this work would have to be done at night, making accurate navigation almost impossible.

No matter how dangerous the job, there were always enthusiastic Navy men to undertake it. The versatile motor launches of the CANOPUS were turned over to experienced Mine Force sailors and became miniature sweepers. Navigational lights were rigged on shore, hooded to screen their purpose from watchful Japanese eyes. Night after night, for two weeks, the daring crews gambled their lives against their skill—and luck—until success finally crowned their efforts. Many mines had exploded near the venturesome boats, but never quite close enough to destroy them. Again a path was open to the sea, making it possible for submarines to come in and rescue a few chosen passengers.

In the meantime, the defenses of Corregidor and nearby fortified islands were gradually being blasted to bits. There were now not nearly so many objectives to distribute the enemy's bombing raids, which made destruction that much more concentrated on the ones still unconquered. The shores of Bataan were within easy artillery range, and batteries lining the beaches pounded day and night against every exposed position on the islands. Observation balloons were even sent up in Bataan to make it easier for artillery shells to be spotted into every nook and cranny.

Huge two hundred and forty millimeter shells began to search out the deeply buried powder magazines under Corregidor's mortar batteries, causing terrific explosions which wiped out several of the guns and their unfortunate crews.

All of the CANOPUS crew and officers who were fit for such arduous duty had been sent into beach defenses with the Marines immediately on arrival at Corregidor. This duty involved a precarious existence in fox holes and caves which they dug for themselves in the cliffs. They slept under the stars at night, and dodged shells and bombs by day. Casualties were surprisingly low, probably because the men had learned by bitter experience how best to take care of themselves.

Artillery shells were conceded to be worse than bombs, because the latter, at least, "rattled before they struck". Planes were always seen overhead before the bombs could possibly arrive and the swish could be heard in time to duck into whatever shelter was handy. But high velocity artillery shells strike before the sound is heard, and no one could tell where or when the next blast would erupt. The guns also could, and frequently did concentrate their pounding on a small area until everything it it was demolished.

In the face of everything that kept their tenure of life uncertain, most of the open-air dwellers had the spirit to be sorry for the less active men, who were condemned to breathe the foul air of the comparatively sheltered tunnels! Obviously, the outdoor contingent wore the free, upstanding air of men who have met the acid test of dangers, and are masters of their own souls.

Flesh and blood, however, could not endure the merciless pounding indefinitely, nor could the concrete and steel of the forts stand forever. One by one the pill boxes and gun emplacements were knocked out, leaving little to resist the yellow horde that would finally pour from boats in the final assault. The war will probably be over before we know the full details of those last desperate hours, when valiant men, equipped with little more than courage, were pitted against the well-armed invaders.

Two nights before that landing, a submarine slipped through the screen of Jap destroyers clustered around the entrance to Manila Bay, and the last group of passengers raced out the new channel to meet their rescue ship. Six Naval officers, six Army officers, eleven Army nurses, one Navy nurse and the wife of a Naval officer found their names on the list which represented a last chance for freedom. As their little boat bobbed its way through the darkness, they found it almost impossible to convince themselves that the long months of trial were actually nearing an end. Suppose something happened to keep that submarine from reaching the appointed spot? Could she get through the cordon of enemy destroyers searching only a few miles outside? What a wonderful relief was the sight of that low black hull looming through the darkness, waiting exactly on her station!

In final testimony of the hell left behind, the dark bulk of Corregidor suddenly blazed with fires and bursting shells, just as the favored group climbed on board the submarine. The Japs were starting to lay down a terrific, continuous barrage which was to mean the end of Corregidor before many more hours had passed.

Within the throbbing steel hull of the submarine, sympathetic crew members served up such food as the hungry refugees had not seen for months. Bunks were already at a premium, but the choicest ones were unselfishly given up to the passengers, with all hands put on a strict schedule for sleeping at different times during the day and night.

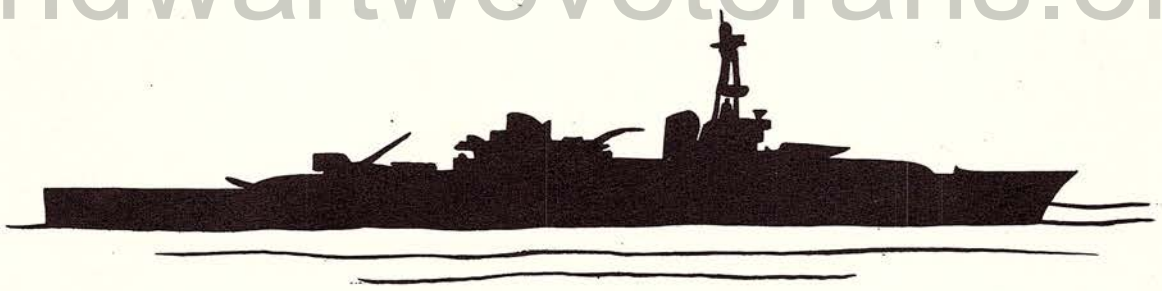
Danger was by no means past. The gauntlet of Japanese patrolled sea lanes still had to be run, and for weeks the only sight of the sun would be through a periscope. But the passengers had placed their destinies in competent hands, and they had no need to worry over such trifles.

