okinawa, as Okinawa is individualized among Pacific islands. The inhabitants are a race of mountain farmers, poorer than those in the rest of the island, and have laid out their gardens on impossible slopes, cultivating small rice paddies with an infinitude of labor. Their villages are small and of thatched huts, and they have trouble getting enough water, which is scarce except in the valleys.

The Japanese assigned to the defense of the area knew the country intimately and had spent a long time organizing it, whereas the information on our side was somewhat inadequate, as much of the peninsula had been under cloud when reconnaissance photos were taken. In addition, many important trails were concealed under trees and were thus invisible from the air.

The peninsula juts out to the west from Okinawa in the form of a stubby, crooked thumb, only a little longer than it is wide. Midway of the peninsula, running from east to west, a stream bisects the two principal ranges of hills and empties into the China Sea near the small town of Toguchi. On the northern side, about two-thirds of the way to the western tip, a small group of islands protects Unten Harbor, where the Japanese Navy had a base for midget submarines, complete with underground workshops, a concealed marine railway and a power plant. Adjacent to the submarine base was a torpedo storage station.

Seen from the ground the region seems to consist of somewhat incoherent upthrust coral ridges, but a view from the air gives it the appearance of a gigantic extinct crater. Around the western tip and back toward the body of the island, the hills run in a series of ridges that are overlooked by two high, twisted masses of rock to the south of the Manna–Toguchi road. Together they constitute Mount Yaetake, 1,200 feet tall. The Japanese commander had chosen this as his main defensive area, since from its escarpments he would be enabled to deny to our forces the effective use of the Nago area, while himself controlling both the Nago–Toguchi and Itomi–Toguchi roads.

To the north the ridges are lower, and rise uniformly from the sea to a line of crests farther inland from the coast. There is considerable rolling land



Men of the 29th Marines push deep into the interior of mountainous Motobu Peninsula.

Antiaircraft fire fills the sky above Yontan Airfield, beating off a Japanese air raid.

here and a few modest villages. On the west the peninsula is more precipitous, the only break in the wall occurring at Toguchi Harbor. At the base of the peninsula the wooded hills form a horseshoe, protecting the flat rice paddies west of Nago. The lower ridges are everywhere heavily wooded, principally with scrub pine; the higher reaches rocky, or covered with grass and a few stunted trees.

The Peninsula is about ten miles long and nearly eight miles wide, or as large as the entire island of Saipan. The country is more rugged than Saipan, and had it been defended (by a division or more) it could have held out for a long time and would have been taken only at great cost.

From his height the enemy could control the approaches to Toguchi with field artillery and naval guns; he could interdict the road to Itomi; he could keep under observation any movement of troops to the northward, and intercept patrols or halt attackers by long range fire from the many 20mm and 25mm antiaircraft guns which he had converted to ground use.

The terrain within the Peninsula was such that it was impossible for the attackers to use mechanized equipment and it even presented serious difficulties to the passage of infantry. The defenses had been long prepared and all likely avenues of approach were heavily mined. The defending force was organized around elements of the Japanese 44th Independent Mixed Brigade, and was known as the Udo Force, after the colonel who commanded it. It was a composite organization, including infantry, machine-gun units, light and medium artillery, Okinawa home-guard conscripts, and the naval personnel from the station at Unten. In addition to 75mm and 150mm guns manned by army forces, the enemy had emplaced two 6.1-inch naval guns capable of reaching any point in the area for eight to ten miles south of Motobu.

After the fighting was over, it was discovered

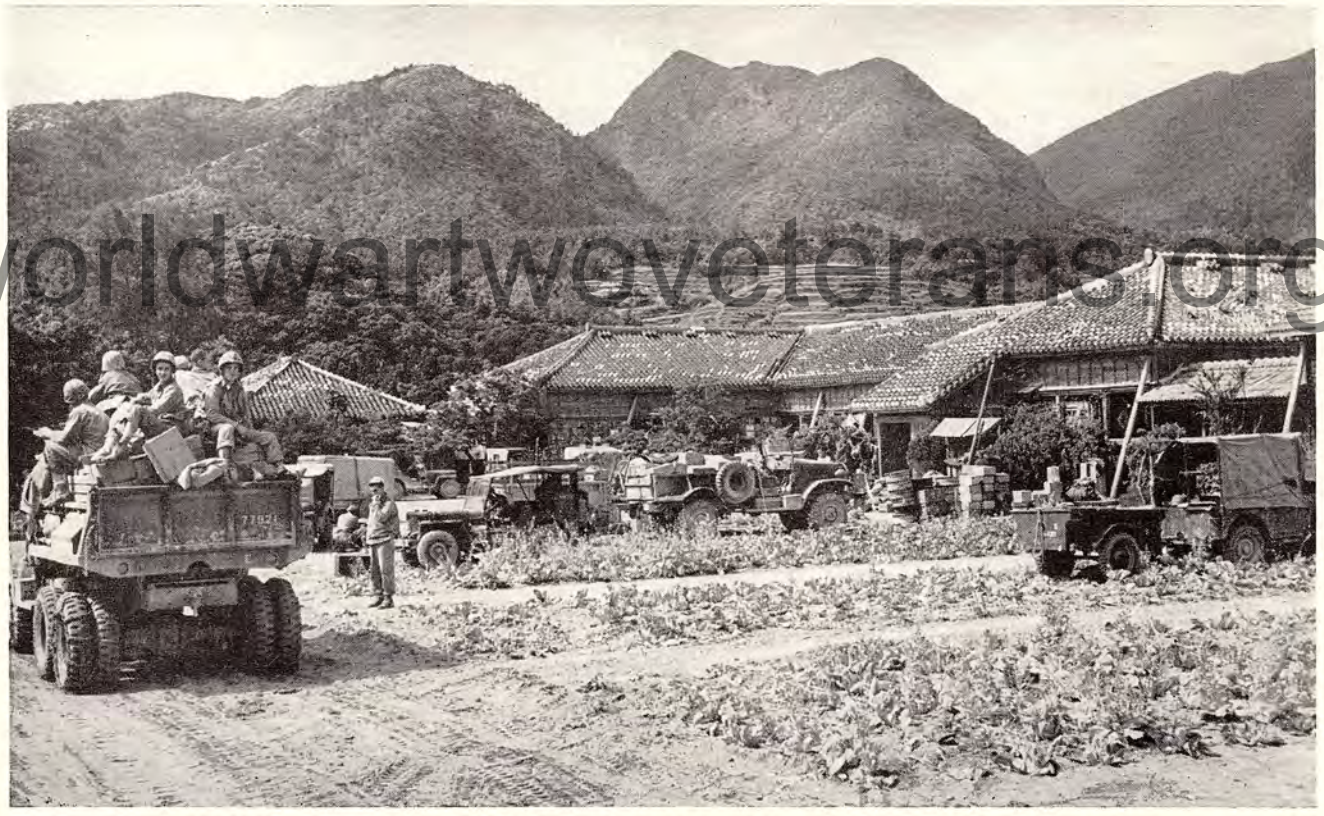
A Japanese landing craft was captured in its camouflaged berth on Motobu Peninsula. The elaborate camouflage had rarely proven effective in concealing the boats from our attacking planes.

that Colonel Udo had maintained his command post in the center of Mount Yaetake in a complex cave system which embraced all the means required for an effective defense, including a complete radio and telephonic communications installation. In addition to this good communications system and their extensive network of cave entrenchments, the Japanese had two other advantages in their local knowledge and the only truly effective means of quick transportation in the mountains—horses. Paddocks and corrals were completely equipped, down to veterinary supplies. Finally, they had an extraordinary number of infantry mortars and small automatic weapons.

This was the position against which the 29th Regiment was moving, in accordance with a plan which called for the 3rd Battalion to circle the southern and western coast to Toguchi, while the 2nd Battalion was to march north along the northern coast road, and the 1st Battalion to proceed along the inland trail which leads from Nago to Itomi.

On the morning of April 9 this movement began, with the three battalions practically abreast. Light resistance was encountered that day by all columns. The following morning the 1st and 3rd Battalions made an attempt to open the road that separated them, the latter battalion reaching the town of Toguchi in the afternoon under heavy rain. If this road could be opened and the ground on either side of it seized, the Peninsula would be split in half, and our forces would have a much-needed east-west communication route.

Two companies of the 3rd Battalion moved out from Toguchi with flank patrols on either side of the trail. About eight hundred yards east of Toguchi there is a sharp curve; here machine-gun and mortar fire fell on the troops from sources high above and invisible. The casualties were not heavy, but the troops were pinned to the ground



The formidable heights of Mount Yaetake rising precipitously above the surrounding mountains of Motobu Peninsula.

and the entire valley was swept by enemy machine guns. The remaining company of the battalion set up its machine guns on a hill commanding the south side of the road, placing fire on the enemy position, and providing sufficient neutralization to permit the withdrawal of the advanced platoons.

One difficulty experienced at all points was that of getting effective supporting fire. Our artillery, in the Nago area, was forced to deliver its fire over the high hills in the center of the Peninsula and there were many defiladed points it could not reach. Four weapons of the 1st Armored Amphibian Tractor Battalion were therefore brought around by water to Toguchi, where they fired under control of the artillery forward observers stationed with the battalions in contact with the enemy. The results were highly satisfactory.

To the east the 1st Battalion worked forward close to Manna and almost within sight of the ocean. Then, late in the afternoon, machine guns and mortars opened a heavy fire from the heights, splitting the column and isolating some of its elements. Companies A and B, in the lead, began a withdrawal, but as they passed an open draw and approached a bridge they ran into another belt of fire, this time from rifles and, apparently, light machine guns. Captain Lyle E. Specht of Company B sought the shelter of some fallen trees and set up his machine guns, while Company C covered with overhead fire, under protection of which Company B and two platoons of Company A reached safe ground. The remaining platoon of Company A, acting as flank security, moved off the road to a protected ridge, spent the night there and rejoined the larger command in the morning.

During the next three days the 29th Regiment conducted a series of probing operations which developed the limits of the enemy's position and enabled the Division staff to make some deductions as to his defense plans. Colonel Udo, they decided, was conducting a very skillful defense, keeping within his circumscribed area, attacking only when he had overwhelming advantages of time and place, usually in the late afternoon or

A flamethrower quickly and effectively knocks out a Japanese cave position on the approaches to key Mount Yaetake.

during the night. The defense was passive in a sense, but this was its object—to delay, detain and wear out large American forces, keep them from being used elsewhere; to hold open a center from which guerrilla operations could be conducted if our vigilance were relaxed or our troops were removed.

The Division's intelligence work had been well and thoroughly done and by this time it was known almost exactly where the enemy was and in what strength. In preparation for a decisive drive the 4th Marines were brought from the east coast and installed on the southwest coast of the peninsula near the 3d Battalion, 29th, the plan being for these two units (4th Regiment, with the 3d Battalion of the 29th attached) to attack eastward toward the central mass of Mount Yaetake. The other two battalions of the 29th would simultaneously move westward from Itomi, clear the Japs from the Manna–Itomi road, and drive them southward in conjunction with the 4th Marines.

The plan and the terrain on which it was executed produced a campaign of considerable professional interest, centering around the fact that it was an operation of mountain maneuver. General objectives were, of course, assigned by the high command, but it was impossible for units to remain in physical contact and there could be no continuous line, so that each battalion and each company had to operate with a considerable degree of independence. The terrain was largely unknown; company and battalion commanders had to alter their methods at every step, fighting a continual battle of opportunity. Moreover, these commanders had to depend upon the physical as well as the tactical resources of their own commands. Artillery and air support would not be effective till the heights affording observation were taken, and the use of armor was out of the question. Finally, the country over which our forces were attacking possessed few roads, and all supplies had to be carried by hand up narrow and rough trails.

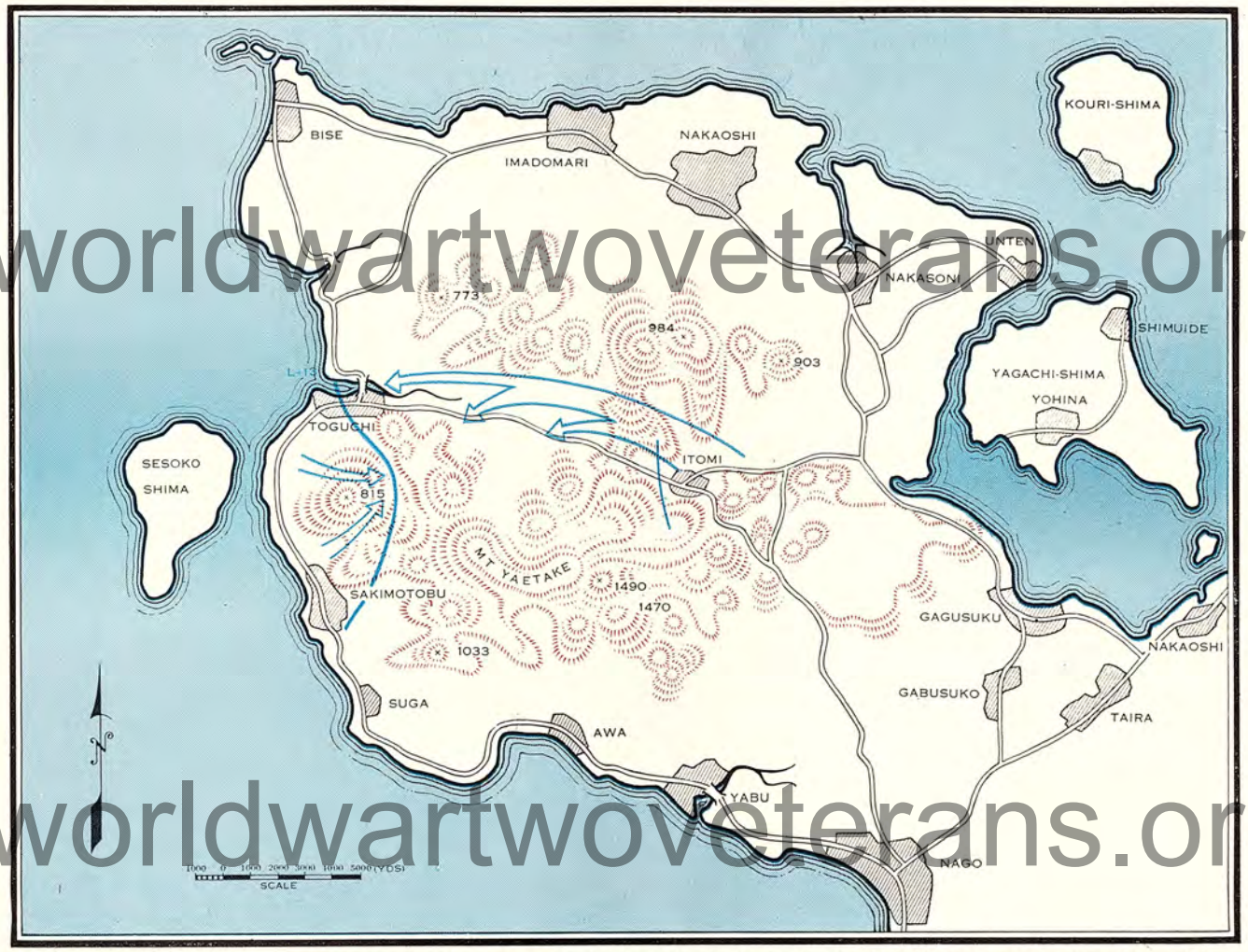
In the coordinated attack of April 14, the 4th Marines, with the 3d Battalion of the 29th Marines attached, undertook initially to seize a 700-foot ridge which was about 1,200 yards inland from the coast, and which dominated the western coastal road. The situation was unique in that the direction of attack was east, while the remaining two battalions of the

A 105mm battalion of the 15th Marines lays down a heavy preparation before the assault of Mount Yaetake.

29th Marines simultaneously drove westward toward Yaetake and from the Itomi area. This convergence upon the central defense system from two opposite directions rendered the coordination of artillery, naval gunfire, and air support a most delicate task.

The attack to seize the 700-foot ridge began at 8:30 A.M. with the 3d Battalion, 29th, on the left and the 2d Battalion, 4th, on the right. Surprisingly light resistance was encountered at first. Scattered artillery and mortar fire harassed the troops, but the objective was nevertheless seized by noon. As the attack moved forward, the 1st Battalion, 4th, was ordered in to follow the 2d Battalion in echelon to the right to protect the exposed flank. Beyond the first ridge, all units encountered growing opposition from small groups of machine gunners and riflemen concealed amid the rocks and scrub pine characteristic of the area. Mortar fire, increasing in intensity, likewise began to fall on the advancing troops. 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 forward 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?"

When the attack ended the evening of April 14



The plan of maneuver of Division units to develop the enemy stronghold on Motobu Peninsula. The 29th Marines were to clear the road from Itomi to Toguchi while the 4th Marines were to press inland across country to capture Hill 815, from which the Japs were able to dominate the coastal road.

the 4th Marines had three battalions in line, the 1st Battalion having been moved well forward to take position on the extreme right flank of the day's objective. The regimental weapons company, unable to employ its heavy weapons because of the very nature of the terrain, was organized as an infantry company and used to patrol the ever extending right flank. The 4th Marines had accomplished the mission assigned in the operation plan for the day, but the valleys ahead were steep and still full of Japs. On the front of Company A, for example, smoke had to be used in rescuing the wounded of a fire team that had been sent forward in an attempt to develop the situation.

General Shepherd had come forward repeatedly, and with his operations officer had followed the situation with regimental and battalion commanders. At on-the-spot conferences with the commanders concerned, he would issue fragmentary orders for the following day, filling in the details later. He also had to keep the larger picture in mind; offshore the Kamikaze offensive against our ships was at its peak, and early warning of the approach of enemy aircraft was urgently needed. This led to moving the Reconnaissance Company to the western tip of Motobu Peninsula at Bise, both to seize a site for a radar warning station in accordance with instructions from higher authority, and to guard against counter-landings.

But by the night of the 14th it was possible to nar-

Marines stand by ready for any enemy who might be flushed out of the farmhouse which has been set afire by a mortar attack.

Colonel Shapley, 4th Marines commander, orients the officers of his regiment on the plan for assault of Mount Yaetake.

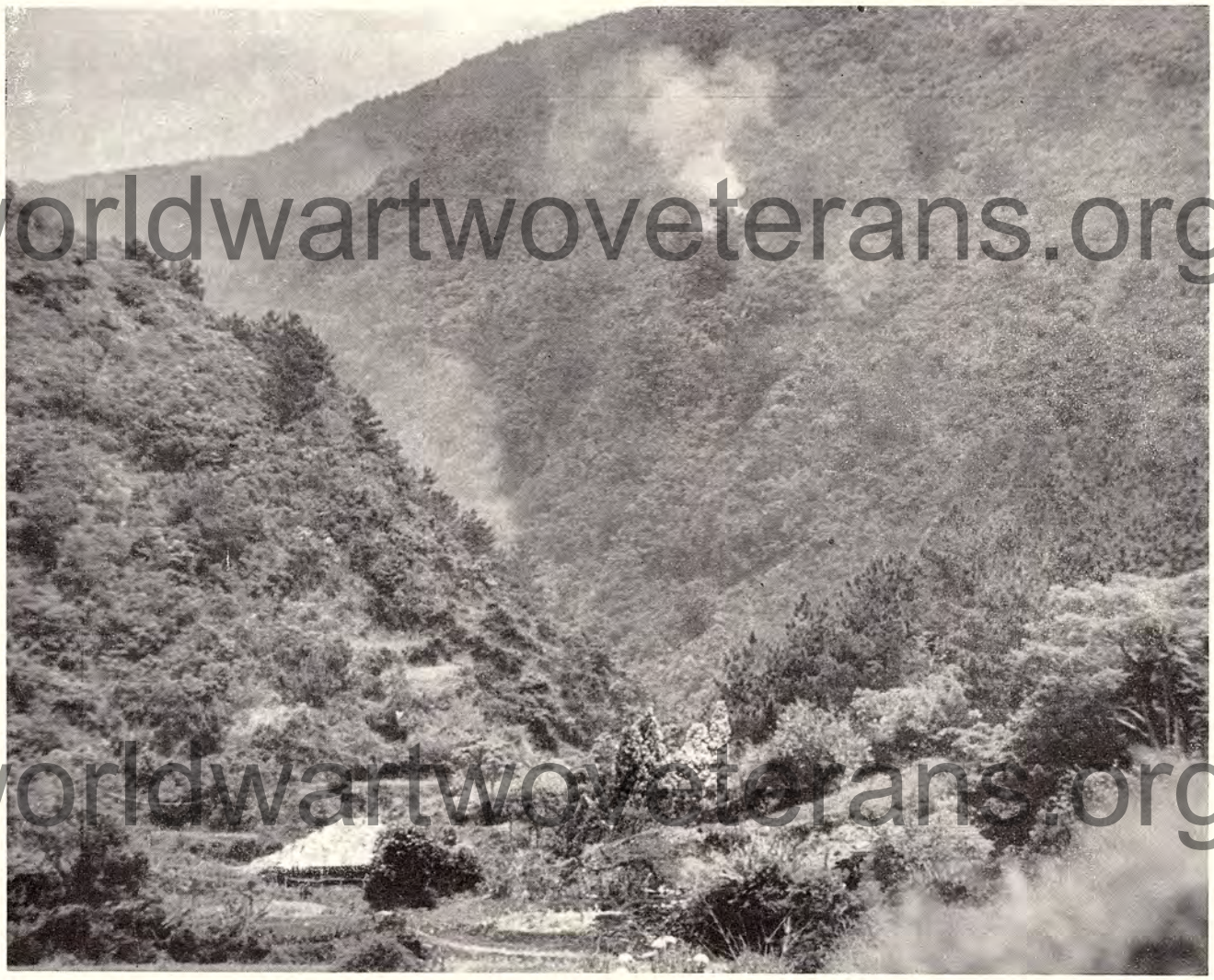
row the general offensive down to more specific objectives. Colonel Shapley knew that the enemy had two strongpoints, one atop Green Hill (named after Lieutenant James H. Green, who was killed there), containing a pair of 75mm guns; the other at the summit of Mount Yaetake itself, to which Colonel Udo's advance units could be seen withdrawing as they were maneuvered out of their initial positions.

On the 14th also, there was a change of command, with Colonel William J. Whaling taking over the 29th Regiment. Colonel Whaling had been through all the Guadalcanal and Cape Gloucester campaigns with the First Marine Division and had twice won the Legion of Merit while gaining his abundant experience in fighting Japs.

The 4th Marines' plan of attack for the next day, the 15th, involved an advance with three battalions abreast, driving one thousand yards farther inland, to the next ridge which stood between the advancing forces and the Yaetake peak.

By noon the regiment was halfway to its objective. On the left flank the 3d Battalion, 29th Marines, was engaged in a savage battle to gain the summit of Green Hill. On the front of the 1st and 2d Battalions of the 4th Marines, the defense was increasing in its tenacity. Before the day ended, Company G had 65 casualties, while three company commanders in the 2d Battalion were evacuated. The key objective of the latter two battalions was described as Hill 200. This hill was not masked to our artillery fires, and a heavy concentration had been laid down prior to the jumpoff. This preparation was supplemented by intensive air attacks and an accurate bombardment by the USS *Colorado's* main battery. During the prejumpoff concentration the Japs retired into the inner security of their caves and waited till the explosions outside subsided, indicating that the Marines were again moving forward. The Japs popped out to reoccupy their defense positions, and invariably the infantry had to go in and dig them out. In bitter fighting Hill 200 was twice taken and once lost before it fell to the 1st and 2d Battalions.

The problems of supply and evacuation increased with each forward thrust of the infantry. The engineers worked feverishly in an effort to improve the far from adequate road net and to extend new roads up to the front lines. The supply dumps were still a good distance back, and in the forward areas the question was quite literally one of moving



A heavy artillery barrage is laid down along the approaches to Mount Yaetake. Clearly shown is the rugged terrain through which the 4th Marines had to press their attack. (Life photo by J. R. Eyerman.)

mountains. Although the bulldozers accomplished the near impossible, roads were still well behind the infantry. As a consequence, ammunition, water, and rations went the last 1,500 yards from the forward dumps on the backs of sweating Marines. Battalion headquarters troops and support platoons were used to assist in this human supply line. The evacuation of wounded was equally difficult. But there is one thing Marines will go through hell for: the proper care of their wounded. The job of evacuating wounded men down the steep, rocky, wooded slopes was miraculously accomplished, and in record time. Many lives were saved because of the will of other Marines to save them.

When the attack of the 4th Marines was halted on the evening of April 15, the 1st and 2d Battalions were strongly entrenched on Hill 200, their day's objective. The 3d Battalion, 29th, on the left, was still short of Green Hill, being unable to overcome the enemy's fanatic resistance.

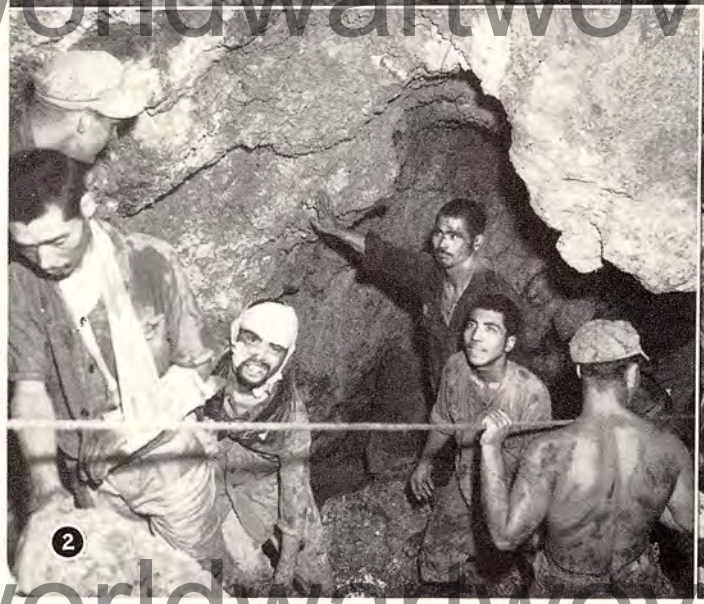
Plans for the following day involved a convergent effort which would gradually shift the direction of the Division's attack toward the north.

The 1st Battalion, 22d Marines, was moved into position on the extreme right flank of the 4th Marines and assigned the mission of working north towards Yaetake, making physical contact with the 4th on the left and the 29th on the right while

15 April 1945: The battle for Mount Yaetake continued to develop. The 4th Marines had gained commanding objectives on the approaches to the Japanese positions, and the 29th Marines were closing in from Itomi to the enemy's rear, while elements of the 22d Marines maintained security patrols on the southern extremity of the position.

those two units commenced gradually to orient their force to the northward. Thus Colonel Udo's force was now pinched in the slowly closing jaws of a nutcracker. In the zone of the 4th Regiment, the 3d Battalion of the 29th moved forward to seize Green Hill directly to its front. The 2d Battalion of the 4th, already on Hill 200, was ordered to hold that commanding ground and support the attack of the 3d Battalion of the 29th on Green Hill. The 1st Battalion began to swing its right flank in preparation for the attack to the northward, at the same time maintaining contact with the 3d Battalion of the 4th which had moved well forward on its right. On the opposite side of Yaetake, moving generally towards the 4th, the 29th commenced to swing its flanks to the north and west, meeting only light resistance as it struck the base of Yaetake itself. Meanwhile the 1st Battalion, 22d, was having difficulty with the steep rocky terrain in its assigned zone, although the actual resistance encountered was light.

On April 16 the nutcracker started to close. During the early morning hours, the 3d Battalion, 29th, renewed the fierce battle for Green Hill. The attack persisted through the entire hot morning, and was climaxed by a rush across the last two hundred yards and a hand-to-hand fight. When the Marines attained the summit they overran and sealed a whole



1—The terrified, half-starved, and ragged Okinawans came out of their hiding places in the hills. Their numbers increased hourly and a grave problem was created as they clogged the vital roads and supply routes. They were quickly herded into the Civil Affairs compound at Taira. 2—Some Japanese, realizing complete defeat, surrendered meekly after Yaetake was captured. Here some are shown coming out of their underground hiding place. 3—General Clement inspects the Civil Affairs compound at Taira.

Immediate transfusion of blood plasma was responsible for saving many wounded men from death.

series of caves, two of which contained the 75mm guns previously mentioned. One hundred twenty Japs died in the open; how many were sealed in the caves by the demolition teams, no one knows, for through the night muffled explosions could be heard as the imprisoned Japs committed suicide.

With the capture of Green Hill, the stage setting was complete for the assault of Yaetake. The 3d Battalion of the 29th on Green Hill and the 2d Battalion of the 4th held their positions and supported the 1st and 3d Battalions by fire as the latter moved directly north. The 1st Battalion, 22d, had been unable to reach its assigned objective and the 29th Marines were still not in position to close the existing gap; thus the right flank of the 4th was in the air. It was a gamble to press the attack, but the pocket of enemy resistance had been quite clearly defined. Colonel Shapely decided to take that gamble, and ordered his battalions forward to their objective, towering, three-crested Mount Yaetake.

The peak of the mountain lay in the zone of action of the 1st Battalion. Company A, commanded by Captain Clinton B. Eastment, was on the left attacking up the south nose, while Company C, commanded by Lieutenant William H. Carlson, was on the right, working up a large draw to attack the main ridge. The uphill advance of Company A through the scrub pine was slow, but met only light resistance in the form of scattered machine-gun fire at first. As it pressed slowly upward, the 2d Battalion from its vantage point on Hill 200 saw indications that the Japs, already well entrenched on the top of the mountain, were being strengthened by reinforcements moving along the ridge from the westward. This was a target of rare opportunity, and the 2d Battalion's 81mm mortars did effective execution, expending over 350 rounds in two hours.

The Japanese commander exercised excellent fire discipline. His troops held their fire until the leading Marines of Company A reached the crest of the key ridge; they then opened up with every weapon they commanded. The fighting was close and bitter and the Marines were unable to maintain their foothold. They were forced to pull back to the meager protection of an overhanging ledge of rock and bring their 60mm mortars into play at close range. But the Japs' knee mortars and grenades

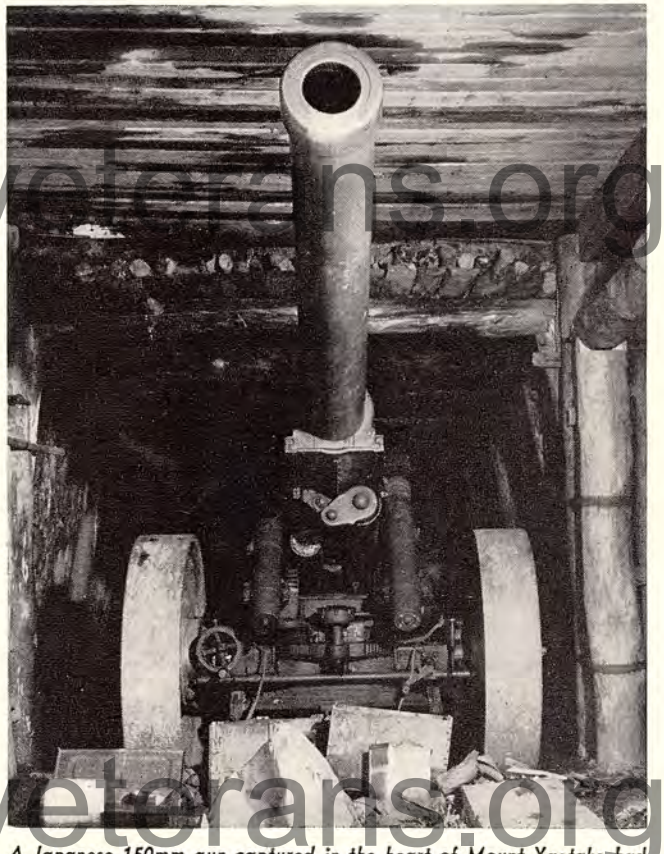
Walking wounded move back to rear areas. The shock of battle is clearly evident in their faces.

were still effective, taking a heavy toll. Company A's present position was untenable and the troops had the alternative of withdrawing farther down the mountain they had just scaled at such great cost, or going forward to assault the crest once more. Just at this time, Lieutenant Carlson directed the left flank platoon of Company C to shift its direction of attack to the westward and up the eastern slope of Yaetake. The platoon thus gained a position on the crest without opposition, where it was able to deliver flanking fire on the enemy's defenses. This fire on their flank forced the defenders to withdraw from the positions which had denied the summit to Company A. Eastment did not hesitate to take advantage of this opportunity and led his company over the crest to secure a precarious hold on the objective.

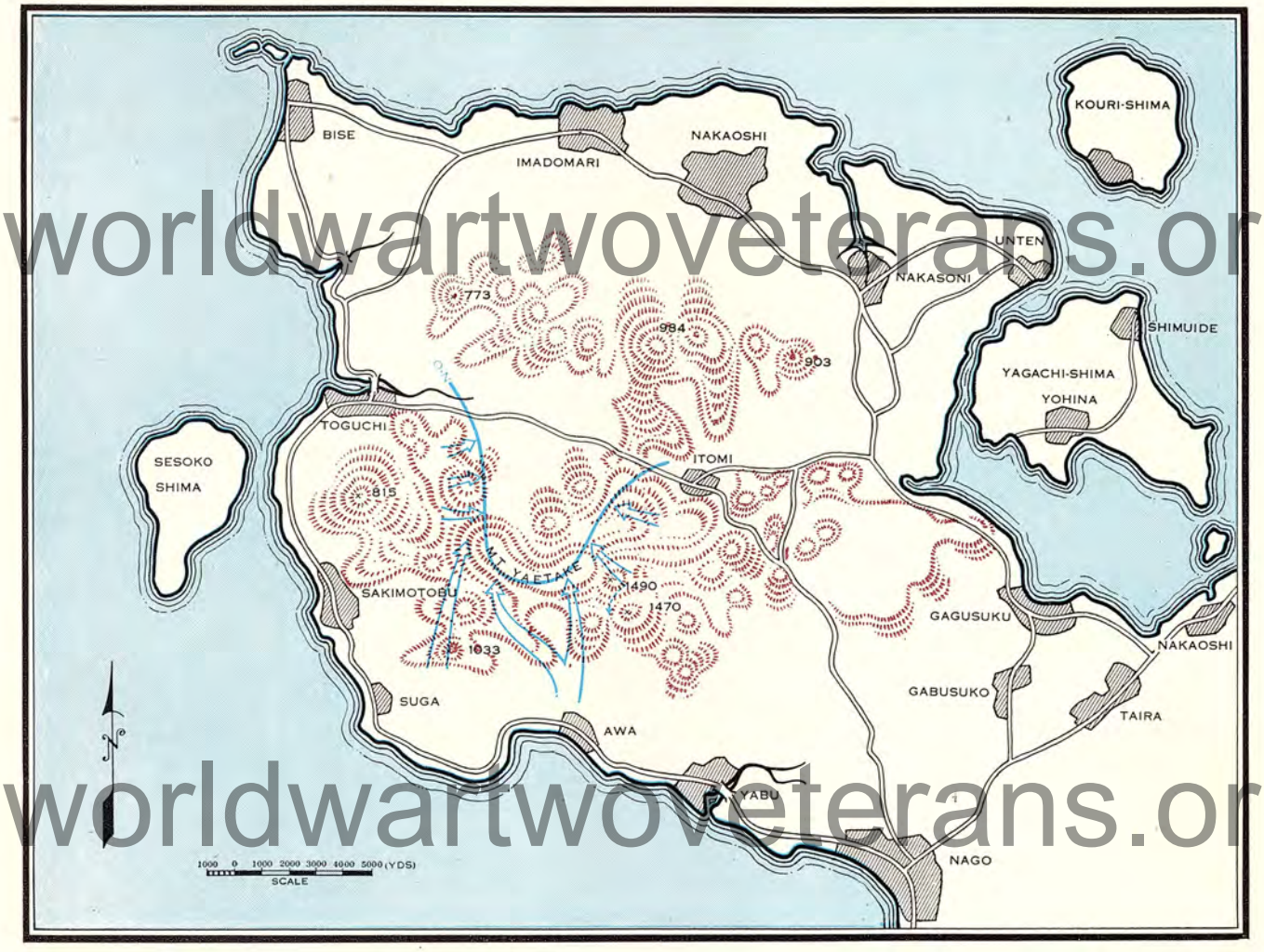
But the fight for the summit of Mount Yaetake was by no means over. The enemy knew they were losing the key to their peninsular defenses and with its loss would go the hope of victory. They were determined to make a supreme effort to regain that position. They regrouped their forces on the western slopes of Yaetake, but in clear view of the 2d Battalion on Hill 200, and it was now that the 2d played such an important role.

The 1st Battalion's position on Mount Yaetake was threatened by lack of supplies and ammunition. Were the Japanese to counterattack in any strength, the Marines had not the material with which to fight them off. From its vantage point, the 2d Battalion laid down heavy fire on the Japs on the reverse slope and succeeded in keeping them pinned to the ground while reserve troops of the 4th Marines rushed supplies up the steep slopes to the 1st Battalion.

Every available Marine shouldered as much ammunition as he could carry and moved it toward the front. One non-commissioned officer, however, was not pleased with the prospect of carrying a heavy load up the mountain, and complained, "But I'm a staff sergeant." The chap next to him, picking up two boxes of machine-gun ammunition, stopped him short, saying, "I'm a first lieutenant; let's go!" Colonel Beans carried two water cans as he moved forward to get a closer look at the



A Japanese 150mm gun captured in the heart of Mount Yaetake had previously commanded the entire coastal road along southern Motobu Peninsula.



17 April 1945: The pincers begin to close around Mount Yaetake. The 1st Battalion, 22d Marines, moves into the line between the 4th Marines on the left and the 29th on the right. The 1st Battalion, 4th Marines, carried the assault to the summit of the mountain.

situation. All hands were likewise employed on the return trip, carrying the wounded back to safety.

The ammunition arrived none too soon. In a desperate and fanatical Banzai attack the Japs rushed forward to close in hand-to-hand combat with the waiting Marines. The Jap soldier was no match for the Marine in open conflict and the Banzai attack was soon halted. A total of 347 Jap bodies was counted when the fighting ceased, and Mount Yaetake was firmly in the hands of the 1st Battalion.

When General Shepherd had looked over the defense positions of Mount Yaetake he remarked: "The Japanese positions were extraordinarily well prepared and organized. The enemy's tactical disposition and employment of his troops were more intelligently conducted than in any previous operation I have observed."

But he was not yet through with Motobu Peninsula, though all there was left on Mount Yaetake were the stretcher-bearers painfully toiling up the steep slopes and down again. There was a hill mass between the Itomi–Toguchi road and the northwest coast, which reconnaissance indicated had been prepared for a stout defense; also there was a warning from Intelligence that several hundred enemy troops had apparently escaped the trap and would probably try to break from the peninsula into northern Okinawa.

All races, all creeds, gathered to pray together for their departed Commander in Chief, President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The day after the capture of the crest was given to reorganization, resupply and the patrolling of the Itomi–Toguchi road, and on the 19th, the 4th and 29th Marines attacked the hill mass between this road and the northwest coast. The resistance was surprisingly light and scattered. though a considerable number of bodies killed by previous artillery or naval gunfire were found; probably the enemy had lacked troops to occupy all the positions in the strength desired.

The suppression of resistance on the peninsula had now become a matter of patrols and searching among the jagged hills. On the morning of April 20, for example, Company I of the 3d Battalion, 4th Regiment, set out from its bivouac area in the foothills beyond Manna, working inland. An elaborate system of trenches was discovered on a ridge six hundred yards short of the sea, but with no evidence of recent use. But four days later, after the battalion was moved out of the peninsula to Kawada on the east coast, a column that might have numbered anywhere between two and three hundred Japanese was seen, and the battalion moved out in strength to intercept them before they could reach a defensible position and dig in.

Company K met the first organized resistance and killed 81 of the enemy in a direct attack, while Company L, which had swung out in a flanking maneuver, accounted for 28 more, and another 50 or more were killed by other units as against one killed and eight wounded of our own.

At about the same time the 1st Battalion, 22nd, was sent from its defense position at Majiya to Taniyo–Take to attack a concentration of approximately 150 Japs who had been reported strongly entrenched on a hill there. The artillery delivered an excellent preparation and the battalion carried a portion of the hilltop by assault, but darkness and the difficulty of the supply problem forced the cessation of operations for the night. From its position on the high ground the battalion jumped off again at 7:30 the next morning, only to find that the remaining Japs had withdrawn—though not many of them could have escaped, for 102 bodies were subsequently counted as a result of the two days' fighting, together with large quantities of aban-

20-23 April 1945: Units of the Sixth Division press the attack northward to destroy remaining scattered resistance on Motobu Peninsula and the outlying islands.

doned Japanese food, ammunition and equipment.

It later turned out that the survivors of this action joined another group which had likewise escaped the battle on Motobu to make up an assemblage of some two hundred men. They were located on April 27, when the Division Commander took swift measures to prevent their escape to the north and east, by bringing two battalions of the 22nd southward in a forced night march from Hentona toward the area where they had been seen, while the 3rd Battalion, 4th, moved inland from Kawada.

The latter battalion made the first contact at about noon, April 28; maneuvered around the flank of the enemy and forced them to fight on unfavorable ground in deep ravines and heavy woods without the opportunity to dig in. Searchers found 159 bodies; and the probability is that the rest were killed also.

From this date until May 2, when the Army's 27th Division relieved the Marines, the Sixth conducted continual patrol activities, killing a few Japs in its area almost every night, but fewer as the days went by. At the date of the relief more than 2,500 bodies had been counted and 46 prisoners taken. The Division's own losses for the period were 236 killed, 1,061 wounded and 7 missing.

During the drive from Yontan Airfield to the northern limit of Okinawa practically every type of maneuver known to military science was employed and every type of supply problem encoun-

Victory on northern Okinawa: The Commandant of the Marine Corps officiates at the flag-raising ceremonies at the Division command post in Nago.

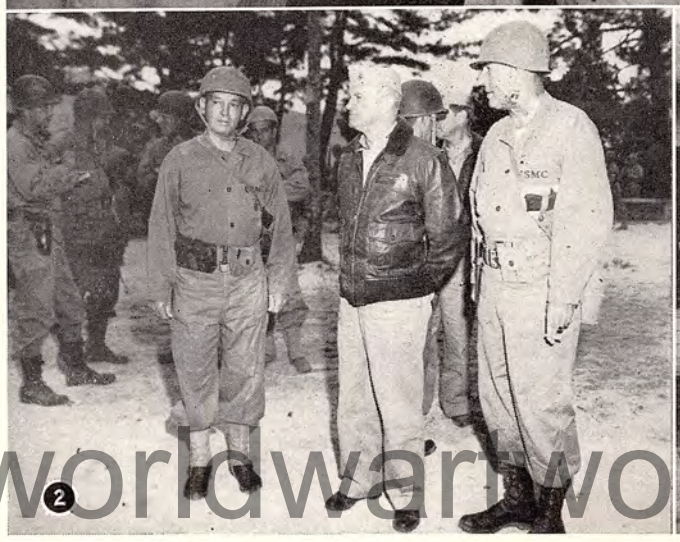
tered. General Shepherd announced the end of organized resistance in the northern two-thirds of the island on April 20. In his message to the troops, he said:

"Within a period of twenty days, the Sixth Marine Division effected a landing on a hostile shore, captured an airdrome, and fought its way over rugged terrain against enemy resistance a distance of 84 miles, securing an area of 436 square miles of Japanese territory."

There remained three small islands off the Motobu coast, still in Japanese hands. They were probably undefended but were a potential threat, especially if the enemy should find resources to attempt a counter-landing. The Fleet Marine Force Reconnaissance Battalion, which had been operating on the island since shortly after L-day, was sent up on the night of April 19-20 to make a rubber-boat reconnaissance of the two larger islands, Sesoko Shima to the west of Motobu, and Yagachi Shima to the north, the larger one being part of the outer barrier for the midget submarine base at Unten.

The reconnaissance showed no trace of enemy troops, and the battalion took over the islands, moving in by night in armored amphibians. The Division Reconnaissance Company took the smallest island, Kouri Shima, in a daylight landing. It was the first occasion on which armored amphibians had been used to carry troops to the attack, at the same time supplying covering fire from their guns. On April 22, General A. A. Vandegrift, Commandant of the Marine Corps, visited Sixth Division headquarters at Nago and was present when the flag was raised to signalize the conquest of the northern part of Okinawa.

"The Sixth Division can well be proud of its accomplishments on Okinawa," the Commandant said. "The Marine Corps proudly welcomes you to the roll of distinguished divisions that have been victorious over the Japanese wherever they have found him."



1—General A. A. Vandegrift, Commandant of the Marine Corps, discusses the operations in northern Okinawa with the Division Commander. 2—The Commandant congratulates the officers of the Division for a job well done. 3—Left to right: Colonel Luckey, Colonel Whaling, Colonel Schneider, and Colonel Shapley, at the flag-raising ceremonies on northern Okinawa.

Top: *Unit commanders of the 22d Marines at a forward observation post view the southern front their battalions are to attack the next day.*
Bottom: *A 155mm howitzer battalion goes into action to soften the southern front.*

Chapter 9: Entering the Southern Lines

While the Sixth Marine Division was subjugating northern Okinawa, operations in the south had moved forward against opposition which gradually developed into some of the most furious fighting American troops had encountered. The attacking force originally consisted of the XXIV Corps, including three Army divisions; it was now drawn across the island from a point north of Yonabaru to Machinato Airfield. This represented the farthest advance southward from the Katena Airstrip where the Corps had made its original landing, and there was determined resistance all along the line.

The Japanese, under the command of General Mitsuru Ushijima, had set up a system of fortified cave defenses, using the coral hills which bordered both sides of the Asa Kawa River. The ancient castle of Shuri was the keystone of the defense; the natural line passed through it from Yonabaru to Naha without a gap.

In many cases the original caves had been developed by networks of tunnels with exits on both forward and reverse slopes of the hills as well as to the flanks. Each hill was thus a fortress, and, in many, facilities for quartering all the troops assigned to the defense of the locality were installed, including sleeping quarters, cooking arrangements and latrines. Occasionally these occupied a single large room; more frequently several smaller ones. Machine-gun positions were built into small compartments radiating from the tunnels, and rifle slits were dug into the hills themselves, so that fire could be maintained from the cave passages. Outside, octopus-type foxholes protected the mouths of the caves. If a unit had as many as five automatic weapons at least two would be emplaced with intersecting fields of fire, while the others covered weak points in the defense or were emplaced for use against targets of opportunity.

Some of the larger caves had medium and heavy guns, occasionally mounted on tracks, in order that the weapon could be moved to the cave mouth,

General Geiger (left) observes elements of the III Amphibious Corps in the battle for the Asa Kawa from a forward observation post.

The Japanese defenses on the southern front were a carefully planned and constructed system of underground fortifications and living quarters connected by a vast system of tunnels.

fired, and then rolled back into hiding. Nothing was haphazard; all was carefully planned. In addition to the hill forts, Ushijima had turned hundreds of the Okinawan stone and concrete tombs into pillboxes; and these were also connected by tunnels and coordinated with the general system of defense.

Behind all the physical obstacles was the fact that the man who had conceived and prepared this system was conducting his defense according to a consistent and logical plan, the basis of which was the same general idea as that of the suicidal Kamikazes. General Ushijima expected to be defeated and killed, but he was fighting a war of attrition, and counted on killing as many Americans as he possibly could. His forces consisted of the Manchuria-trained Japanese Thirty-second Army; both he and they thoroughly understood that the Naha–Shuri Line was the key to the island's defense, and they intended to make its capture a costly operation.

Meanwhile as the Sixth Marine Division completed its operations in the northern end of the island, American offensive operations moved slowly forward against the Shuri Line in the face of constant heavy shelling and counterattacks. The attacking force was deployed with the 96th Infantry Division on the east flank, overlooking Yonabaru, the 27th Infantry Division initially at the opposite end of the line at Machinato. The 7th and 77th Divisions alternated in the area between Shuri and the right flank of the 96th, while the First Marine Division, held in reserve at Chibana, awaited orders to move forward.

During three weeks of fighting the defenders had been driven from the outer Machinato Ridge line to the main battle position centering on Shuri itself. Persistent Jap shelling and frequent counterattacks had depleted the strength of our front-line units so far that on April 30 preparatory orders were issued for the Sixth to move from Nago to Chibana for commitment in the southern zone. Meanwhile the First Marine Division relieved the 27th Infantry Division on the right of the line, and the latter unit was ordered up to replace the Sixth in the north.

The Division began its long southward movement on May 2, with the engineers and elements of the 6th Service Battalion making up the first motor convoy. On May 3 the 29th and 15th Regiments followed, with the 4th, 22nd and remaining units of the Division bringing up the rear on successive days. By May 6 the entire Division was quartered around Chibana.

May 7 saw the beginning of a period of heavy rain, which was to continue, almost without interruption, for seven days. The thick red dust that had covered the whole country became a deep and gummy mud which made motor movement most difficult. Trucks, jeeps and even tractors often were mired down, finding movement beyond their powers, and it was necessary to call on available amphibian

Top: *Marines preparing for the all-out assault on the Asa Kawa defenses.* Bottom: *The 22d Marines' regimental command post.*

Torrential rains turned Okinawa into an island of mud. Through the mire the Division advanced, overcoming almost insurmountable difficulties in maintaining the essential flow of supplies to front-line units.

An observer and a sniper work together on the commanding heights overlooking the Asa Kawa.

tractor units for the most ordinary transportation.

There was only one road leading southward along the island's west coast and the presence of so many stalled vehicles along this route threw prodigious burdens on the Division's Military Police under Lieutenant Colonel Floyd A. Stephenson. He was ultimately forced to allow one-way traffic only, the directions in which traffic was permitted to move alternating for periods of several hours through day and night. A second road, laboriously cut through the coral and mud west of Machinato Airfield, relieved the situation to some degree. As a final complication there was the accurate enemy shell fire which repeatedly knocked out bridges, leaving the engineers with the endless task of replacing them.

Meanwhile the infantry were doggedly slogging through the morass and across the rugged coral to effect the relief of the First Division. On May 8, the 22nd Regiment moved to the high bluff overlooking the Asa Kawa River and relieved the 7th Regiment of the First Division there, while that division shortened its lines to the eastward. The 29th Marines moved in a day later, establishing a defensive position to cover the beaches stretching along the western flank of Machinato Airfield.

From Shuri heights the Japanese could observe every movement the Sixth made and they used their artillery with an accuracy and coordination beyond anything yet encountered in the Pacific, forcing the Marines constantly to take cover in the rock and limestone tombs facing the sea. Here the 1st Armored Amphibian Tractor Battalion came up to join the 29th in covering the beaches against the

A Marine squad deploys on a reverse slope awaiting the order to move out in assault.

The curiously shaped Okinawan tombs often served as deadly pillboxes for the enemy.

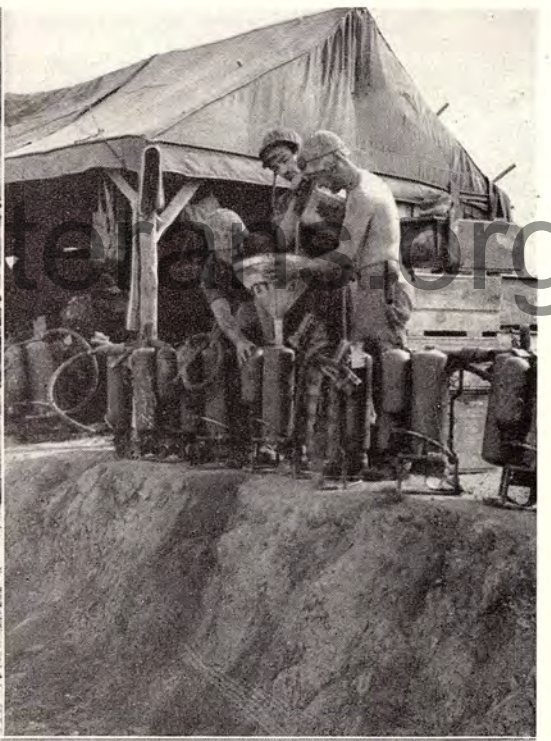
possibility of a counter-landing, while to the rear the 15th Regiment moved its artillery into position. The remainer of the Division stayed in the Chibana area, prepared to move on twelve hours' notice.

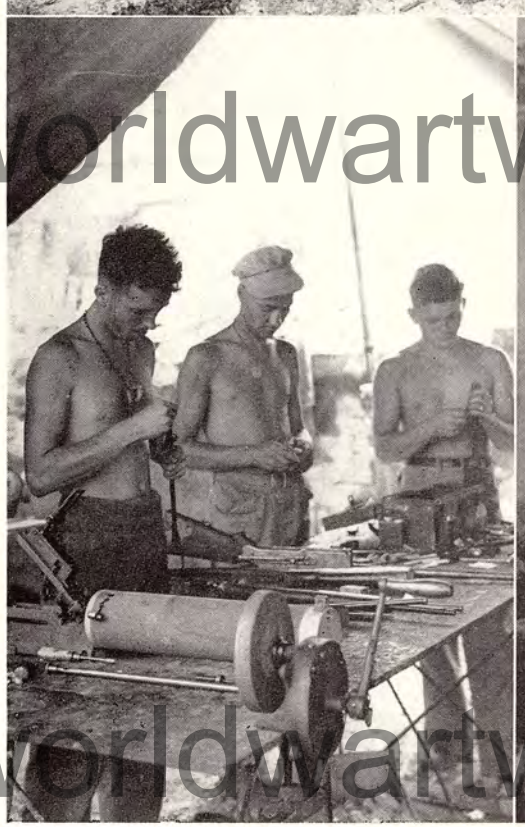
The night of May 8 brought the first contact and the first casualties—within the area of the 2nd Battalion, 22nd, which adjoined the First Division elements, where the Japanese shelling was particularly severe. The 1st Battalion of the regiment, in reserve at Machinato Airfield, was also heavily shelled, but had no casualties to report. The 3rd Battalion on the extreme right flank, sent forward patrols to the Asa Kawa to examine the bridge spanning the river and to determine the enemy strength and dispositions preliminary to a general attack ordered for the 10th. These reconnaissance measures were continued into the next day, when Companies I and K sent forward groups which crossed by wading near the mouth of the stream. Both groups were fired on from positions along the riverbank and Company K lost two men while accounting for twelve Japs and knocking out an antitank gun.

The reconnaissance reports, however, were far from encouraging. The night patrols reported that the bridge across the river was badly damaged—impassable for either foot or vehicular traffic, and the river four feet deep with a bottom of gelatinous silt. The daylight patrol found the river bed insufficiently firm to bear tanks.

Advance across the river was thus largely an engineering problem, and a company of the 6th

Tenth Army situation map upon entry of the Sixth Marine Division into the southern lines.





Supporting troops: The effective work of the engineers, ordnance and supply units enabled the Division to maintain its forward movement.

Bulldozers were used to pull supply vehicles and mechanized equipment through the mud, but even they became bogged down at times.

Engineer Battalion was placed in direct support of each regiment going into the assault, with a liaison officer stationed at each command post. Under this liaison officer was an engineer reconnaissance officer who kept both the regiment and the engineer battalion informed—a system which yielded generally satisfactory results.

Under cover of night on May 9 the engineers moved along the base of the high coral cliffs to the north bank of the Asa Kawa and commenced work on a footbridge, while bomb-disposal squads cleared lanes through the mines which the Japanese had sown in great profusion. Marines of the 22nd, on the cliffs above, were prepared to cover the operation with every weapon that could bear on the river line, but as the engineers moved like shadows in the knee-deep slimy stream, not a shot was fired, there was no sound but those made by the engineers themselves.

At 2:30 A.M. on the 10th the bridge was complete and the engineers began their withdrawal. Now the Japs became active; machine-gun and rifle fire flashed in long red streaks past the Leatherneck engineers running for cover, but without producing a single casualty.

The stage was set; the Sixth Division was ready for its drive toward Naha. The 22nd Regiment would lead the attack, its 2nd Battalion on the left maintaining contact with the First Division, and the 3rd Battalion next to the seacoast. The 1st was directed to maintain contact between the other two, and to occupy the first high ground south of the river.

Marines press the attack forward over the rocky ridge lines in the battle for Asa Kawa.

Chapter 10: The Battle of the Asa Kawa

THE 22ND MARINE REGIMENT WAS A VETERAN unit and its men, like most experienced soldiers, could form their own accurate estimates of terrain, enemy capabilities and the difficulty of a prospective operation. This time the Marines of the 22nd knew they were facing a tough one; but along with their experience they had acquired the true Marine *esprit de corps* which is perhaps better defined as American guts—and they were ready to go.

The Division Commander sent them forward late on the night of May 9 after the building of the Asa Kawa footbridge. It was 3:30 on the morning of May 10 when the first units started across the stream, the 2nd Battalion wading on the left, the 3rd Battalion using the bridge.

The Japs were by no means inclined to give them an easy crossing. Heavy fire came down in the crossing area but each assault battalion was able to push two companies across the stream before dawn, when a Jap suicide team rushed the bridge with a satchel charge of TNT and blew it out. The assault forces regrouped on the south side of the stream, and at 5:20 a coordinated attack was launched under cover of a smoke screen.

The attack had air support from dive-bombers and rocket planes, with good help from self-propelled guns and 37s on the north bank. The advance on the left was toward a large concrete sugar mill, whose main buildings had been almost completely destroyed by naval and aerial bombardment. There remained two tall brick chimneys from which the Japs had complete observation of all the Marines' movements, while from the ruins below issued sniper and machine-gun fire to harass the men still crossing the estuary. Several sections of 37s were turned on the mill; and got its activities under control at least temporarily.

By 6:00 o'clock the 1st Battalion, which had been directed to maintain contact between the other two battalions, was across the Asa Kawa and had pushed to the high ground south of the mill, while the 3rd Battalion on the seaward flank drove southward on an 800-yard front. Lieutenant Colonel M. O. Donohoo, of this last unit, surveyed the situation as his troops were being hit, both from a rocky promontory jutting into the sea on his right and from emplacements the Japs had constructed in a 30-foot bank to his left.

"The situation is bad," said he. "We're getting hit, but we are across and we are going to stay."

The Asa Kawa Estuary, crossed by the 2d and 3d Battalions of the 22d Marines under heavy fire during the pre-dawn hours of 9 May.

Shell holes offered meager protection for troops crossing the Asa Kawa.

His battalion had been unable to push more than 150 yards after the initial advance; and neither had the 1st Battalion of Major Thomas J. Myers to his left. In this latter unit Captain Warren F. Lloyd, commanding Company C, pointed to a hill of decayed coral limestone visible to the left of Asa Ridge through the morning fog. "Most of the damned fire is coming from that knob up there," he said. "Probably have to take it before we get anywhere near Naha. It won't be a picnic." Prophetic words!

One platoon of Captain Lloyd's company worked up the slopes on the 1st Battalion's left, with Corporal Ed Couchon taking the four-man fire teams of his squad across a field swept by Jap bullets to a position from which they could assault a little mound rising out of the greater mass of the ridge that overlooked the Asa Kawa. Tombs jutted from the sides of the lesser peak and they were occupied, for spurts of fire came from them, to which long streaming jets from the flamethrowers of the attackers replied. One by one the tombs fell silent, but no sooner had they done so than mortar shells and rifle fire rained on the whole position from the same limestone hill Captain Lloyd had indicated earlier.

All day long the company measured its gains in feet, and whenever a group larger than a squad tried to ascend to the crest, the limestone hill spat fire. By nightfall there were only seven men left out of fifty in the platoon of Lieutenant Loftis; and in another platoon there were only twelve men.

The 6th Tank Battalion had moved one company forward in an effort to provide the armored fire support of which the infantry stood in so much need, but they could not make it through the mud and silt of the river mouth. That night General Shepherd ordered the erection of a Bailey bridge, and Company C of the tank battalion moved up to join Company B at the base of a cliff near the point where the bridge was to be set up, so that both companies could cross as soon as the span was in place.

The Japanese had their own ideas about this, however, and the engineers had hardly started work when the enemy began an accurate interdiction fire against the bridge site. Three men were injured by flying rock; they insisted upon continuing their work. So did the Japs, laying down a second series of concentrations at 2:00 A.M. (which fortunately fell two hundred yards downstream), a third at 4:00 A.M. and a fourth at dawn.

The engineers worked on; at 10:00 in the morning, the job was done and they watched, grimy and sleepy-eyed, as the long line of mediums rumbled across and into action. A little red-haired engineer leaned from the truck in which he was bound for a rear area to cry: "We'll do it again

Tank-infantry teams worked in close coordination to destroy Japanese strongpoints.

Top: The Division's engineers worked through the dark hours of night and the heavy fire of Japanese artillery to bridge the Asa Kawa so that the desperately needed tank support might be moved forward. Bottom: *The first tank across the Asa Kawa. Prior to the construction of the bridge, tank officers had attempted to move their vehicles across the soft crusted estuary, but they sank too deeply into the mud. It was imperative, then, that a Bailey bridge be constructed at all costs.*

Top: *A smoke screen covers the advance of the 22d Marines on the southern banks of the Asa Kawa.* Bottom: *Behind the skeleton of the shell-torn sugar refinery rises Charlie Hill, so desperately defended by last-ditch Japanese troops.*

whenever you need us. Blast them all to hell!"

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Denig, Jr., the tank battalion commander, led the machines into action, the noses of their 75s questing like well trained bird dogs on the search for quail. Close beside and behind them the infantry again surged forward, a few laborious yards at a time, mopping up the Japs who scurried from caves and tombs as the tank guns blew in their entrances.

The coral hill that had proved so stubborn on the previous day was still a problem for Major Myers' 1st Battalion whose advance was halted before it. In the early afternoon he called for naval gunfire support; USS *Indianapolis,* flagship of the fleet stood in near the mouth of the Asa Kawa, carefully registered on the hilltop, and then laid a succession of almost perfect 8-inch concentrations on the hill, knocking loose great lumps of coral that tumbled down the jagged hillside. The dust had not yet settled when Major Myers once more led his men forward. Leading elements still met blasts of fire from a camouflaged pillbox and from slits in the face of the hill itself.

Both were beaten down and one platoon of Company C crawled past to work on a third strongpoint; but the cunning Japanese reoccupied the original positions by means of their intricate tunnel system, and cut off the platoon. On one side Cap-

Marines destroy Japanese emplacements with demolitions during the assault on Charlie Hill.

tain Lloyd with a squad led by Sergeant Joe Passanante rushed one of the tombs and in five minutes half the squad was down. The rest took shelter as a platoon sergeant, Sam Howard, shouted to Lloyd, "Any wounded up there?"

There were, replied Lloyd, but it was almost certain death to try to rescue them. "I'm going," said Howard, and ran forward; he had almost reached the wounded Marines when machine-gun bullets brought him down.

It was evident that the infantry alone would not be able to make it. The whole of Company C was withdrawn some four hundred yards while the tanks came forward to fire point-blank into the tombs that rimmed the ridge, an operation which lasted for an hour or more. At 4:15 the company —or what was left of it—went in once more, and this time reached the top. There were less than two-thirds of them now, tired and shaken, but as darkness fell they dug in to prepare for a counter-attack. It came.

For the first time the Japs began to appear in groups of more than two or three, counterattacking the slim band of Marines repeatedly from midnight on, under cover of a heavy mortar barrage. The last of the charging Japs was killed just as dawn began to break—a man who threw a grenade at Corporal Vic Goslin and another Marine. Goslin's

1—Division medical units established their aid stations immediately in the rear of assault units. 2—Amphibian Tractors assisted in casualty evacuation. 3—The courage of the Navy Corpsmen saved many seriously wounded Marines. 4—A casualty is quickly evacuated to the rear.

Army flamethrower tanks operated in close coordination with Company C, 22d Marines, in destroying an enemy resistance on Charlie Hill.

BAR jammed; he slapped lustily at the grenade, knocking it ten feet from the foxhole, where it exploded without damage. Nearby Marines shot down the attacker.

As the last counterattack died out the tanks came forward again to support the infantry, firing directly into tombs and pillboxes. Among them were four flame-thrower tanks which sprayed enthusiastically the points from which the worst fire had come. All day tanks and infantry worked over the tombs and caves; and by nightfall the job was complete, with little but occasional sniper fire to disturb the weary men of Company C. But, as one Marine put it, "They'll be mad because we chased those bastards of theirs out of here," and all hands went down into deep foxholes in anticipation of heavy shelling during the night to follow, an anticipation that was fully justified.

On the following morning a count showed that Company C had lost 35 killed and 68 wounded out of an original 256 while taking Charlie Hill. An examination of the place showed the reason. It had been fortified in three levels with interconnecting tunnels and winding corridors that widened into rooms, some used as galleys, some as field hospitals. In one there was even a Japanese Ford sedan, intact; in all there were weapons—a total of seven knee mortars, thirteen Nambu machine guns, two 20mm guns, two 47mm guns, one heavy field piece on tracks, any number of plastic mines and hand grenades, seventeen small ammunition dumps, three large ammunition dumps and hundreds of satchel charges of dynamite. Near the bodies of dead Japs were knapsacks taken from Marines in the fighting farther north; they were filled with Jap socks, luck charms, picture postcards, underwear. Many of the uniforms were brand new. There was a freshly sealed chamber behind whose

A near miss as a Jap mortar explodes in the midst of a group of advancing Marines.

wall other dead Japs evidently lay, for in front of it there were one hundred of the enemy's metal identification tags, a heap of flashy medals, a few swords, rifles and Victory Banzai flags.

"Same old story," said Captain Lloyd, as he contemplated the collection. "We sealed them up on Guadalcanal, too. They don't change. They just get tougher. They dig in so deep you have to keep driving and driving until you get them. Even here a lot of them probably got away, running through these tunnels and scooting back in the hills. Probably trying counterattacks all night. Yes, you charge them and charge them, and you have to lose some awfully good men doing it.

"Listen, back at Guadalcanal, we used to have bull sessions about these Marine kids. A lot of guys would say they were nothing but civilians in uniform. Now I've been brought up in the Marine Corps. My father was a Marine, I have three brothers who are Marines, and my sister is married to a Marine. So maybe I'm prejudiced. But I always used to say that once you put a Marine uniform on a kid, he becomes something special. He's a Marine through and through, like nothing else in the world. Maybe it sounds corny, but I wish those guys who used to sneer could have seen those seven men in Loftis' platoon all come forward when he told them he was going to join another platoon and asked if they wanted to come along. I wish they could have seen the little runners who kept jumping from the lead squads back to the tanks and the command post to let everyone know what was going on. Then they'd know what I mean. I just wish they could have been here to see them go ahead, knowing it had to be done the hard way, and knowing damn well a lot of them were going to get hurt, hurt goddam bad."

Lloyd, a little man with a hairline moustache, only twenty-four at the time, shook his head. "And most of them are just kids. Oughta be in high

Men of the Army's 91st Chemical Mortar Company provided accurate and effective support for the advancing Marines.

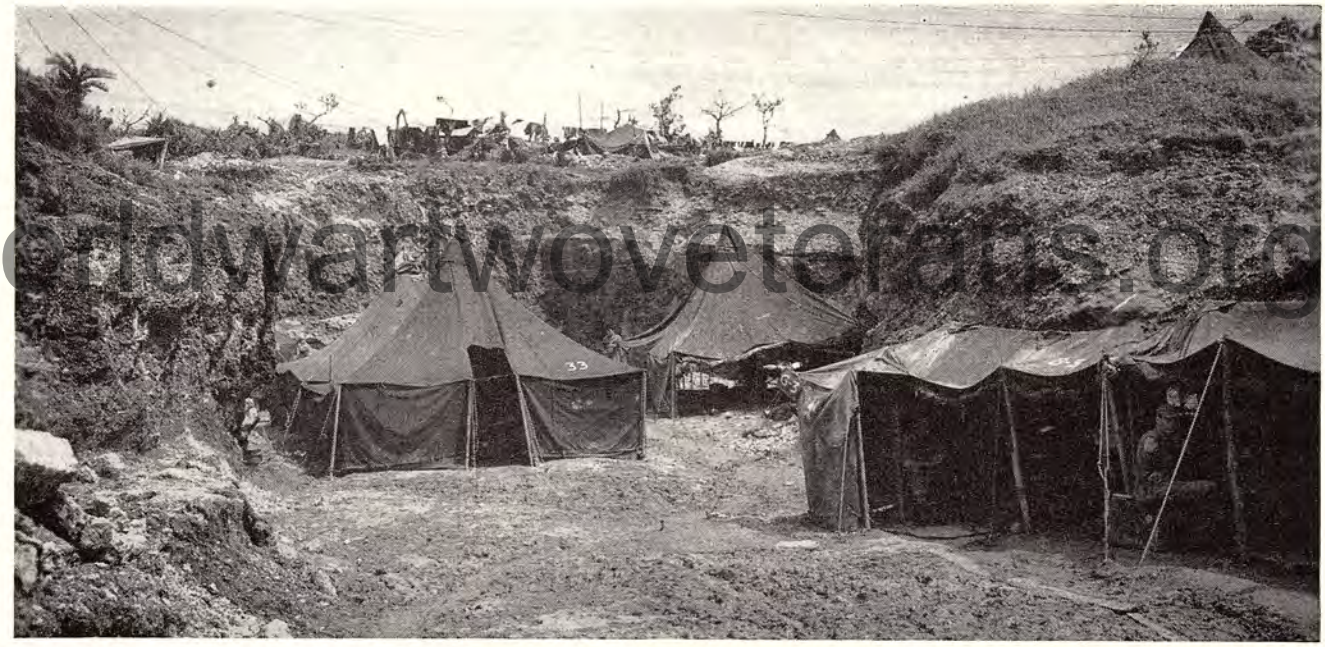
school some place." He gave the order to move out—move out ahead.

Now, in order to maintain the advance, the 2nd Battalion drove forward on the 22nd Regiment's left flank, conforming its movement to that of the 1st. All this time the 3rd Battalion had been engaged in a struggle which rivaled that for Charlie Hill in ferocity—a battle for the cliff area that ran to the sea. They made it; and when they had won the place the commanding general sent a message to the battalion commander:

> Through high-powered field glasses I observed your courageous attack on the steep ridge you seized this afternoon. I commend every officer and man who participated in this assault for his personal bravery and the fine teamwork exercised by all units in capturing this precipitous and strongly defended terrain feature. The actions of your men are in keeping with the highest traditions of the Marine Corps.

At the close of that day, May 11, the Division had pushed forward seven hundred to one thousand yards, mopping up the areas behind its lines. All through this advance Jap artillery continued to fire into the 22nd from the direction of Shuri. Nor was the beach area held by the 29th Regiment off Machinato Airfield neglected. The Japs pumped an almost continuous rain of shells into the tomb-dotted area, and during an exceptionally heavy downpour of fire on the night of May 11, two enemy barges were sighted offshore. Naval vessels moved in, and in the light of their searchlights both barges were destroyed.

There was one slight adjustment in our front-line order of battle. The 3rd Battalion, 29th Regiment, was brought from the Machinato area on May 12 to form a link between the left of the 22nd Regiment and the First Marine Division, which was up against the key Shuri hill position whose steep slopes and powerful defenses made its advance painfully slow.



The Division command post moved across the Asa Kawa soon after the assault battalions had secured the commanding heights overlooking Naha.

The positions of the battalion covered at once the left flank of the 22nd Regiment and the right flank of the First Division, a fact which the Japanese appreciated as fully as we, demonstrating their view by keeping the area under heavy mortar fire and intense sniper activity. A Navy medical Corpsman, Hospital Apprentice First Class Robert H. Rhodes, Jr., was in this area when six Marines were wounded in a mortar barrage. He began to drag the wounded to the safety of a nearby cave.

As he lifted the first victim, a sniper's bullet droned past. He had started for the second when a voice hailed him—the sniper's.

"Hey, doc, come on out," the Jap was challenging.

"Okay, Buckteeth, I'm coming," shouted Rhodes and dashing forward through the bullets, retrieved the second Marine.

The Jap swore furiously. "I dare you to come out of there once more."

"Get ready. Here I come," answered Rhodes. For the third time the sniper missed and a third Marine was pulled back to the cave.

Wild with rage over his own bad marksmanship and the courage of the American, the Jap ripped off another string of oaths. "If you come out again I'll hit you right between the eyes," he shouted.

"You couldn't hit me if I ran right down the barrel of your rifle," Rhodes answered scornfully, and dragged the fourth Marine to safety. Marines in the cave tried to keep the Corpsman from going out again, but after another exchange of challenges he brought back the fifth man. This time the Marines held him back by force. The Jap yelled: "What's the matter, doc, afraid you'll get killed?"

The Leathernecks in the cave were not merely detaining Rhodes; some of them were slipping forward to put a permanent end to the conversation. Rhodes watched them with one eye. "I'll bet I live longer than you," he shouted back, and as he shouted it the BARs opened a sharp burst. Then the Corpsman calmly rescued the sixth man.

All along the front, every minute of the day and every hour of the night was filled with incidents which differed from this only in having no overtones of conversation with English-speaking Japs. The air was filled with a choking, evil-smelling dust, the mingled product of powdered coral and explosive fumes. The shelling was so steady that removal of the wounded by the normal means was often impossible and tanks were used as emergency ambulances. It became a familiar sight to see one of the armored monsters lumbering among the smoking shell craters, a couple of stretchers tied to its back, while a patrol walked beside it, on the alert for suicide satchel-charge attacks. The men in these patrols did not get off easily, either; Japs were every-

Reinforcements file toward the front lines past a shell-torn amphibian tractor, mute evidence of the fury of the fighting.

where around them, in hummocks, tombs and caves, not hesitating to come out in the open and hurl grenades or satchel charges.

About the time the 3rd Battalion, 29th, was committed it became apparent that while the 1st and 3rd Battalions, 22nd, had secured high ground, their further advance would be even more bitterly opposed because the enemy still held the ridge which dominated the Asa Kawa valley on the south. The keypoint of this ridge lay in the 2nd Battalion's zone of action, and accordingly the regiment's main effort was shifted to the left. Against the ridge the 2nd Battalion made its drive with Companies E and G abreast and Company F in reserve. The attack had been going on only half an hour when Japanese machine-gun fire, exceptionally heavy and accurate even by the standards of Okinawa, was encountered. Lieutenants Thorne and McDowell of Company E, and Lieutenant Carrigan of Company G were wounded, and Lieutenants Harris and Lynch went forward as replacements.

Company E, on the left, inched forward, while Company G, on the right, sought and finally made contact with the 1st Battalion, which unit appeared to be making satisfactory progress. But both companies had to work up an open draw, and on this the Japanese concentrated so terrific a mortar barrage that evacuation of the wounded became a

The mud often was too much even for the irrepressible jeep.

serious problem, several stretcher bearers being hit as they tried to get the injured men out. As before tanks had to be brought forward to assist in the evacuation.

Not all the wounded were evacuated. Sergeant Fred Setliff, for example, fought along this ridge for twenty-four hours in spite of serious shrapnel wounds. Later he had this to say: "From the time we got halfway up the slope until they took me away, the mortars didn't ever seem to let up. As for us returning fire, it was the same as it had been on Motobu—you just couldn't see them. They sure were dug in."

Marines of assault units pause in a covered gully to relax and enjoy a cigarette.

Nearly forty per cent of this platoon was killed or injured there, Setliff said. "I saw some of my old friends who were on Guam with me get it bad. One man, a machine gunner, was hit the same time I was and he didn't want to leave. He was setting up his machine gun again, ready to give the squads cover, when a sniper shot him through the heart."

Even the usually effective bazookas often could not get fire into these positions, Setliff continued. "We had one bazooka pounding away into an aperture for a long time. When we stopped, it was quiet again. But whenever anyone tried to advance, bullets would come shooting out of there like a thousand peas. It got so you began wishing for a Banzai charge so you could at least see what you were shooting at."

But the Japs seldom emerged except after dark, their usual time for counterattacks. Under the unsteady glow of flare and star shell they could sometimes be seen creeping stealthily or sometimes running in bounds, toward the American lines, to close, in one of those weird small-arms battles, with grenades exploding, Samurai swords uplifted and screaming Jap oaths rising above the normal battle sounds.

On May 13 the 22nd continued its forward drive. The 3rd Battalion forced its way slowly ahead along the seacoast, the 1st Battalion made the main effort along a valley in the center of the regiment's zone but it was under continual accurate fire from machine guns and mortars. The 2nd Battalion on the left gained little in the face of flanking fire from

A flamethrower team liquidates a sniper nest.

the Shuri sore spot. This deadly accurate fire was to have an ever-increasing effect on the operations of the Division for the next two weeks.

Through all the bitter fighting the supporting elements of the Division were in action carrying their share of the load. Each assault battalion had the direct support of one battalion of the 15th Regiment, with another artillery battalion in general support. The tanks were all in action while the 9th Amphibian Tractor Battalion was using its high, duck-like vehicles to bring up supplies and evacuate wounded.

On the morning of May 13, the main effort was made on the left, with the 2nd Battalion, 22nd, and the 3rd Battalion, 29th, striving toward the high ground overlooking the upper reaches of the Asato River. Both the artillery ashore and the ships lying in the offing provided intensive preparation and supporting fires, but the resistance was heavy from the beginning and became steadily more so; by the end of the day the two assault battalions had advanced no more than 200–300 yards. On the right the remainder of the 22nd had meanwhile pushed patrols into the village of Amike, north of Naha Town.

In this area, where the 3rd Battalion, 22nd, was in action Private First Class Frank Shumann, a husky blond boy from Yale, was killed in a way typical of many others—and of the Marines in this battle.

He was a G-2 Section runner in division headquarters when the Sixth landed on Okinawa; and even during those less arduous days, he yearned for front-line assignments, declaring that the Japs would have to get him up there if they were to get him at all. In the north there was a shortage of observers at the divisional observation posts and Shumann's persistence in asking for front-line duty won out. He was sent to an advanced observation post, where he succeeded in locating enemy strongpoints, then offered to lead a patrol to the positions.

The patrol crept down a ridge toward Amike before dawn. There were a number of well armed Japs in there, as they well knew, for the enemy had fired on the ridge all night. Shumann was with the lead fire team, with a submachine gun as his weapon. He slipped past two rows of houses, but

Not all the land mines could be located: A demolished Sherman tank.

Tank-infantry action in the northern approaches to Naha.

as the patrol neared a third cluster of huts the air was suddenly filled with Jap machine-gun bullets and two men near Shumann toppled into a ditch, badly hit.

The big Marine spun around and squeezed the trigger of his weapon. It jammed; he threw it aside and drew his pistol, firing repeatedly at the source of the enemy bullets. They stopped coming, and as the patrol worked slowly forward once again, it found four dead Japanese around their machine guns.

After the patrol had returned to the ridge and made its report, an entire platoon supported by tanks was sent into the area. Shumann, with his gun repaired, was at the head of the little column. "I think I know where that mortar pocket is," he said, referring to one that had been particularly troublesome. "I saw them when we were down there this morning."

The road was dotted with dead Japs, but for fifteen minutes, attackers encountered no live ones. Then, two hundred yards north of the Asato River, the Japs spotted the tanks and opened up with mortars and machine guns. The mortar fire was ineffective; the machine-gun fire less so.

Shumann was one of the first hit, by a machine-gun bullet through the right knee. He dropped to the thistle-covered sod by the side of a dusty road. Using his elbows to push forward, he inched on, pausing every few seconds to reply to the machine-gun fire with a burst from his own weapon. Fifty feet ahead, he spotted the Jap mortar position. "There!" he yelled and pointed. "There!"

Another string of Nambu bullets went through

The bazooka did its part.

The Division Commander with Lieutenant General Simon B. Buckner, Commanding General, Tenth Army, observe the advance on Naha.

his leg, but he continued to work his painful way forward, still shooting across the road, when from the right another team of Japs hurled grenades.

The first flew over Shumann's head, a second exploded inches from him, killing him instantly just as he emptied the last clip in his weapon. It was too late for the Japs; the tanks, guided by his hand signals, fell on the enemy nests, killing one hundred Japs and capturing ten machine guns. Later a flamethrower unit worked up and wiped out the mortar position.

The Division had now worked its way through the Asa Kawa defense line, and on a narrow front had seized the north bank of the Asato River at its mouth. If this hold could be further exploited and expanded inland, it was possible that the whole enemy defense system would collapse.

That night it was clear to General Shepherd that the combat efficiency of the 22nd Regiment had been considerably reduced by the rigors of its 2,000-yard advance. Casualties had come to over eight hundred and the remaining men were very tired. He therefore decided to resume the attack on the following day, May 14, with the 29th Marines making the main effort on the left, supported by the 22nd Marines.

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 to the Shuri position, a fact which the Japs well knew.

Chapter 11: Sugar Loaf Hill

During the fighting on May 12, the Sixth Division for the first time touched an area where the most bitter, costly—and decisive—action on Okinawa was to take place. Along most of its line the attack of the Division that day moved forward satisfactorily, but on the extreme left, where the objective was the high ground overlooking the upper reaches of the Asato River, there was intense resistance. At this time few people on our side realized the tremendous importance attached by the Japanese to this ragged, chopped-up area. It was not until several days later, days of experience with the fierce and well coordinated resistance at this point that the Sixth Division learned that General Ushijima regarded the place as a key to his main system of defense.

During the day's fighting on the 12th, the 22d succeeded in making limited gains on its right, but later in the afternoon the advance of the 2d Battalion on the regimental left was brought sharply to a standstill before an irregularly rectangular hill that was destined to go down in the annals and legends of the Marine Corps as the Sugar Loaf.

The name, of course, came from its shape. It stands forth as an insignificant-looking terrain feature shadowed by the towering Shuri hill mass—an ugly pile of mingled coral and volcanic rock, emerging abruptly from the surrounding terrain. It was one element of a triangular system of defenses which formed the western anchor of the enemy's line, blocking the corridor that leads into the Shuri hills from the west. Southeast of Sugar Loaf lies another hill named Half Moon, and to the south was Horseshoe. Sugar Loaf thus formed the point of an arrowhead aimed at the center of the advancing Sixth, with the two southern hills standing as the broad and sturdy base of the arrow. The enemy perceived that while these three hills were in its possession, he had little to fear from any flanking movement by the west, and he had accordingly organized the terrain as strongly as possible, an almost classic study in static defense.

Each keypoint in the system could render assistance to all the rest. There was a deep depression within Horseshoe which gave the Nips protected mortar positions, impregnable to anything but short-range attack by means of aimed rifle fire and grenades. A network of tunnels and galleries throughout the whole triangular system facilitated the covered movement of supplies and troops. Finally, the three hills rose abruptly from surrounding bare terrain and there were no covered avenues of

Sugar Loaf Hill, seen from the northwest.

Dug in for the night. Sugar Loaf Hill is in the left background.

approach into the enemy maze. Troops attacking any one element of the position were in full view and exposed to converging fire from the other two points of the triangle; and finally, the entire Sugar Loaf area presented a clear target to the enemy machine guns, mortars, and artillery emplaced on the Shuri hill mass.

Behind Sugar Loaf and its attendant hills lay a broad corridor which led into the Shuri fortress. General Ushijima and his canny Chief of Staff, General Cho, had organized their positions to make the most of the Japanese soldier's feral instinct to live, fight and die underground; they set the highest of prices on access to this corridor. The prospective customer was the Striking Sixth.

As yet unaware of the enemy's estimate of Sugar Loaf's value, the 2d Battalion, 22d Marines, launched a tank-infantry attack against it as part of the operations of the afternoon of May 12. A single company, Company G, led the advance. The infantry suffered light casualties for the first nine hundred yards of the advance, as assault elements approached the high ground, but fire increased steadily and finally two platoons were pinned down, while 47mm guns, well concealed in caves, battered at the accompanying tanks. Captain Owen T. Stebbins, the company commander, and Lieutenant Dale W. Bair gathered the forty men of the remaining platoon and went forward in a charge.

At the end of one hundred yards only twelve men were on their feet. Captain Stebbins was a stretcher case, his legs riddled with machine-gun

The Jap artillery drops a volley perilously close to one of our Sherman tanks.

bullets. As Bair took charge, he too was hit. With his left arm hanging limp, he assembled enough Marines to increase the size of the group to twenty-five. Led by tanks, they charged again and attained the top of Sugar Loaf. Four men—ten per cent of the original platoon—plus only a handful of those who had reinforced them, reached the top.

Men as yet unhit sought cover in small depressions on the approaches to the hill and began moving the wounded into the deep ruts made by tanks. The tank men, covered by their own smoke grenades and shells, left the protection of their armor to lift wounded to turrets or front plates, but as they did so the tempo of the Jap artillery and mortar fire increased.

Bair, a 225-pounder of six feet two, completely disregarded his own safety as he stood on the crest of the hill, with a light machine gun in his good arm to cover the rescue of the wounded, swinging it in the direction of every Jap who fired. He was a perfect target, his huge body dominating the skyline. Said Private First Class James Chaisson, who was helping with the work: "It was impossible to be afraid when you saw him standing up there."

But the rescue of the wounded did not take the hill. Three times the survivors of Company G reached the summit, and three times they were driven off by mortar fire and hand grenades. The whole fight was, in fact, one of the kind the Japs always assumed they could win through that intangible quality they called "spiritual power," supposed to be uniquely their possession, which would enable them to overcome the material strength of their enemies. On Sugar Loaf they had the material strength as well, for their positions were almost invulnerable to the best of our artillery, air, and tanks; only infantry with rifle and grenade could achieve any measure of success. The Marines did not refer to spiritual power, but to the more prosaic quality of "guts," and kept on coming.

Nightfall found the key hill still in enemy hands.