When news of the fall of Corregidor came through the radio two days later, faces were grim and grief stricken. We had hoped that there might be time for

more submarines to be sent in, and more of our shipmates rescued. Now that last hope for friends was gone. They had joined the "Missing in Action" roll call.

For them it would always be a roll of honor. Far from being an implication that they might have shirked their duty or fled from the battle, in their case it could only mean death or imprisonment after the most devoted service any nation could ask of its loyal subjects.

Just before the Navy radio station on Corregidor was destroyed to keep it out of alien hands, the Commandant had flashed a final message which well expresses the code by which those sailors lived and fought. Not for themselves were the thoughts of twenty-five hundred men and officers of the Navy in that last desperate hour —instead, they "reaffirmed their loyalty and devotion to country, families, and friends."



U. S. S. CHESTER (CA 27)

During the latter part of the '20s, the heavy cruiser CHESTER, named in honor of the southeastern Pennsylvania city, grew out of the Camden, New Jersey, yards of the New York Shipbuilding Corporation. As the graceful cruiser slid down the lubricated framework of timbers at her launching on 3 July 1929 she was formally christened by Miss Jane Turner Blain, niece of Chester's Mayor S. E. Turner. Commissioned on 24 June 1930, CHESTER stretched 600 feet in length and tipped the scales at 13,000 tons, was able to plough through the seas at a rated speed of 32.7 knots.

There followed some 11 years of peacetime exercises and operations with Uncle Sam's Fleet—training that transformed neophyte man-of-war into professional. In the war which was inconceivable at that time, this investment in precision and accuracy, coordination of ship and complement was to accrue a dividend of inestimable value.

USS CHESTER was as prepared for war when it struck on 7 December 1941 as her country was not. As the treacherous Japanese lashed out at our most formidable Pacific base, the heavy cruiser was enroute to that point from ill-fated Wake Island. Within a month she was in the war up to her main truck and indoctrination rapidly crystallized into action with a series of shellings of Japanese garrisons in the Marshall Islands. Caught in a ferocious enemy air attack off the island of Taroa, she took a well-directed bomb amidships in an effort to lure the air marauders away from the carrier ENTERPRISE and was forced to return to Pearl Harbor in company with ENTERPRISE and other units of the bombardment force.

These were the one-sided days of the Pacific conflict, the newly declared foe being able to effect amphibious landings wherever and whenever he wished due to his iron control of air and sea lanes. The sole rampart between the American home shores and the rising tide of Japanese conquest was manifested in a thin line of heavy fighting ships and sleek, highly maneuverable DD's which constituted our Pacific Fleet at that time.

CHESTER'S battle damage repairs were rushed to completion at the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard and, after refresher exercises and a brief period of duty as a convoy escort, she joined American carriers for strikes at Tulagi in the Solomons. Her observation planes were catapulted into the air over Guadalcanal and returned with valuable topographical information which the Navy later used to advantage in covering the invasion forces at jungle-encompassed Henderson Airfield and Bloody Nose Ridge.

On 7 May 1942 the ship threw her weight in another direction, screening carriers during aerial pummelling of Japanese-held Misima Island in the Louisiade Archipelago.

The time-table of the aggressor was based on the ability of the Mikado's juggernauts to roll unchallenged from victory to victory—speed was of the essence to fully exploit the initial element of surprise which her perfidy and our perfunctoriness had gained her. The first major interruption in that time-table occurred in early May of 1942 in the Coral Sea northeast of the shores of Queensland, Australia.

By mid-April the Japanese had established the dan-

gerous New Guinea—New Britain—Solomon Island arc to the north of the Australian continent. On the 30th of that month the enemy dispatched from Truk a large occupation force with strong combatant escort which was commissioned to capture Port Moresby in southeastern New Guinea, thus expanding their defensible outer perimeter in the Southern Resources area.

To obviate this move, a United States task force built around the carriers YORKTOWN and LEXINGTON hastened into the Coral Sea. CHESTER was a unit of Rear Admiral Frank Fletcher's flotilla of five cruisers and five destroyers, cruised with guns ready for the approaching contest. Throughout the 4th and 5th of May long-ranged search planes made an abortive attempt to ferret out the Japanese occupation force which was then making final rendezvous in the Shortland Islands prior to the advance on Port Moresby. It was discovered on the 6th and unsuccessfully bombed by three land-based B-17 bombers but the course of the puissant assemblage indicated that it would transit Jomard Passage in the Louisiade Archipelago on the following day.