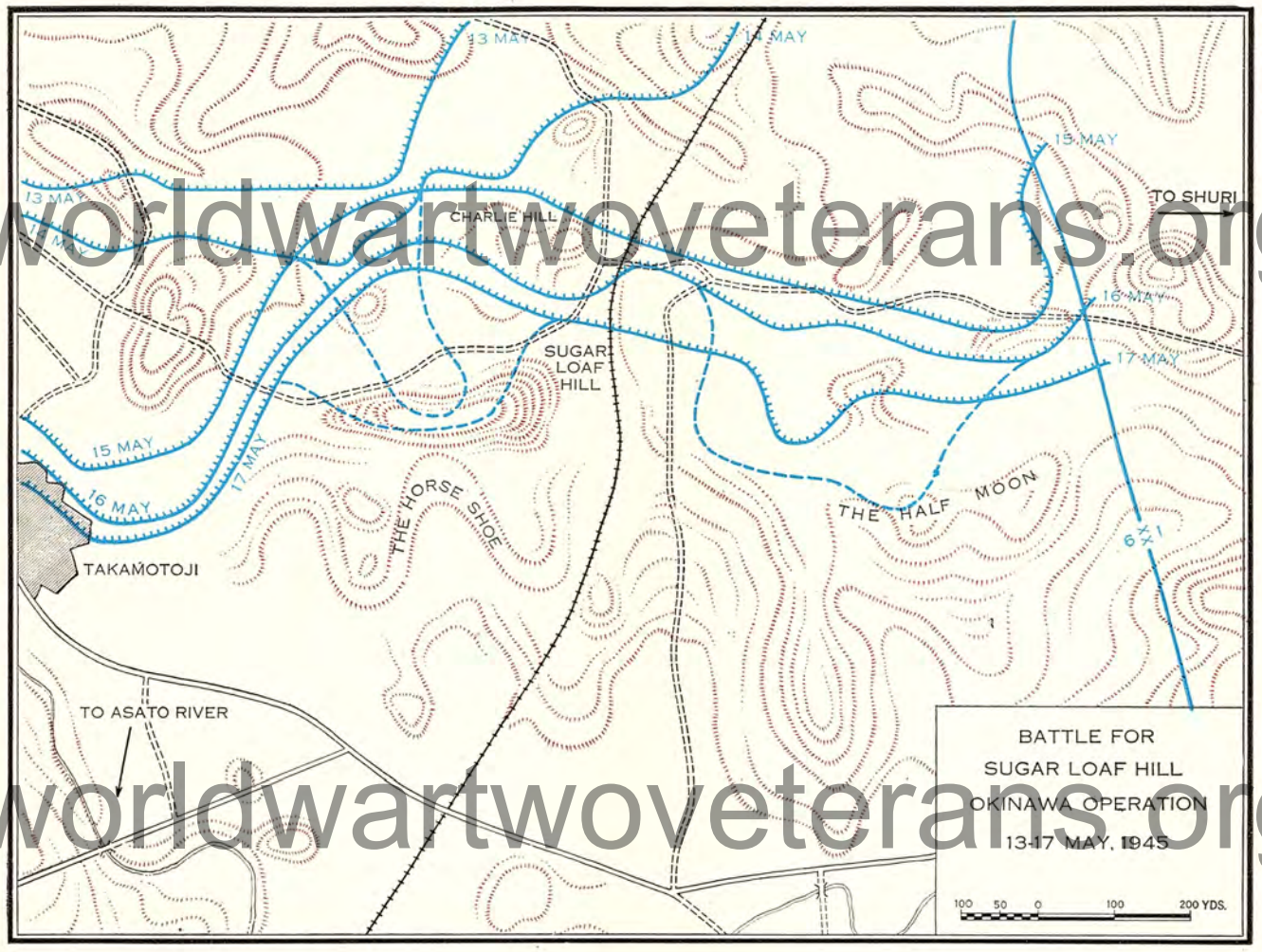
On the following day the 22d Marines gradually oriented its main effort against the Sugar Loaf area and was able, in midafternoon, to reach the summit of the hill with elements of the 2d Battalion. But again the murderous flanking fire from Shuri coupled with repeated counterattacks drove the survivors back to the low ground. While limited gains averaging from two hundred to three hundred yards had been made in other areas of the front, toward the Asato's mouth, the Division's attack actually had been brought to a halt by its supreme test—the Sugar Loaf–Half Moon–Horseshoe defense.

To meet the challenge the Division attacked on

Sugar Loaf Hill, seen from the north. The entire hill was honeycombed with caves and tunnels, many of them connecting with the Half Moon and Horseshoe elements of the Sugar Loaf defense system.

the morning of the 14th with the 22d and 29th Regiments abreast, the 29th making the main effort on the left. Both units met increasingly stubborn resistance from the start. Soon after the jump-off the 29th encountered Nips pocketed in a bowl-shaped depression which could not be cleared out at once. Colonel Whaling maintained the momentum of his attack by slipping his 1st Battalion around the left of this feature and bringing up the 3d Battalion to reduce it, while the 1st continued to press forward. The defense had been so cleverly organized that no free access to the bowl from any point on its rim could be obtained; it was reduced only after two days of the slowest and hardest kind of fighting.

On its front the 22d was able, in limited advance to seize some 1,500 yards of the Asato's north bank, fronting the city of Naha. On the left, however, the 2d Battalion, though attacking with its entire infantry strength, was unable to seize and retain a foothold on the Sugar Loaf objective. Under cover of artillery, flame-throwing tanks, gun tanks, 4.2-inch mortars, and tank destroyers, elements of Companies F and G were able to secure a lodgement on the hill by 3:00 P.M. but the accurate fire coming from the front, left, and left rear again forced them back. Nevertheless, at 4:30 Lieutenant Colonel Woodhouse, the battalion commander, determined to make a final attempt while some daylight still remained. He ordered E Company to support that attack by fire while F and G together assaulted the hill. Supporting artillery battered Sugar Loaf and its two companion hills for thirty minutes and the attack, covered by a smoke screen and supported by tanks, jumped off shortly after 5:00 P.M. Denied observation by the heavy smoke, the enemy's defensive fires were reduced somewhat in effectiveness, but the advance was still bitterly opposed. At 7:30, after two hours of heavy fighting, the assault forces reached the slopes of Sugar Loaf, but their ranks were pitifully thin. Of the four supporting tanks originally assigned to the attack three were destroyed by 47mm fire; and of the 150-odd men who had begun the advance two hours before, four officers and forty enlisted men remained on their feet; casualties were continuing. Evacuation was extremely difficult due to the constant mortar and rifle fire that covered all the Sugar Loaf approaches; supplies were almost exhausted. The spirit of the few survivors was fading—along with the remaining daylight.



At this point Major Henry A. Courtney, Jr., executive officer of the 2d Battalion, who had been with the assault companies throughout the day, rallied the remnants at the base of the hill. Courtney was among the outstanding officers of the Division. He had led the advance of the 22d Regiment to the northern tip of the island, walking as part of the point, far ahead of the main body, and, more recently, had refused to be evacuated when slightly wounded by artillery fragments on May 10. Now, as dusk was gathering, a group of twenty-six men, dispatched by Colonel Woodhouse, arrived carrying much needed ammunition and a few rations. Major Courtney immediately commandeered their services, and, in the strange quiet that sometimes follows an enemy barrage, he addressed the entire group calmly: "Men, if we don't take the top of this hill tonight, the Japs will be down here to drive us away in the morning. I have a plan. If it works, we'll take the top of the hill. I want volunteers for a Banzai of our own!" He looked from one to another of the intent young faces around him. "When we go up there, some of us are never going to come down again. You all know what hell it is on the top, but that hill's got to be taken, and we're going to do it. What do you say?"

There was determined, even eager, willingness in their eyes. The plan was for the combined group to attack under cover of darkness, moving up the slope in a line, and upon reaching the top, to throw hand grenades as rapidly as possible. Under cover of the grenade barrage and supporting mortar fires, they were to dig in and cling to the summit. After clearly explaining the situation and assigning in-

Top: *A rocket platoon delivering its paralyzing weight of explosives in support of the front-line action.* Bottom: *An artillery forward observer spots the effect of fire by his battalion.*

dividual tasks, Major Courtney called for supporting mortar fire, and then, turning to the waiting men, calmly said, "I'm going up to the top of Sugar Loaf Hill. Who's coming along?"

The Marines moved forward at once, scrambled up the sheer side of the Sugar Loaf, and dug in at the crest, Courtney at their head. Machine-gun and rifle fire flew at them from Horseshoe and Half Moon hills; Japs on the reverse slope lobbed grenades over; shrapnel ripped through the air and green dungarees were a poor defense against it.

The Marines returned the fire as best they could, and held their positions. The price paid for that ground was recorded back at the battalion aid station, where more than three hundred casualties had been evacuated from the battle zone during the last two days.

At midnight there were signs of unusual activity on the Japs' side of the hill, and Courtney deduced that a Banzai charge was imminent. He determined to discount it by attacking first. Every man would go over the top.

"Take all the grenades you can carry," he directed coolly. "When we get over, throw them and start digging in."

He led the charge himself. "Keep coming," he urged as he hurled his grenades. "There's a mess of them down there." Courtney was still out ahead of his men when a Japanese grenade exploded inches from him and he fell, mortally wounded, but the remaining Marines kept tossing grenades and digging in.

During the night a cold rain came out of the East China Sea, adding mud and misery to the grim surroundings. When morning came there were only 15 survivors of the 46 who had actually stormed the hill, and at dawn enemy artillery, mortars and infiltration forced their withdrawal.

That morning of May 15 came in behind mists—a day which saw fighting on the front of the Sixth Division reach a pitch rarely equalled during the entire campaign—or any other, for that matter. The enemy could not afford to relinquish Sugar Loaf, and on this day his determination to hold it was actually felt by the Division. It was a day which saw heroism become commonplace—heroism like that of Corporal Donald (Rusty) Golar.

Rusty used to admit he was a "story-book Marine." "I'm one of those glory hunters," he would tell the boys back on Guadalcanal. "I'm looking for glory and I'm looking for Japs." Other Marines rarely scoffed at this exuberant self-appraisal. For one thing, Rusty was red-haired and brawny, with muscles toughened by work as a longshoreman in San Francisco; for another, he had already won the Bronze Star for his exploits on Guam with the light machine gun that was his favorite weapon. When he talked they passed the word to skeptics: "You watch that Rusty. Just keep your eye on that redhead."

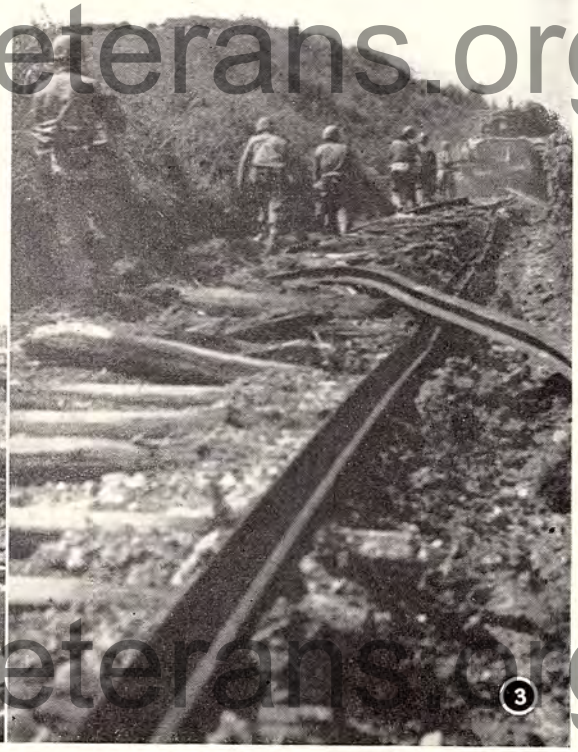
The lapse of time between occurrence of casualties in the front lines and evacuation to hospital ships was very short.

Rusty was one of Major Courtney's little band on Sugar Loaf in the early morning hours of May 15 and, true to prediction, he gave them something to watch. He had set up his machine gun where it would do the most good, but was also most exposed to the fire from Horseshoe Hill on the right—close to the crest. Down on one knee, his camouflaged helmet bobbing on his red head with each pull of the trigger, Rusty emptied his belts into the Japs. When they shot at him from the flanking hill, he would wheel into position with a booming "Yeah!" and then go to work on his new customer.

Presently there was no more machine-gun ammunition, nor were there many live Marines around Rusty. Of the dozen who had been in his group, only he and two riflemen were left. Ammunition carriers trying to get up had all been killed or wounded.

"Gotta use what I got left," he yelled to Private Donald Kelly, one of the riflemen, who was lying nearby, and drew his pistol, firing at the Japs till all his ammunition too was gone. Then he leaped to his feet, wound up like a big league pitcher and hurled the empty weapon at the enemy.

"Still need some more stuff to throw at those guys," said Rusty. He scurried about the hillside, collecting hand grenades from those who had fallen, and began hurling them across the small valley into



Tanks took an important part in the Sugar Loaf assault. 1—Occasionally they were required to evacuate casualties. 2—A tank-infantry attack in the making. 3—Tanks and infantry moving down the sunken railroad bed east of Sugar Loaf.

Tanks moving between Half Moon and Sugar Loaf Hill.

the caves with wonderful accuracy, killing Japs with every toss. The grenades too ran out, but Rusty was not yet ready to slide down the hill to the comparative safety of an embankment. Among the dead Marines he found a Browning automatic rifle; feet wide apart and standing directly in the line of enemy fire, he pumped bullets from this weapon till it jammed.

"Nothing more to give 'em now," he bellowed to Kelly. "Let's get some of these wounded guys down." Rusty bent over and carefully gathered up a comrade who had been shot in the chest. "I'll have you in sick bay in no time."

Kelly tells the rest. "As he walked with the man toward the embankment a Jap sniper's bullet struck Golar. He sort of staggered, but he put the wounded man carefully down. Then he went over to the ditch with a surprised look on his face, like he thought he could go on forever without the Japs ever getting him. I saw him sit down and push his helmet over his forehead like he was going to sleep. Then he died."

Rusty Golar was killed in the early morning hours of May 15, before 8:00 o'clock, when the attack was due to jump off, after naval and air preparation lasting from 6:30 to 7:00 and artillery preparation up to the very moment of the attack. On the right the 1st Battalion launched its attack on schedule, but ran into a counter-barrage of both artillery and mortar shells in unusual numbers.

Major Tom Myers, commanding officer of the 1st Battalion, 22nd, went up to a forward observation post on the northern bank of the Asato from which he could overlook the blackened hulk of Naha. He had his orderly, Pfc Guido Conti, with him, and shortly after 7:00 he gathered his company commanders in the lee of a red-tiled house to review for the last time his plan for the day's action. It was a "safe" place which had been immune from enemy shelling, machine-gun and sniper fire; but at that moment the little group of dusty and unshaven men must have been spotted from one of the mortar pockets within the city. Across the river flew a single shell which landed squarely in the middle of the red-tiled house. When the smoke cleared away Major Myers lay dead, five feet from

Jap mines and 47mm guns (foreground) took a heavy toll of tanks and amphibian tractors.

The remains of a Marine mortar position, employed during the Sugar Loaf attack.

him lay his orderly, also dead. Lieutenant Harrison P. Klusmeier, executive officer of the tank battalion's Company C, was killed; all three of the infantry battalion's company commanders were wounded as was the tank company commander.

On hearing of the death of Major Myers, General Shepherd remarked: "It's the greatest single loss the Division has sustained. Myers was an outstanding leader. Whenever I called on him for a job he never failed me." Major Earl J. Cook, the battalion executive officer, assumed command and the battalion moved slowly down the Asato.

The 2nd Battalion was to make the main effort, and the situation in its zone was even more difficult. At 7:30 the Japanese counterattacked, driving from the summit of Sugar Loaf the few men who were left in Major Courtney's group. The artillery preparation for the day temporarily slowed the Japs up, but they regained momentum and by 9:00 A.M. the counterattack had spread along a 900-yard front, reaching into the zone of the 29th Marines. Not until 1:15 was the 2nd Battalion able to absorb this thrust and bring it to a halt, and in doing so, the battalion was forced to give up some of the ground immediately in front of Sugar Loaf. The battalion was now worn down by constant fighting and heavy casualties; having lost over four hundred men in three days it was withdrawn and replaced by the 3rd Battalion, 22nd Marines.

In the meanwhile the 29th Regiment had attacked abreast of the 22nd, in an effort to gain the Half Moon section of the Sugar Loaf defense system. Both its 1st and 3rd Battalions were engaged all day in fighting of the same bitter character as on the other part of the front. The troublesome bowl-shaped depression which had been bypassed on the

Blasting out a cave in the Sugar Loaf area.

previous day was finally cleaned out, and the two battalions worked slowly forward under fire from the Shuri area to their left. By late afternoon the 1st Battalion was fighting at grenade range in the valley before Half Moon Hill. The tanks, deployed in support of the infantry, came under direct fire from enemy 15cm guns on the Shuri heights as they moved into the exposed ground around the base of Sugar Loaf.

Company D of the 29th's 2nd Battalion was shifted to the zone of the 22nd to assist in mopping up enemy elements which had infiltrated during the night. When they arrived the Jap counterattack was in progress and Captain Mabie's men were immediately ordered into the lines to help beat it off; they fought for ten hours, mostly with grenades.

The place became known as Hand Grenade Ridge. Corporal Jack Castignola, who was there, tells the story of the battle:

"The Japs were in about the same position on the other side, and all we did was pull pins, give the grenade a little toss, and they'd roll down on the Japs. We killed a lot of them with rifles, too. The first one I killed would have made a good end on any football team. He was over six feet tall and must have weighed over two hundred. He was the first one I saw dressed in a Marine outfit. He had on all our stuff except a helmet and that was one of the things that gave him away. He strolled up to our lines and I glanced at him. I happened to think, 'That guy has an awfully long rifle.' I looked around just as he was walking into a cave at my left. I knew none of our men were casually walking into caves in that part of the country. Then he came out and I noticed his gleaming small helmet. There was a stone wall outside the cave and the Jap seemed to hide from something, pressing himself against the wall. He stood just like he was in front of a firing squad. He sagged like a loose rope the first time I shot."

Neither of the regiments in line had made much progress during the day, and that night, the night of May 15-16, they were forced to cling to their positions under particularly violent artillery and mortar fire.

The attack was resumed at 8:30 the following morning, with the 22nd again striking at Sugar Loaf Hill while the 29th undertook to seize Half Moon, and thereby protect the 22nd's left flank. Immediately after moving out, the 1st Battalion, 22nd, encountered intense automatic weapons fire from the town of Takamotoji, which had hitherto been quiet. The presumption that the enemy was moving reinforcements in to bolster his left flank around Sugar Loaf was obvious.

Life-giving plasma, administered virtually in the front lines.

By 2:00 P.M. the 29th was well up on the Half Moon slope, and under this protection the 3rd Battalion, 22nd, had worked itself around on the left of the regimental line, to a position from which another assault could be made against Sugar Loaf. The attack jumped off at 3:00 P.M. with tank and artillery support, and immediately ran into a terrific counter-barrage from the Shuri hill mass, while there was no diminution in the machine-gun, mortar, rifle and grenade fire from the Sugar Loaf itself. Four times the Leathernecks surged up that slope to close quarters; four times they were driven down again by mortar and artillery fire and the fanatical counterattacks of Japs pouring from their caves. Night found our lines still short of the crest.

The 29th was meeting the same type of resistance on the left. Supported by Captain Philip Morrell's tanks, troops of that regiment worked forward to the crest of Half Moon ridge and by 5:00 o'clock, were digging in under intense mortar and artillery fire from the Shuri area. Extensive use of smoke failed to halt this fire, which came from the left rear, and the Marines were unable to organize the ground they had gained. Among the rising casualties was Lieutenant Colonel Jean Moreau, the Battalion

Elements of a front-line rifle company digging in for the night; a Jap trench proves useful.

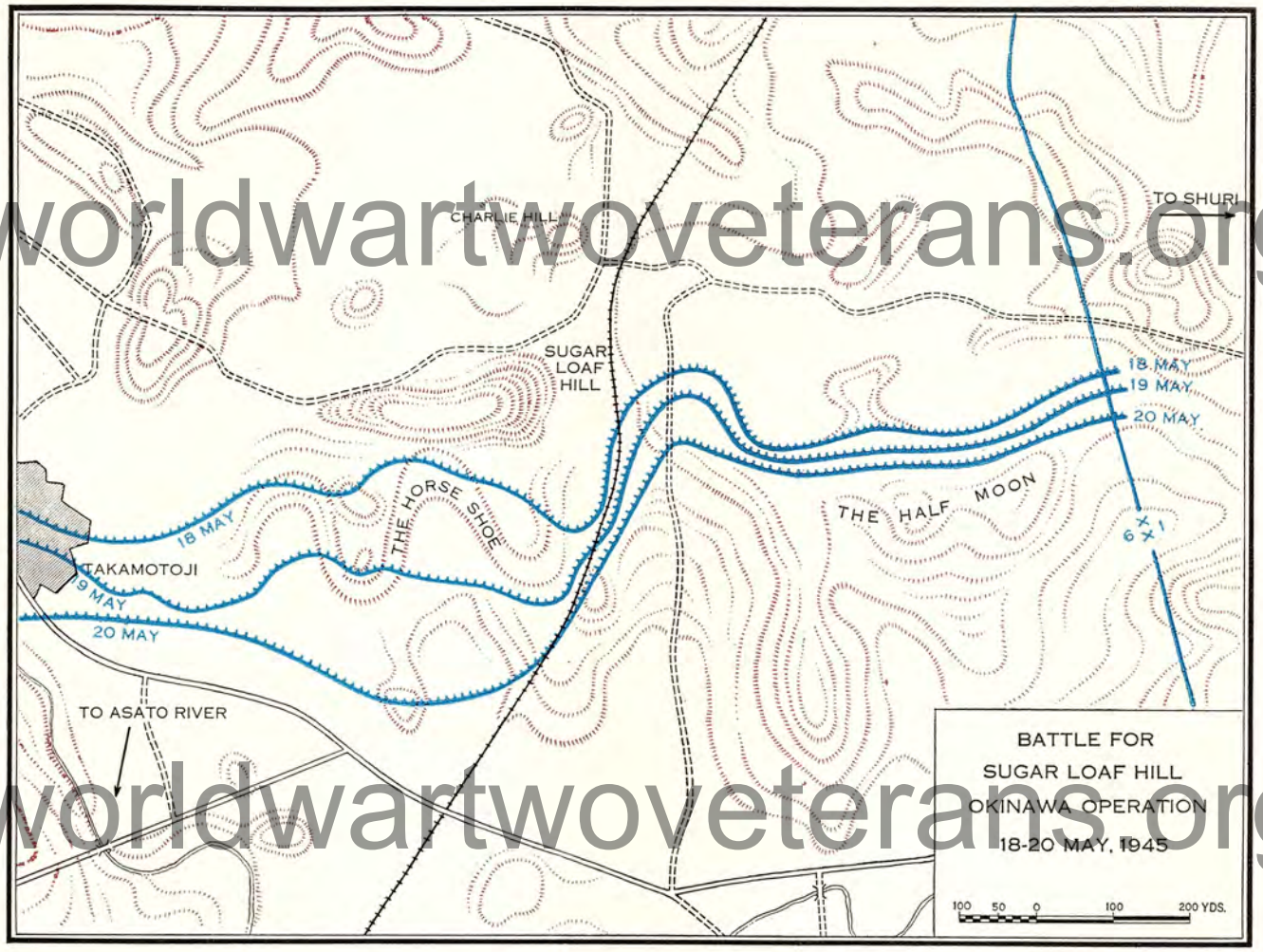
Commander. Shortly before darkness it was necessary to withdraw the troops to a defensive position on a ridge north of Half Moon.

During the day the 3d Battalion of the 29th had worked its way along the east side of the railroad track until Companies G and I could make a dash across open ground and reach the northwestern end of Half Moon. Lieutenant Colonel E. A. Wright, controlling his battalion from Charlie Hill, saw them pinned down by enemy long-range machine-gun fire and mortar fire from Sugar Loaf and the Shuri heights. The two companies, receiving heavy fire from their right rear, left rear, and front could only hug the ground and throw what grenades were available. There was no time to dig in or organize the ground. Altogether the two companies had less than sixty men on the side of the hill and many of those were wounded. Lieutenant Colonel Wright saw that without reinforcements his men could not maintain their precarious foothold; the longer they remained the heavier the casualties would be. When it was apparent that the men would have to be withdrawn, he called in smoke to cover the withdrawal. Evacuation of wounded was difficult. It wasn't until well after midnight that all the wounded were pulled out. With both flanks exposed, the battalion had attempted a task too difficult to accomplish unless flank units could move up abreast simultaneously. Neither the 1st Battalion, 29th, on the left, nor the 2d Battalion, 29th, on the right could do this.

During the afternoon Pfc Harold A. Wilfong raced through the fire time after time to deliver stretchers and help evacuate the wounded. When one of our men in a bazooka team was hit, Wilfong volunteered to take his place, and inched up the slope of Half Moon with a load of rockets, following the gunner. At the crest the bazooka man was hit and his bazooka damaged. Wilfong had to help the man down the hill through a hail of shell fragments. "Nearly broke my heart," he said, "—didn't get to fire that bazooka at the Japs."

Corporal John A. Spazzaferro was hit six times by rifle and machine-gun fire before he withdrew, with just two men remaining of his 14-man squad. "The toughest guy I ever saw," he was described by his platoon leader, Lieutenant Edgar C. Greene. One bullet had gone through Spazzaferro's left arm, two more through his right arm, breaking it above the elbow; another nearly took off his trigger finger, while the fifth entered his back and came out just above the left hip and the sixth grazed his right hip. At the beginning of the counterattack the corporal was carrying a tommy gun, but when a Jap machine gunner opened up, Spazzaferro seized an automatic rifle to obtain greater range. When that weapon jammed after a few rounds, he picked up an M-1. "It looked as though Spazz killed a Jap every time he squeezed the trigger," said the lieutenant. The indestructible corporal finished the fight by going back to the tommy-gun.

Greene himself was hit and fell beside the rail of a narrow gauge railroad along the draw between Half Moon and Sugar Loaf. "I raised my head," he said, "and saw that Spazz was standing there, still firing his tommy-gun. He had already been hit



six times." When the Jap fire was silenced the corporal began to move and then collapsed about ten feet from Greene. The officer thought the rugged Italian must be done for. At this moment four Japs came toward them. Greene played dead, pushing his face against a rail and assuming a grotesque attitude. One of the Japs examined the lieutenant for souvenirs, taking his wrist watch and then reaching into a pocket, only to draw out disgustedly a hand covered with warm, sticky blood from a wound in the officer's side. After the Japs had moved past Spazzaferro the lieutenant lifted his head and called "Spazz!" breathing a sigh of relief as he saw a grin spread across the Marine's face. It was the next day before tanks were able to rescue the pair from enemy territory.

Private James J. Lore was advancing with a flamethrower against a cave where seven Japs were manning a machine gun. Four of them ran to one side of the cave's entrance, three to the other. He killed the four in one searing blast, then turned on the others. He was able to set their clothing ablaze but his flamethrower suddenly went out and they started for him. With no weapon, weighted down by the hose and tanks on his back, he turned to run, but tripped over a communications wire. As the burning Japs closed in on him, it occurred to him to spray them with the incendiary fluid. Lore grinned as he told how he "stopped them with a blaze of glory."

All told, however, that May 16 was as bitter a day as the Sixth Division had seen or would see. Two full regiments had attacked with all the power at their command and still were unsuccessful. There were two salient facts in that lack of success—the

The depression of the Horse Shoe seen from the Jap side. It provided covered positions for mortars, reserves and supply installations.

Sugar Loaf defenses had been reinforced and strengthened during the preceding twenty-four hours, and the intense enemy fire from the Division's left and left rear would continue to constitute a major problem until the Shuri area was reduced.

The Division Commander, accompanied by his operations officer, had come forward in the late afternoon for his usual daily visit to the front, and he held a conference with Colonel Whaling. At this conference it developed that to the east of Sugar Loaf, running north and south, there was an insignificant depression, hardly large enough to be dignified by the name of "valley." Some Nip fire had fallen into it, but the volume of their effort seemed to be reserved for troops assaulting the three hills, for men had passed through this depression with relative ease on several occasions.

On the basis of this fact General Shepherd planned a piece of tactics like a football power play, involving what the textbooks academically call a "calculated risk." The plan was to move an entire regiment through this valley in column—the 29th Regiment. Beyond the valley the battalions were each to engage one point in the defense system, each attack beginning as soon as the one preceding it was fairly under way. The 1st Battalion would lead, placing the south side of the ridge in its zone under attack; the 2nd would engage Sugar Loaf and the 3rd sweep through to Half Moon, thus bringing all elements of the Sugar Loaf defenses under almost simultaneous attack. The maneuver involved a change in regimental boundaries to bring Sugar Loaf into the zone of the 29th.

There was an unusually heavy naval and artillery preparation before the attack jumped off at 8:55 A.M. on May 17. Company E of the 2nd Battalion worked into a position from which it could assault Sugar Loaf, and the troops went up the northeast slope of the much contested hill, under continuous artillery fire from Shuri and drawing heavy fire from mortars among the crags of Horseshoe all the way. Captain Alan Meissner, the Company Commander, gradually worked his unit to the top where he and his men were met by a heavy Banzai charge that carried them back to the base of the eminence. Swiftly they reorganized and pushed up again, encountered superior numbers in a bayonet fight, and were once more driven down. Undiscouraged, they made a third and again unsuccessful attempt. Late in the afternoon the depleted company somehow found resources of strength and courage to try again, and though the Japs tried desperately to drive them off, this time they held the ground. However, the company's ammunition was now exhausted and casualties had been so heavy that no man could be spared to remove the wounded, so after dark the depleted company was ordered to withdraw. The attack had cost 160 casualties.

Both the 1st and 3d battalions had made limited advances but neither unit had captured its assigned objective. Late in the afternoon the positions held by these units as a result of their local gains came under heavy artillery fire from Shuri, and under cover of darkness the 1st Battalion was forced to withdraw. A part of the 3rd Battalion still remained on the reverse slope of Half Moon Hill, however, and by tying in its fires with those of 2nd Battalion units on the right, was able to remain there.

Marines of a reserve unit moving forward to relieve the front-line troops.

The 29th's attack had thus failed to take Sugar Loaf, which was the key objective, but a considerable measure of security had been gained by the advances on the left flank and the regiment was in a good position to resume the assault on the next morning.

General Ushijima realized that his Sugar Loaf position had been shaken and was in danger of falling. He attempted once more to reinforce under cover of darkness, but the counterattack was observed while forming and twelve battalions of artillery put down a concentration that inflicted such losses on the enemy that he gave up the effort.

The prospect before Lieutenant Colonel William G. Robb, commanding the 2nd Battalion, 29th Regiment, was grim that night. The battalion had expended all its grenades in Company E's first two attempts to take and hold Sugar Loaf, and it was lack of supply more than anything else that had caused the withdrawal. There seemed little likelihood that the viciousness of the hand-to-hand struggle would in any way abate on the morrow or the supply difficulty be easily met, but that evening Colonel Robb called Colonel Whaling at regiment on the field telephone. "We can take it," he said. "We'll give it another go in the morning."

The battalion attacked on that morning, May 18, at 8:30. Tanks tried to work their way through minefields on both sides of the hill, but met with little success, six of their number being disabled by mines or enemy fire during the morning. Nevertheless the battalion had worked so far forward on the flanks of the hill that by 10:00 it was considered feasible to attempt a combined tank-infantry assault. Captain Howard L. Mabie of Company D conceived the plan of pushing half the command around the right of the hill with tank support, and as soon as the enemy's attention was engaged in that direction, sending the other half-company around the opposite flank, also with close tank support.

This time the effort won through. The tanks encircled the hill from both sides and the infantrymen joined them as soon as the caves on the reverse slopes were sealed. For an hour the fighting was furious, but when it relaxed a trifle, Marines were firmly dug in all around Sugar Loaf Hill.

The driving, machine-like precision with which the 2nd Battalion executed this maneuver, the swift planning with which new situations were met and the determination with which the attack was pressed, were all evidence of the ability of the 2nd Battalion. Overseeing its every move, calm and determined, Colonel Robb had fought his battalion through to its important objective, Sugar Loaf Hill.

Sugar Loaf was secured, but heavy fire continued to come from Horseshoe Hill and Company F was dispatched in that direction. The assault was perfectly maneuvered; the Marines went right to the crest, where the fight developed into a grenade battle at close quarters with a terrific mortar barrage falling. Company D, deployed along the crest of Sugar Loaf, afforded fire support, and with that help Company F seized the forward slope of Horseshoe, where they dug in under strong enemy counterfire.

The Japanese were not yet ready to give up, however. During its swift advance, Company F had shaken loose its right flank from contact with

1—Sugar Loaf in our hands! 2—Casualties are being evacuated, and operations are under way to clear out the debris of battle. 3—Marines dry their equipment on the side of Sugar Loaf.

the 22nd Regiment, and the Japs counterattacked on this flank in the night, feeding reinforcements through a deep ravine while raking Company F's position with white phosphorus. The pressure was too great; Company F was forced to withdraw to Sugar Loaf, while some of the Japs succeeded in gaining entrance to caves in that hill where the 2nd Battalion had to mop them up at dawn.

On the morning of the following day, May 19, the 29th Marines was relieved by the 4th. As they moved in, fighting was still in progress on the south slopes of Sugar Loaf Hill and Horseshoe was in enemy hands. The enemy, who had observed the movement of our troops from the Shuri eminence, poured a tremendous volume of fire into the area, and not all the smoke and screening facilities of the Sixth Division could prevent severe losses. In Lieutenant Colonel Bruno A. Hochmuth's 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, there were forty casualties at this period, and there was still much rugged fighting before the division could completely control the Asato. But the essential point had been gained, and we are sure now that the Sixth Division's assault forced General Ushijima's Thirty-Second Army to initiate plans for withdrawing from its Naha–Shuri–Yonabaru position.

During the ten-day period that ended with the capture of Sugar Loaf, the Division had lost 2,662 killed and wounded; but time and again men who went to the sick bay to have serious wounds dressed had to be forcibly restrained from returning to the battle. Men with the so-called "happy" wounds—injuries that would normally require evacuation, but gave no promise of permanent damage—argued with doctors and corpsmen about going back to the front immediately. In one aid station a youthful Marine from Texas was actually apologetic, "Just a scratch, Doc," he said, showing a forearm torn open by a bullet. "Put on a patch so I can get back to my outfit."

The weary physician examined the arm. The Marine watched stretcher bearers bring a comrade into the first aid station, white faced and unconscious. The doctor motioned for a corpsman to dress the Texan's arm and himself bent over the man on the stretcher.

"Where's he hit?" the Texan asked.

"Mortar fragments in the stomach," the doctor replied.

The Texan was silent as the corpsman wrapped bandages around the injured arm. As soon as the adhesive tape was on, he jumped up, mumbled "Thanks," and started for the entrance.

"You're going to stay here a while. There's danger of infection in that arm." The doctor again leaned over the man on the stretcher.

The corpsman pointed to the cot and told the Marine to lie down and silenced his protest. Staring at the man with the stomach wounds, the Texan grudgingly obeyed.

As he did so a grinning Leatherneck from Ohio stuck his head into the aid station and winked at a corpsman. "They got me, Pal," he said, limping in. "Maybe I'll get to go home."

The corpsman had the Ohioan roll up his trouser leg, revealing torn flesh above the ankle. He began a wisecrack which was cut off by the sight of the doctor working over the man on the stretcher.

"What hit him? Shrapnel?" asked the Ohioan.

"A doctor will examine your leg in a moment."

"That poor guy is really shot up."

"All it needs is a bandage," the Ohioan said, as the doctor examined his leg. "The corpsman can put it on."

"Go lie down on a cot," said the doctor.

"There's nothing wrong with me," the Ohioan argued, but the corpsman had dealt with these cases before. "Come on, Mac," he said. "Take the end cot . . . I know, I know. But there's danger of infection."

No non-participant can really attain a true picture of the violence of that battle for Sugar Loaf, and it is impossible to cite here more than a few examples of the valor that was the common coin.

In a foxhole near the bank of the Asato Pfc. Raymond Huestis was bayoneted by a Jap in the right shoulder, right arm and neck. As the Jap drew back for another thrust, Huestis jammed his knee hard into his enemy's stomach, then leaped at him, clamping the Jap's neck in the crook of his left arm and maintaining the pressure until his assailant was choked to death.

Pfc. Robert Clark found a Jap knee mortar in a cave and carried it to the foxhole where he and Lieutenant Robert Jordon were lying. When the

The pitiful natives suffered untold misery, but received gentle treatment at the hands of Marines.

enemy rushed the foxhole Clark fired eight rounds at them with their own ammunition, and later, when another wave of Japs attacked, he stood erect in the foxhole, spraying them with bullets from his BAR.

Three times in a single day Pfc. Daniel (Amphtrac) Albin missed death by small fractions of time and distance. Shrapnel ripped his pack apart, a shell landed only fifty yards from him and machine-gun bullets tore off his cartridge belt. That night a Jap tried to kill him while he was asleep in his foxhole. Albin, rapidly and fully awake, grabbed the Jap by the back of the neck and stabbed him to death.

While the lines were in darkness Lieutenant Leonard M. Peterson warned a man to stop talking or he would give away his position. An inaudible mumble defiantly answered the Lieutenant's order.

The next moment the Lieutenant heard the knocking of a grenade against a helmet. In a flash he realized that only a Jap grenade requires that operation, leaped from his foxhole as the missile arched toward him, and silenced the Jap.

Corporal Walter G. Parker had taken cover in a crater atop Horseshoe Hill with Pfc. Eugene R. Lewis. The Japs began throwing grenades at them; Parker tossed the first one back. Then two more came together, rolling down the side of the crater to a stop, about two feet apart. In his haste to pick them up, the corporal fumbled both grenades. He dived upon them, saving the life of his buddy. At that instant still another grenade rolled into the hole, and Parker pulled that, too, under him. Two of the three exploded. Against all expectations, he survived, though with severe leg and body wounds.

Two members of the Division's War Dog Platoon.

Big George Murphy, who had played end for Notre Dame, went back up Sugar Loaf to rescue a comrade after one of the withdrawals. As he was carrying the man out, the Nips hit him squarely in the back. Turning round to face the enemy in a last gesture of defiance, he emptied his pistol at them, then fell dead.

Sergeant Mendel E. Bons—"Big John" to his men —exposed his six-foot-five-inch frame time after time to rescue wounded men and to direct and encourage the Marines under his command.

To relate these isolated cases is, in a way, pointless, because a dozen or a hundred might be told for everyone represented here. They are only minor parts of the whole that place the Striking Sixth's battle at Sugar Loaf Hill on the list which includes Iwo's Mount Suribachi, Peleliu's Bloody Nose Ridge, Saipan's Tapotchau, Tarawa's Betio Beach and the Battle of the Tenaru on Guadalcanal. On that hill the Marine Corps' newest division was called upon to perform its most difficult task, and did not fail. To top the list of those who fought there and gave their lives are such names as those of Major "Court" Courtney, "Rusty" Golar, "Fighting Irish" Murphy and Lieutenant Bob Nelson, all of whom chose Sugar Loaf for a valiant last stand and who met death gloriously. They made Sugar Loaf hallowed ground.

Snipers are flushed out of the Christian Church in Naha.

Chapter 12: The Battle for Naha

FROM THE HEIGHT OF CAPTURED SUGAR LOAF the Marines could look across the sluggish Asato River into the blackness and rubble of what had once been Okinawa's capital and a city of 65,000 people. Now the only residents were Japanese soldiers manning the mortar and gun emplacements that lurked in the shadows of the abused buildings, to oppose the Division's advance. Capture of the ruined city was the next step.

Most of the day of May 19 was required to effect the relief of the depleted 29th Marines by the 4th Regiment. The enemy with his excellent observation in the Shuri Hills was able to pour in accurate fire that forced our men to dig foxholes as they lay flat on the ground. The relief cost us seventy casualties, and might have cost many more had it not been for the excellent discipline of the troops involved. It was completed at 2:30 P.M., with the 4th making preparations to renew the attack while the 29th withdrew to defensive positions along the beach fronting Machinato Airfield, where it sought whatever rehabilitation could be obtained.

At 8:00 in the morning of May 20 the 4th attacked toward the upper reaches of the Asato with two battalions abreast. By an enveloping action from the west the 2nd Battalion, on the left, gained positions on Half Moon Hill, the high ground dominating the eastern half of Horseshoe, and thus reached a position from which it could look down on the mortar positions that had done so much damage to the other two regiments of the Division during the Sugar Loaf fighting. The 3rd Battalion meanwhile, had gained a foothold on King Hill, looking down into Horseshoe from the opposite flank. The combat on the forward slopes of Horseshoe was not less intensive than any part of the battle for Sugar Loaf and the most damaging fire came, as before, from the towering Shuri Hill area on the left. The two battalions had nevertheless been able to advance about two hundred yards before being forced to halt and dig in under continuous fire.

At 9:30 that night the Japs launched a counterattack, one of the key moves of the whole campaign, for their position would be lost unless it succeeded. They came on in battalion strength—no wild Banzai charge, but a skillfully executed maneuver, preceded by an intense mortar barrage. During the fight, the 3rd Battalion, 4th, on the right of the regiment, received the brunt of the assault.

In the darkness it was difficult to tell friend from foe. Sometimes men had to toss grenades into adjacent foxholes where the original occupants had

White phosphorus from mortars of the 22d Marines sets a fire in northern Naha.

No one ever expected to be dry or clean again. The mud was everywhere.

been killed or wounded; at other times grenades came toward them from positions where Marines were presumed to be. The 60mm mortars kept up an almost incessant stream of illuminating shells that outlined the flat area between Sugar Loaf and the crest of Horseshoe Ridge. Ammunition supply was assured by a line of Marines passing up cases from hand to hand in the rear.

As soon as the counterattack began to take form six battalions of artillery were concentrated on the narrow area immediately before the lines of the 3rd Battalion. But through it the Japs came stubbornly on, and it became necessary for the 4th to commit a part of its regimental reserve to hold the hard-won front-line positions. They were kept secure; no ground was lost, and in the morning nearly five hundred Japanese dead were counted where their attack had failed. Our casualties were light.

Adjoining the left of the 4th the 1st Battalion, 22nd, formed the link with the 5th Regiment of the First Division. This battalion made slight adjustments in its lines to conform to the advances of the regiments on its flanks, but it was in no position to give effective help against the bitterly contested Half Moon area. It was apparent at this time that although the Division might take that mass, it could hardly hold it in the face of the flanking fire from the Shuri area at the center of the island, with which the Sixth had no direct means of dealing. The Division Commander accordingly decided to anchor his left on a strong reverse slope position and to develop the full force of the Division's power on his right, making an envelopment directed to the south and southeast. Such a move, he believed, was

the most feasible means of maintaining the momentum that had continued since the Asa Kawa crossing, and, at the same time, avoiding a costly operation under the Shuri guns.

During the night of May 21-22 there began a slow, drizzling rain which during the next nine days became an important factor in the military situation. It continued throughout that period, turning the whole area into an expanse of bottomless red mud. The rain was already falling steadily when the attack was resumed on the morning of May 22, with the 1st and 3rd Battalions of the 4th driving toward the Asato while the 2nd Battalion remained in its positions on the reverse slope of Half Moon, in contact with the 1st Battalion, 22nd, on the left. The supply system functioned with difficulty under that downpour and tanks could give only long-range support from the roads. Normal transport means were ineffective, and supplies had to be brought up in amphibian tractors. Under these adverse conditions the Marines worked steadily forward to drive the surviving defenders across the river and seize the high ground overlooking its northern bank. The stream was already a raging, muddy torrent and the general weather conditions of the island made it likely that it would continue so; accordingly, extensive preparations were necessary before a crossing could be considered.

The number of amphtracs was limited and even they had difficulties in the mud; the enemy maintained his rain of shells, especially from an 8-inch piece which was insouciantly nicknamed "Box-car Charlie" by the Marines. Small-arms and mortar fire from the vicinity of Machishi Town on the south bank was constant.

Under the falling rain and falling steel the 4th commenced its preparations for a crossing, dispatching two patrols to the opposite side of the stream. They penetrated about two hundred yards into the ruins of Machishi, receiving machine-gun fire from their front and both flanks, and returned to report heavy concentrations of enemy weapons emplaced in the high ground about five hundred yards south of the river. Further reconnaissance reports indicated that the passage of the stream would have to be made without tank support, since the required bridging would be a major engineering effort, and, once across the tanks would be sharply restricted by the flooded ground.

A machine-gun position overlooking the Asato River.

Between dawn and 10:00 A.M. on the 22nd, more patrols were pushed south of the stream and reached a depth of four hundred yards. The actual crossing began at noon, under a heavy downpour, with the 1st and 3rd Battalions working across the stream by infiltration.

Objective of the day's attack was a long-nosed ridge jutting north out of Naha. From caves in its slopes heavy mortar and machine-gun fire fell on the Marines as they worked their way down the slopes between Horseshoe and the north bank of the Asato, but the regiment's own mortars battered the enemy fire into silence.

Units crossed the tumbling stream in rushes, two or three Marines at a time leaping up to dash forward and plunge across the water, anywhere from waist to shoulder deep. Jap rifle and machine-gun bullets laced the surface into foamy patterns and heavier weapons fired from the high ground to the southward, where the Japs had excellent observation. By 1:30 P.M. the leading elements of both battalions were across and had driven three hundred yards to the south, where they paused to reorganize and evacuate casualties.

An effort to support the move with tanks and tank destroyers had failed under the combination of mud, mines, mortar shells and the steep river banks. The question of supply for the Marines on the south bank now assumed major importance. While every available man was engaged in packing food and ammunition across, a group of engineers under

Top: *Portable footbridge thrown across the Asato River by troops of the 6th Engineer Battalion.* Bottom: *The first Bailey bridge to span the Asato—erected under fire to permit tanks to join in the attack to the south.*

Engineer mine detection and removal teams had an almost endless job in clearing the streets of Naha.

Lieutenant Henry A. Herz made an attempt to bridge the stream. They were driven back by a mortar concentration. Nevertheless, by nightfall, the infantry, without armored support, had pressed on to a line five hundred yards deep and including a portion of Naha's eastern outskirts.

Under cover of darkness Lieutenant Herz and his platoon tried again, with the ingenious scheme of running five amphtracs into the stream and scuttling them there to act as bridge piers. This attempt failed also when the first two vehicles were destroyed by mines, but the engineers kept on, carrying hundred-pound sections of pre-fabricated footbridge on their backs, and after five hours of gruelling labor, at last succeeded in getting two bridges set up.

But they were only footbridges. As soon as they were in position the engineers began work on a larger, Bailey bridge, and by 2:30 in the afternoon of the next day, in spite of falling shells and falling rain, they had a crossing for armor and transport in operation.

While the bridging was in progress, the two battalions of the 4th south of the stream moved forward at a pace that was little more than a crawl in that continuous mud but they moved forward nevertheless. By evening of May 25 they were in possession of the greater part of the north-south ridge west of Machishi. That night about 8:00 o'clock the Japs counterattacked the 1st Battalion in company strength under cover of a smoke and mortar concentration, but the troops had been expecting that, and after forty-five minutes of close-in fighting the enemy were thrown back in disorder.

Later that same night elements of the Division Reconnaissance Company were sent across the river near its mouth to determine whether urban Naha was held in strength. They slipped silently into the outlying streets of the city, crawling over mounds of roof tiles, concrete and wood in the first large Japanese city Marines had entered. They found only occasional snipers hidden in the ruins and before dawn were ordered to dig in and hold the positions they then occupied.

That night it rained harder than ever. Dawn of May 26 found the road network of the rear areas a quagmire in which all traffic was at a standstill and supply virtually impossible. During the day the 4th confined its activities to patrolling while the Reconnaissance Company worked another three

OY "grasshopper" planes proved accurate as eyes for the commanders on the ground. This one is observing over the burned-out shell of Naha.

Clearing snipers out of the buildings in Naha was a slow and hazardous job, calling for a maximum of coordination.

hundred yards forward toward the center of Naha.

In the meantime the First Division had broken through the difficult salient at Shuri, advancing to a position approximately parallel with the Sixth. That night, May 26, there were indications that the Japs were attempting a withdrawal across the whole of the Tenth Army front. It was important to learn the extent of this action; the Commanding General therefore ordered vigorous patrolling along the entire Division front.

As a part of this plan the 2nd Battalion, 22nd, moved out at 7:00 on the morning of the 27th, crossed the Asato, relieved the Reconnaissance Company in Naha, and then pressed farther into the city against rifle and knee-mortar fire. The town was split in two by a canal and we now held about half the area west of it. At the same time the 4th Regiment was pressing vigorously forward in the eastern outskirts of the city, encountering snipers among the tombs and ruined buildings. Thus the Division's line ran from a point southeast of Sugar Loaf where contact was maintained with the 5th Marines to where the 2nd Battalion, 22nd, rested its flank on the China Sea in the city itself.

On the 27th and 28th the rains were so heavy that little could be accomplished beyond determining that no general withdrawal was in progress on the Sixth Division front. Before dawn on the 29th, the 29th Regiment came up to relieve the 4th, which passed into Division reserve. The latter regiment had been in the line for nine days, and was badly fatigued by constant fighting under the battering of enemy artillery fire from Shuri during a period when the rainfall aggregated almost eighteen inches. During that period it had cracked the main enemy defense line and destroyed 2,095 Japs; but the price had been 1,100 casualties.

Yet it is not to be thought that the matter of

Street fighting in western Naha—dangerous but necessary. The training at "Bonegiville" was paying dividends.

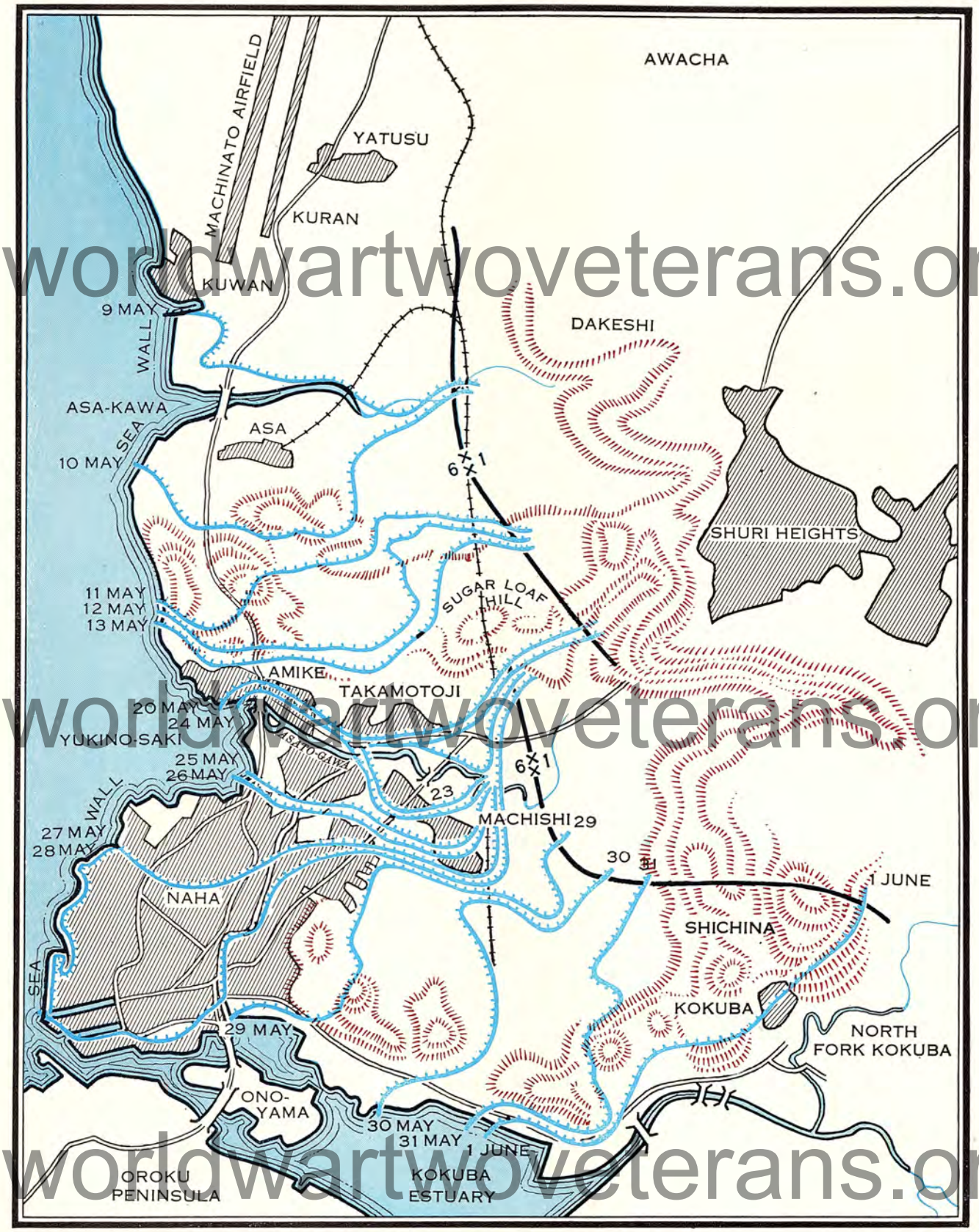
artillery fire was a one-sided business. The 15th Regiment had kept up continuous and fiercely accurate supporting fires. At one time a single artillery piece, its gun crew captained by Sergeant Fred E. Stanford, landed eight successive shells in an area fifteen yards in diameter from a distance of eight thousand yards. There was a Jap supply and ammunition dump in the area and it was destroyed.

"The Japs had a lot of ammo and supplies stored near a village outside of Naha, and it was carefully camouflaged," said Stanford. "Our forward observer knew there was something there, but he couldn't tell what it was. The first shot knocked the camouflage off. Then the observer saw what had been hit and called for seven more rounds. Each one landed in the supply dump until it was completely wiped out."

With support like this the 22nd Marines under their new commander, Colonel Harold C. Roberts, executed the Division's third opposed river crossing in twenty days, attacking in the darkness again—before dawn on the 29th. The rain drove down unceasingly as the engineers, now fully convinced that this was an "engineers' war," threw footbridges across the Naha canal at three points, and the 1st Battalion, 22nd, filed quickly across, followed by the 2nd Battalion shortly after daybreak. Resistance was light, consisting mainly of rifle and machine-gun fire. Meanwhile the 29th, farther to the west, advanced in coordination with the 22nd against similar resistance.

Marine mortar shells fell ahead of our troops as they advanced into the eastern outskirts of the ruined city. The place, viewed from the Division observation post on the high ground just south of the Asato, presented an aspect of systematic destruction. It had been built largely of concrete, but only the buildings that had housed the city hall and the provincial government remained standing and these were rent with gaping holes and gutted by fire. Marine infantry could be seen working carefully through this desolation, taking cover as Jap bullets whipped into the mud about them. Each brief halt meant the discovery of another Jap position. The word would flash back, and minutes later the hiss of speeding mortar shells would come from overhead. A pause: then up ahead appeared puffs of smoke through which lashed shrapnel and splinters of wood. On the heels of the high explosive came white phosphorus shells, following which the troops moved in to complete the destruction.

As the Marines of the two regiments penetrated deeper, they came everywhere on the grotesque and terrible ruins of war—streets filled with debris, bodies of Japs everywhere, in gutters, in hastily-dug foxholes, or hanging limply from shattered window



9 May through 1 June—Operations of the 6th Division from its entry into the Southern Lines until the completion of the capture of Naha.

1—The ruins of Naha after the Division had cleaned out the last Jap resistance there. 2—Naha seen from the rocky seaward coast of the city. It was in this area of coral boulders that the last defenders of the city were found. 3—A patrol of the 6th Reconnaissance Company moving into southern Naha. 4—Another patrol moving through the destroyed city.

1—With an assault platoon as it moves through a graveyard in the eastern suburb of Naha. 2—Naval gunfire, artillery and aerial bombs destroyed even the heaviest concrete structures. 3—An anti-sniper patrol. 4—A 37mm cannon sited to fire across Naha Harbor.

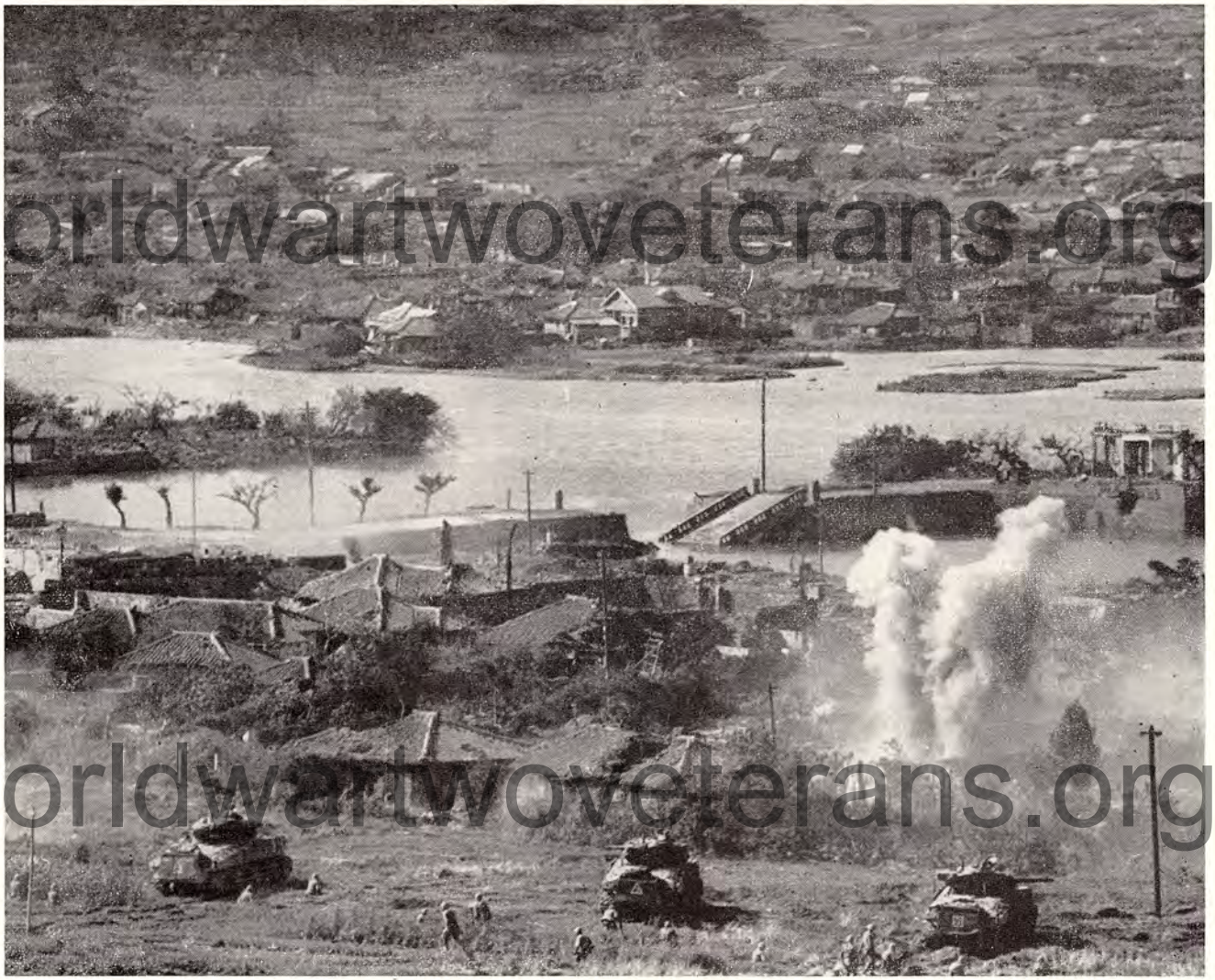
frames. At the railroad station the gutted cars stood like skeletons against the sky and even these held bodies.

As the Marines moved forward, Jap troops scurried across the back yards of the residential district to reinforce those opposing the advance; fire came from the eastward and from positions facing the city on Oroku Peninsula to the south. The Leathernecks had covering fire from their own machine gunners, atop the ridge overlooking the city from the north. The red streaks of their tracers, bright even in the daylight, ripped into thin walls or ricocheted from red-tiled roofs. One gunner, swinging his piece, accidentally sprayed a group of trees near the river and was surprised to see three Japs jump from the boughs and scamper across the street.

The residential district of the town was known as Tomari. White phosphorus was fired into the frame buildings there to deprive the enemy of concealment, and presently whole blocks were burning, but even in Tomari there were a number of buildings too substantial to be destroyed by fire. The dominant structure was a long, two-story L-shaped school, which had suffered comparatively little from shelling, and upon this the Marines converged, meeting only slight resistance.

Toward the harbor region destruction was more complete and at the shore lay four large landing barges and a motor torpedo boat, while out in the water were three large hulks of sunken Japanese merchantmen with only their masts above water.

The fires had begun to burn down for mere lack of fuel when the largest blaze of all was set off, almost accidentally. Captain Charles S. Robertson, in charge of a 105mm battery, was firing on a large chimney in the eastern part of town, which had served the enemy as an observation post, a small and difficult target. A near miss from one of the guns struck a camouflaged gasoline truck. There was a violent explosion and a gust of fire which ignited



Infantry and tanks push across the fields into the houses of Naha. As they advance they shell a house harboring Japanese soldiers.

lightly built houses all around; the west wind caught up the flames and sent them racing through four blocks of dwellings to the mud flats bordering the bay. The same wind carried other fires eastward toward the principal street, a fairly broad paved avenue, lined by two-story frame buildings.

In the bluffs commanding the city the advancing Marines found many caves and emplacements, mostly abandoned now, and all of curious construction. Along one bluff, for instance, the Japs had driven a tunnel to connect a long row of turtle-backed tombs built into the slope, with an amazing narrow-gauge railroad running the whole length of the tunnel.

Elsewhere along the Tenth Army front the 7th Infantry Division had pressed into Yonabaru at the extreme left of the Shuri Line, and the 77th Infantry Division had generally kept pace with it, though experiencing difficulty in the section around Chocolate Drop Hill, a smooth turret-shaped knob on a plateau near Shuri. The First Marine Division had driven through the Shuri salient, and was pursuing the retreating Japs with all vigor.

But while the withdrawal was general along the remainder of the front, the enemy appeared determined to hold the Naha area, leaving before the Sixth Division a system of formidable defenses manned mainly by naval troops from Oroku Penin-

The ruins of Naha. Every ship in the harbor, every boat and every bridge, every street and building, had felt the overwhelming power of our supporting arms.

Our artillery moves into Naha, extending the range of our weapons farther to the southward.

sula to delay and confuse the Division's advance. The positions held by the Jap naval units were on the high ground west of Naha and on Oroku Peninsula itself, where a good many of these troops remained. They had plenty of artillery, mortars and 20mm pieces in the caves and pillboxes, from which they maintained a fire so constant and accurate that tanks supporting the advance of the 22nd Marines toward the L-shaped school building were forced to withdraw.

On May 29 the 22nd drove eastward to reach the Kokuba estuary, which forms the upper reaches of Naha Harbor, reaching a position opposite Ona Yama Island, in the center of the wide stream. The 29th advanced in conformity, gaining a position which provided left flank security for the 22nd, at the same time maintaining contact with the First Marine Division. The immediate objective was now the high hill system running down to the north bank of the Kokuba, from which the Japs could look down on the lines of the advancing regiment. The enemy's small-arms fire was heavy here, and it was supplemented by the sporadic appearance of the newest of Jap weapons, a powerful rocket that was immediately named Screaming Meemie from the weird sound it made in flight. Actually, it was inaccurate and not particularly dangerous, the psychological effect of the scream being about the worst it could offer. The launcher was captured later on Oroku Peninsula. It was crudely constructed of two planks forming a V-shaped trough; in firing the rocket, the propelling charge was detonated by striking with a mallet, and there was no means of controlling the missile's flight. Many of the rockets fell in the water between Ona Yama and the peninsula.

On May 30 the 22nd and 29th attacked to clean the north bank of the Kokuba River. It was a day of torrential rains which again prevented the assault regiments from employing armor against the Jap machine-gun positions located in tombs. It was not a machine gun, however, but a sniper's bullet that took the life of the brilliant commanding officer of the 2nd Battalion, 22nd, Lieutenant Colonel Horatio C. Woodhouse, Jr. He was a graduate of Virginia Military Institute who had entered the Marine Corps in 1936 and had seen service in Shanghai and at Pearl Harbor before the war. All through the campaign he had led this battalion, particularly distinguishing himself in the fighting for Sugar Loaf by his calm, fearless leadership and his superb tactical judgment. East of Naha on this day his battalion had swept up and around the hump of a small eminence called Hill 27; Woodhouse had moved forward to a position overlooking his front lines when the sniper put an end to his career. He was replaced by Lieutenant Colonel John G. Johnson.

On May 31, the two regiments jumped off at 7:30 in the morning in an attack which carried rapidly forward for several hundred yards before meeting an intensified resistance around Hill 46 and the high ground west of Shichina village. The position had been carefully constructed to dominate all the surrounding territory; it effectively held up the ad-

A squad finds time to rest.

A combination of artillery and aerial bombs destroyed this steel-and-concrete building.

vance until a company of tanks worked forward through the mud. With their help a new, coordinated effort was launched at 3:00 P.M. in the face of intense mortar and machine-gun fire, and resulted in a gain of four hundred yards. Dark found our lines still short of the key hill, but there was some evidence that the enemy's position was weakening. Heavy artillery fire was brought down on it before the men dug in for the night, and continued till morning.

This fire, combined with the infantry action, was more than the enemy could stand. On the morning of June 1 the assault regiments broke right through the Shichina area, and the Striking Sixth had won the first large Japanese city to be taken in the whole war. It was an achievement even greater in its overall aspect than when told in the terms of daily advances. The Japanese artillery, concentrated on the Division's enveloping maneuver, was the heaviest seen in the Pacific war and the most accurately employed. The weather conditions were as bad as they could possibly be, the armored support which the troops had every right to expect couldn't be employed to the best advantage; yet in twenty days the Division had pushed through to the shores of the Kokuba.

The cost had been heavy. Although no precise figure was available, the casualties for the twenty days were well above four thousand. Losses in materiel were unusually high, especially in the struggle for Sugar Loaf, where tanks and amphtracs were the targets for the Japs' many high-velocity antitank weapons. In the big picture the result was that the main Japanese defense line had been outflanked, and General Ushijima's men had been driven to their final defensive position in the southern tip of the island. But not all of the defenders had retreated, and the Sixth Division had still another battle to fight . . . Oroku Peninsula and its garrison of naval troops remained.

A veteran of the 22d Marines.

Chapter 13: Operations on Oroku Peninsula

Oroku Peninsula contained Naha Airfield, which had once been one of the main links in the chain of plane bases connecting metropolitan Japan with the stolen empire to the southward. Its high ground commanded Naha Harbor, and while the Japanese held the place it remained a threat to the flank and rear of forces driving toward the southward in the central part of the island.

For a long time the Japanese had realized the dominating position of the peninsula and they had spent much effort and material in organizing the whole place as a fortress, self-sufficient, though now isolated from their final line of defense at Yaeju Dake–Yuza Dake–Kunishi–Mezado. Guns on the high ground emplaced facing seaward covered the whole western coast of Okinawa against amphibious attempts all the way from Itoman to Machinato.

They had good observation from the high ground that overlooked Naha Harbor, and had no doubt followed the eastward advance of the 22nd and 29th Marines toward the Kokuba, with interest. Evidence accumulated later indicates that they were convinced the Sixth Division would continue its sweep to the eastward, and would eventually attack the peninsula from its base.

The officer who reached this conclusion was Admiral Minoro Ota, who commanded the forces on the peninsula. In accordance with his conviction he disposed the bulk of his troops along the ridge line that guarded the base of the peninsula and sited most of his mobile weapons to fire in that direction.

But in venturing to guess his adversary's intentions, the Admiral deceived himself. General Shepherd chose to do exactly the opposite—that is, to make a water envelopment, landing on the peninsula just north of Naha Airfield. The Division was to land in a column of regiments, with the 4th Marines in assault, supported by two companies of tanks, and followed by the 29th. The 22nd was to remain in its present position across the base of the peninsula, maintaining pressure on the enemy's strong defenses there. This decision to make a seaborne envelopment was not adopted by General Shepherd, however, until a detailed night reconnaissance of the Oroku area by the Reconnaissance Company disclosed the beaches to be suitable for LVTs and the area immediately inland to be only lightly held.

The tank men boarded LCTs on the afternoon of June 3, a day many of them were long to remember, for that night they had their first fresh-food meal after many days of field rations. They sat at tables, ate off plates, and consumed such delicacies as fresh vegetable salad, olives and ketchup, doubly welcome after C rations. There were even radio programs, rebroadcast from the States, with such Sunday programs as Charlie McCarthy, Jack Benny and the Great Gildersleeve, which the Marines had heard on other Sundays, back home. A show starring Lena Horne came on the air, and she sang "My Country, 'tis of Thee." As the sounds came from the instrument the talking stopped, and the men sat quietly, staring into the distance, where battleships, cruisers and destroyers were silhouetted against the sunset-painted sky to the westward. The show ended, darkness came down, and the men flopped to the deck to make themselves as comfortable as possible for the night.

In the early morning hours of an overcast and moonless night, the 4th Marines embarked in their LVTs near Machinato Airfield and began a two-hour approach, moving southward along the reef. Overhead the sky was streaked with the red of naval and artillery shelling, shelling of an intensity rarely equalled in the Pacific war. During the period from 4:45 to 5:45 A.M. over 4,300 rounds of high-explosive ammunition, ranging from 75mm to 14-inch, were placed on the restricted landing area. At 5:47, just as day was breaking, the assault troops reached the beach, closely followed by the tanks. On the beach itself there was little opposition, and the 2nd Battalion promptly pushed forward against scattered machine-gun fire to seize the nose of the high ridge to the left of the landing area, while the 1st Battalion drove directly inland to capture the ridge at the seaward flank of the beach. Concurrently Ona Yama Island in mid-Naha Harbor was captured by the 6th Reconnaissance Company after thirty minutes of sharp fighting. The Oroku landing was clearly one of those complete successes that are born of surprise, and long before the enemy could redistribute his forces, the 4th Regiment had

A flamethrower team of the 4th Marines lands in assault in the dawn attack on Oroku Peninsula.

a firm foothold and was driving steadily inland, while the 29th, employing LVTs that had been used by the 4th, began to embark.

There were several sharply rising hills just behind the beach area, where the assault elements encountered a few rear-guard units using knee mortars and small arms, which they quickly disposed of. Inside the hills were positions that could have held an army—caves, large gun emplacements, elaborate passageways, troop quarters, storage spaces—most of them unmanned.

As the troops moved past these hills, resistance began to stiffen all along the line, now from 250 to 400 yards inland, and tanks were sent to support the advance on the left, where the weight of the enemy seemed to be. At this point, about noon, the familiar rain of Okinawa began to come down in driving torrents, bringing with it warning of a possible

The operations of the Division, 4 to 6 June, as assault troops press rapidly inland from the landing beaches.

typhoon, which information caused several of the landing craft transporting supplies to seek shelter, and thus deprived the advancing troops of reserve supplies. By mid-afternoon the 29th had successfully crossed to the Oroku front and had two battalions in assault on the left of the line.

In the thick mud ashore the troops were encountering more mines than at any other time during the operation, so many, in fact that the disposal squads were swamped with work. Mine-removal men attached to the tanks often had to get out in front of the vehicles to probe suspected areas with their knives, while demolitions personnel were busy sealing the numerous cave entrances. In this type of measured progress the lines reached, by dusk, a point 1,500 yards in from the beach and including part of Naha airfield, at a cost of about fifty casualties. Also, by day's end, the engineers had succeeded in repairing the bridge from Naha to Ona Yama Island—leaving only the span between Ona Yama and Oroku undone—to provide a land supply route to the peninsula.

Every operation develops its own features of special interest and the Sixth Division's first day on Oroku had produced two. One was the way in which wire communication was established with the assault regiments. As early as 9:00 in the morning a four-trunk cable that had been placed at Naha lighthouse the preceding day was carried across the mouth of the harbor in rubber boats. It was over-

A flamethrower team works forward on Oroku.

headed on the mast of a sunken ship there, and by 11:00 A.M. the Division Signal Company had established direct wire communications with the forces on Oroku.

The other feature was of more ominous significance. The Japanese appeared to be even stronger in automatic weapons than in the preceding phases of the operation. Later this preliminary estimate was found to be perfectly accurate; the enemy was using in his ground defense not only the numerous antiaircraft weapons that had protected Naha field, but also many guns stripped from planes wrecked on the field by our early air raids.

During the rainy night that followed, the enemy somewhat recovered from his surprise, all night long keeping the front under fire from mortars and Screaming Meemies. On the morning of June 5 the Division renewed the attack at 7:30 with the 4th and 29th Regiments abreast. Everywhere the troops pushed slowly forward against stubborn resistance until about noon, when the advance of the 3rd Battalion, 4th, on the extreme right of the lines, was stopped by an enemy strongpoint near the village of Toma. Tank support was called for, and despite the difficulty of operating over terrain sodden with the heaviest storm the Marines had seen on Okinawa, Company C of the tank battalion reached the front lines. They found the infantry pinned down by shell fire and automatic weapons. Coordinating their actions with the infantry the tanks gave prompt help, knocking out machine guns and shelling caves. Soon the infantry was able to move on again. That evening Colonel Denig, the Tank Battalion commander, received a message from the 4th:

"Orchids to C Company's tanks," it said. "Company I [4th] had been unable to move until the

A mortar unit is kept busy delivering supporting fire. (Note the empty shell cartons in the background.)

tanks came in to support them. Many weapons were captured, many Japs killed. It was a successful afternoon. The gains were due to the tank support."

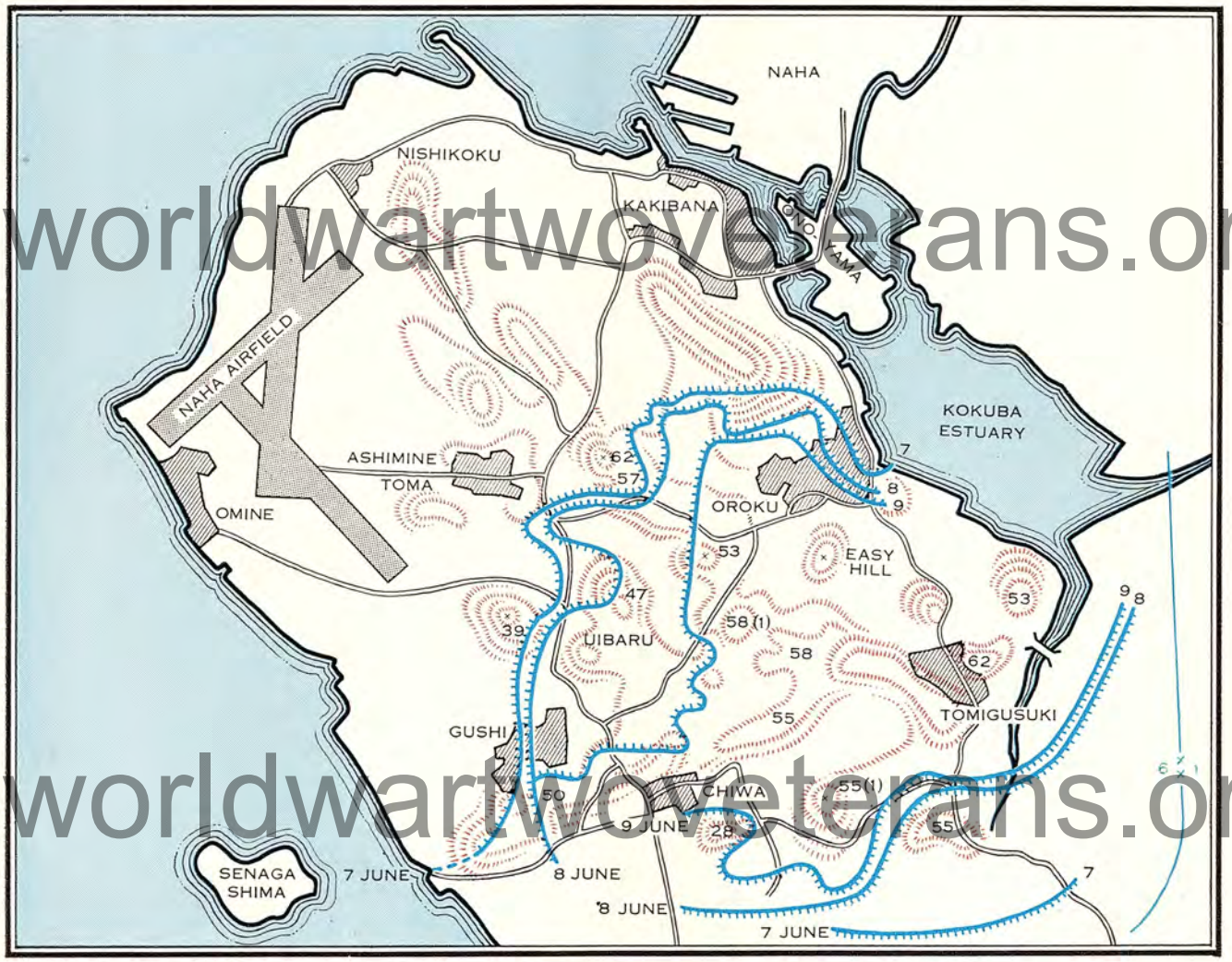
Resistance to the 29th Marines' attack, which was oriented along the high ridge overlooking Naha harbor, increased steadily and by mid-afternoon they were in a stiff fight near Hill 57, a strongpoint which was also holding up the left elements of the 4th. Here Company H had to break up a Japanese counterattack. The regiment was able, however, to advance its left flank about five hundred yards southeast along the shore of Naha Harbor, thus clearing the coastline sufficiently to permit the engineers to throw a 300-foot pneumatic ponton bridge across the Kokuba Estuary from Ona Yama Island to Oroku and thereby establish direct road communication with Naha. Security detachments were dropped here to prevent Japanese attempts at demolition. Later the engineers replaced their pontons with a 340-foot Bailey bridge, the longest ever built by the Marines.

By dark the Division's beachhead had been deepened by as much as one thousand yards and Naha Airfield was ninety per cent in our hands.

The next morning's operations confirmed the fact that the heaviest enemy defenses were concentrated along the ridge line running northwest and southeast, parallel to the Kokuba Estuary. The 29th Marines, in whose zone the backbone of the ridge lay, made little progress, while the 4th was able to advance only its right flank. Throughout the day troops assaulting the cave-studded approaches to the key ridge came under heavy fire from automatic weapons, mortars and rockets. Later, when General Clement, the veteran of Bataan, examined the emplacements along this line, he remarked that Oroku was "stronger than Corregidor."

In the 29th Marine zone Lieutenant Jack Vaughn and Platoon Sergeant John Kimlin discovered a typical cave position, and plunged in, expecting to find a crudely fashioned rifle or machine-gun position. A hundred and fifty yards inside the hill a Jap soldier suddenly stepped out of a recess, bellowing something and reaching in his pocket. Kimlin fired three quick shots and the Jap fell dead, his hand

Top: *Screening Meemie Jap rocket.* Bottom: *Jap antiaircraft gun overrun by the 4th Marines on Oroku Peninsula.*



The operations of the Division 7-9 June, as assault troops maintain steady pressure on the inner Oroku defense system.

gripping a grenade. Beyond him the two Marines came upon an intricate system of winding corridors, with sleeping quarters for enlisted men, more elaborate quarters for officers and enough equipment to supply a battalion, the whole on three floors, connected by sturdy ladders.

The corridors were from two hundred to three hundred yards long and had been well lighted; their power lines stretched to a central station in Naha. All were lined with the straw mats on which the Japs had slept and in the clay beside each mat was a niche for the man's personal belongings. Along similar corridors the officers' quarters were spaced out fifty yards apart, their walls covered with quilting and their entrances draped with cloth material. Vaughn described one of them as an ideal living compartment, with two fine overstuffed chairs, a desk, writing equipment and a good-sized bed.

On the deepest level were storage spaces for everything from gasoline drums to bags of flour. One room contained medical supplies and cots. Another was a well stocked galley. A third had been the communications center, with a switchboard and radio equipment. There were even pigeon roosts for carrier pigeons, and all through the place, mortars, ammunition boxes of all kinds, light cannon and repair shops for ordnance and communications equipment. When hills like these were manned, they made formidable obstacles indeed.

The 4th Marines found progress least difficult on

Tank-infantry action to clear Jap remnants out of the flats south of Naha Airfield.

their right where the flat ground around Naha Airfield offered the enemy little opportunity for entrenchment. Consequently on June 6 the Division commander directed that every effort be made to push the 4th's attack southward to place that regiment on the flank of the enemy defense. The advance was rapid on the extreme right, where Naha Airfield was completely overrun. The troublesome enemy position centering around Hill 57 was meanwhile subjected to a coordinated attack by the 29th and 1st Battalion of the 4th. It was the type of position against which armored support is most useful, and just at this juncture it was denied because, in addition to the omnipresent mud, the roads had been badly cratered by the enemy and sown with the most complex system of antitank mines yet encountered. At the close of this day Hill 57 was still in the enemy's hands, and our men had to dig in and prepare to make yet another assault.

The 22nd Marines, in corps reserve up to this time, were released to the Division during the day with instructions that the regiment be employed to protect the right flank of the First Division, which had driven south on the heels of the Jap Thirty-second Army and had accordingly left that flank uncovered.

Heavy opposition continued on the following day. The right flank of the 4th, which had met only light resistance the day before, encountered a strong network of defense in the vicinity of Gushi Town. The Japanese had apparently detected the danger to their western flank and moved in reinforcements from some other sector of the front. At the same time the 29th continued to meet stiff resistance among the caves in the rocky outcroppings of the ridge which overlooked Naha Harbor.

The powerful Hill 57 position still stood as a menace to the general advance and Colonel Shapley determined at about 9:00 A.M. to launch a coordinated assault with his 2nd and 3rd Battalions. In preparation for the attack the engineers worked hard at clearing minefields and about noon three platoons of tanks managed to work forward to support their attack. The tanks did good work against the enemy gun positions, killing at least a hundred Japs there, and with their help the infantry again surged forward, carrying the hill just before dark.

Along the boundary between the Sixth and First Divisions, the 22nd had been patrolling the high ground immediately east of Chikuto to determine the nature and extent of the enemy positions. Concentrated machine-gun fire was received by several

A prodigious engineering task—to bridge the Kokuba River between Naha and Oroku Peninsula.

patrols; they located its sources and during the day the regiment's 3rd Battalion made a limited objective attack, overrunning the position before dark. The remainder of the 22nd continued to maintain contact with the First Marine Division on the left.

Early the next day, (June 7), the 4th moved its 1st Battalion into positions on the right flank under cover of a smoke screen. The battalion then attacked the high ground immediately south of Uibaru. It was an all-day battle of the most intense character, but it ended with the Marines in possession of the ground they had sought. During the early part of the day the remainder of the 4th did not fare so well. Hill 38 stood across the path, northeast of Takamiya, and every attempt to advance around the flanks of this eminence or to sweep over its crest, was stalled by Jap automatic fire from the adjacent hills. Finally the 2nd Battalion turned the Japs' own ingenuity against them by moving assault elements through the extensive tunnel system the enemy had dug into the hill. The covered approaches made the attack a surprise, a strong force was swiftly built up on the reverse slope and the hill was taken. Twice more this maneuver was repeated during the day, each time with brilliant success.

On the left flank the 29th made steady but slow progress, developing the fact that the logical avenues of approach to the enemy's mountain positions were from the south and southwest, now that all possible advantage had been taken of the water landing. To explore the approaches from the south, and to maintain continued pressure on the enemy, the 22nd moved one battalion to occupy Hill 69, south of Zahana, thus gradually orienting the power of that regiment in a more northerly direction. Meanwhile, by mid-afternoon, another battalion of that regiment had patrolled to the west coast across Itoman airfield without encountering resistance.

The division now had the Japanese completely surrounded and from this point on the problem was one of tightening the noose. The resistance, however, gave no indication of diminishing. The terrain was indescribably rough and fire continually came from concealed gun-ports in front, on the flanks and from the rear. An incident typical of the bitter fighting was that of Private William H. Lowe's one-man blitz against Tomigusuki Castle, an ancient coral pile near the eastern extremity of the peninsula.

"When the Japs fired on us from caves along a ridge, we worked our way up the opposite slope," said Lowe. "A couple of buddies brought up the TNT, tied the blocks and put fuzes in the charges. I lighted and threw the going-away satchels into the caves."

Oroku was heavily mined. Top: *Two tanks that fell victim to land mines, and* (bottom): *A 2½-ton truck that ran afoul a hidden aerial bomb.*

This account is a modest one; Lieutenant Rex Dillow says Lowe exposed himself to enemy gunfire to blast no less than seventy-five caves. "When the blasting was finished, 114 Japs lay dead," declared Dillow.

On June 10, concerted pressures were brought to bear on the enemy from north, west and south. The 4th pushed eastward to seize Hills 55 and 58, the 22nd northeastward toward the Kokuba and the 29th moved slowly through the town of Oroku, paced by flame-throwing tanks. The 4th and 22nd made steady progress, but the 29th encountered heavy resistance and was held to small gains. That night the Japanese began to show signs that the steady pressure to which they had been subjected was beginning to break them up.

A few surrendered (note white flag). Still more chose to hide or to resist until the end, as was the case with the Jap soldier on the left.

These signs came chiefly in the form of local counterattacks, of which the heaviest fell on the sector held by the 1st Battalion, 4th Marines, continuing during the greater part of the night. After daylight, more than two hundred dead Japs were counted in this sector alone.

The next day, June 11, the Division employed the greater part of eight battalions of infantry in a coordinated effort to smash the bulk of the enemy resistance. The 4th worked forward between Hill 58 and Tomigusuki into a heavily held pocket covered by mutually supporting machine guns and 20mm antiaircraft cannon. Tanks were brought up to assist the infantry, but they found themselves involved in several cleverly concealed minefields, with every yard of the space covered by enemy automatic fire. The engineers had to work under direct fire in clearing these fields, but they somehow managed it and the advance went on; the pocket was cleared.

The 22nd's attack was delivered in conjunction with that of the other two regiments, under cover of an intense artillery barrage, against Hill 62, east of Tomigusuki. The first attack, led by the 2d Battalion, lost its momentum at about noon. That battalion resumed its attack, however, and at 12:20 reported the capture of Tomigusuki. Immediately thereafter, the 3rd passed through the 2nd and drove forward toward the Kokuba Estuary. After three hours of bitter fighting the battalion worked its way to the crest of Hill 53, the high ground overlooking not only Kokuba Estuary but the entire Oroku area to the northward, where the 29th was still encountering powerful defenses and making only limited advances.

But the stage was now set for the final breakthrough, and on June 12, it took place. During this day the forces converging from the west and south compressed the pocket west of Tomigusuki, while the 22nd Marines drove farther northward in the direction of Oroku. As the high hills came one by one into our possession, the enemy was forced into the open of the flat paddy ground along the south bank of the Kokuba.

Their positions had been whittled down to a few thousand square yards of mud flat when Lieutenant John Stone led Company I of the 29th into the area. His orders were to destroy the remaining enemy concealed in the caves, ditches and tall grass of the

Flamethrower teamwork in reducing a Japanese emplacement.

flatland. Stone's unit, which had less than one hundred effectives, began on the hillside caves at the fringe of the flats. Japs rushed out to throw grenades, but Stone's riflemen were too quick for them, and those who stayed inside were sealed there to stay forever as the company worked down toward the river bank.

"We knew that some of them wanted to surrender," Stone said. "They were waving white flags out on the flat, in groups of threes and fours. We started out after them. Some were so well camouflaged in little ditches that we walked to within three or four yards of one group before we saw them."

A group of thirteen Japanese, the largest single bag made by Company I that day, surrendered to a platoon led by Sergeant James E. Higdon, Jr. Another platoon, that of Corporal James V. Brown, found that most of the Japs were opposed to surrender, preferring the suicide way out, one entire group of ten blowing themselves up with an explosive charge as the Leathernecks closed in.