At about 0845 on the morning of 7 May, United States carrier search planes found a portion of the enemy transport force which included the aircraft carrier SHOHO near Misima Island. Planes immediately abandoned the mammoth flight decks of LEXINGTON and YORKTOWN, took to the air to pounce on the covey of vessels that had just been flushed. Dive bomb and torpedo hits sent the cynosure SHOHO to a sub-surface sepulchre within 15 minutes of the first hit. Simultaneously, a striking group from the Jap carriers which were operating in support to the east and were as yet unlocated by our forces darted in to demolish the destroyer SIMS and fleet oiler NEOSHO.

In reality, two Japanese forces were converging on the Coral Sea area; the one apprehended as it steamed directly south from the Louisiades and the other—the sneak punch—skirting much farther to the east around the Solomons. Contact was made once more on the following day and in the subsequent exchange of carrier plane blows, the Jap battleship SHOKAKU received severe damage and both our YORKTOWN and LEXINGTON were given crippling dive-bombing assaults. Due to uncontrollable gasoline fires and delayed fuel tank explosions which rent her asunder, the latter veessel was of necessity abandoned, whereupon our own DD's loosed a slew of torpedoes at LEXINGTON'S stately form and sent her to the bottom.

At the same time the carrier duel was in progress, a force of 12 Nipponese torpedo planes with Rabaul-based fighter escort darted in out of the sun to smash at CHESTER and her sister cruisers. The anti-aircraft shells of the defending forces soon filled the azure heavens with grayish puffs of clouds, few of the bombers being able to penetrate the bulwark of hot steel which the guns threw up. CHESTER'S 5-inch found their mark in many a fuselage that afternoon, the ship later being credited with splashing 8 of the Rising Sun delegation into the Coral Sea and rendering assistance on many others. She was also instrumental in breaking up the attack on the harrassed carrier group; a Jap torpedo bomber making a run on YORKTOWN received a volley of the best CHESTER had to offer, plopped into the sea like a bird arrested in flight by a hunter's bullet.

As the tattered remnants of the Jap air group banked for a quick dash over the horizon to safety, there ended the first major engagement in naval history in which the surface ships involved did not exchange a single shot. As a result of the loss of SHOHO, the damage to SHOKAKU and the heavy loss of pilots and aircraft from both their land-based and carrier air groups, the invasion force retired and the date of the projected occupation was postponed until July. Although our loss of one carrier, one tanker, one destroyer and 66 planes was keenly felt, the Japanese southward incursion had been checked and the valuable base of Port Moresby saved for the Allies, was later used as the principal stepping-stone in the Allied advance through New Guinea. Although the enemy had planned to make another try at Port Moresby in July, their disastrous losses in carrier strength suffered at Midway in June forced final abandonment of the plan to invade that point by sea. Postponement must be a word unknown to those who make claim to proficiency in the blitzkrieg type of warfare.

Following the Coral Sea engagement, veteran cruiser CHESTER proceeded to the Navy Yard at Mare Island, California, where she was dressed in a new coat of camouflage, primed and made ready for her next encounter. Post repair trials and battle exercises followed and a rejuvenated CHESTER then sped to the Ellice Islands via Pearl Harbor.

She lent valuable assistance in assuring the success of the Funafuti occupation in the Ellice group and anchored at Espirito Santo in the New Hebrides on 6 October 1942. It was here that Commander Cruisers, Task Force 11, broke his flag on CHESTER and established Heavy Cruiser Number 27 as his flagship.

Disaster struck quickly on the night of 20 October 1942 as CHESTER was moving through the waters north of the New Hebrides group. An enemy submarine which had apparently been stalking her for several hours, unleashed a torpedo when the time was ripe. CHESTER was stopped dead in her course as the lean, silvery fish found its place amidships and detonated with a reverberating roar. The maimed vessel zig-zagged awkwardly in frantic maneuvers to elude her tormentor and then limped back to Espirito Santo for emergency repairs.

While CHESTER was at anchor in Espirito Santo

harbor on 26 October, her crew watched wide-eyed as the Army transport PRESIDENT COOLIDGE, one-time $8 million luxury liner, ran afoul of a Jap-sown mine at the lagoon's entrance. Her alert Captain promptly and skillfully grounded the stricken vessel on a convenient coastal reef. Here the listing transport clung long enough to permit its human cargo of approximately 4,000 troops to clamber down ropes into shallow, sunlit waters, with the phenomenal result that only 2 of that number were lost. Like a Dunkerque in reverse, thousands of troops swarmed up the shelving sands of the island, leaving PRESIDENT COOLIDGE to vanish in a swirl of white foam behind. CHESTER swung into action and put forth immediately to the scene of the disaster. She spent the rest of the day probing the waters for survivors and wound up with a total of 400 gratefuls on board, transported them all back to Espirito Santo.