Yet the percentage of surrenders was comparatively high and one of the men most responsible was Pfc. Harry M. Tuttle, an interpreter who worked with the assistance of a captured Japanese warrant officer. He succeeded in convincing more than twenty of the enemy that being a prisoner was better than being dead. "Their greatest fear," he said, "was of maltreatment at the hands of their captors."

The most successful of all the efforts at taking prisoners was that of Lieutenant Silverthorne, a veteran language officer, who had served on Bougainville, Emirau and Guam. Working through the paddy land with a native he succeeded in inducing no less than fifty-six Japs to come in.

105mm self-propelled guns support the Oroku attack.

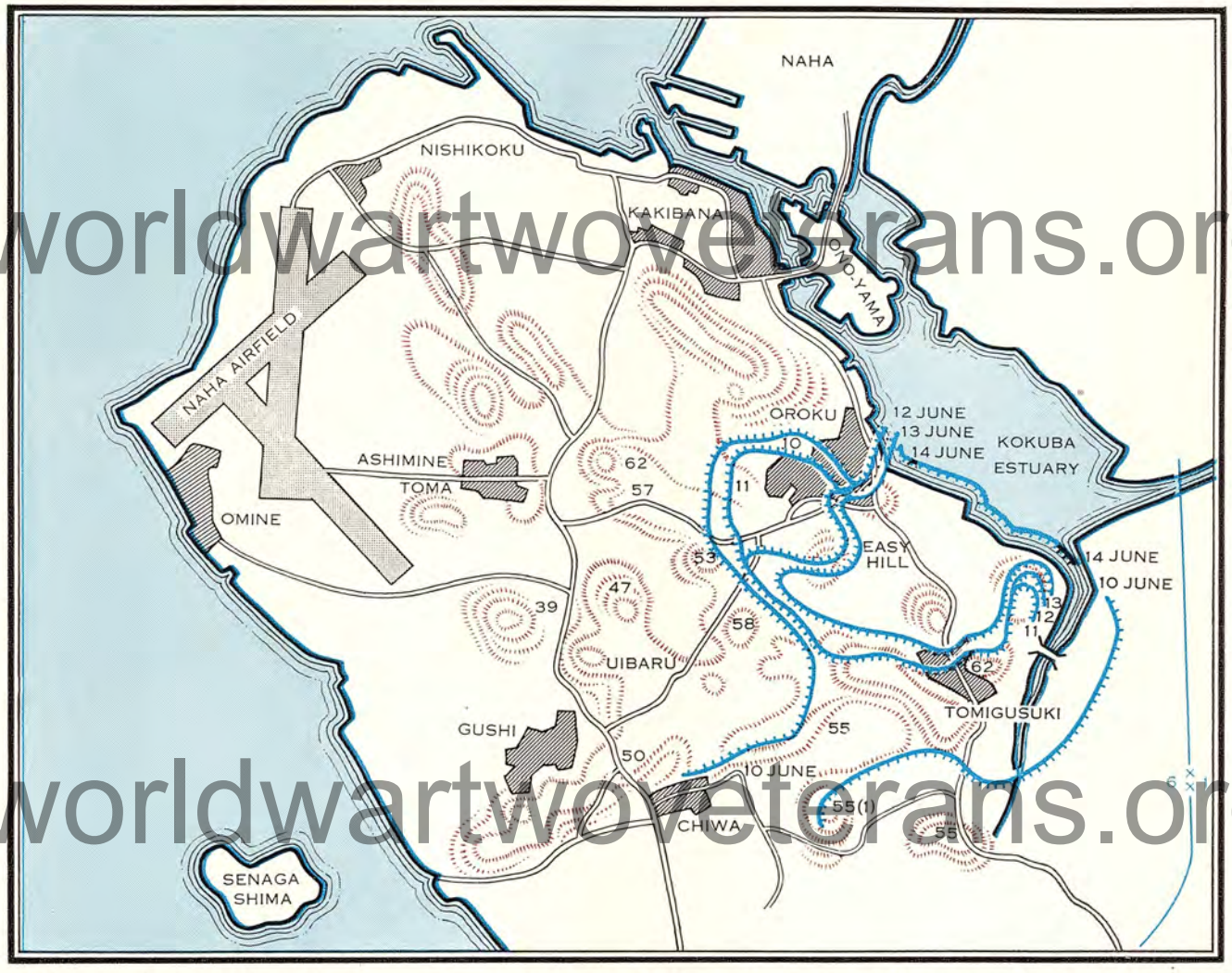
Large hangar on Naha Airfield.

On one occasion during the busy day when he made this haul, Silverthorne glanced around in time to see that a Jap lying prone had a Browning automatic rifle trained on him. The 225-pound former Williams College football star walked directly up to the muzzle of the rifle, telling its operator in Japanese that he had nothing to worry about; then pushed the weapon to one side and took the Jap prisoner. "The muzzle kept looking bigger and bigger to me as I approached it," Silverthorne said later. "By the time I got within three feet of it, I would have sworn that I was walking up on a 155 howitzer."

The final sweep of the remaining areas was completed June 13, when the 29th Marines engaged a stubborn force of estimated company strength, firmly entrenched in Easy Hill, immediately south of Oroku Town. As the determined attack developed, the breaking morale of the enemy was clear from the confusion and indecision in their ranks. Some resisted to the end and were killed where they stood; some offered no resistance whatever; others killed themselves, and a small group surrendered. Much the same conditions were encountered by the 4th and 22nd Regiments, and during the day 861 Japanese were killed while seventy-two prisoners were taken.

The next day, while mopping up operations were still in progress on Oroku, the 6th Reconnaissance Company landed on the small island of Senaga Shima offshore, following up a four-day bombardment. There was no resistance, but in combing the island the company killed two Japs and discovered five 4.7-inch coast-defense guns as well as several minefields. On Oroku the mop-up was of the usual type: liquidating small pockets of resistance and pulling captives from caves. It marked the completion of the peninsular operation, which brought

1—The last stages of the Oroku battle: Flushing hidden Japs from the mud flats along the banks of the Kokuba River. 2—A frightened Jap comes out of hiding. 3—Flamethrowers helped take care of those who wouldn't surrender. 4—The Japs were difficult to lacate in the cane fields.



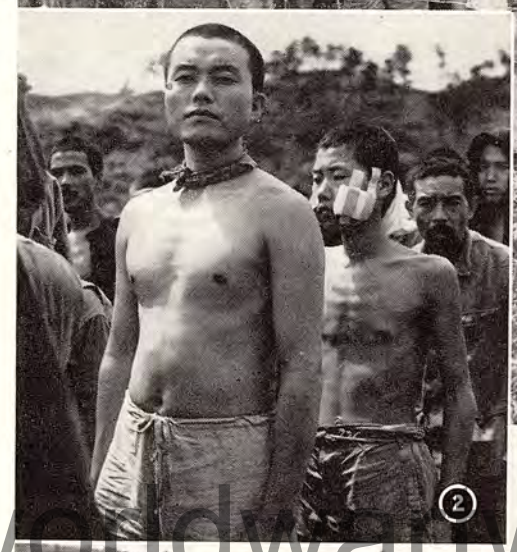
Division operations 12-14 June. The Japanese defenses crumbled as the three regiments pressed the remnants into the Kokuba estuary.

Naha Harbor and Naha Airfield into American possession.

The ten-day fight had been a hard one, against an enemy who had made the utmost use of ground peculiarly well adapted to a defense in depth. General Clement's remark that it was stronger than Corregidor was no overstatement; the Japanese had obviously worked for a long time at converting the ragged coral outcroppings and the many small precipitous hills into a strong and intelligently planned defensive system.

In one of the cave networks near Tomigusuki was found the headquarters of Admiral Minoro Ota, who had commanded New Georgia and Kavieng before being placed in charge of the Okinawa Naval Base Forces defending valuable Oroku Peninsula.

This cave was discovered and investigated by a patrol of Marines led by Lieutenant Colonel Williams, the Division Intelligence Officer. Colonel Williams was looking for the bodies of the Admiral and his staff, who reportedly had committed suicide in the cave. Lieutenant Frederick Van Brunt was one of the party. He has described the cave as "a labyrinth of corridors, operations rooms, barracks and storage chambers." The headquarters was completely equipped down to electricity and a system of hot and cold running water. In the last days of the battle it had been used as a hospital, and when the patrol entered they found themselves walking on a carpet of dead and dying Japanese. The search for



1—Prisoner stockade on Orote Peninsular. 2—Defeat. 3—Japanese prisoners carry their own wounded. 4—Surrendering Japs are interrogated immediately in order to locate "last ditch" defenders.

the admiral's body continued for two days; it was finally found, with the bodies of several other high-ranking naval officers, who had composed the admiral's staff. In accordance with the code of honor of a Japanese officer faced with defeat, Admiral Ota and his staff had died in the traditional manner.

There was an ironic note in the fact that the same admiral who had been outmaneuvered and defeated by the Marine Raiders on New Georgia should meet his second and final defeat at the hands of the Division which included a number of the same Marines he had encountered in the Solomons.

The Oroku victory was not without its price, and that price was a heavy one—a total of 1,608 Marines killed or wounded. Thirty tanks had been disabled by mines, antitank guns or Japs carrying satchel charges. One tank had been destroyed by two direct hits from an 8-inch naval gun, fired at point-blank range. But the price the Japs paid for their defeat was greater than the cost of victory to us. The Sixth Division had killed almost five thousand of them and had taken some two hundred prisoners.

As soon as the peninsula was secure salvage operations on the wreck-littered harbor of Naha began. It was estimated that within sixty days the harbor would accommodate more than half a million tons of shipping monthly. Mines were removed from the airfield and repair work on the long coral runways was begun immediately.

The Sixth Division was commended for the capture of Oroku both by Lieutenant General Simon B. Buckner, Jr., Tenth Army commander, and Marine Major General Roy S. Geiger, Commander of the III Amphibious Corps.

Said General Buckner: "My compliments . . . for a well conducted and successful operation in securing the Oroku Peninsula . . . and destroying a large enemy garrison in strong and well fortified positions, thus contributing materially to the success of the Okinawa campaign."

General Geiger's commendation pointed out that the Division's capture of Oroku was preceded by its penetrating the western defenses of Shuri and capturing the city of Naha. Of the Oroku phase he said: "The Division quickly executed an amphibious operation under handicap of adverse weather and difficult logistic conditions, fighting its way inland over very unfavorable and rugged terrain . . .

"It wrested strongly fortified hill and cave positions from an enemy determined to fight to the bitter end . . . The indomitable spirit and professional skill displayed by the Sixth Marine Division will be a source of pride and gratification to all Marines."

Troops of the 6th Reconnaissance Company reach the summit of Senaga Shima following their daylight landing on 14 June.

General Shepherd said: "The more than four thousand Japs killed during the ten-day period are not alone the measure of the Division's accomplishment, nor are the successes realized in the bitter battles for Hill 53, Hill 58, Hill 62 and other well organized defensive positions.

"In a broader sense, the Sixth Marine Division has given the Navy and our country the valuable Naha Airfield and Naha Harbor, which will bulk large in support of succeeding operations aimed at the defeat of the Japanese Empire.

"The workmanlike execution of a complex amphibious operation—planned, prepared and executed over a 36-hour period—is an impressive tribute to the tactical and logistical ability of all hands."

No rest for the weary. Marines of the 22d Regiment moving southward to join the rest of the Tenth Army in the attack on the enemy's final positions.

Chapter 14: The Capture of Ara Saki

After such a series of battles as that which carried the Marines of the Sixth Division through the Sugar Loaf position, the city of Naha and the fortified Oroku Peninsula, most troops might expect and would receive a period of rest. For this division there was no rest; not while Japanese in arms remained on Okinawa. Shortly after the last of the enemy had been ferreted from their caves in the Oroku hills, the Division was once more on the move, bound for the extreme southern portion of the island to enter the lines at Mezado Ridge, on the right flank of the Tenth Army.

While the Oroku fighting was going on, the First Marine Division had cut a wide swath around the base of the peninsula, and had driven to the China Sea. That division had now encountered the final fanatical Japanese defense line, as had the remainder of the Army, and it soon became apparent that the full power of the Tenth would not be too much if the knockout were to be delivered with the swiftness desired.

The appearance of the Sixth at Mezado Ridge on June 17 introduced a flaw into the plans of the enemy, who had counted on the Oroku position to detain at least a full division for a considerable time, as well as to deny to American forces the use of Naha Harbor and Airfield. In his southern lines the enemy was conducting a stubborn defense of attrition. On our side the 7th Infantry Division of the XXIV Corps was making slow but steady progress in the vicinity of Komesu, with its left flank resting on the sea. Next to it the 96th Infantry Division was conducting the same type of battle against the rough Yaeju Dake plateau, while on the right the First Marine Division was fighting its way forward along the jagged coral of the north slope of Kunishi Ridge. The 77th Infantry Division had been pinched out of line and was in Army reserve.

The plan was similar to that employed at the Asa Kawa on May 9. The First Division would shorten its lines, shifting its boundary to the left to make room for the Sixth, which would attack in column

Elements of the Sixth Division moving toward the southern front.

War dogs were useful in flushing snipers in the canefields.

of regiments. The 22nd Marines would carry the assault burden.

Confronting the veterans of Colonel Harold C. Roberts' regiment and the replacements who had joined them were three impressive hurdles of rock. These were the ridges Mezado, Kuwanga and Kiyamu—all fortified, all tunnelled, looking like grey bony fingers protruding from the landscape of Okinawa, verdant under its perpetual rains.

The attack of June 17 involved a painful advance up the rocky, scrub-covered slopes of Mezado Ridge, with the 1st and 3rd Battalions of the regiment in line, in the face of machine-gun, mortar and small-arms fire. All day the assault went on, the same type the regiment had been called upon to make so many times before, taking one cave position after another in flamethrower-demolition attacks, till in the evening the crest of Mezado was held and patrols were busy with their grim task of mopping up by-passed caves and knots of resistance. No one ever has or could have collected all the details of the heroism that day, of which the death of Private Raymond F. Hernandez is typical.

He was killed while advancing on a Jap machine-gun emplacement. "Hernandez was in one of the lead combat teams," said Lieutenant W. Garland Loftis, his company commander. "The Japs were well dug in, and snipers were everywhere. I saw Hernandez going forward, bullets flying all around him. Once I noticed he stumbled and fell as though he had been hit, but he got up and charged the emplacement with grenades. The fire team, with Hernandez throwing grenades and urging the men on, knocked out the machine-gun. A few minutes later a sniper shot Hernandez and a Jap machine-gunner also opened up on him. Hernandez threw one more grenade, then fell dead."

At another point in the battle Pfc. John J. Clampitt was sent to the rear with some others to bring up and install a field telephone. As the group started back five Japs leaped from a cave high on a ridge.

"When we looked up at the sound of firing," said Pfc. James Carr, "we saw six figures running about. We couldn't tell who was who, but we saw one man with a tommy-gun spraying the area. He got one Jap and then another. We couldn't fire because we were afraid we'd hit the Marine. We saw him get another Jap. Then he went down. He was on one knee, but he kept firing. Two more Japs fell. Then he collapsed and we couldn't see him any more."

A group of Marines worked toward the scene of this small but deadly battle. En route six more Japs appeared and were dispatched. At the scene of the ambush one final Jap survivor opened fire from the ground and had to be eliminated by a burst of rifle fire. Clampitt lay dead, his submachine gun cradled in his arms, with four Japanese dead and one wounded around him.

The town of Itoman, principal settlement of southern Okinawa. In the immediate background is Mezado Ridge, objective of the 22d Marines' attack of 17 June.

As soon as Mezado Ridge was in our hands, surrendering driblets of Japanese began to make their way to the 22nd's hillside command post. The first arrival shuffled along the twisting trail ahead of a vigilant guard, bowing his shaven head left and right to Marines who received this politeness with cold resentment.

"Now he bows," one of them remarked. "Yesterday he was trying to knock us off with a damn machine gun."

Some of the prisoners were Okinawan Home Guardsmen, openly happy to be out of the battle, coming in twos and threes, even in larger groups. Others were troops from the Manchurian armies, sullen and somber. Questioning revealed many who had been airplane and tank mechanics until the loss of their northern positions had turned them into riflemen and machine-gunners.

Some carried in their hands the safe-conduct passes dropped from our planes and fired in artillery salvoes. But the best persuaders were the weary riflemen, BAR men and machine-gunners who offered these soldiers of the Empire the choice of death or surrender.

There were others who took the former choice. As the Marines gathered around the growing knot of prisoners, there came the crack of a rifle from the valley below. Then a pause. Then another crack, and the replying chatter of a dozen or more rifles. A Jap sniper who had opened fire on the patrol lay sprawled in the tall sugar cane.

"Lots of those guys around," an officer said. "They can be nasty."

A Marine, Pfc. Kenneth M. Portteus, who had once studied for the priesthood, now an interpreter, told how other Japs died that morning.

"I was walking along the sea wall," he said, "when I spotted three Jap soldiers walking through the field. They had four women with them. I called to them to come ahead. The women started up, but they hadn't gone more than two feet when I saw the Japs take out grenades, pull the pins, and blow up the women and themselves."

A runner came up the hill, reporting that there was a big cave below full of women and children—"maybe soldiers, too."

Portteus slung his carbine over his shoulder and followed the other to the cave, a deep recess in a limestone hill, whose face still bore the scars of artillery poundings. Fifty feet from the mouth of the

Top: *Clearing Japs out of the canefields at the seaward end of Mezado Ridge.* Bottom: *Marines of the 22d Regiment gain the crest of Mezado Ridge.*

Left—Okinawa civilians rebuild their thatched-roof huts; Right—Okinawa citizen heads declaration of thanks for the kind treatment shown the Okinawa civilians by the Marines.

cave he paused and yelled *"Dete Koi!* (Come out!) You will not be harmed!"

There was no response; Portteus called again.

A chubby woman in faded blue pantaloons and a ripped silk blouse appeared at the cave entrance. Her black hair hung wildly to her shoulders. On her back was a naked baby, sleeping with his arms thrown around the woman's neck. Another child, about five years old, stood at her side.

Portteus called again, and the woman began to walk toward him. She had taken about three steps when shouts came from the cave behind her. The woman stopped. Then as the shouts grew louder, angrier, she gave one glance at Portteus, turned quickly and ran back into the cave.

Patiently, Portteus called once more. "Usually they talk things over and then come out," he remarked in an aside.

Another call, but the result was not what he had hoped. A blast shook the hill, followed by a second and then a third explosive shock, then silence out of which a low wailing issued from the cave.

When the Marines penetrated the cave, they found ten shattered bodies slumped near its center. The head of the woman in pantaloons had been blown off. Her two children were dead, their arms nearly ripped from their little bodies. Another baby lay dead against the wall, and scraps of flesh with brown uniform cloth adhering were stuck to the sides of the dugout. At the far end a handful of natives huddled in terror. When Portteus told them to leave, they shuffled out in quick disorder, casting only the briefest of glances at the dead.

At the command post there were more soldiers —an English-speaking Jap private, who was aghast to learn that his officers were surrendering too; a sergeant major who insisted he had tried to commit suicide, but that the grenade failed to work; a private first class, who said he liked to write poetry.

One of them gazed at a moustachioed Marine, asking for water. The Marine stared at the Jap as though surprised at the request, then unscrewed his canteen lid and, pouring some water in an empty ration tin, handed it to the prisoner, who mumbled his thanks.

"Damnedest thing, isn't it?" the Marine remarked. "Yesterday I was climbing up this hill trying to get this monkey or some one like him and he was trying to get me. Now I give him a drink of water and he tells me I'm a good guy. Hell of a note, isn't it?"

The attack was resumed on the morning of June 18, against Kuwanga Ridge, the second of the three barriers that lay between the Division and the finale of the Okinawa campaign. The 2nd Battalion, 22nd, passed through the 3rd (which had borne the brunt of the Mezado fighting) to make this assault beside the 1st Battalion. H-hour was 8:00; the infantry moved forward with tank support after the forward slope of the hill had been thoroughly covered with smoke.

Imperial troops—minus the characteristic warlike spirit.

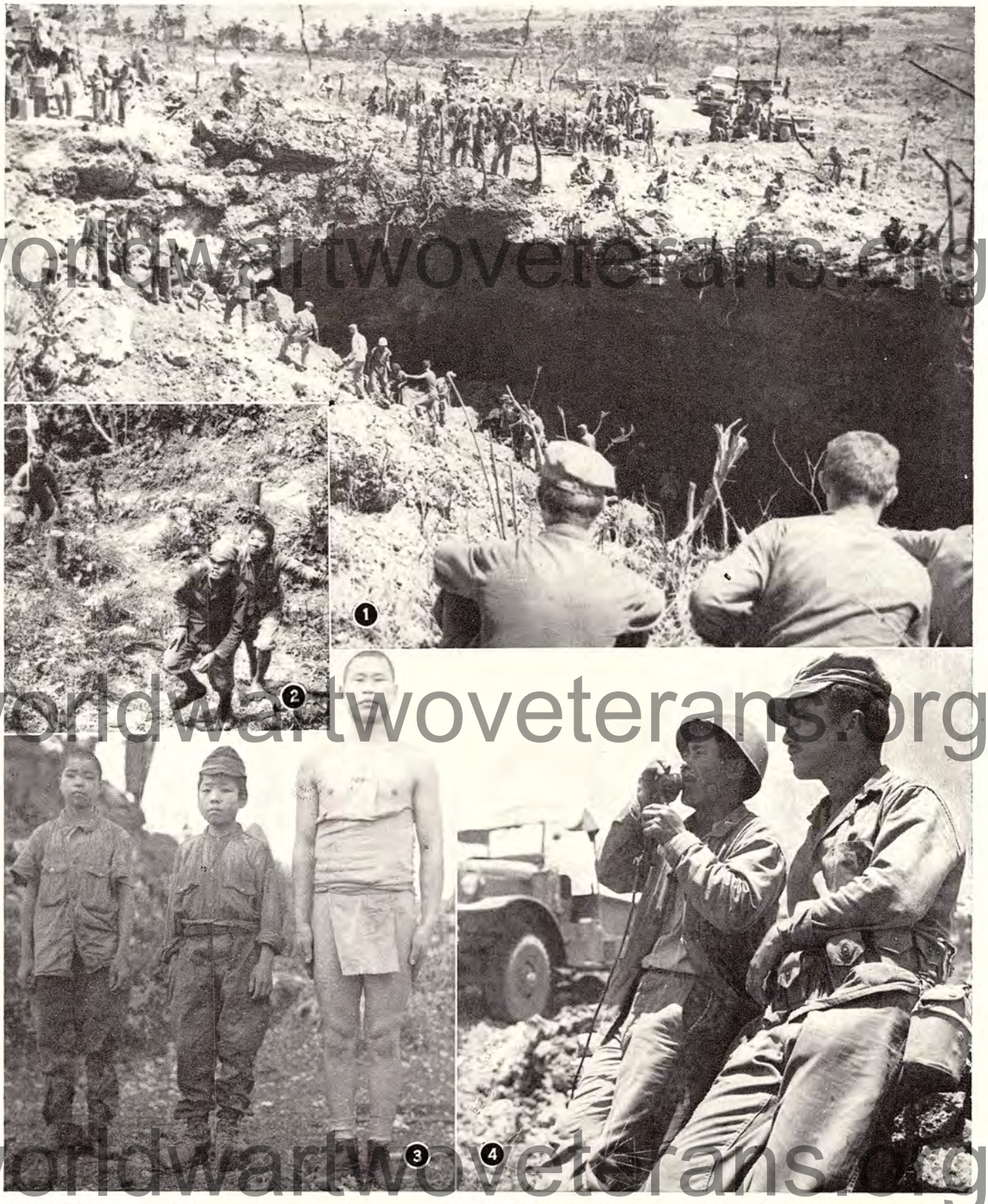
Portions of the high ground were in our possession by noon, but the ridge was even better organized than Mezado had been and the battle swirled all along the length of the dust-covered slopes throughout the day. The cost in casualties was high and among them was Colonel Harold C. Roberts, the 22nd's gallant commander. He had been up forward watching the advance of the 2nd Battalion with his executive officer, Lieutenant Colonel August Larson, and one of his men, Pfc. Nicholas Woloshuk, and was returning to his observation post when a Jap sniper opened fire.

"Colonel Roberts was the only one hit," Woloshuk said, "and at first we thought he'd got it in the left shoulder. He clutched it and said, 'I've been killed.' Colonel Larson and a corpsman helped to move him back a few yards and I ran behind a rock to see if I could spot the sniper. I did, and when he raised his head I fired a few bursts with my tommy gun and got the Jap who hit the Colonel. When I got back to where Colonel Roberts was, he was dying."

Colonel Roberts, one of the most decorated men in the Marine Corps, had commanded the regiment since May 17, and had led it through the drive for Naha, the Oroku Peninsula fighting, and in the seizure of Mezado Ridge. Colonel Larson assumed command of the regiment and it was under his leadership that it completed the capture of Kuwanga Ridge. There were places along its rugged crest

As the Division overran Kuwanga Ridge enemy soldiers began to surrender in large numbers.

Division operations, 16-21 June. The capture of Ara Saki.



Prisoners of every description: 1—Hundreds of civilians and soldiers flushed from a tremendous underground cave. 2—Jap soldiers timidly approach our lines to surrender. 3—Two Okinawan conscripts and a Manchurian warrant officer. 4—An attempt to induce Japanese forces to surrender by using psychology and loudspeakers. These efforts met with varying degrees of success—occasionally proving extremely fruitful.

from which a man could catch a glimpse of the water beyond the foot of the island. The end of the Okinawa operation was in sight—literally in sight.

By that afternoon, however, it was evident that the depleted 22nd lacked the numbers to organize the 1,800-yard ridge for defense; the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, was accordingly moved up to take positions on the Division right flank before nightfall. The remainder of the 4th was also brought forward to be in position for continuing the attack on the morning of June 19, while the 22nd prepared to conduct mopping up operations on the two ridges it had overrun during the preceding days.

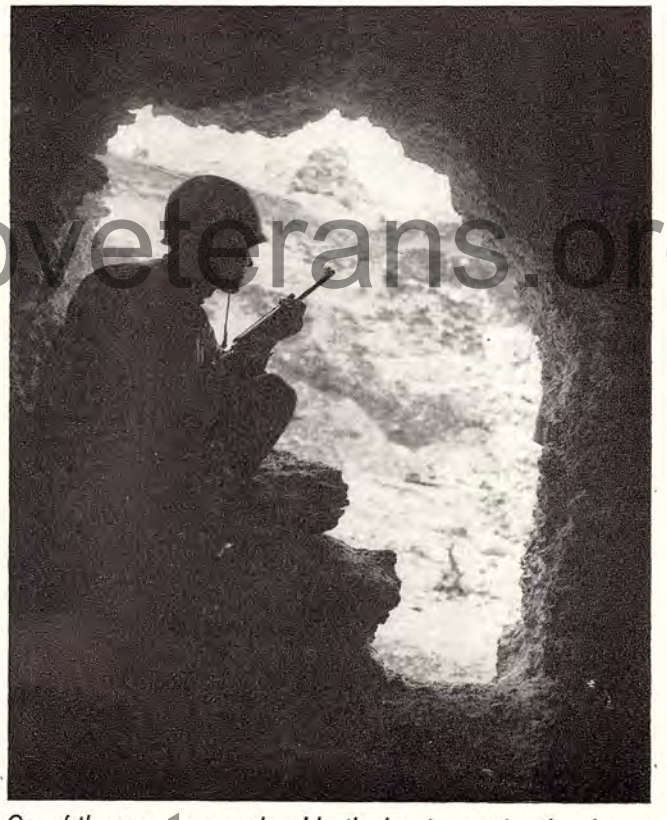
The position faced by the 4th was Kiyamu Ridge, and it was the last resource of the Japanese in that part of Okinawa. It had an outlying defensive position along the small, but strongly held Ibaru Ridge, and against this position the 4th Marines drove on the morning of the 19th, with the 1st and 3rd Battalions in assault. The attack broke right through the Ibaru defenses, and by evening the remaining enemy confronting the division had been penned into an area five thousand yards square, but well fortified and extremely difficult of access.

The precipitous character of the north face of Kiyamu, in fact, made it necessary for the 4th to attack the position from the rear, and preparations were made for such an attack on the following day. Colonel Whaling's 29th was brought forward to join in the attack on the seaward flank.

Meanwhile the rear areas were clogged with the largest collection of prisoners yet taken on Okinawa, including many civilian refugees, some of them wounded. Seven hundred of one group of Japanese soldiers who had been driven back to the sea chose mass surrender instead of mass suicide, and the only instance of the latter was when a group of forty climbed down the cliff to a ledge a few feet above the water, there destroying themselves with grenades.

Not all gave up or died, however; to the last these enemies showed the old Jap trickery so often employed in the Pacific war, and thirteen Marines were caught in a trap when three of the enemy waved a white flag.

"The three were spotted on a small rock fifty yards offshore near the southern tip of the island," Corporal John H. Pearson tells the story. "They waved a white flag, so we went over to get them."



One of the many caves employed by the Japs in opposing the advance in southern Okinawa.

The way led through a cane brake at the edge of the water. At the beach Pearson, serving as interpreter, told the three Japs to undress. While he was talking to them, another squad of enemy soldiers slipped around behind the cane brake and opened fire.

"By then we had the three soldiers," said Pearson. "We hit the deck and fired back. Four of our men were hit, one killed. A platoon of Marines above five hundred yards away saw what was happening and came to our rescue. Then we retreated. I think the three prisoners were part of the ruse, but we took them back anyway."

The old story that Japanese never surrender was completely disproved by the Sixth Division, which conducted organized efforts on the psychological front, shelling all enemy-held areas with propaganda leaflets, and using broadcasts both from the front lines and from an LCI off the southern beaches. At this date the number of military prisoners taken by the Division had already passed the two thousand mark and was still climbing steadily.

The reserve battalion of the 22d Marines moving forward to join the assault on Kuwanga Ridge.

Trophies of battle—hard won.

On June 20, the 4th and 29th Marines resumed their attack to drive the enemy off Kiyamu Ridge and pin him against the sea. On the front of the 4th the resistance was soon over, but it was necessary for units of the Division to comb the whole area for groups of the enemy still determined to kill a few Americans. Suicides, singly and in groups, occurred all along the cliffs and beaches of the southern end of the island, while quite unprecedented numbers of Japanese continued to surrender. At one time those in the compound near the Division command post far outnumbered the Marines in the vicinity.

Lieutenant George Thompson, a platoon leader in the 29th Marines, was in hot pursuit of ten Japs when he and four men with him rounded a turn in the trail to find themselves confronted by no less than 350 armed enemy soldiers. This was more than he had bargained for, but the lieutenant kept his head. Standing on a natural platform offered by an outcrop of rock, he bowed, smiled and waved to the surrounding Japs, keeping up a running description of the scene over a walkie-talkie to his company command post.

He pushed his pistol into his rear pocket and motioned for the men with him to sling their rifles over their shoulders. The Japs around him looked flabbergasted, but there was not much fight left in them. Some killed themselves with grenades as little as ten yards from Thompson, and he noted that many of the enemy officers had women companions, whom they shot before destroying themselves.

Those who were not ready for suicide crowded around. *"Tobako! Tobako! Tobako!"* shouted Thompson, and as several of the enemy soldiers extended their hands, he distributed the contents of four packages passed to him by his companions. Not for a moment did he cease smiling and chattering —words apparently addressed to the Japanese, but really his running account of the event. He begged no one at the other end to interrupt him with questions. "I have an idea that if I did stop talking or smiling the Japs will kill us," he said.

Interior of an Okinawan tomb. The highly decorated urns contain the ashes of departed ancestors.

At long last! Men of the 2d Battalion, 22d Marines, hoist the same flag over Ara Saki at the extreme southern tip of Okinawa that they raised over the northern tip two months before.

A Japanese officer killed a woman, walked toward Pfc. Rufus E. Randall, snapped to attention, saluted and handed the surprised Leatherneck two sabers and a wrist watch. Then he stepped back ten yards and blew his head off with a grenade. This touched off a wave of suicides, with the enemy officers continuing to surrender their sabers, watches and flags to the amazed Marines.

In the midst of this extraordinary scene four grenade-laden Japs approached the group menacingly. "Here it comes," said Thompson.

One of them grunted: *"Tobako."*

"They want cigarettes and we've run out," said Thompson.

When he shook his head some of the Japs angrily hurled their helmets to the ground. Thompson had an inspiration. With the widest possible grin he pointed up the cliffs toward the American lines, shouting: "Lots of *tobako* up there!"

By this time patrols sent out by battalion were on the scene. Thompson warned them to keep their weapons out of sight. "That way we won't have to fight and maybe some of the Japs will surrender." Thompson's tactics were successful; 150 enemy soldiers followed our troops to the rear with astounding meekness and a few minutes later no less than 350 Okinawan civilians streamed out of nearby caves from which they had been watching the whole performance.

On another occasion Marines in an LCI were broadcasting via loudspeaker to a group of several hundred Japanese soldiers and Okinawan civilians wandering aimlessly along a beach. The broadcasters directed them along the beach to the west where they would pass through the Sixth Division lines, but only a little way along they ran into a fire fight between Marines and a group of entrenched Japs. Several of the wanderers were hit and for a few moments pandemonium reigned along the beach.

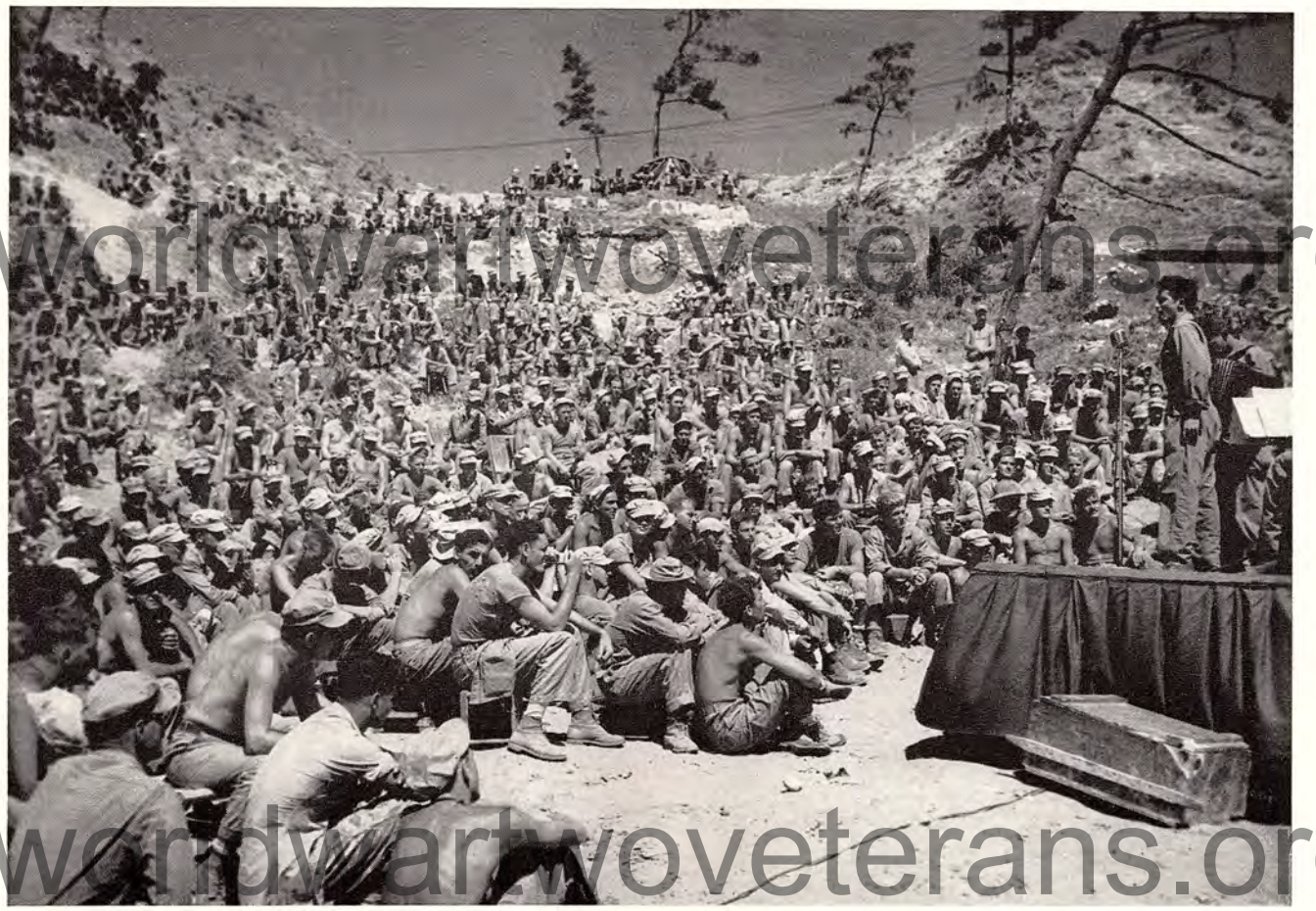
Then someone in the LCI noticed a man who appeared to be an officer among the Jap soldiers.

"Fall them in! Fall them in!" cried a voice over the loudspeaker in Japanese.

The Jap officer obeyed, ordering the civilians to form a column and marching them briskly back along the beach until they reached the 7th Infantry Division lines, where they were surrendered.

While these surrenders, suicides and manhunts were occurring on June 21, men of Company G, 2nd Battalion, 22nd Marines, formed a rough circle around a small mound atop a rugged coral cliff. They could look down on the mingling waters of the Pacific Ocean and the East China Sea which they

The Division Headquarters mess force.



Well earned relaxation. A USO group entertaining men of the Division after the island was declared secured.

had fought eighty-two bloody days to reach. On the outer edge of the circle, grim and battered Leathernecks faced outward, rifles at the ready. Snipers were still firing occasional shots, but the Marines of the outer circle only noted their location for future reference; right now they were busy.

In the center of the circle three Marines and a Navy corpsman marched toward the small mound. They were veterans of the entire campaign—Platoon Sergeant S. S. Semetsis; Sergeant Narolian H. West; Pfc. Daniel Dereschuo; and Hospital Apprentice 2d class Joseph M. Bangart. They carried a roughly hewn pole and an American flag. It was the same flag these same men had unfurled over the island's northmost point only a month before.

The Marines stood in quiet reverence as the quartet placed the mast on the mound. The four men stepped back a pace. A bugler came forward, raised a battered instrument to his lips and blew the first stirring notes of "Colors."

As the bugle sounded, the four men unfolded the flag, rapidly ran it to the top of the makeshift staff. The dirty, tattered Marines stood at rigid attention, their officers saluting. They could relax now, could forget the sound of mortar shells and the stench of death. Okinawa had become American territory.

The last note of the bugle faded away. There was a moment of dead silence before Lt. Col. John G. Johnson, the battalion commander, stepped forward.

"This has been a hard fight," he said, "and in raising this flag we pay tribute to the memory of those brave men who have fallen in action. We shall ever be mindful of their glorious deeds as we continue along the road to Tokyo and victory."

Chapter 15: The Record of the Striking Sixth

There were comparatively few men in the rifle platoons and companies at Kiyamu Ridge on June 21, 1945, who had landed with the Sixth Division on Easter Sunday morning. Motobu, Asa Kawa, Sugar Loaf Hill, Oroku Peninsula, Kuwanga Ridge had cost the Division 8,227 killed and wounded.

But those left, and the wounded in the hospitals, could well be proud of the record the Striking Sixth had made. It had captured more than two-thirds of Okinawa, the strategic jewel that nestles at the center of the bead-like string of islands called the Ryukyus. Possession of the island gave us five enemy airfields, two seaplane bases and three anchorages where fleets could lie. It meant domination of the East China Sea and the cutting off of Japanese shipping routes from north to south. It provided bases from which American aircraft could reduce the Japanese homeland to a rubble and a springboard for the invasion of China and Japan.

The campaign was not merely one of bases and approaches, but the opening round of the battle for Japan itself, and the Japanese Thirty-second Army was fully aware of that fact during the eighty-two bloody days of combat. When the flag was finally raised on Kiyamu Ridge an entire army from Manchuria, that homeland of Japanese military power, had been so beaten into the dust that nothing of it remained. Now, on the ground it had held, hammers and bulldozers replaced mortars and cannon; and the sound of these instruments of construction and destruction was audible in the home islands of Nippon, 325 miles to the north. They were playing the overture to the downfall of an Empire.

The Sixth Marine Division had much to do with the orchestration of this theme. In exchange for its casualties it had killed more than eighteen thousand Japanese troops, more than had been killed by any Marine division in any previous campaign. It had captured 3,254 enemy prisoners, also a record; had taken Yontan and Naha airfields, Unten Ko, the midget submarine base and great stores of supplies.

It is no detraction from the splendid performance of the other divisions of the Tenth Army to say that the Sixth played a decisive part. It had outflanked the "impregnable" Naha–Shuri–Yonabaru line at the Asa Kawa and Sugar Loaf Hill, and later again broke through the enemy's left flank at Mezado and Kuwanga ridges.

It would be invidious and impossible to single out any unit within the Division as more heroic than another. The 22nd Marines broke the enemy's line twice, at the Asa Kawa and at Mezado Ridge. The 4th Marines won the battle of Mount Yaetake and played a leading role in the magnificent victory on Oroku Peninsula. The 29th Marines shed torrents of blood for Sugar Loaf Hill—and took it. At the close of the campaign, when the achievements of all the units had been studied, the Presidential Unit Citation, highest unit award conferred by the United States, was awarded to all three of the Division's infantry regiments as well as to certain of their supporting units.

The 22nd Marines were cited for their drive across the Asa Estuary from May 10 through June 1, the drive that led to the breaking of the Shuri Line and included the initial storming of Sugar Loaf Hill. Supporting units cited were Company A, 9th Amphibian Tractor Battalion, for action from May 10 to May 13; a detachment of the 6th Joint Assault Signal Company; and the 1st Section, 3rd Platoon, 1st Bomb Disposal Company, for May 13 to June 1; and the Reconnaissance Company, Headquarters Battalion, for May 27-28.

The 29th Marines were cited for their capture of Sugar Loaf Hill, May 14-19. Their cited supporting units were the 3rd Platoon of the 1st Bomb Disposal Company, less one section, and a detachment of the 6th Joint Assault Signal Company Naval Gunfire and Air-Ground Liaison team.

Their assault on Oroku Peninsula from June 4 through June 16 earned the coveted citation for the 4th Marines. The supporting units cited were the 3rd Platoon, 1st Bomb Disposal Company, less one section; a detachment of the 6th Joint Assault Company Naval Gunfire and Air-Ground Liaison team; and the 91st Chemical Mortar Company, Separate, U.S. Army.

The Navy Unit Commendation, second highest unit recognition, was awarded to the 6th Engineer Battalion for its work throughout the entire campaign from April 1 through June 21.

Lieutenant General Simon Bolivar Buckner, Tenth Army commander.

These were official recognitions. But those who were present knew that the Okinawa victory was the work of a team, shared by everyone in the Sixth Division from the Commanding General down through the privates who had sloshed through the rice paddies and crawled across the coral ridges of the island. In recommending the division for the Presidential Unit Citation, Lieutenant General Roy S. Geiger, then Force Commander, wrote:

> A comparison between the performances of this division in the Okinawa operation and other divisions in recent and very difficult operations in the Pacific Ocean area is not easy to make because of the necessity of comparing it with another Marine division and four Army divisions operating on Okinawa and with the three divisions of the V Amphibious Corps in the Iwo Jima operation.
>
> It will no doubt be conceded that the operations referred to were among the most difficult military operations ever undertaken by United States military forces. If comparison is made, however, with divisions in other operations in the war against Japan, the commanding general would not hesitate to say that the performance of the Sixth Marine Division was vastly superior by comparison.
>
> The conduct of the Sixth Marine Division throughout this gruelling campaign was at all times heroic and outstanding. It accepted its hazardous missions without question and performed them in spite of staggering losses among its personnel. The relentless and continuous advance demanded uncommon devotion to duty from its men, who were in action against the enemy for a period of three months.

In March of 1947 this recommendation of General Geiger's was approved by the Secretary of the Navy and the Presidential Unit Citation was awarded to organic and attached units of the entire Division and included recognition of their splendid work.

A brilliant victory—but at a price few would forget. On a hillside looking out across the East China Sea, the Sixth Division cemetery was dedicated on Independence Day, just ninety-five days after the Division's first units set foot on the beaches below. By truck, by jeep and on foot thousands of men who had survived one of the Pacific's most arduous campaigns came to the brief and impressive ceremony. Long before the program started they gathered around the rows of crosses and Stars of David that marked the graves of 1,697 who fell in battle.

In awarding the Presidential Unit Citation to the entire Division, the individual citations of the units previously mentioned were rescinded.

Navy Lieutenant Commander Paul Redmond, chaplain of the Fleet Marine Force, spoke for all: "This is not a bivouac of the dead. It is a colony of heaven. And some part of us all is buried here."

In his dedicatory address General Shepherd called the men buried there "the heroes of the war." They gave the last thing they could give—their lives.

Among them was Major Henry A. Courtney, Jr., executive officer of the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Marines, who received the Medal of Honor posthumously for his heroism at Sugar Loaf Hill. His citation reads:

> During the night of 14-15 May, Major Courtney commanded remaining forward elements of two companies of his battalion located to the rear of a strategic enemy defended hill from which the enemy had driven back our advancing forces several times during the day. Although his orders called for static defense during the night, Major Courtney, aware of the importance of this hill and the probable disastrous effect of a counterattack therefrom, for which he knew the enemy to be preparing, and fully realizing the extreme danger entailed, decided and obtained permission to move his small force of men over the hill with a view to disrupting the enemy's plans and providing more advantageous positions from which to renew the attack on the following day. Having explained the situation to his men,

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

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

SIXTH MARINE DIVISION, REINFORCED

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

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

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

For the President,

James Forrestal

Secretary of the Navy

he announced his personal intention to go to the hill, and without further orders turned and proceeded on his way, throwing grenades at nearby enemy cave positions to neutralize the enemy fire issuing therefrom. Every man followed him, and the small force now further depleted, gained the hill which was their goal. Halting his force on the reverse slope, runners were dispatched, soon returning with additional grenades and replacements which raised the size of the force to forty-six. Thus constituted, Major Courtney again preceded his force, neutralizing and destroying enemy positions en route, and gaining the crest of the hill. Upon reaching the crest, he saw large numbers of the enemy assembling for counterattack less than a hundred yards down the forward slope. He immediately began hurling grenades at the enemy, shouting to his men to do likewise. By this determined assault, many of the enemy were killed and the remainder withdrew to their cave positions from which they commenced delivering heavy mortar and grenade fire on the crest. Ordering his men to dig in, Major Courtney moved through a hail of fire to aid the wounded, assign men to more advantageous defensive positions, and to lend encouragement to all. While so doing he was struck by an enemy mortar fragment and instantly killed.

There was also Pfc. Howard Gonsalves, who had served as acting scout sergeant of an artillery forward observer team from Battery L of the 4th Battalion, 15th Marines. He was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously, with this citation:

Undaunted by the powerfully organized opposition encountered on Motobu Peninsula during a fierce assault waged by an infantry battalion against a Japanese stronghold, Private First Class Gonsalves repeatedly braved the terrific hostile bombardment to aid his forward observation team in directing well-placed artillery fire.

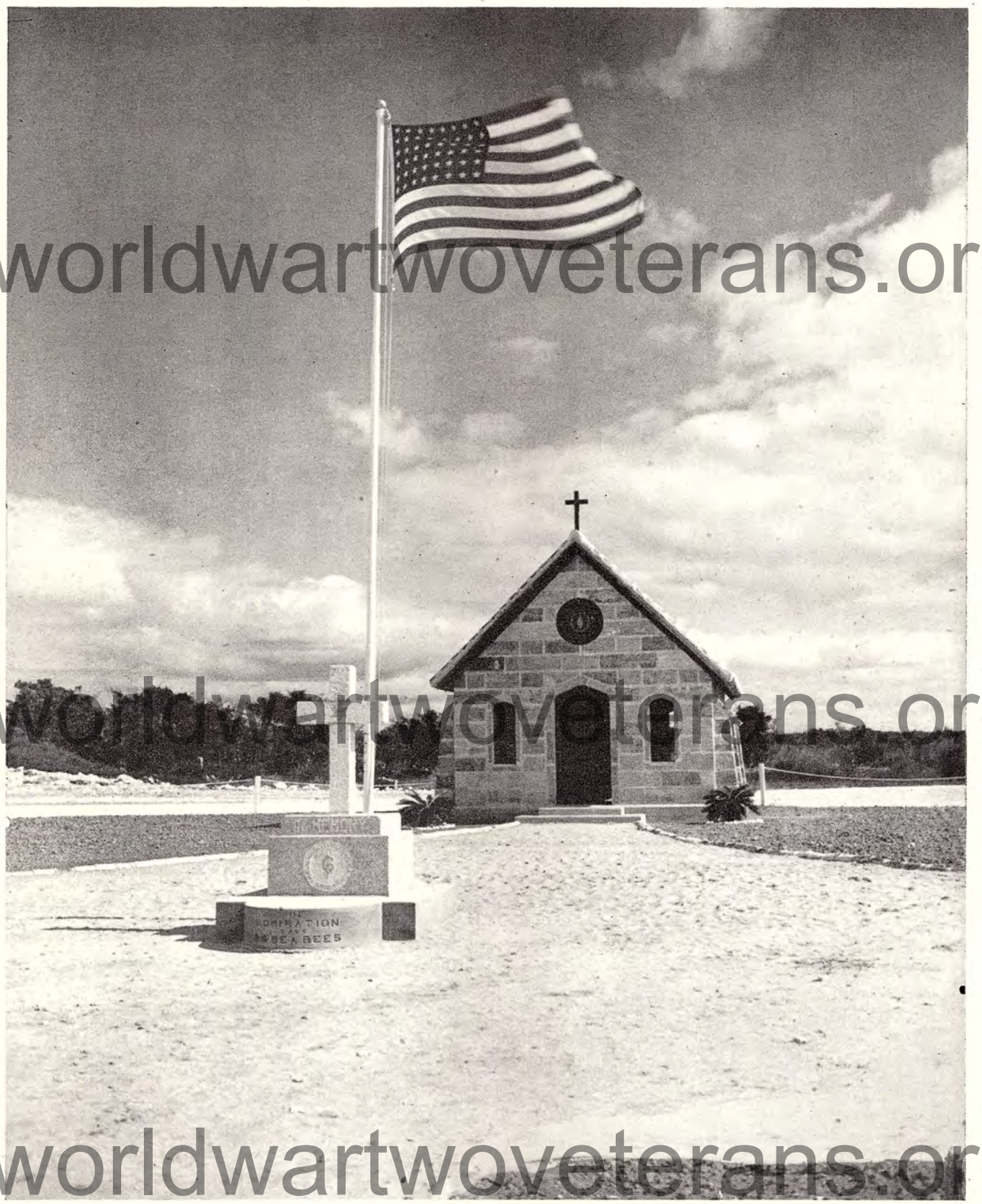
When his commanding officer determined to move into the front lines in order to register a more effective bombardment in the enemy's defensive position, Private First Class Gonsalves unhesitatingly advanced uphill with the officer and another Marine, despite a slashing barrage of enemy mortar and rifle fire.

As they reached the front a Japanese grenade fell close within the group. Instantly Private First Class Gonsalves dived on the deadly missile, absorbing the exploding charge in his own body and thereby protecting the others from serious and perhaps fatal wounds. He readily yielded his own chances of survival that his fellow Marines might carry on the relentless battle against the fanatic Japanese.

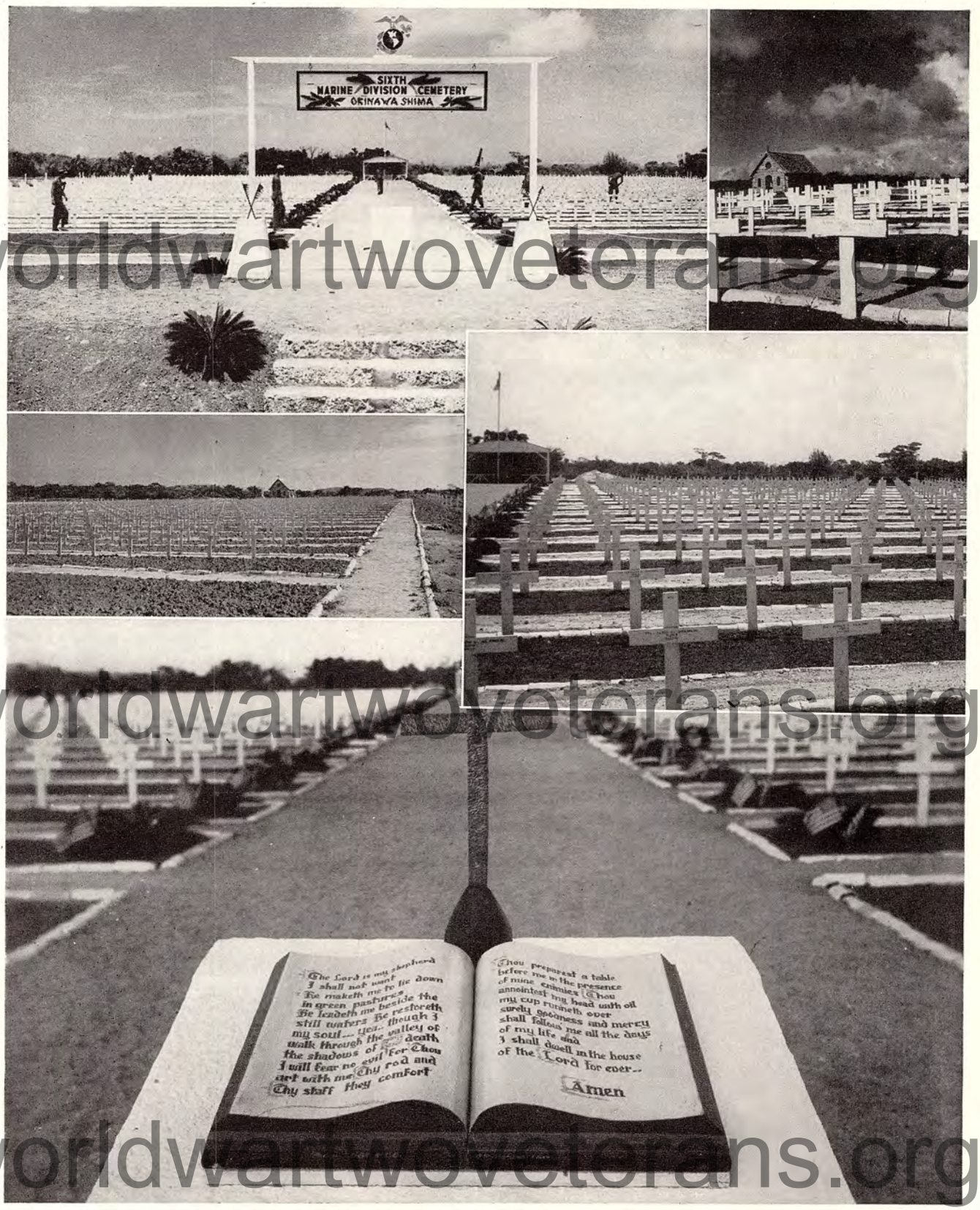
But not all the heroes were in that cemetery. Some went through the mortar bursts, the rain of shellfire and the driving machine-gun bullets, displaying that extra something, and came out alive. Their deeds were an inspiration, and it is both pleasing and proper to record those who were recognized. Among them:

MEDAL OF HONOR

Corporal Richard E. Bush, a squad leader with Company C, 1st Battalion, 4th Marines. During the final assault on Mount Yaetake, Corporal Bush displayed such courage, aggressiveness and determination in the face of heavily concentrated enemy fire that he inspired his squad with an indomitable fighting spirit that enabled them to be first on the ridge to dislodge the enemy from his entrenched position. Corporal Bush was wounded in this action and evacuated behind rocks, together with the other wounded, for treatment. While he was being treated a Jap hand grenade landed in their position. With complete disregard for his own personal safety, Corporal Bush unhesitatingly pulled



The chapel in the Sixth Marine Division Cemetery. Facing westward toward the East China Sea, the chapel looks out upon the Yontan beaches, scene of the Division's initial action on Okinawa.



The Sixth Marine Division Cemetery, final resting place of 1,697 gallant Americans.

the grenade to him and shielded the grenade with his hand and body in order to protect the other men. In doing so, he suffered additional wounds in his stomach and face, as well as the loss of three fingers.

NAVY CROSS

Private First Class Anthony E. Borgia, flamethrower operator in Company E, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines. Private Borgia and one other Marine were engaged in neutralizing caves on Oroku Peninsula when 37 of the enemy rushed from a nearby opening and sought to deploy for possible defense. Though his flamethrower fuel was exhausted and he was armed only with a pistol, Private First Class Borgia charged the enemy group. He killed one enemy soldier, seized the rifle of the dead enemy and rushed among the remaining enemy troops, firing with such accuracy and bold ferocity that they scattered in panic, making possible their quick and complete destruction by Marines arriving to investigate the firing.

Private First Class Charles E. Johnson, squad leader with Company K, 3rd Battalion, 29th Marines. Private First Class Johnson's platoon leader and a number of men became casualties and the advance of the platoon was held up by heavy enemy machine gun fire. On his own initiative he immediately took charge of the situation, reorganized the platoon and aggressively and courageously led the final assault on the objective. Alone and without regard for his own safety, he charged two enemy machine guns with a rocket launcher and fired point-blank, destroying both of the guns and their crews. His heroic and inspiring actions contributed materially to the continuation of the advance of his company's mission.

Lieutenant Colonel John G. Johnson, commanding officer of the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Marines. During the assault on Radio Hill, east of Naha, he assumed command of the battalion when his predecessor was killed. When he noticed

that new replacements were bewildered and suffering severe casualties as a result of heavy enemy fire from the front and from caves on the right, he immediately went to the front lines. Under heavy enemy fire and with utter disregard for his own life, he quickly reorganized assault units and personally directed their attack, reaching the objective by dark. Then he again reorganized his battalion and engaged the enemy in hand-to-hand fighting in the darkness, annihilating the enemy in the area. Lieutenant Colonel Johnson's personal bravery and firm determination were an inspiring example to his men.

Corporal Harry Kizirian, a squad leader with Company E, 2nd Battalion, 22nd Marines. While returning from a dangerous patrol in enemy territory, Corporal Kizirian had almost reached his lines when he spotted a Marine stretcher party pinned down by intense Jap fire. Despite wounds suffered in both legs and the groin, Corporal Kizirian held a heavy Browning Automatic Rifle in the crook of his arms and dragged himself in the direction of the enemy by pressure of his elbows. Firing a steady stream into the enemy position, he completely wiped it out, allowing the stricken group of Marines to gain their lines.

Lieutenant Colonel William G. Robb, commanding officer of the 2nd Battalion, 29th Marines. By his inspiring leadership, perseverance and personal courage, he led his battalion to seizure of the keystone of the enemy defense in the Naha-Shuri line, Sugar Loaf Hill. Repulsed three times by a fanatical defense which was constantly being reinforced by fresh troops, he requested permission to again attack Sugar Loaf despite heavy casualties from previous attacks. Lieutenant Colonel Robb exposed himself to enemy fire on many occasions in order to personally encourage his men and to better direct the attack on this vital objective. His battalion successfully seized and held the objective, in spite of a fierce enemy counterattack, thereby causing the Japanese to withdraw from the Naha-Shuri line.

Corporal Hugh A. Vogel, reconnaissance non-commissioned officer of a 37-millimeter antitank platoon with Weapons Company, 4th Marines. Corporal Vogel was assigned the mission of observing enemy fire so that he might direct the fire of his platoon. In order to gain better observation, he coolly and unhesitatingly advanced beyond the front lines, heedless of personal danger from enemy heavy machine gun and mortar fire. While advancing he came upon an enemy dual purpose 13-millimeter weapon. He quickly killed the crew, captured the gun and turned it upon the enemy, destroying a mortar position and killing all members of the mortar crew. After the successful completion of this mission, he proceeded to attack two enemy-held caves during the hours of darkness. Exhibiting superior skill and personal courage, he destroyed these caves with demolition charges, killing all enemy occupants.

Colonel William J. Whaling, commanding officer of the 29th Marines. He skillfully maneuvered elements of his command through rugged terrain to aid in driving the enemy to defeat on Mount Yaetake. He willingly exposed himself to direct enemy fire time and again by his presence among the most advanced elements of his regiment. In the campaign for southern Okinawa Colonel Whaling, by his conspicuous bravery in the personal direction of assault units, was a source of inspiration to his officers and men, contributing materially to the seizure of desperately defended Sugar Loaf Hill. On Oroku Peninsula his aggressive and determined leadership resulted in the successful reduction of one of the most heavily fortified strongholds encountered.

Lieutenant General Roy S. Geiger, Commanding General, III Amphibious Corps.

SILVER STAR

First Lieutenant William H. Agnew, an artillery forward observer, 15th Marines. When the infantry battalion to which he was attached was pinned down by extremely heavy machine gun and mortar fire, causing many casualties, Lieutenant Agnew on his own initiative and without regard for his own personal safety unhesitatingly advanced alone to a high point beyond the front lines where he continued to expose himself to heavy enemy fire in order to bring artillery fire to bear upon enemy gun positions, thereby destroying one 20-millimeter gun, three machine guns, three mortars and silencing all enemy fire in the area.

Lieutenant Colonel Fred D. Beans, executive officer of the 4th Marines. While serving as regimental executive officer, Lieutenant Colonel Beans was called upon to take the place of a battalion commander killed in action while the battalion was engaged in a fierce fire fight for Mount Yaetake. Heavy artillery, mortar and small arms fire had inflicted heavy casualties. Lieutenant Colonel Beans, with an indomitable fighting spirit, took command of the badly shaken battalion and through his own example of coolness and courage under fire led the battalion to the brilliant accomplishment of the mission of capturing the enemy bastion of Mount Yaetake. Moreover, by his aggressive leadership, he capitalized on the advantage gained by continuing the violent momentum of the attack throughout the following day to the complete destruction of the enemy force. His keen tactical ability and faithful devotion to duty aided materially in the rapid destruction of the fanatical enemy forces on Motobu Peninsula.

Second Lieutenant Howard A. Berrian, leader of a 60-millimeter mortar platoon in the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines. On May 24 Second Lieutenant Berrian assumed command of a rifle platoon whose platoon leader had been wounded and evacuated and while that platoon was committed to fierce action. Before assuming command, he personally supervised the evacuation of several wounded men who were at the base of a cliff to tie ropes around the wounded in order that they might be evacuated in the safest and most expeditious manner. Thereafter, he led and inspired his men to a position from which the enemy could be brought under effective and superior fire. His leadership and coolness under fire were instrumental in destroying the enemy force.

Second Lieutenant August L. Camarata, platoon leader in Company I, 3rd Battalion, 29th Marines. Lieutenant Camarata was ordered to move his platoon behind an assault platoon and give them covering fire against heavy enemy machine gun and rifle fire which was emanating from both flanks and from the right and left rear of the assault platoon. He led his platoon up the forward slope of the

General Joseph W. Stilwell (holding campaign hat) who assumed command of the Tenth Army following General Buckner's death. Until General Stilwell arrived, the Army was commanded by Lieutenant General Geiger.

steep objective and placed his men, while exposing himself to heavy enemy fire, with their backs against the bitterly contested objective and caused heavy and accurate protective fire to be delivered on both flanks of the enemy, neutralizing two enemy guns and killing fifteen of the enemy. Though wounded himself, he repeatedly refused evacuation and continued to move, under heavy enemy fire, from man to man shouting orders and encouragement to them until the objective had been taken.

Corporal Frederick Edenharten, squad leader in Company H, 3rd Battalion, 29th Marines. Corporal Edenharten asked for and received permission from the commanding officer to reconnoiter enemy territory where the advance of his company was being held up. He moved forward alone over terrain swept by heavy enemy fire for a distance of 200 yards until he was within a few yards of the enemy positions. He located the positions of the enemy machine guns which had been holding up the company's advance and returned under heavy fire to his lines. The information he brought back enabled the Marines to bring concentrated fire upon the enemy guns and resulted in the company's advance and seizure of its objective.

Corporal William C. Enright, leader of a machine gun squad in Company K, 3rd Battalion, 22nd Marines. 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 throughout 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.

Private First Class Edward W. Galuska, machine gunner with Company G, 2nd Battalion, 22nd Marines. While displacing forward, Private First Class Galuska found himself confronting an enemy machine gunner already going into action. Despite the handicap of the enemy's advantage, Private First Class Galuska declined to withdraw to nearby cover but unhesitatingly went into action and succeeded in killing the enemy machine gunner. Finding himself then fired upon by another enemy machine

The surrender ceremony of the Ryukyus Island Group. General Stilwell accepted the surrender from a Japanese delegation. Infantrymen and Marines make up the guard of honor while Sherman and Pershing tanks line the road.

gun, he so well directed the fire of his weapon that the second machine gun was put out of action. Then, when his own machine gun was disabled by enemy fire, he courageously rushed forward in the face of intense enemy fire, seized one of the abandoned enemy machine guns and with good effect directed it against the enemy, thereby directly assisting the advance of his company.

Corporal Benton R. Graves, section leader in a machine gun platoon of Company I, 3rd Battalion, 29th Marines. Corporal Graves' company was ordered to withdraw to a more favorable position during the fight for Sugar Loaf Hill. He moved forward under heavy enemy fire and set up a light machine gun in an exposed position in order to effectively cover the displacement of his company. Although he was under constant heavy fire, he knocked out two enemy machine guns and killed several Jap riflemen. His action played a big part in the successful withdrawal of his company with a minimum of casualties.

Corporal Gregory T. Hensey, member of an artillery forward observer team, 15th Marines. On his own initiative and with complete disregard for his own personal safety, Corporal Hensey crawled with a stretcher for 100 yards under intense enemy fire to reach a wounded lieutenant. He then led three men in carrying the lieutenant out of the area, which was being swept by enemy machine gun fire. Corporal Hensey then reorganized his team and led them forward through heavy enemy fire to the front lines, where he was able to bring artillery fire in support of the advancing infantry.

Corporal Dennis J. Hines, fire team leader in Company B, 1st Battalion, 4th Marines. Corporal Hines was engaged in the fierce fighting on Sugar Loaf Hill and, while courageously leading his fire team in the assault upon the heavily defended enemy positions, was wounded in the foot. He left his platoon, but within an hour voluntarily returned to the scene of action. Once again, in the face of heavy enemy fire, he heroically led his team in neutralizing and destroying enemy caves and fortified positions which were checking the advance of his platoon. He was wounded a second time by shell fragments but refused to be evacuated until his fire team had successfully completed its mission.

Private First Class Oran D. Jones, an ammunition carrier in a machine gun section of Company E, 2nd Battalion, 22nd Marines. Private First Class Jones saw a group of some 25 enemy troops seeking to advance and attack the right flank of our forces, then organizing a night defense. He led an attack against the Japs. Although painfully wounded at the outset by enemy grenade fragments, he grabbed an

Surrender ceremony on Okinawa as General Stilwell accepts the capitulation of the Japanese 32d Army.

automatic rifle from a casualty, rallied a small band of Marines and led them in a charge against the advancing Japs. Private First Class Jones charged with such fierceness and fired with such accuracy that a number of the enemy were killed and the rest driven off in panic. His bold action eliminated a threat to his company's flank.

Platoon Sergeant Edward F. Keough, a platoon sergeant with Company G, 2nd Battalion, 22nd Marines. During the assault on a strongly defended enemy ridge near Sugar Loaf Hill, Platoon Sergeant Keough saw the advance of his platoon held up by fire from a machine gun emplacement. Disregarding his own personal safety, he charged into the face of the enemy gun. He killed two of the enemy and destroyed the emplacement with an automatic rifle, enabling the platoon to continue its advance.

Private Edward B. Largey, a rifleman with Company G, 3rd Battalion, 29th Marines. While advancing with his company when it was attacking a strongly-held ridge in the face of heavy enemy fire, Private Largey was painfully wounded by an enemy rifle bullet. In spite of his wound and with complete disregard for his own safety, he voluntarily continued to advance up the precipitous slope in the face of heavy fire, and with hand grenades he destroyed an enemy machine gun emplacement, killing five enemy soldiers. His actions assisted materially in the seizure of the position.

Private First Class John L. McDonald, fire team leader in Company B, 1st Battalion, 4th Marines. During an assault on a dominating hill, Private First Class McDonald's platoon was pinned down by intense automatic fire, and the exposed flank assaulted by enemy troops. On his own initiative, he boldly led his fire team to the exposed flank and gained fire superiority over the assaulting enemy. Then, without regard for his own personal safety, he ran to within ten feet of the enemy and with grenades and rifle fire killed eight of them. When his platoon was ordered to withdraw to its former position, he covered the withdrawal of his fire

team. After the last man had moved back, he withdrew.

Hospital Apprentice First Class Kenneth W. Mullins, a Navy corpsman attached to the 3rd Battalion, 29th Marines. During an attack by his company against a Jap-held ridge on the extreme southern end of Okinawa, a number of Marines were wounded and lying exposed to heavy enemy fire on the forward slope of the ridge. Hospital Apprentice First Class Mullins rushed over the crest of the ridge and down the fire-swept forward slope. He threw himself on top of a wounded Marine to protect him from further injury. When enemy fire abated he dragged his comrade out of danger and administered first aid. He then noticed another wounded Marine lying in an open field which was being raked by machine gun fire. Again, alone and heedless of danger, he ran to the casualty and remained with him despite heavy Jap fire, administering first aid until the wounded Marine died. During the day he was wounded but refused evacuation until relief was available.

Second Lieutenant Marion E. Price, a platoon leader with Company A, 1st Battalion, 4th Marines. Second Lieutenant Price volunteered to accompany his company commander and two others on a reconnaissance, preparatory to the commitment of his company into line. As the party crossed an open space at the base of Kiyamu-Gusuku Ridge it was ambushed. He gained a covered position and returned the enemy fire with the only automatic weapon in the party. He soon noticed that his company commander was seriously wounded and that the other officer in the party was unable to drag him to safety from the exposed position because of the heavy enemy fire. Despite the heavy enemy fire delivered at a range of 15 to 20 yards, he went to the aid of his company commander and the other officer. He remained in this exposed position for an hour, subjected to enemy rifle fire until help arrived. He then assisted in carrying his company commander to safety. He later assisted in tying the lines, thereby accomplishing his mission.

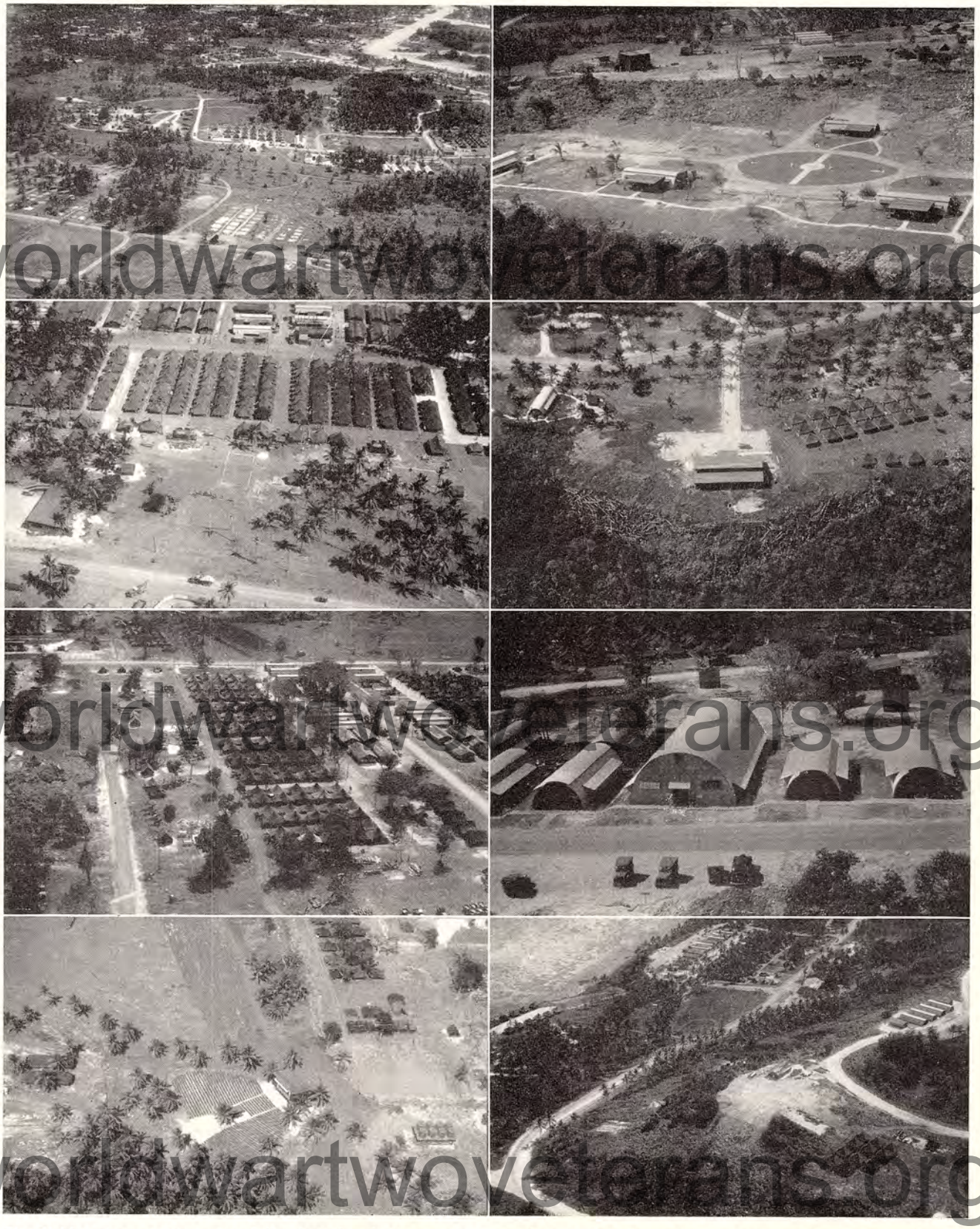
Gunnery Sergeant Walter E. Sandy, tank platoon sergeant with the 6th Tank Battalion. Gunnery Sergeant Sandy was operating with his tank group approximately 700 yards in front of friendly lines and was engaged in a heavy fire fight with the enemy when one of the tanks was immobilized by an electrically controlled mine. The position of the disabled tank was such that movement of the other tanks in the group was blocked. Gunnery Sergeant Sandy dismounted to search for an avenue of egress, and during this time he was under continuous enemy mortar and small arms fire. After finding a route he remounted and, as his tank attempted to move, it became bogged down in a water-filled shell hole. He again dismounted and completed the shackling necessary to extricate his tank and was slightly wounded by a mortar shell fragment. After the withdrawal of his tank he moved into a position from which he covered by fire and smoke the evacuation of the crew from the disabled tank. This evacuation was completed without the loss of a single man, in spite of heavy enemy fire. Gunnery Sergeant Sandy's actions were responsible for the saving of his tank at a time when tanks were sorely needed.

First Lieutenant Spencer V. Silverthorne, a language officer with the division intelligence section. First Lieutenant Silverthorne continually volunteered to lead patrols on dangerous missions which furnished information of great value. On numerous occasions he exposed himself to intense enemy fire, entering many caves not previously reconnoitered, thereby risking his life in order to obtain the information. On June 13 he voluntarily exposed himself to enemy fire for a period of five hours in an effort to induce a strong enemy group to surrender. With complete disregard for his own safety, he moved ahead of the advancing troops in an attempt to persuade the enemy to surrender their arms and themselves. Despite innumerable difficulties, he accomplished unprecedented results which expedited the completion of the operation and undoubtedly saved the lives of many Marines.

Technical Sergeant Ralph G. Thomas, wire chief in the communications section of the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Marines. During the defense of Sugar Loaf Hill Technical Sergeant Thomas learned that the front lines were in grave need of more ammunition. He procured a quarter-ton truck and trailer, and in darkness embarked upon his voluntary, hazardous mission through enemy mortar and artillery fire. Although his vehicle was pierced several times by shell fragments and he was twice blown from the truck by concussion of enemy shell bursts, he continued supplying front line units with ammunition. He made three trips through the dangerous area and also assisted in the evacuation of the wounded.

Corporal Duey C. Thompson, a fire team leader with Company A, 1st Battalion, 4th Marines. Upon moving onto Hill 58 on Oroku Peninsula with his platoon, Corporal Thompson observed an enemy mortar firing on adjacent friendly troops from a small cave on the forward slope of the hill. Despite the enemy fire he made five trips down the forward slope and threw a grenade into the cave each time. Failing to destroy the enemy mortar with his grenades, he quickly prepared a demolition charge, ran down the forward slope to the very lip of the cave and dropped the charge into the entrance. The resulting explosion sealed the cave, thereby destroying the enemy.

Corporal Charles Vargo, a platoon guide in Company G, 3rd Battalion, 29th Marines. Corporal Vargo was wounded while advancing with his platoon up a steep and strongly fortified enemy ridge on Motobu Peninsula. In spite of his wound, he continued to advance and directed the advance of his men for another fifty yards until wounded again, this time by a hand grenade fragment in his chest. He then knelt in an exposed spot almost on top of an enemy gun position and fired over the heads of his men, inflicting many casualties on the enemy and allowing the entire line to advance. When his fire was masked by the advance of his own men, he again moved forward to his position with the line as platoon guide and continued to fire and direct the fire of his men until the hill was secured.



The Division camp on Guam—carefully planned and constructed to provide a comfortable existence, it was a welcome change from the foxholes of Okinawa.

Chapter 16: Return to Guam

It was 101 days from the beginning of the Okinawa operation when the bulk of the Sixth Division embarked there for withdrawal to Guam. The point of departure was Naha, that battered shell of a city, and as thousands of Marines lined the rails to look back at it, not one felt any regret at leaving the island which had cost the Marine Corps so much in blood and pain.

One week later the Division reached Guam and moved into a newly built camp situated on high ground overlooking Pago Bay, in the southeast corner of the island. Compared with what they had seen it was a luxury camp, with Quonset huts for all offices and sick bays, while the officers and men had tents with wooden decks and electric lights. The place had been laid out so that all units of the Division were close to headquarters; there were hard packed coral roads to separate companies, battalions and regiments, and shortly after arrival the ingenious Marines began to produce little comforts, such as tables, chairs and even chests of drawers, carpentered together from old packing cases and discarded lumber.

During the first week a Red Cross canteen was opened in a big frame building with screened-in sides and a tarpaulin roof. The interior was furnished with evidences of more Leatherneck inventiveness in the form of brightly colored tables that had once been power cable drums. The chairs were an odd lot, of every size and description, some brought to Guam by the Red Cross, others donated by the men who had worked on them on their own time.

Coffee and doughnuts were available during the evenings at the canteen, and a combination radio-phonograph supplied entertainment. There were parties on special nights for the Marines of particular states, with the Red Cross hostesses as sponsors—tireless workers who managed to bring a little of the home touch to the men, and whose success was evidenced by the crowds that filled the canteen nightly.

The Special Services Section was unwearying in its efforts to provide movies, arrange for USO shows and every other form of entertainment that might bring to the battle-weary men the relaxation so necessary after battle. In the meantime there was a continuing series of ceremonies at the Division theater, where decorations were awarded for the many acts of bravery and exceptional service on Okinawa. As their comrades watched, a total of 1,592 Sixth Division Leathernecks stepped to the stage to receive their awards from the Division Commander.

Left: *The Japanese bell, a trophy of the Okinawa campaign, stands on a cliff in front of the Commanding General's quarters.* Right: *The reinforced pyramidal tents of the Division camp on Guam were set amid tropic coconut groves.*

The 22d Marines' camp on Guam.

There were naturally a good many changes in the Division's personnel during this period, both on the General's staff and among the battalion and regimental commanders, the latter mainly as the result of casualties. The 22nd Marines, whose command had been assumed by Lieutenant Colonel Larson when Colonel Roberts fell in battle, was taken over shortly before departure from Okinawa by Colonel John D. Blanchard, former Marine Corps Ordnance Supply Officer at Washington. He had accompanied President Roosevelt to the 1936 Pan-American Conference as his Military Aide and had been ordnance officer of the Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, just prior to taking over the regiment. The task of rehabilitating his new command was not an easy one, for the 22nd had seen the worst Okinawa had to offer and had taken the heaviest casualties of any regiment there.

In Division Headquarters, Colonel Karl K. Louther assumed the position of G-1 (Personnel) succeeding Major Overstreet, who departed for the States.

Colonel Louther had at one time been a member of the Department of Personnel at Marine Corps Headquarters, and had served through the Okinawa campaign as executive officer of the 22nd and as Deputy Chief of Staff of the Division. His present task was the onerous one of filling in the gaps of the Division's personnel and reassigning men and officers throughout its structure.

Coincident with this was the immense task of resupplying the Division with equipment, including

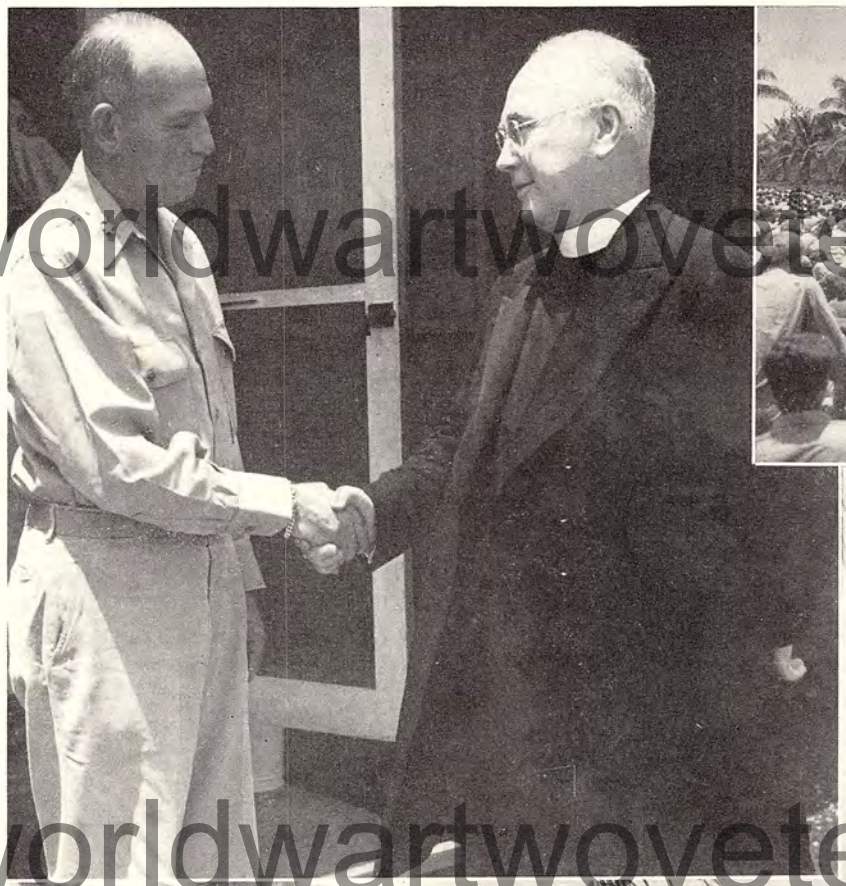
It's OVER! VJ-day: The news came with such suddenness as to make it almost unbelievable.

everything from six-by-six trucks to belt buckles. This task fell to Colonel W. N. Best, the Division Quartermaster, who had served in that capacity throughout Okinawa. Under Colonel Best's leadership working parties supplied by the individual battalions labored for days unloading new gear from the ships that formed "theater lines" at the docks, and far into the night long files of trucks carried the goods away to warehouses.

Sick bays were promptly established throughout the Division under the direction of the Division Surgeon, Captain Don S. Knowlton (MC), USN. Captain Knowlton had been with the First Marine Division on Guadalcanal, where he organized the first evacuation of wounded in the Pacific area, and he had received the Legion of Merit for his work. His Second Legion of Merit came for his services at Okinawa. A graduate of Yale University and Tufts College Medical School, he taught at Georgetown University Medical School for eighteen years as Associate Professor of Surgery before entering the naval service.

The Division was now only a little short of full fighting strength, and the recreation program gradually shaded into one of training for the next operation. The infantry regiments began daily excursions into the outlying country with full field equipment; the guns of the 15th boomed across the Guam plateau, and there was intermittent small-arms fire. But most units were on half-day schedules and the training was still primarily concerned with physical conditioning when the big news came through.

There had been indications for some days that the Japanese Empire was moving toward the point



Francis Cardinal Spellman, Catholic Military Vicar of the Armed Forces, pays the Division a visit.

of asking for terms, so that the first radio report of surrender came as something of an anticlimax. It arrived at about 10:00 o'clock at night, lights out time, when many had gone to bed.

Few found it possible to remain there. The Sixth Division Marines reacted, like Americans everywhere, according to individual temperament, but they all reacted. Some leaped from their cots and ran into the company streets, some shouting, others merely looking on. There was an odd variety of attire, including Marines in nothing but towels and field shoes and others in underwear.

In the 22nd's headquarters area members of the regimental band brought out their instruments and headed an impromptu parade that lasted for more than an hour. Clusters of men huddled around the radios, listening for further details on the surrender of the enemy who had fought so hard. For some of these the news was almost too big to grasp.

Some men promptly demanded the payment of bets, long since made, on the duration and outcome of the war. Thus comrades reminded Stanley A. Goff, a first sergeant of the 15th, of a promise made many weeks before to dress in his one carefully preserved suit of starched khaki and wallow on the ground. In fact, they even selected a fine mud-hole for his VJ-day ceremony.

After the shouting and the impromptu ceremonies were over came changes in the Division's plans. The 4th Marines, now under Lieutenant Colonel Beans, had been alerted when the war's end became a possibility, and on August 14, the day the Japanese surrendered, that veteran regiment left to take part in the occupation of Japan. General Clement was named commander of the landing force of which the 4th was the principal part.

The regiment had already departed when the Division received a distinguished visitor in the person of Cardinal (then Archbishop) Francis J. Spellman of New York, Catholic Military Vicar of the United States Armed Services. There was a Mass of Thanksgiving, celebrated at the Division theater, following which the Archbishop addressed the troops, praising them for what they had accomplished, and urging them as citizens to meet the challenge of a lasting peace.

"America must now be the victor over herself," he said. "America has shown what it is and what it can do. Dictators have found that we are not a decadent democracy. No outfit met harder battle nor achieved better success than did this Division. I pray to God that you men returning to civilian life will remember your lessons of patriotism, of sacrifice and of giving to others."

There was an official celebration of VJ-day, during which General Shepherd spoke to the troops.

"As individuals and as units we have been in the war against the Japanese from the very first," he said. "In our Division are men who fought in the first American offensive at Guadalcanal and Tulagi. Here today are those who built the road to Tokyo step by step, victory by victory, at New Georgia, Makin, Bougainville, Eniwetok, Parry, Engebi, Emirau, Saipan, Guam.

"As a division, our mission was to help conquer the Japs on Okinawa. Your accomplishments there have won the plaudits of our countrymen at home. History may some day place the Okinawa triumph alongside other recent vital developments [Russia's entry into the Pacific war and the atomic bomb] which convinced the enemy that further resistance was unwise.

"The pride I have felt as leader of this Division in battle will never fade. For the missions accomplished up to this day, I say to you: 'Well done.' I am confident that whatever our future assignment may be you will fulfill it with the same skill and efficiency you showed on the battlefields."

The nature of that "future assignment" naturally became, and for weeks remained, the number one subject of speculation and conversation. Possibly a few hit the nail on the head, but for the majority it was certainly a surprise when the word came through and the men knew they were off for occupation duty in China.

The aircraft carrier Yorktown *holds a steady course a scant seventy-five feet from the dwarfed LSV* Ozark *as a Marine from the carrier is hauled to the LSV by breeches buoy. Nearly a thousand seagoing Marines from Navy ships were put aboard the Ozark in this manner, in a mass transfer at sea.*

Chapter 17: Occupation of Yokosuka

THERE WERE INDICATIONS FOR SOME DAYS that the war was about to reach its end, but days are not weeks, and weeks would not have been too much in which to plan the initial occupation of the Japanese mainland, the first in history.

One unit charged with the occupation was designated Task Force A, with the 4th Marines at its core. Preliminary plans were drawn for this force on August 11 by the III Amphibious Corps, and quartermaster officers were told that the force must be prepared to embark within forty-eight hours. This called for the complete re-outfitting of six thousand men, the correction of all equipment shortages (of which there were still many) and the preparation of plans for combat loading the seven ships that were to carry the force. Operations officers had little opportunity to make advance plans; the task force was organized only twenty-four hours before its headquarters left Guam. In those twenty-four hours intelligence officers hastily assembled maps and reports, while personnel officers filtered replacements received from the Transient Center, Marianas Area, to fill out the 4th with the six hundred men it was under strength.

General Clement and the Headquarters unit of eleven officers and forty-two enlisted men left Guam on August 13 aboard USS *Ozark* to report to the commander of the Third Fleet. Behind them, aboard the transports there was nervous discussion of whether the Japanese surrender offer might not be one more trick. There was plenty of precedent for the idea that this was the case, and during the two weeks between the end of hostilities and the beginning of the occupation, there were brief flurries of fighting here and there across the Pacific. When Japanese officials explained that all field commanders had not received the cease-fire order it brought comfort to some, but others regarded it with a skepticism that was not diminished by a Jap request that the start of the occupation be postponed several days to allow

Breeches buoy transfer at sea, en route to Yokosuka.

Lieutenant Colonel Fred D. Beans, CO, 4th Marines, Reinforced, speaks to the troops as the convoy steams toward Japan.

them to prepare for the reception of Allied troops. On August 16, twenty-four hours after the orders had come through to cease the offensive against the Japanese, an escort ship reported sighting a torpedo wake across the bow of the *Ozark* at one thousand yards.

Thus the atmosphere was tense on August 21, when the convoy of five assault transports, one assault cargo ship and one LST made contact with the Third Fleet in the waters off Honshu. There were the battleships *Iowa, Missouri* and *Wisconsin,* with an array of carriers that included the *Yorktown, Saratoga* and *Bon Homme Richard;* their massed power was far more reassuring to the landing troops than any number of apologies from the Japanese Emperor.

On August 18 General Clement had already reported to Admiral Halsey aboard the *Missouri* with his staff—Lieutenant Colonel Louis Metzger, Chief of Staff; Captain John R. Thek, G-1; Major John L. Hopkins, G-2; Major O. V. Bergren, G-3; Lieutenant Colonel Theodore A. Beeman, G-4; and First Lieutenant Bevan G. Cass, Aide. Aboard the flagship General Clement discovered that the task force was to be built up almost to division strength by the addition of a provisional regiment of sea-going Marines from thirty-two major ships of the Third Fleet, a provisional regiment of two thousand Navy

The Yokosuka Naval Base.

bluejackets from eight ships, and a provisional battalion of 450 Royal Navy sailors and Royal Marine Commandos from five British ships recently arrived in the Pacific.

The transfer of all these landing forces from their warships to eight transports had to be accomplished at sea, a huge task. Each transport had a warship on either side, steaming slowly ahead, while the 3,500 men were moved across by breeches buoy, the whole task being accomplished in the daylight hours of two days.

Reinforcing units attached to the 4th Marines for Task Force A were the 1st Battalion, 15th Marines; Company C, 6th Tank Battalion; the Tank Maintenance Section of the 6th Service Battalion; Company A, 6th Engineer Battalion; Company A, 6th Pioneer Battalion; Company A, 6th Medical Battalion; Truck Company, 6th Motor Transport Battalion; 1st Platoon, Ordnance Company; Service Platoon and Supply Platoon, 6th Service Battalion; one section of the Sixth Division Band; the Shore Party Communications Team, Shore Fire Control Party and Air-Ground Liaison Team of the 6th Assault Signal Company; Company A of the 4th Amphibious Tractor Battalion, Company D, 6th Medical Battalion, all under Landing Force Headquarters, which consisted of the headquarters detachment and the 1st Platoon of the 6th Military Police Company.

The assembly and operations of the landing force presented some problems unique even in Marine experience. Only the 4th Marines and its reinforcing elements, with the Royal Marine Commandos had been combat trained as units; supplies had been embarked for no more than the elements provided by the Sixth Division, and the diverse units had had no opportunity to work together. In fact, the units from the Fleet were not even formed into companies and battalions until after the breeches-buoy transfer had taken place. They had no field radio

Japanese troops evacuating the Naval Base area.

or other communications equipment; no transportation or water supply equipment. All had to be provided for them, chiefly from Task Force A supplies.

Neither could the technique of the landing, in a tactical sense, be worked out until General Clement and his staff boarded ships of the Third Fleet, less than two weeks out of Tokyo. Unit commanders and their key staff members were assembled, also by breeches buoy, for the necessary detailed conferences on plans for the landing and subsequent operations.

As a result of the earlier conferences, it was made clear that the landing force was to be part of Third Fleet Task Force 31, under command of Rear Admiral Oscar C. Badger, and that it comprised all the units that would participate in the occupation of the Tokyo Bay area. The primary mission of the force was the seizure and occupation of the great Yokosuka Naval Base, including the adjacent air

station. Minor missions assigned in addition were the securing of the Zushi area of Miura Peninsula (which included Hayama Imperial Palace, tentative headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers), and the demilitarization of the entire peninsula.

Two tentative landing plans were worked out:

Plan One was to land across the reasonably good beaches at Zushi on the southwest coast of the Miura Peninsula, seize that area, then advance five miles overland in two columns to the Yokosuka Naval Base, using the two good roads that spanned the peninsula. Supplies and equipment would be unloaded at Yokosuka, the ships moving around the peninsula as soon as the troops had debarked at Zushi.

Plan Two called for sailing directly into Tokyo Bay through a passage cleared in the minefields, and effecting simultaneous landings at the Yokosuka Navy Yard and at the Air Station, the troops then moving to seal off the peninsula and secure the Zushi Area.

Plan One was initially preferred because it was believed there was some peril of Japanese treachery in sending all ships and troops through the narrow, fortified Uraga Strait to Tokyo Bay, before any troops had landed. However, when aerial photographs were finally delivered and showed the two cross-peninsula roads disappearing several times in tunnels through the ridges, this plan was discarded for Plan Two, which struck directly at the objective.

General Clement, accompanied by Japanese officials, proceeds to the surrender ceremony.

Brigadier General William T. Clement, commander of Task Force A, addresses the troops.

On August 21 a dispatch was received from Eighth Army command directing the execution of Plan Two and adding that the landing force should secure the Uraga–Kubichi–Yokosuka–Funakoshi area of Miura Peninsula. The Army's 11th Airborne Division was to land at Atsugi Airfield, a few miles above the northern end of the peninsula and would be responsible for securing the remainder of Miura. Their landing from the air was scheduled to be simultaneous with that of the naval units from the sea. Additional orders followed for the early demilitarization of the forts and shore batteries on Futtsu Saki, a long, narrow peninsula jutting from the eastern shore into Uraga Strait at the mouth of Tokyo Bay.

There are four small islands in Uraga Strait. The original plan had provided for elements of the British landing force to seize these and insure the safety of ships entering Tokyo Bay; but when the orders about Futtsu Saki were received, this plan was modified to include a landing by the reserve battalion of the 4th Marines on that cape as soon as possible after daylight on L-day. As soon as this mission was complete the battalion was to reembark in its landing craft and act as reserve for the main 4th Marines landing at Yokosuka Navy Yard.

Japanese troops lay down their arms under the watchful eyes of Marines of the 4th Regiment.

Two teams of two observation planes each were to afford air observation for the landing, and although there were to be no combat planes in direct support, approximately one thousand were available on call, aboard carriers hovering in the offing. Naval gunfire support, if necessary, was to be furnished by the cruiser *San Diego,* four destroyers and twelve assault craft.

Two underwater demolition teams were assigned, one to the British units for their island landings and the other to the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Marines for Futtsu Saki. This battalion also was furnished a team of ten Navy gunners' mates to demilitarize the heavy coast defense guns on the peninsula.

The landing was scheduled for August 30. On the 28th General Clement and Admiral Badger, aboard the *San Diego,* proceeded into Tokyo Bay to give instructions to the commander of the Yokosuka Naval Base area and other officials. These instructions were explicit and complete; the Japanese were directed to clear the landing areas of all personnel except skeleton maintenance crews; to demilitarize and mark all coast defenses and antiaircraft installations with white flags visible four miles at sea; to have Japanese officers and guides at the beach to meet the landing force; and to provide motor transport and other facilities to aid the landing troops.

On the morning of August 27, Task Force 31 sailed into Sagami Bay and anchored within sight of the snows of Fujiyama. Three days later the task force entered Tokyo Bay through the pre-dawn darkness while Japanese navigational lights on the Tsurugisaki promontory blinked out across the hitherto forbidden waters and the men on the decks wondered about the extensive fortifications that were said to saturate this area of Japan.

"Land the landing force" came the order at 4:10 that morning, and the troops began scrambling down the sides of their transports into the landing craft. As the brightening day revealed details on Futtsu Saki, 1,500 yards away, they could see the massive forts, with white flags flying over them as prescribed.

"I hope they mean it," remarked one Marine, as he surveyed the scene over the ramp of his LCVP.

At 5:50 the first American troops to set foot on

Japanese soil—the first foreign invaders ever to touch the Japanese mainland—reached shore. They were men of the 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines, commanded by Major Frank Carney. While two companies were seizing the main fort and armory at the center of Futtsu Saki, the third company landed on the extreme tip of the peninsula and occupied the second fort. At both places caches of arms and ammunition were taken and Nipponese soldiers surrendered meekly.

This seemed to be the answer to the question everyone on the transports had been asking, whether the Japanese would fight or not, but no one could yet be sure, and the Marines went energetically about their task of demolishing the powerful fortifications that would imperil shipping if the Japanese should change their minds.

Meanwhile at 9:30 A.M. the 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, commanded by Major Wilson B. Hunt, landed and occupied Yokosuka Naval Base without incident. Simultaneously the 1st Battalion, under Lieutenant Colonel George B. Bell, seized Yokosuka Airfield and began demilitarizing the installations there.

As the Marines moved inland there was no resistance and no violence. Only a few Japanese were present, all wearing white armbands as instructed, to indicate they were essential to the maintenance and operation of public utilities. Guards were left at the warehouses and other installations, and the troops moved on through the navy yard and across the airfield, checking guns to see that the breechblocks had been removed and herding non-essential Japanese before them. The initial phase of the occupation was completed when the British forces seized three island forts in Surago Channel and landed on Azuma Peninsula.

The formal surrender of the Yokosuka area.

General Clement and his staff came ashore at 10:00 A.M. and established the landing force command post on the beach. They were met by a Japanese Navy captain, a Kempei colonel, and a party of other officers who formally surrendered the area and received instructions as to what forms of cooperation were expected of them, with the warning that failure to cooperate would be severely dealt with. General Clement then proceeded on to the old Headquarters Building, where the U.S. flag was raised over the naval base at 10:15 with appropriate ceremony. The flag used was the same that had been raised by the First Provisional Brigade on Guam and by the Sixth Division on Okinawa. After this occasion Vice Admiral Totsuka, commandant of the naval base, was instructed to be present at 10:30, to make formal surrender of the Tokyo Bay area to Rear Admiral Carney, Chief of Staff to Admiral Halsey.

The actual ceremony took place at 10:45 A.M., and it marked a memorable moment in Marine Corps history—the climax of the four years of Pacific fighting that had begun with the black days of Bataan and had led on and on through the days

Liberated prisoners—members of the "Old" 4th Marines captured in the Philippines, exchange yarns with members of the "New" 4th.

Marines wade through the surf toward the shore line of the land of the Rising Sun. These troops are going ashore with full equipment to assist in the occupation of Japan.

of Guadalcanal, Bougainville, Emirau, Eniwetok, Guam, Saipan and Okinawa. But like the flag raisings on the other conquered islands this was only an interlude. The 11th Airborne Division and the Third Fleet Landing Force were alone in Japan facing several million fully armed troops who, it was said, still wished to fight. A single incident or false step might touch off the whole explosive mixture, and it was necessary to proceed with the same care as though this were a shooting operation.

The regiment of sea-going Marines accordingly came ashore to relieve the 1st Battalion, 4th, at the airfield, while the regiment of bluejackets relieved the 3rd Battalion at the navy yard. Skeleton crews of sailors boarded those Japanese naval vessels found to be operational and took command. The 4th Marines moved inland to take up a perimeter of defense for all the forces ashore in the area.

General Clement and his staff set up Landing Force Headquarters in the former Japanese Admiralty Headquarters building at Yokosuka and began their complicated task. It included not only demilitarizing large forts, but also disarming Japanese military personnel, releasing Allied prisoners of war and the maintenance of public utilities. Armed reconnaissance parties were detailed and plans were prepared to scour the entire area.

The first night in Japan was quiet. On the following day General Clement left for Yokohama, headquarters of the Supreme Allied Commander, to confer with Lieutenant General Robert L. Eichelberger, commander of the Eighth Army, on occupation policies. Two days later the Marine general was aboard USS *Missouri* to witness the historic signing of the Japanese surrender. By that date the Navy landing party was garrisoning the eastern half of the navy yard, the sea-going Marines were occupying the entire airfield area, and the British were securing installations along the beach between the airfield and the navy yard, as well as garrisoning Azuma Island. The 4th Marines were covering the remainder of the navy yard, with the naval base perimeter as far as the British zone, and were sending out daily patrols to demilitarize small local garrisons in accordance with information furnished by the Japanese.

On September 6, the 4th Marines took over the entire naval base area and the sailors, sea-going Marines and British forces returned to their ships. It had become apparent by this time that the Japanese civilian authorities were sincere in their effort to cooperate. English-speaking Japanese (some of them former soldiers) accompanied the Marine patrols as interpreters as they penetrated inland, where many Japanese gazed at them in wonderment, not having heard of the surrender.

One such patrol was conducted by Battery A, 15th Marines, under Lieutenant Colonel Walter S. Osipoff, the battalion commander. The patrol's mission was to accept the surrender of the Kurihama Naval Mine School and its garrison, then to occupy the shipbuilding center at Uraga. At the latter place the patrol was to obtain full information on harbor installations and to make an inventory on all ships. The Mine School itself, once a key fort in the defense system of Tokyo Bay, was found to be an empty shell as the result of bombings by carrier planes. There was only a skeleton garrison of naval personnel; they conducted the surrender of their fort with the most rigid ceremony, hauling down their flag and tendering their swords to the officers of Battery A. After the ceremony they watched dumbly while Marines searched every structure in the compound, confiscated hundreds of small arms, loaded them onto trucks and left for the town of Uraga.

At Uraga the old men were impassive; the young men generally watched the proceedings with wide-eyed interest, while the young women turned away their faces. Most of the older women went about their business as though nothing unusual were going on, but some cowered against the dirty walls of unpainted and ramshackle buildings. Only the children took delight in the show and seemed unafraid.

A young navy lieutenant acted as interpreter for Colonel Osipoff as the latter took possession of the municipal police station and made his desires known to the mayor. While statistics were being gathered on the city's power plants, fire-fighting equipment and the shipbuilding yards, Lieutenant R. H. Manning headed a patrol on a tour of the harbor installations. There he found a Japanese Navy lieutenant and his staff awaiting the patrol's arrival. Accompanied by these he found hundreds of small naval craft—minesweepers, speed boats, etc., and one large modern transport still under construction. At a conference in the office of the commandant the Japanese officer provided an inventory chart showing the location and type of every vessel in the harbor, while young cadets served sliced tangerines with a fruit wine. The place had been extensively fire-bombed and the whole harbor was a shambles. All buildings, furnaces and wharves were wrecked, and the yards, which employed ten thousand men, had been idle for some time. A drydock large enough to accommodate a 10,000-ton ship was the only major installation to escape destruction.

The liberation of the Allied prisoners provided many pleasant and stirring episodes. Among the famous Marines released by the occupation forces was Lieutenant Colonel James Devereux, who had commanded the Wake Island detachment that took so heavy a toll of Japanese before the place fell. At Yokosuka, 120 liberated members of the "Old 4th" Marines were brought down from Yokohama to meet the men of the "New 4th." The regimental band played while the liberated heroes of the Philippines sat down to a steak dinner with the men who had carried on the name of their organization and General Clement shook hands with men he had last seen on Corregidor. Tales of the horrors of Japanese imprisonment were exchanged for those of victories across the Pacific, and there was even Japanese beer to seal old and new friendships. Two half-brothers, one in the old regiment, one in the new, were joyously reunited after never expecting to see each other again. At the close of the dinner the New 4th held a formal guard mount and presented their regimental colors to the men of the Old 4th.

Another event of this period was the arrival of General Shepherd and his Aide, Lieutenant Benjamin S. Read, on September 5. The General inspected all units in the Yokosuka area and at a formal ceremony awarded decorations to a number of men for exploits in the Okinawa campaign. Fifteen days later the Fleet Landing Force was dissolved, General Clement and his staff leaving for Guam, but the 4th Marines remained at Yokosuka as a garrison.

Major General Eiji Nagano, commander of all Japanese forces in the Tsingtao area, lays down his saber in token of unconditional surrender.

Chapter 18: North China

It was some weeks after the end of the war when the men of the Sixth Division learned of the mission for which they had been training on Guam. They were to have taken part in the attack on the Japanese mainland near Tokyo in February 1946. But with the surrender of our adversaries a new training program was necessary for the tasks the Division would be performing in a world without a war in it. Emphasis was placed on occupation duty, street fighting and the maintenance of order among a civilian population.

Early in September came preparatory orders for the move to North China. The Sixth Division, less those elements still in Japan, was to move to Shantung Peninsula, occupying Tsingtao and nearby Tsangkou Airfield on the southern coast, and the port of Chefoo on the northern coast.

In case the Tsingtao–Chefoo landing proved impractical, the Division was to land at Shanghai, secure the Tachang and Shanghai–Chiangwan airfields, the part of Shanghai around the Huang-Pu River and the area as far south as might be necessary to join hands with the First Marine Division, which also had an alternate plan for landing at Shanghai if its scheduled assignment to Tientsin and Peiping were changed.

Colonel Best left Guam by plane on September 21 with an advance reconnaissance party of twenty officers and men to arrange for troop billets at Tsingtao and Chefoo and to obtain information on such matters as water supply, sanitation facilities and health conditions. There was an extra complication in this assignment, pointed up by the fact that the advance party intelligence section, under Navy Lieutenant Commander Ritchie Davis, was to gather information on the location of all Japanese, Chinese Communist and Japanese puppet forces in the Division's area of responsibility. Major defense installations were also a question, and high on the list was information about places where Allied prisoners were being held. Less than a week later the troops began filing aboard the twelve transports and five cargo ships that were to carry them to China. General Shepherd, General Clement

The Tsingtao populace is genuinely glad to see the Marines arrive.

The formal surrender ceremony. The entire Division (less the 4th Marines) paraded on the Tsingtao Race Course to participate.

Troops of the 4th Battalion, 15th Marines, en route to the formal surrender ceremony.

and the staff boarded the convoy's flagship, USS *Dade,* October 1, and on the next day the ships sailed.

There was little sorrow in the ranks over bidding a long farewell to Guam and its tropical heat. The trip that followed was a novel experience to many—the first time they had been at sea when the ship was not blacked out from sunset to sunrise. Now all the hatches were open, smoking was permitted topside, and all around the horizon shone the navigation lights of other ships in the convoy, red, green and white. Radar antennae, which had slowly turned on all ships, scanning the sky for enemy aircraft, were stilled on all but the command vessel. The sea was calm; the voyage pleasant as no wartime voyage had been.

The route of the convoy carried it past the southern tip of Okinawa, where the Division had spent so much blood. Now it seemed a tiny, peaceful land mass in the distance. In this area General Shepherd and a small staff transferred to the destroyer escort *Melvin K. Nawman* to run to Tsingtao ahead of the convoy and make a detailed reconnaissance prior to landing the troops. Already at this time it seemed probable that plans for landing the 29th Marines at Chefoo might have to be changed, as this city was in the hands of the Chinese Communists, who showed little intention of withdrawing.

Before leaving the *Dade,* the General issued a statement explaining their mission to his men. A few days later the *Dade's* weekly newspaper, *The Invader,* dedicated an issue to the Sixth Division, in which the General's statement appeared:

> United States forces have been designated to participate in the occupation of certain sections of China in order to assist Chinese Central Government forces in the disarmament of Japanese troops. The III Amphibious Corps will occupy the Tientsin–Tsingtao area pending the arrival of Chinese government troops. The Sixth Division will participate in the occupation of the Tsingtao–Chefoo area of Shantung Province.
>
> Our mission is to land and occupy Tsingtao and the adjacent Tsangkou airfield, and the port of Chefoo; to assist local authorities in maintaining order and in preventing disease and starvation; to release, care for, and evacuate recovered Allied military personnel and Allied internees; to cooperate with the Chinese Central Government forces; to accept, when necessary, local surrender of Japanese forces, as authorized by higher authority, and to assist the Chinese in effecting the disarming and confining of these forces.
>
> It is apparent from the foregoing that the function of the Sixth Marine Division in its occupation of the Tsingtao and Chefoo areas is one of assisting a friendly nation in the discharge of a large and complex task.

General Shepherd's departure was like a signal; as the convoy turned northward into the East China Sea, the weather broke, and the ships labored through monstrous, white-flecked seas. It was the outer edge of the great typhoon that caused such extensive damage at Okinawa, and it prevented the convoy from reaching Tsingtao on October 10, the anniversary of the Chinese Republic's foundation,

The surrender ceremonies: 1—Major General Eiji Nagano signs the surrender documents. 2—The American flag is raised over Tsingtao, China. 3—Japanese officers lay down their sabers.

Air view of the infantry component of the Division at the surrender ceremony.

as had been planned. At dawn on the 11th the word of land in sight was passed and by the time the troops had finished their breakfast, they were moving into Kiaochow Bay. The ships came in in single file, with hundreds of Navy and Marine Corps planes overhead in V formations, as out of the distance rose the city which was the first glimpse of anything approaching civilization that many of the troops had seen in two years. Nor did it represent civilization alone; here was adventure—China, a land that was a name in a geography book to most.

Tsingtao, long a subject of international disputes, has become increasingly important with the development of air power. From its airfields planes can patrol most of the Yellow Sea and control the shipping routes of the North China coast. The development of the Tsingtao area was begun by the Chinese themselves, late in the nineteenth century, but in 1897 the German government forced the lease of the place in compensation for the murder of two German missionaries. Because Kiaochow Bay offered the best anchorage north of Shanghai, the Germans began turning its collection of hovels into a base for the Kaiser's Asiatic Fleet. Everything had to be imported, but by 1914 the Germans had converted Tsingtao into a relatively modern city. Then World War I broke out; the Japanese, supported

Top: *The heavy General Sherman tanks fascinate the Chinese populace.* Bottom: *Troops of the 1st Battalion, 29th Marines, after the Japanese surrender.*

Honor Guard ceremonies at the Catholic Cathedral, Tsingtao, China.

by a small unit of British Royal Marines, captured the place, holding it until 1922, when it was returned to China under the Washington agreement.

Tsingtao, as an open door to interior China, attracted American and European business men, and this cosmopolitan influence rapidly turned it into one of the least Chinese-looking of Chinese cities. The waterfront area, largely controlled by Europeans, was built up with modern steel-and-concrete buildings, the streets were wide and paved for wheeled traffic, and the city was one of the cleanest in the Far East. It became the second largest textile and manufacturing center in North China, with some heavy industry and the second largest railroad shops north of Shanghai.

Efforts to unite the Shantung region under the Chinese Central Government had been hampered by lack of communications and political disunity, with the result that a second Japanese attack in 1937 brought a quick collapse of resistance. The province was among the first to be incorporated into Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Now that sphere had itself collapsed, and the rehabilitation of the province presented a serious problem to the Chinese Central Government and its allies, since it would take much time to move a Chinese army in from the southern part of the country. As a result, existing Japanese garrisons had been instructed to maintain order until United Nations troops could be brought in.

The arrival of the Sixth Division represented the second stage in the process; they were to disarm the Japanese and maintain order until regular Chinese troops could relieve them. Accomplishment of the mission began shortly after noon on October 11, when the men of the Division disembarked.

For this landing the reception committee did not consist of Japanese armed with machine guns and grenades, but of the Division's own advance party and the Chinese press, its weapons cameras and pencils. Odd-looking charcoal-burning Japanese trucks were on hand for transportation, now under authority of the Chinese War Transportation Board; in some of these the Reconnaissance Company (now under command of Major Alexander D. Cereghino) set out for Tsangkou Airfield, seven miles northeast of the city. They found it a quiet spot among the hills. Major Cereghino set up a defense around the field and informed the Japanese commander that he was formally relieved of his duties, the Japanese troops being removed from the field on the next day. The Reconnaissance Company remained on guard for ten days, until the arrival of Marine Air Group 32 from Okinawa, at which time the Sixth Division's artillery observation squadron, VMO–6, also came in from the aircraft carrier *Bougainville*.

Back at Tsingtao itself, throngs of Chinese lined the streets to cheer the marching Marines, give the "thumbs up" salute and watch the big tanks rumble past. Buildings formerly used by the Japanese were

Division Headquarters—previously occupied by the Japanese Naval Command in the Tsingtao area.

taken over as troop billets, including Shantung University and several primary schools. One school assigned to the 15th Marines was totally destroyed by fire shortly before they arrived, with the result that Chinese authorities arrested ten Japanese, including the school superintendent, on arson charges, all of them being later convicted. At the old German barracks taken over by the 6th Tank Battalion, Japanese soldiers had ripped out the telephone lines, but seventy of them were detained until the system had been reinstalled.

With these exceptions, the occupation was smooth. The Division command post was opened October 13, in the building that had formerly housed Japanese Naval Headquarters for the Tsingtao area; the Grand Hotel was taken over as Military Police Headquarters and the Civil Affairs office was set up in the former German consulate.

In the meanwhile, the commanding general, III Amphibious Corps, had investigated the situation at Chefoo and cancelled the orders for a landing there. It was the second most important city of the Shantung Peninsula, but the Chinese Communists had set up their own government there and were preparing to oppose any American landing by force. It was no part of the policy of our government to interfere in Chinese internal affairs; the city appeared to be orderly, and the Japanese troops had been withdrawn from the area, so the 29th Marines were brought ashore at Tsingtao, five days after the initial landing. They were quartered in the Japanese Middle School.

Tsingtao had once been known as "the Riviera of the Far East," but during the long years of Japanese occupation it had deteriorated into a paste imitation of a fifth-rate Atlantic City. One by one the cafés of Shantung Road, Tsingtao's Broadway, had been forced to put up their shutters, and even the beach houses at the famous Strand beach were ripped down. During the war dirt and dullness took the place of the former gayety, and the only amusements were occasional gunshots in the night or gossip about who would be hustled off next to the internment camp at nearby Wei H'sien.

The arrival of the Sixth Division rapidly changed this. As soon as the Marines began doing the town, people magically leaped out of their lassitude, and Shantung Road with its less attractive tributaries became filled with life. Every other person, from ragged waifs to ancients, had something to sell—apples coated with honey, beads, dried peas, fountain pens, straw baskets, peanuts, mandarin caps, canes, "genuine jade" curios, kimonos, picture postcards, alleged Scotch whiskey of very recent local origin, crockery, baked potatoes, shoes, books, pencils, rings, wrist bands, bracelets, hosiery, tobacco, watches, pears, beer and trashy Japanese leftovers. Everywhere were large posters heralding victory and the arrival of the Marines.

Prices for everything went up sharply and the exchange rate between American money—"gold" to the Chinese—and the local Federal Reserve Bank notes did queer dipsy-doodles that Marines were unable to comprehend. When the advance party arrived at Tsingtao the exchange rate was $2,700 Chinese for $1 US and quart bottles of Japanese beer were selling for $250 FRB (Chinese Federal Reserve Bank notes). By time the main body of troops was ashore the exchange had dropped to $2,000 for $1 and the price of beer was $400 a bottle. A week later the exchange had gone down to $1,200 for $1 and whatever beer could be found cost $1,600 a bottle. This situation offered an opportunity to the local money peddlers, since the prevailing rate at Shanghai or Tientsin was $4,000-$5,000 in FRB for $1 American, and they went to work at once buying up American money with their FRB. This speculation sent the exchange rate soaring till it hit a peak of $6,700 for $1.

It was a situation that might have brought protests under other conditions, but not from these

The formal surrender. General Shepherd and Lieutenant General Chen Pao-tsang.

Formal Surrender by the Senior Japanese Army and Auxiliary Forces Commanders within the Tsingtao Area to the Commanding General Sixth Marine Division, III Amphibious Corps, Fleet Marine Force, United States Marine Corps, and to the Deputy Commander Eleventh Chinese War Area, for and in Behalf of the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek

The Emperor of Japan, the Japanese government, and the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters, having recognized the complete military defeat of Japanese Military Forces by Allied Forces and having surrendered unconditionally to the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, and

The Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers having directed by his General Order Number One that "The Senior Commanders and all ground, sea, air and auxiliary forces within China (excluding Manchuria) Formosa and French Indo-China north of the 16 degrees north latitude shall surrender to the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek,"

We, the Japanese Commanders of all Japanese forces and auxiliaries in the Tsingtao area, also recognizing complete military defeat of Japanese Military Forces by Allied Forces, hereby surrender unconditionally all of the forces under our command to the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek.

All Japanese forces hereby surrendered will cease hostilities and, until otherwise directed, will remain at the stations they now occupy. They will assemble, preserve without damage, and turn over to forces specified by the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek all arms, ammunition, equipment, supplies, records, information and other assets of any kind belonging to the Japanese Forces. Pending specific instructions all Japanese aircraft, naval units and merchant ships in the area named above will be held without damage where they are presently located.

All Allied prisoners of war and civilian internees now under Japanese control in the area named above will be liberated at once and Japanese forces will provide protection, care, maintenance and transportation to places as directed.

Henceforth, all Japanese forces, hereby surrendered, will be subject to the control of the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. They will obey only orders and proclamations issued by him, or his duly authorized representatives, or orders of their Japanese commanders based thereon.

This act of surrender and all subsequent orders and proclamations of the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, to the surrendered forces will be issued at once to appropriate subordinate commanders and forces, and it will be the responsibility of all Jap-

anese Commanders and forces to see that such proclamations and orders are immediately and completely complied with.

Any member of the forces surrendered hereby, who fails or delays to act in accordance with this act of surrender or future orders or proclamations of the Generalissimo, will be summarily and drastically punished, together with his responsible commanders.

We understand and acknowledge that the Commanding General, Sixth Marine Division, and the Deputy Commander, Eleventh China War Area, are the duly authorized representatives of the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, and that we will immediately and completely carry out and put into effect his orders and instructions.

In case of conflict or ambiguity between the English text of this document and any translation thereof, the English text shall govern.

Signed at Tsingtao on the 25th day of October 1945 by Command and in behalf of the Emperor of Japan and the Japanese Government.

**

Nagano Eiji

Accepted at Tsingtao on the 25th day of October 1945 for China, The United States, Great Britain and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the interest of the other United Nations at war with the Japanese.

For the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek

Leonard C. Shepherd Jr.

Major General, United States Marine Corps
Commanding, Sixth Marine Division

李延年

Major General, Chinese Army
Deputy Commander Eleventh Chinese War Area

The 6th Tank Battalion at the surrender ceremonies.

civilization-starved troops, who found themselves able for the first time in two years to sit down in a restaurant and order a meal of steak and eggs or a full course Chinese dinner; or cluster around tables in bars and be served with vodka, beer or brandy. All but the beer were plentiful.

There were bathhouses, too, with the first hot-water baths available in many months. For twenty-five cents (U.S.) a Marine could enjoy the luxury of a tub half-filled with hot water, with the bathing chores performed by an attendant, followed by a manicure and pedicure and a brisk massage as he lay on a cot in a Turkish towel bathrobe. A shampoo, haircut and shave completed the lavish ritual of grooming, and at the door the Leatherneck could take a rickshaw ride into the center of the city for his night of liberty at a cost of another five or ten cents.

Meanwhile, the serious tasks of the Division went on. Patrols had gone out to determine the number of Japanese troops in the area and the extent of the defensive installations. There were plenty of the latter—forts covering all the approaches to the Shantung Peninsula and the entrances to Tsingtao harbor, mainly built by the Germans and much improved by the Japanese when they took over. There were plenty of Japanese troops, too—over ten thousand of them, who had been garrisoning Tsingtao when the Division arrived, surrendered in a colorful, hour-long ceremony at the Tsingtao race track.

All units of the Division except the 4th Marines, still on duty in Japan, were present, and General Shepherd issued a special division order, which said:

> You are about to participate in the formal surrender of the Japanese military force in the Tsingtao area. It is an historic event which each of you shall long remember. It is the goal for which we have fought during these past four years, and I am sure the personal satisfaction each of you obtains from witnessing the local Japanese Army commander lay down his sword in complete defeat will, in a small measure, compensate for the dangers and hardships to which you have been exposed during your service in this war.

As more than twelve thousand Marines stood at attention in the oval race course, their tanks and weapons forming a powerful display of military might, a Japanese major general signed the surrender document. He was Major General Eiji Nagano, commander of the 5th Independent Mixed Brigade. The acceptances, in ten copies, were signed by General Shepherd and Lieutenant General Chen-Pao-tsang, representing the Chinese Ministry of War.

Flags of the United States and China flew from the masts on the surrender platform itself, and atop the race course grandstand were the flags of the United States, China, Great Britain, Russia and France. The audience beneath them was a highly cosmopolitan group, including internees only just released from the Wei H'sien internment camp. They saw General Nagano lay down his pen, unhook his sword and place it on the table in front of General Shepherd, an action presently imitated by the Japanese officer's staff. Marine Military Police now escorted the Japanese from the field, and the Division Band played the American National Anthem, the Chinese National Anthem and the *Marine Corps Hymn*. Among the officers witnessing the surrender from the platform with General Shepherd were Major General Keller E. Rockey, commanding the III Amphibious Corps and Vice Admiral Daniel E. Barbey, commander of the Seventh Fleet Amphibious Forces.

One phase of the Division's mission was thus accomplished; attention now turned to arrangements for the repatriation of the Japanese, military and civilians, and to the maintenance of order and public services while the first task was in progress. The focal point of this work lay in the Civil Affairs section, headed by Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Rickert.

A city administration had been recognized by the Chinese Central Government, the mayor being Li Sien-liang, who had led a group of guerrillas in Shantung Province during the war, and had moved into Tsingtao with a force of about three thousand men at the end of hostilities. Lacking personnel qualified to administer the various city departments, Mayor Li had been forced to appoint military men without specialized training, since the only trained administrators were men who had collaborated with the Japanese during their seven-year occupation. It was the task of the Civil Affairs Section to cooperate with and assist Mayor Li's appointees. In discharging this last task the Division was fortunate to have on its staff Captain Ernest B. Price, formerly a U.S. consular official in China for fifteen years, who knew the country intimately and spoke the language fluently.

Among the tasks accomplished was the inspection of the city's fire department and the conclusion of arrangements for its operation with the Division fire department in case either encountered a blaze it could not handle alone; the coordination of the Marine Military Police and the local Peace Preservation Corps; the testing of the city's water supply and the study of its meat inspection facilities. Numerous restaurants and bars were placed out of bounds to Sixth Division troops because of insanitary conditions in their kitchens.

There were a good many United States citizens who had been stranded in Shantung, many of whom had lost all their possessions, even clothing. They had to be assisted, while guards were placed around approximately one hundred pieces of American property found in the Tsingtao area. Much American property had been systematically looted by the Japanese, and in such cases efforts to recover the missing furniture and equipment were set afoot. Sometimes the recovery proved impossible, and in such cases claims were investigated for report to the Allied Claims Commission.

As the initial step in repatriation a census of Japanese civilians in the Tsingtao area was undertaken. Approximately thirty thousand were found in the city itself and it was estimated that an additional forty-five thousand residing in Shantung Province would be moved out through Tsingtao harbor. The Civil Affairs Section took over warehouses and made arrangements to feed thirty thousand Japanese during the period needed for the migration. As far as it was practically possible, the Japanese in Tsingtao proper were segregated in one portion of the city, this district being placed under the control of the Civil Affairs Section.

Repatriation of the Japanese military personnel was quite a different problem, and was handled by Division G-3, with Major Spencer H. Pratt in direct charge of the task. The first movement of troops back to metropolitan Japan was made on November 18, when three thousand naval personnel were loaded on three American LSTs. They had been members

Red Cross canteen workers who assisted in the operation of Shepherd House, the Division Enlisted Men's Club.

of the naval air group based on Tsangkou field. A fleet of fifteen LSTs then began a shuttle service between Tsingtao and Japan, the movement continuing until all the approximately sixty thousand Japanese troops in Shantung Province were evacuated.

Of the civilians many were businessmen who had come to Shantung with their families to help build the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. The first group left Tsingtao on December 8, 3,275 sailing for Hakata, Japan, aboard the liner *Tatsuki Maru*. The supply of Japanese shipping was insufficient, so American LSTs were also employed in the task of civilian repatriation.

Another type of duty fell to the 1st Battalion, 29th Marines, who were detached from the Division and moved out to Peitaiho, three hundred miles north of Tsingtao, to assist First Division Marines in guarding the Tientsin–Chinwangtao railroad, over which passes most of China's coal supply. The battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Leroy P. Hunt, Jr., was reinforced by Battery E of the 15th Marines and a tank platoon from the 6th Tank Battalion, and was assigned to guard a forty-mile stretch of the railroad.

At the same time competition to the delights of liberty in town began to be offered by the appearance of such recreational facilities as the Red Cross and Enlisted Men's Clubs—the former in what had been the Tsingtao International Club, built in 1913 for German colonials. The halls that had once seen ponderous discussions of the Kaiser and world power over steins of beer were provided with ping-pong tables, a snack bar, a library and—most welcome of all—American hostesses. It was formally dedicated on November 3 by General Shepherd, in whose honor the building was renamed "The Shepherd House." At the dedication ceremony the general presented a key to the club to Private First Class Joseph J. Stadrawa, a veteran who had been wounded on Okinawa, and the first man to enter the building on the night it was opened.

Simultaneously, work was rushed on a radio station, the first Marine Corps-sponsored station ever operated in China. It was named XABU, and was completed by November 10, date of the Marine Corps birthday.

Six weeks later, on Christmas Eve, the Enlisted Men's Club opened its doors, featuring an unlimited supply of Stateside beer, and mural paintings reminiscent of the gayest night spots of the speakeasy era.

Tsingtao stadium boasted an athletic layout of which any American university would have been proud. Touch-football games were played there throughout the fall, culminating in a Thanksgiving Day "Rice Bowl" game, which brought the 22nd against the 29th. Between them, the teams could produce an impressive array of grid stars—John August of the University of Alabama, Saxon Judd of Tulsa University, W. O. (Pott) Pottenger of Western Michigan and "Sixty-Minute" John Genis of Purdue. A crowd of more than ten thousand watched the game, which was won by the 22nd, 25 to 14.

With the close of the football season the Marines turned to basketball, and the enlisted quintet of the 22nd made a strong bid for the North China championship. The team was built around such stars as Corporal Larry Baxter of Dartmouth and St. John's Colleges, who was placed on the runner-up team in All-America selections; Pfc. Jack Hubbard of Central Washington College, an All-State selection; Pfc. Ed Fox, All-State in New York; John Patrick Kelly, former professional, and Corporal Chet Ross, who had played in semi-pro leagues.

On the day before Christmas General Shepherd relinquished command of the Division to Major General Archie F. Howard, in a formal ceremony attended by the Division Staff, the regimental and

battalion commanders and their executives. The Division Band played *Auld Lang Syne* as the flag of the general who had formed the Division, trained it and led it through the Okinawa campaign to victory was lowered from its staff atop the Administration Building. Following an exchange of salutes, General Howard's flag was raised over the building as the band played the *Marine Corps Hymn*. Band and honor guard marched away while the two generals marched down the double rank of officers, General Shepherd to bid goodbye to each, General Howard to shake hands with members of his staff.

In General Howard the Sixth Division acquired one of the Marine Corps' most capable administrators and ablest diplomats, one of whose most striking characteristics is a ready human understanding that makes him easy to approach. Born January 29, 1892, at Clay Center, Kansas, he was appointed to the Naval Academy as a midshipman after attending Lyon County Elementary School in Americus, Kansas, and spending six months at Kansas University.

Upon being graduated in 1915, he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps, winning his promotion to first lieutenant in April 1917, and that to captain six months later. During the latter part of World War I he held the temporary rank of major and was permanently commissioned in that rank in 1929. He became a lieutenant colonel in 1935, a colonel in 1939 and a brigadier general in 1942.

The long stretch of his service included China and Siberia during World War I, Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico, the Panama Canal Zone and the Philippines. Afloat he had served aboard the *Brooklyn, Galveston, Helena, Wyoming, Texas* and *New York*. He completed the two-year course at the Army's Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and the senior course of the Naval War College at Newport, Rhode Island.

In July 1939, General Howard was named Assistant Commandant of Marine Corps Schools, serving in that capacity until January 1941, when he was appointed Commandant. From May 1941 to July 1943 he was Chief of Staff of the I Marine Amphibious Corps, at that time central command organization of all Marine units in the Pacific Ocean Area. Later he was Island Commander of Guadalcanal and then of Munda, being awarded the Army's Distinguished Service Medal for his services; and he came to the Sixth Division from a post as Inspector General of Fleet Marine Force Pacific, in which capacity he had just completed surveys on Guam and in Japan. His decorations include the Victory Medal with Siberian Clasp for service in the *Brooklyn* in 1918; the Expeditionary Medal for service in Santo Domingo in 1922-23; the American Service Defense ribbon, 1939-41; and the Asiatic-Pacific ribbon with bronze star.

When he assumed command of the Division, Japanese forces that had garrisoned Tsingtao were disarmed and repatriated, Allied nationals from the Wei H'sien camp had been moved to their former residences in China or to their homelands, and the Division was fully prepared to maintain order.

By February 1, Marine Corps agencies were beginning to turn over the Japanese repatriation task to Chinese authorities. Chinese Eighth National Army troops had begun the relief of the 7,400-man Japanese 5th Independent Mixed Brigade in the nearby Lao-Shan hills, along the vital Tsingtao–Tsinan railroad, and at the Chi–Mo garrison point, twenty miles north of Tsingtao.

Negotiations were already under way in Peiping to end the 18-month-old civil war in China, and it appeared that this vast land might at last achieve unity, owing in no small measure to the presence of American arms. The mission was accomplished; it was clear that the services of the Sixth Marine Division in the Orient would soon no longer be required.

On April 1, 1946, the Sixth Division, reduced to a strength commensurate with the peace-time needs of the Corps, was redesignated the Third Marine Brigade. It was the last of the four wartime divisions to be formed, the last to be inactivated, leaving only the First and Second Divisions intact as part of the Corps' permanent postwar structure.

The Sixth had the unique record of never seeing duty in the United States during the whole of its nineteen months of existence. Throughout the campaigns of Melanesia, Micronesia and the Orient, its officers and men held high the sword emblazoned on their badge, and Corps and County will remember the crusading spirit with which they fought.

Chapter 19: The Commanders

MAJOR GENERAL LEMUEL CORNICK SHEPHERD, JR.

General Shepherd is a Virginian (born at Norfolk, February 10, 1896), and shares with General of the Army George C. Marshall the somewhat unusual background of being a graduate neither of the Naval nor Military Academy, but of the Virginia Military Institute. It was in the month of April 1917 that President Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war against Germany, and four days later Shepherd was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps. He departed from VMI with a Bachelor of Science degree in May 1917 and was immediately sent to Parris Island.

His training at that base did not last long; by June he was already on his way to France as an officer of the 5th Marine Regiment and during the summer and fall of 1917 underwent intensive training with the regiment. The 5th became a unit of the Army's 2d Division and entered the lines in the Verdun Sector in March 1918. In active war promotions are rapid; by August of 1917 Lieutenant Shepherd was a first lieutenant and eleven months later he became a captain.

Captain Shepherd went through three major battles—the Aisne, St. Mihiel, and the Meuse–Argonne—and was three times wounded—near Le Mares Farm, at the Bois de Belleau (which the French renamed Bois de la Brigade de Marine), and in the Meuse–Argonne. There was ample experience of the attack crowded into those months, but it seems to have been his experience on the defensive that most influenced military thinking.

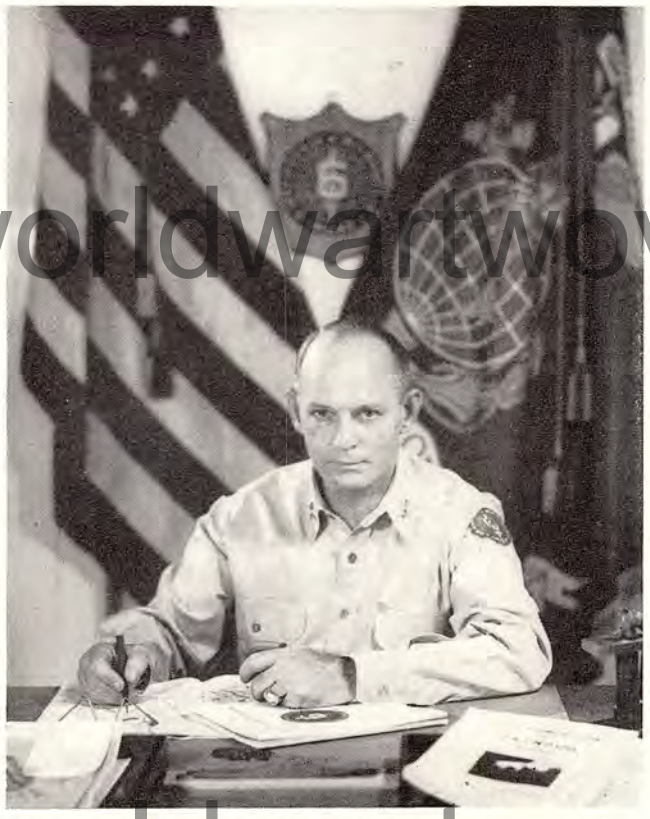
"I shall never forget," he has said, "those days in June 1918, when the last German offensive of World War I was at its height. The 4th Marine Brigade was deployed in a thin line across the Château-Thierry—Paris highway, with orders to hold at all costs. We withstood the German attacks for three days before taking the offensive ourselves and counterattacking in Belleau Wood. It's a helpless feeling to know the enemy is about to assault you, and you can do little about it. If possible, a commander should always strive to be on the offensive—*attack*—and put the heat on the enemy and keep it on; that is my motto for winning battles." A considerable variation, be it noticed, from the European theory of war fathered by Clausewitz, which holds that "the defensive is the strongest form."

After the Armistice, young Captain Shepherd was assigned to the Army of Occupation in Germany as a company commander, later serving on the brigade staff and remaining with it until August 1919, when he returned to the United States. He remained only a month before returning to France on a detail assigned to making relief maps of the battlefields of the Fourth Marine Brigade.

In December 1920, Captain Shepherd was appointed aide-de-camp to Major General J. A. Lejeune, then Commandant of the Corps, and from June 1921 to July 1922, served as junior aide at the White House. A picked detachment of Marines was sent to the Internation Exposition at Rio de Janeiro that year; Captain Shepherd was its executive officer. Through the years that followed he went through the varied employments of a Marine officer in peace—at sea aboard the battleships *Idaho* and *Nevada,* in China with the Third Brigade at Tientsin, and as regimental adjutant of the "Old 4th" at Shanghai, and four years as a District and Departmental Commander in the Garde d'Haiti. In 1918 he had won his second promotion in a year; in 1932 he reached the rank of major after fourteen years, and in July 1935 was promoted to lieutenant colonel.

This was followed by a course at the Naval War College, and an appointment to command the battalion with which he had served in France, the 2nd of the 5th Regiment. The regiment had lately been assigned to the new Fleet Marine Force, organized for and busily studying a concept then so new in war that many people believed it impossible—amphibious assault. Colonel Shepherd spent two years at it; when he had finished this tour of duties he was transferred to the Marine Corps Schools at Quantico where he served as Director of the Correspondence School, Chief of the Tactical Section, and Assistant Commandant. A year later came his promotion to colonel.

The war was obviously nearing our shores by that time and in the fall of 1941 the Officer Candidate Course was set up, looking toward the expansion of the Corps. Colonel Shepherd was placed in charge



Major General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Commanding General, Sixth Marine Division.

of it, and thus was responsible for the basic training of many of the younger officers who fought Japan.

In March 1942, the 9th Regiment was activated, and Colonel Shepherd received the command. It was in training for nine months. The special qualities which the Colonel stressed were a thoroughness in the basic training of the individual and tactics of the company, battalion and reinforced regiment. The regiment, which was initially part of the Second Division, became the nucleus of the Third Division in August. Colonel Shepherd took the regiment overseas in January 1943, and served with it in New Zealand and Guadalcanal; but before it went into battle for the first time at Bougainville, he was promoted to brigadier general and assigned as Assistant Division Commander of the First Marine Division.

That division was then serving in Australia and General Shepherd spent several months with it before setting out for his first major battle of the war—the landing at Cape Gloucester on Christmas Day of 1943. After the capture of the airfield at that point, the general was given a semi-independent command as head of a task force in the Borgen Bay area. There were two hard battles there, in which he drove the enemy from a pair of positions known as Agori Ridge and Hill 660. They were decisive, for the Japanese abandoned western New Britain as a result.

The personal result for General Shepherd was the award of the Legion of Merit with this citation from Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid, commander of the Seventh Fleet:

> From 29 December, 1943 [General Shepherd] actively commanded and effectively planned the employment of the Division units that occupied and extended the perimeter of the Borgen Bay sector. These forces captured and occupied Target Hill and Hill 660, two strongly held enemy positions, and extended the perimeter eastward 3,000 yards, thus securing the Landing Beach area for subsequent resupply of the Division despite constant efforts of the enemy to regain possession of the area. Working under the stress of time and battle, Brigadier General Shepherd accomplished the task in an exceptionally meritorious manner. That the operation of the forces thus commanded resulted in the complete elimination of the enemy from this sector was due in a large measure to the professional attainment and devotion to duty on the part of Brigadier General Shepherd.

The campaign was barely over when General Shepherd was ordered to Guadalcanal to assume command of the First Provisional Brigade, by that time already assuming some of the aspects of a division. His new troops soon discovered that he made a great point of active, personal command. Later, all through the Guam campaign, he was in the front lines daily, trusting nothing so much as his personal reconnaissance. Said one of his officers: "It's pretty dangerous walking around the front lines with a star on your collar. We always thought he should have been more careful. But it does a lot for the morale of the men to squeeze one off and then see the Old Man standing there watching."

To General Shepherd these trips were more than a matter of morale. "You can't find out how a battle is going sitting in a command post," he has said. "You've got to get up there and talk to your subordinate commanders. A commander should have the feel of the situation, and there's no place to get it except in the front lines." But morale is important, too: "I think it helps the morale of the men to know that their brigade commander is forward where he can see what they are up against."

His performance in the Guam campaign brought the general the Distinguished Service Medal, with a citation that concluded:

> His indomitable courage in repeatedly occupying forward positions to determine tactical situations and his resolute spirit of aggression in the recapture of this important stronghold reflect the highest credit upon Brigadier General Shepherd, his gallant command, and the United States Naval Service.

General Vandegrift felt moved to supplement the citation by a personal letter:

> I wish to express my personal gratification upon the recognition of your exceptionally meritorious service to the government in a duty of great responsibility as Commanding General of the First Provisional Marine Brigade, during the assault and occupation of Guam . . . as evidenced by the award to you of the Distinguished Service Medal with a citation by the President of the United States. Be assured of my deep appreciation of your devotion to duty and exemplary conduct which are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Marine Corps.

After the Guam campaign the general returned with his brigade to Guadalcanal, where it became the Sixth Division and he a major general, with rank as of February 1 of that same year. On September 7 he began training the full division—a function of which he has said, not once, but several times:

"A combat team is just like a football team—it must know and rehearse its plays before it enters a game. Once a unit is committed to action, there is little a commander can do to influence the situation. Every individual of an organization must know his job and be so well disciplined that he will automatically comply with orders under fire. The long hours devoted to training will pay big dividends when the chips are down. And there is one thing more—every individual must be imbued with the will to win, no matter what difficulties are encountered."

The spirit he instilled in the Sixth Marine Division was perhaps best defined by an Army officer who served alongside Marines in several island operations and who praised the Sixth in these words:

"We got along fine with every Marine division, and enjoyed working with them, but the Sixth was the most professional outfit I ever saw. All they wanted to do was to attack."

In addition to the decorations named, the General has been awarded the Navy Cross for action in France; Army Distinguished Service Cross; a Gold Star for his Distinguished Service Medal; an Oak Leaf Cluster to his Legion of Merit; Silver Star with Oak Leaf Cluster; Bronze Star Medal; Purple Heart with two Oak Leaf Clusters and Gold Star; the Presidential Unit Citation and Navy Unit Commendation ribbons; French Croix de Guerre with Gold Star; French Fourragère; Montenegrin Silver Medal of Bravery; World War I Victory Medal with four battle clasps; German Occupation Medal; Yangtze Campaign Medal; Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal with Bronze Star; China Service Medal; Distinguished Service Medal and the Order of Honor and Merit of Haiti; and the Chinese Order of Cloud and Banner, 2nd Class.

Brigadier General William T. Clement, Assistant Division Commander.

Brigadier General William Tardy Clement

Brigadier General Clement had the unique record of seeing the war at its very beginning and very end. He was one of the first men in Manila to learn

of the attack on Pearl Harbor, being awakened at 2:30 in the morning as staff duty officer to receive the famous message: "Attack on Pearl Harbor—this is no drill!" At the end a general, he was assistant division commander of the Sixth and was chosen to command the Marine and Naval forces which landed in the Yokosuka and Tokyo Bay area to receive the unconditional surrender of the proud and desperate men who had initiated that attack.

Born in Lynchburg, Virginia, in 1894, he was, like General Shepherd, a graduate of VMI, being sworn in as a second lieutenant of Marines a month later than the latter, in May 1917. There was a revolution in Haiti at the time; one week later Lieutenant Clement was ordered thither with a detachment of reinforcements for the Marine Guard, and he spent the whole of the next two years on that bandit-infested and uncomfortable island. In 1923, a captain, he was ordered to the American Legation Guard at Peiping, China, where he remained another two years before returning to San Diego. The year 1926 saw mail robberies reach epidemic proportions, and the Marines were called in. Captain Clement was sent to Denver, where he commanded the parties guarding the mails in the states of Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska and the Panhandle of Texas.

From this duty he was suddenly recalled in the following year to join the 4th Regiment when that organization was rushed to Shanghai because of the Chinese troubles. The assignment kept him beyond the Pacific for another two years, when he returned to San Diego, served for a time as executive officer of the Recruit Depot and Sea School, and then had a tour of duty aboard the battleship *West Virginia* before going to Bremerton, Washington, as commander of the Marine Barracks at the Ammunition Depot there.

In 1934 he received his majority and went to Quantico as a student and then as instructor at the Marine Corps Schools, a duty which lasted for three years. This led more or less naturally to his next appointment, as commander of the Platoon Leaders' Classes—students from various colleges, who were being trained to qualify as reserve lieutenants upon graduation.

From 1938 to 1940, Clement, now a lieutenant colonel, commanded the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, and maneuvered both with and against his future associate, General Shepherd during exercises in the Caribbean. The two gained an intimate knowledge of each other's approach to the problem of tactics in amphibious warfare that was to prove of the highest utility in the years ahead.

In June 1940, Colonel Clement once more returned to the Orient, now as a member of the staff of Admiral Thomas C. Hart, commanding the U.S. Asiatic Fleet. Not long after his arrival he was sent on a special inspection trip through North China to obtain first-hand information about territory under Japanese control and to prepare plans for reducing the Marine force in North China.

Fleet headquarters had been moved ashore on the dispersal of the surface ships in October of 1941, and it was in the shore headquarters that Colonel Clement received the famous message announcing war. He remained in the city during the bombing, when the navy yard was destroyed and it became evident that the fleet could not be supported from that spot. The remaining ships and members of the headquarters staff were sent southward during December, Admiral Hart leaving by seaplane on Christmas night; but Colonel Clement remained behind at his own request and went to Bataan to join the 4th Marines.

Colonel Clement was on the Peninsula until its surrender on April 9, 1942. On that night he received orders to leave by submarine for Australia.

His own story of the escape is: "Two Jap destroyers and a cruiser were patrolling the entrance to the harbor to prevent boats from getting away. After dark we tried twice to pass through the minefield in a small boat, but each time we were picked up by the Jap searchlights and had to return. The third time, about 11:30 P.M., we were able to evade the patrol vessels and fortunately contacted the submarine which had been ordered to pick up our party. We climbed aboard after midnight and at 1:30 slipped through the blockade and escaped."

Seventeen days later the Colonel reached Freemantle, where he illustrated the international character of the war by being placed in charge of the training of a group of Australian commandos.

This training was still incomplete when he was ordered to Washington and flown across the Pacific for temporary duty on the East Coast. After four months Colonel Clement was sent to England on the staff of Admiral Stark, commander of U.S. Naval Forces in European waters. He remained there

until November 1943, then returned to Quantico for duty as Assistant Commandant and then Commandant of the Marine Corps Schools, a post which he still held in October 1944, when ordered to Guadalcanal as assistant commander of the Sixth Division.

General Clement holds the Navy Cross, awarded for duty on Bataan. His other decorations are three awards of the Legion of Merit; Bronze Star Medal; Army Distinguished Unit Citation with Oak Leaf Cluster; Navy Presidential Unit Citation with two stars; Philippine Defense Medal; Haitian Campaign Medal; World War I Victory Medal; Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal with two Stars; Yangtze Campaign Medal; China Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Ribbon with three battle stars; European Theater Ribbon; American Theater Ribbon; Chinese Order of Cloud and Banner; and Commander of the Order of Orange–Nassau.

Colonel John C. McQueen

Colonel John T. Walker was the Sixth Division's first Chief of Staff. In November 1944, he was relieved by Colonel John C. McQueen. Born in Carrollton, Missouri (July 5, 1899), Colonel McQueen attended the United States Naval Academy, being commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps on graduation in 1921.

The high spot of his duties during the next ten years was his service in Nicaragua where he went as commander of the Marine detachment aboard USS *Cleveland*. The detachment served ashore in Somotillo during a major portion of the time from February 1928 to April 1929. McQueen returned to Nicaragua again in 1930, this time to spend two years serving first in the Guardia Nacional de Nicaragua as District Commander of Somotillo and El Sauce, and later as Department Commander of Esteli. His services earned him the Nicaraguan Cross of Valor.

In the process he acquired an elaborate knowledge of Spanish, which brought him an appointment as an instructor in that language at the Marine Corps Schools after his return to the United States. In 1936, when the guns of the Spanish Civil War began to be heard, McQueen's Spanish was again put to use. He was named commander of the Marine Detachment aboard the newly commissioned heavy cruiser *Quincy*, sent to evacuate nationals from Spain to France. Among others "we inadvertently evacuated two nieces of King Alfonso," Colonel McQueen has said. "They came aboard in disguise and their identity wasn't discovered until they were safely in France."

In July 1939, then a major, Colonel McQueen was detailed to the Army's Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Graduation brought him an assignment as instructor in the Tactical Section of the Marine Corps Schools, then headed by the man who was later to be his commander, Lieutenant Colonel Shepherd. This appointment lasted until 1940, when McQueen was sent to London to observe British landing operations.

He was there during the great "night fire blitz" of Christmas week. "You could stand in the street and read a newspaper by the light of the burning city," he has described it.

July of 1941 found him back in the States, where he served until October 1942, at Headquarters Marine Corps. He was then assigned as chief of Intelligence on the Staff of the Commander of Amphibious Forces Pacific Fleet and was Intelligence Officer on the Joint Planning Staff which drew the plans for the recovery of Attu and Kiska. His personal participation in these operations won him the Legion of Merit.

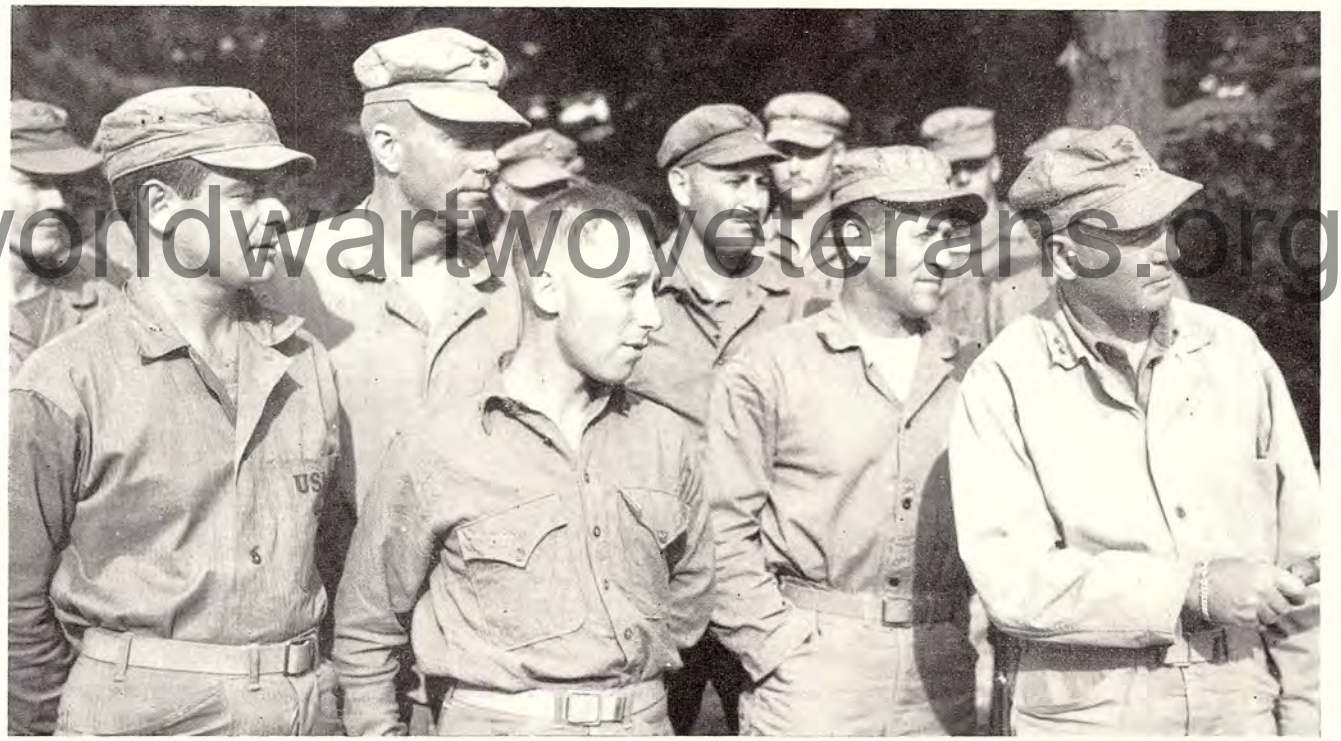
A second Legion of Merit followed in recognition of his services with the V Amphibious Corps as Operations Officer during the attacks on the Marshalls and Marianas. He received his colonelcy in November, 1943, and celebrated his 24th year of service with a third Legion of Merit for the Okinawa Campaign.

Staff

Major Addison B. Overstreet

Major Overstreet headed the G-1 (Personnel) Section of the First Provisional Brigade, and when the brigade became the Sixth Division he continued in that role.

Born at Enderlin, North Dakota, December 28, 1915, and a B.A. graduate of the University of Minnesota (1937) he continued to a law degree in 1940, in August of which year he was commissioned a second lieutenant of Marines.



Left to right: *Major Addison B. Overstreet, G-1; Lieutenant Colonel August Larson, G-4; Lieutenant Colonel Victor H. Krulak, G-3; Lieutenant Colonel Thomas E. Williams, G-2; Colonel John C. McQueen, Chief of Staff; General Shepherd.*

His present rank was attained on June 15, 1943. By that time he had seen overseas duty in Iceland and Guadalcanal, and five months later he participated with the Third Division in the assault landing at Empress Augusta Bay, Bougainville. In April 1944, he joined the First Provisional Brigade, and with it participated in the landing on Guam, for which service he received the Bronze Star Medal. He later received the Legion of Merit and a Gold Star on his Bronze Star Medal for services on Okinawa.

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas E. Williams

Lieutenant Colonel Williams took over the duty as Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2 (Intelligence) of the Division from Lieutenant Colonel Robert S. Shaw in November 1944, and continued in this post until just prior to inactivation.

Born September 26, 1915, in Denver, Colorado, he was graduated from the University there in 1936 with B.A. and M.A. degrees and immediately enlisted in the Marine Corps. He was placed in reserve status in April 1938, after attending the Platoon Leaders Class at San Diego and receiving a commission. Returning to active duty in April 1940, he was graduated from the Marine Corps Schools in June of the same year.

In Iceland (July 1941–March 1942) he served as company officer of the 6th Marines, then returned to Camp Elliott, California. Being graduated from the Army's Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth in August 1943, he was appointed chief of the Intelligence Section at Marine Corps Schools. He attained his present rank in August 1944 and was awarded the Legion of Merit for his services in the Okinawa Campaign.

Lieutenant Colonel Victor H. Krulak

Colonel Krulak joined the Sixth Division as Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3 (Operations), in October 1944, relieving Lieutenant Colonel Thomas A. Culhane, Jr., who had been Operations Officer of the First Provisional Brigade.

Colonel Krulak was born in Denver, January 7, 1913. He is a Naval Academy graduate (May 1934), where he was captain of the Navy Crew, and attended Basic School at Philadelphia. As a lieutenant he served one year aboard USS *Arizona* before

returning to Annapolis in 1936 as crew coach. During the next two years he was with the "Old 4th" in China and on returning to the United States in 1939, attended the Marine Corps Schools, from which he was graduated in April 1940. After a tour of duty with the First Marine Brigade in Cuba he went to the staff of the Atlantic Amphibious Corps in April 1941, for various assignments, among which was that of aide to General H. M. Smith. He volunteered for the then new parachute duty in September of 1942, and training completed, was named commanding officer of the 2nd Parachute Battalion.

This battalion landed on Choiseul under Colonel Krulak's command as a diversionary move for the November 1943, assault on Bougainville; spent seven days on the island, disposed of several hundred Japs, destroyed the barge base and captured a chart of the Bougainville minefields, used by Halsey that same night. The battalion upset the enemy command arrangements and got away with minor casualties, including Colonel Krulak, who was wounded. He was awarded the Navy Cross for this action and later received the Legion of Merit and Bronze Star Medal for services at Okinawa and in the occupation of Tsingtao.

Lieutenant Colonel August Larson

Lieutenant Colonel Larson, previously Supply Officer of the First Provisional Brigade, was appointed Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4 (Logistics), when the Sixth Division was organized.

Like Major Overstreet he is a graduate of the University of Minnesota. He was born at Sherburn, Minnesota, July 2, 1904; he enlisted in the Marine Corps January 13, 1928 and received his commission in 1931. After a year of Basic School he served with the 4th Regiment in China until 1934, when he was transferred to USS *Augusta*.

A crack shot, one of the few men of the corps qualified to wear both the Distinguished Rifle and Pistol Marksmanship badges, the colonel was for years a member of the Marine Corps Rifle and Pistol Team. In 1938, as a captain in charge of the machine-gun company of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, he served under General Shepherd. In 1940 he returned to sea duty aboard the carrier *Wasp*, later to play so prominent a part in supporting the Marines on Guadalcanal, but at that time in the Atlantic.

In February 1942, detached from this duty, he became an instructor in the then new Candidates Class at the Marine Corps Schools, himself graduating from the Fourth Command and Staff Course in March 1944. At this date he was assigned to the First Provisional Brigade as supply officer, serving with it through the Guam operation and being awarded the Legion of Merit. The Okinawa operation brought him the Silver Star and Bronze Star Medals.

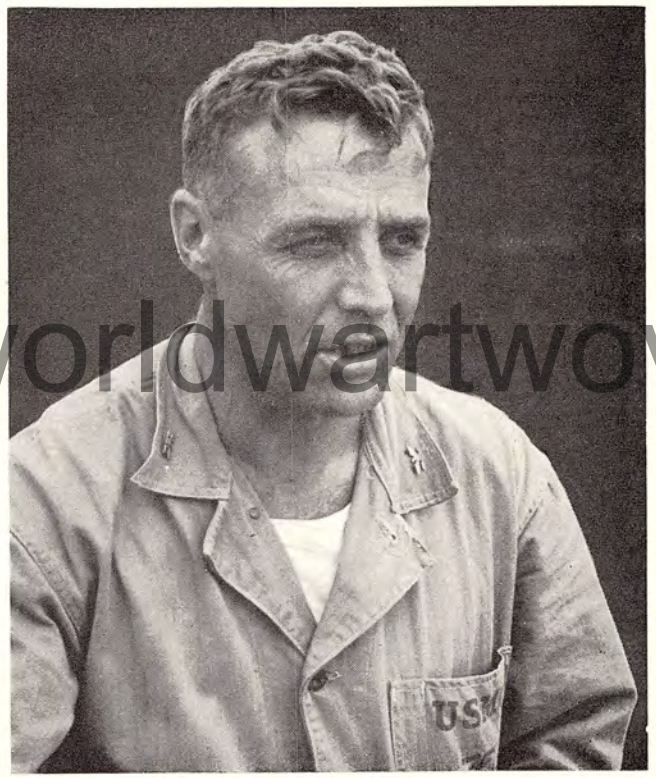
Regimental Commanders

Colonel Alan Shapley

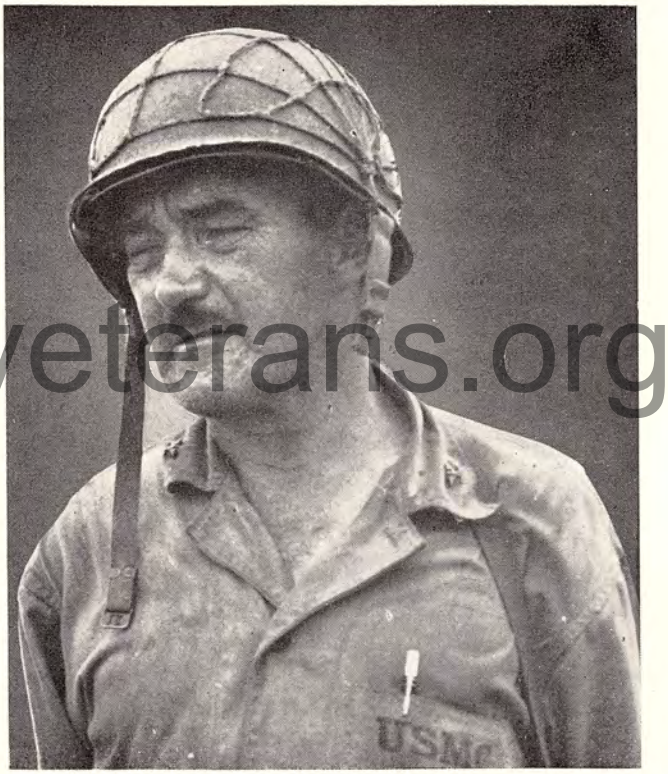
A 1927 graduate of Annapolis, Colonel Shapley commanded the 4th Regiment on Okinawa and Guam. A star athlete at the Academy, he coached many teams during his service. Colonel Shapley, then a captain, was in command of the Marine Detachment aboard USS *Arizona* in Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. A bomb explosion threw him from the mainmast control station into the water where, although stunned, he rescued another man from drowning. For this action he received the Silver Star Medal. Until succeeding Lieutenant Colonel Carlson as commanding officer of the 2nd Raiders, Colonel Shapley served on the staff of the I Amphibious Corps. He led the 4th Regiment from its reactivation through the Okinawa campaign. In addition to his Silver Star Colonel Shapley holds the Navy Cross for his service on Guam, the Legion of Merit and Bronze Star Medal. He also wears the Presidential Unit Citation and Navy Unit Commendation Ribbons.

Colonel Merlin F. Schneider

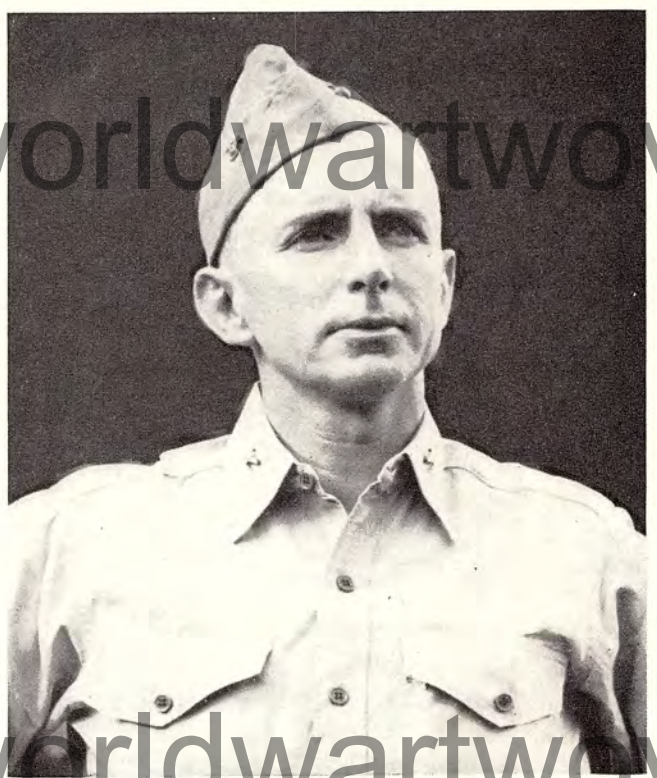
Colonel Schneider, a Naval Academy graduate of 1923, has seen service in Quantico, Haiti, China, Mare Island Navy Yard and aboard the battleship *New Mexico*. He joined the 22nd Regiment upon its organization in 1942 as commander of the 3rd Battalion, later becoming regimental executive officer and in March 1944 commander of the regiment. With it he served on Wallis Island, Tutuila, the Solomons, Kwajalein Atoll, Eniwetok, Guam and until mid-May, at Okinawa. He received the Navy Cross for Guam and the Bronze Star for Okinawa.



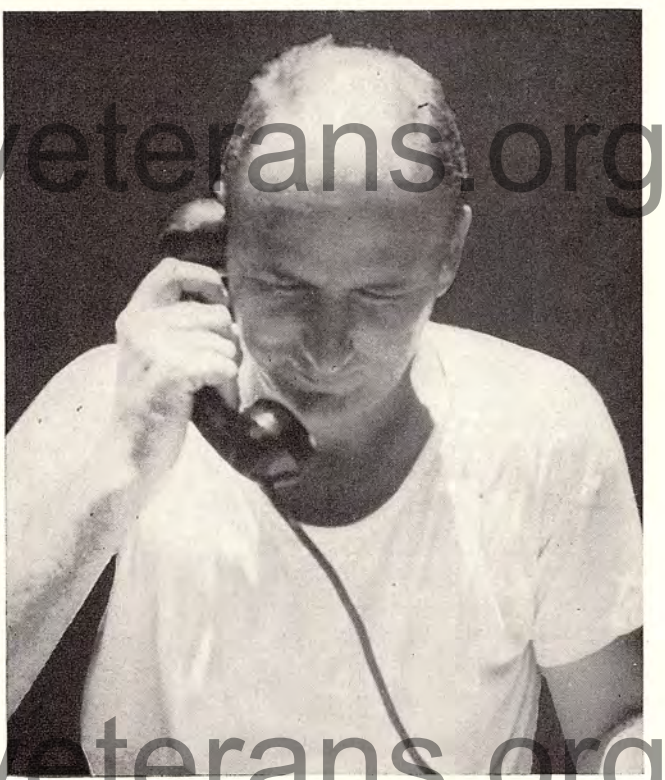
Colonel Alan Shapley.



Colonel Merlin F. Schneider.



Colonel Victor F. Bleasdale.



Colonel Robert B. Luckey.

Colonel Victor F. Bleasdale

Colonel Bleasdale, born in New Zealand, December 2, 1895, and brought up in Wisconsin, has a service record as wide as his origins. He holds no less than eighteen decorations and campaign ribbons, and of his thirty years of service, no less than half have been spent in actual combat duty. He entered the Marines by enlistment on May 4, 1915, and shortly after went to Haiti to help quell one of the numerous revolutions of those years. After two years of it, he returned to the United States only in time to be sent to France with the AEF. While in France he received his second lieutenant's commission in the field, with a Navy Cross and a Silver Star Medal for bravery in action. His return from Europe was followed by periods of service in the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua. He became one of the Corps' leading authorities on machine guns and bush-warfare tactics.

During World War II he served in Samoa and as Chief of Staff to the Training Command at Camp Lejeune, where he was stationed when appointed commander of the 29th Marines.

Colonel Robert Burneston Luckey

Colonel Robert B. Luckey of Vineyard Haven, Massachusetts, commanded the 15th Marines. He was born at Hyattsville, Maryland, July 9, 1905, and was graduated from the University of Maryland in 1927, where he had four years in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps, and immediately received his commission as a second lieutenant of Marines.

He has been stationed at Philadelphia, Washington, Annapolis, Fort Sill, San Diego, Quantico, Parris Island, and Camp Lejeune; in Nicaragua with the First Marine Brigade, and in China with the Embassy Guard at Peiping, beside having sea duty aboard USS *Rochester*. In 1939 he joined the First Marine Brigade, which later became the First Marine Division, in Guantanamo, Cuba, and was commander of the Special Weapons Battalion in that division's move to Guadalcanal for the first American offensive of the war. Later he became executive officer of the division's artillery component, the 11th Marines. Colonel Luckey participated in the Cape Gloucester expedition as executive officer of the 11th Marines and was artillery officer on General Shepherd's staff during the operation in the Borgen Bay area.

Early 1944 saw him back in the States as director of the Marine Corps Field Artillery School at Quantico, but in November of the same year he was on his way back to the Pacific to join his new regiment and the Sixth Division. Colonel Luckey holds the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal, the Presidential Unit Citation and the Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon.

Colonel William J. Whaling

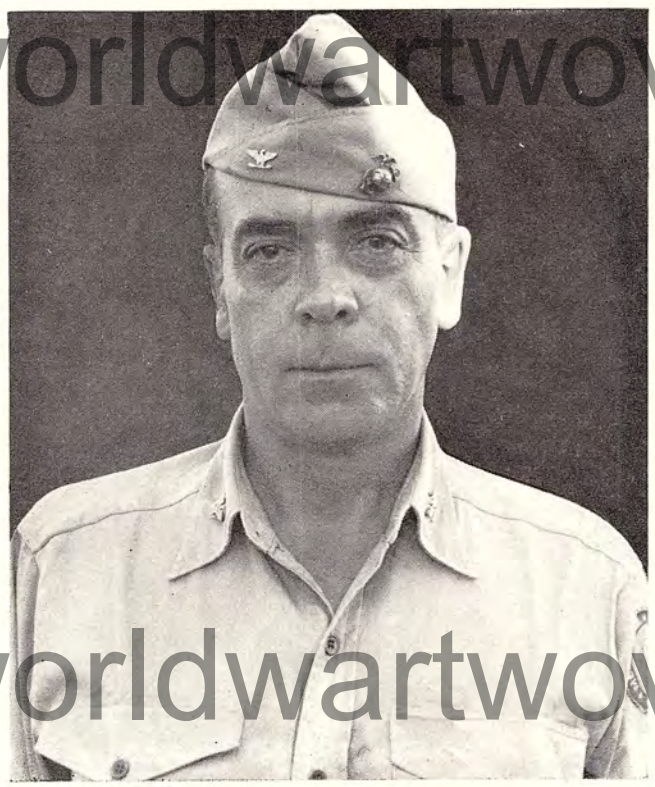
Colonel Whaling succeeded Colonel Bleasdale in command of the 29th Marines during the Okinawa Campaign. Like his predecessor he is a marksman of national reputation; in 1937 he captained the Marine Corps team that won the National Matches. Born in Minnesota (February 26, 1894) he enlisted in the Marine Corps at the beginning of World War I and was assigned to the 6th Regiment, with which he won the Silver Star Medal and a field commission. After occupation duty in Germany he served at various posts in this country, at the American Embassy in Peiping, as District Commander in the Garde d'Haiti and in Nicaragua. He commanded a battalion of the 5th Marines in the Guadalcanal campaign, where he made an exceptional record as a jungle fighter. His work as commander of the 1st Marines in the Cape Gloucester expedition brought him the Legion of Merit. Just before the Okinawa invasion he joined the Sixth Division as a member of the staff and in that operation won the Navy Cross.

Colonel Harold C. Roberts

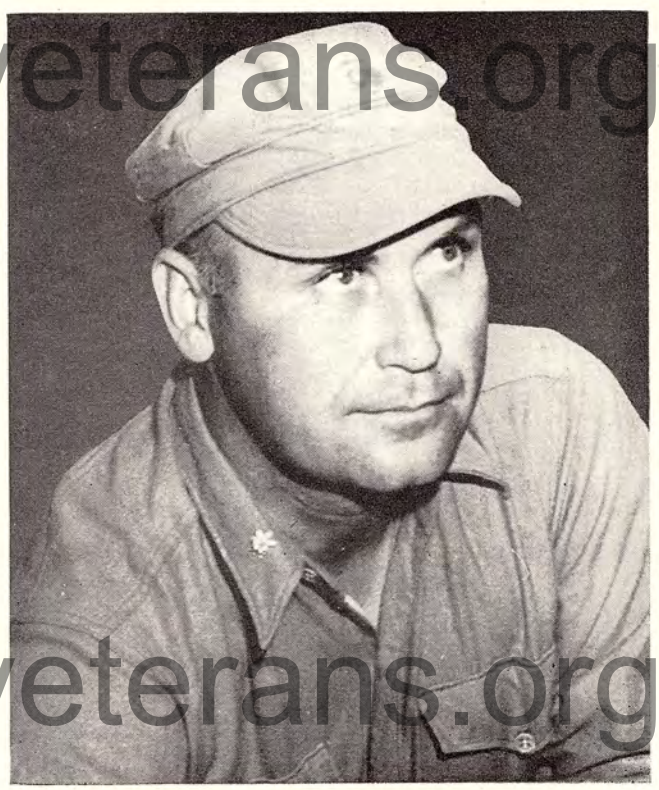
Colonel Roberts, a native of New York (born October 1, 1898), served as a Navy hospital corpsman with the Marines in France during World War I; there he received both the Navy Cross and the Army Distinguished Service Cross for heroism at Belleau Wood. After the war he applied for a Marine commission and received it in March 1923. As executive officer of the 3rd Defense Battalion he was in Tulagi after its capture in 1942. Later he was Chief of Staff for the Corps Artillery Officer, V Amphibious Corps during the invasion of the Philippines. Colonel Roberts did not join the Sixth Division until January 1945, being assigned as operations officer to General Clement. He succeeded Colonel Schneider as commander of the 22nd Regiment in May 1945. Colonel Roberts received a second Navy Cross while

Colonel William J. Whaling.

Colonel Harold C. Roberts.



Colonel John D. Blanchard.



Lieutenant Colonel Fred D. Beans.

acting as second in command of the Coco River Expedition in Nicaragua in 1928. For his part in the Naha and Southern Okinawa fighting he received his third Navy Cross. He was killed in action at Hill 69 on June 18, 1945.

Colonel John D. Blanchard

Colonel Blanchard enlisted in the Marine Corps on March 15, 1920, and entered the U.S. Naval Academy June 27, 1921. Upon graduating from the Academy, Colonel Blanchard selected the Marine Corps for a career and was commissioned as a second lieutenant, June 4, 1925.

He has been stationed at Philadelphia, New York, Wakefield, San Diego, Bremerton, Quantico, Norfolk, Pensacola, Alaska and Washington in the continental limits of the United States, and has served overseas in Haiti, China, Pearl Harbor, and Cuba as well as a tour at sea on the USS *Indianapolis*.

Colonel Blanchard was with the Service Command for a year during World War II prior to joining the Sixth Division at the close of the Okinawa campaign. He took command of the 22d Marines upon the death of Colonel Roberts. He later assumed command of the 4th Marine Regiment at Tsingtao, China. Colonel Blanchard wears the Navy Cross, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Order of the Southern Cross (Brazil), and the Collar Order of the Cloud and Banner (China).

Lieutenant Colonel Fred D. Beans

Lieutenant Colonel Beans graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1930. Shortly after entering the Marine Corps as a second lieutenant he served with the Guardia Nacional of Nicaragua. He returned from Nicaragua to serve with the Fleet Marine Force and later in China. At the start of World War II, Colonel Beans went to Samoa for occupation duty there with the Second Marine Brigade. He later commanded the 3d Raider Battalion through the Bougainville operation and subsequently became executive officer of the 1st Raider Regiment.

Lieutenant Colonel Beans returned to the United States for a short leave and period of rehabilitation and rejoined the 4th Marines on Guadalcanal just prior to the Okinawa campaign as its executive officer. During the Okinawa operation he replaced a battalion commander killed in action and led the 1st Battalion, 4th, in its conquest of Mount Yaetake.

At the close of the campaign for Okinawa, Colonel Beans assumed command of the 4th Marines and led the regiment to Japan for the occupation of the Yokosuka Naval Base. He has been awarded the Navy Cross, Silver Star, Bronze Star, and Nicaraguan Cross of Valor.