In the waning days of 1942 CHESTER was moored for repairs at the Sutherland Drydock, Sydney, Australia, and on Christmas day set out for Norfolk, Virginia, Navy Yard by way of Pago Pago and Panama. On 15 December, Captain Thomas Macy Shock who had skippered the venerable CHESTER since the war's inception, was relieved of command by Captain William Handy Hartt, Jr., USN, who in turn was succeeded by Captain Francis Thomas Spellman, USN, on 12 July of the new year 1943.

After her yard period at the United States port, full power trials were completed 31 July 1943 and the cruiser declared at the peak of fighting trim. For the first time, American task fleets were exerting heavy pressure on the Japanese and the constant activity of our submarines in the Western Pacific was depleting his combatant as well as his logistic strength. Decisive Navy action to drive a spearhead into the Marianas Islands had progressed beyond the map consultation stage.

Carrying the flag of Commander Cruiser Division Five, CHESTER, on 19 November 1943, joined a conglomerate force comprised of the carriers ESSEX, BUNKER HILL, INDEPENDENCE; cruisers SALT LAKE CITY, PENSACOLA, OAKLAND, and five destroyers. This group proceeded to hit Tarawa and Apemama in the Gilberts, the planes swooping in low to blast shore installations and defenses, and the surface forces hammering away at targets of opportunity with their heavy rifles. During the operations off Tarawa, enemy defense guns scored several near misses on CHESTER and the cruiser's gunners drove off a group of attacking torpedo planes. From 30 January through 4 February 1944, CHESTER, as flagship of the task group, led the fire at Taroa and Wotje, raced with guns blazing to deny the enemy the use of his airfields in the Kwajalein assault.

There was another brief repair period at Mare Island, and the cruiser proceeded to an entirely new theatre of operations with Adak in the Aleutians as her destination.

The storm-lashed North Pacific, with its blasts that sometimes reach velocities well above 100 knots and which roll up unbelievably gigantic seas of 50 to 70 feet from trough to crest, was the global war's most rugged theatre from the climatic standpoint and a proving ground for both ships and men.

Operating out of Adak with Task Force 94 under command of Rear Admiral E. G. Small, USN, CHESTER was in on the first surface craft bombardment of the Japanese Kurile Islands. Enemy shore installations on Matsuwa were pounded on 13 June 1944 and on the 26th, the cruiser's 8-inch were busied with the task of levelling materiel concentration points on fog-sheathed Paramushiro. The almost complete absence of visibility worked both in favor of and against the sea raiders. While the accuracy of the gunfire was somewhat impeded, the surface units were also provided with a comfortable cloak in the eventuality of air attack.

Captain Spellman left CHESTER in the Aleutians on 16 July 1944, his position as Commanding Officer being filled by Captain Henry Hartley, USN.

In the latter part of August, CHESTER thawed as she steamed to join the escort carrier MONTEREY and several destroyers for a smash at Wake. She became flagship of Cruiser Division Five as its Commander, Rear Admiral A. E. Smith, USN, embarked on 28 August. Five days later the surprise air and sea bombardment began against that island whose original garrison had been written into the honor scroll of our country's history. The Nipponese retaliated with accurate 8-inch fire from their coastal defense batteries but no damage was incurred by the attacking ships.

Docking briefly at once-hostile Eniwetok and Saipan, the ubiquitous CHESTER took destroyers CASE, CUMMINGS, DOWNES, CASSIN, DUNLAP, and FANNING under her wing and the group set out to rock Marcus on 9 October.

Ten days later CHESTER was lying off Samar in the Philippines with a number of big carriers and cruisers supporting our landings on Leyte. The three almost simultaneous naval actions, the Battle of Surigao Strait, the Battle off Samar, and the Battle off Cape Engano, which have been collectively dubbed, the "Battle for Leyte Gulf" ensued as the myriad ships of our Third and Seventh Fleets were welded together to meet the Japanese vessels in the High Command's Operation "Sho No. 1"—the defense of the Philippines.

CHESTER'S role in the Battle for Leyte Gulf was that of screening carriers off Samar while Navy planes launched strikes against the crumbling Jap defenses on the beaches of Leyte. With the completion of this task, she was ordered to Ulithi to reload her magazines and augment her dwindling fuel supply.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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The Pacific war, which CHESTER had known since that first Sunday when people and government were fused, had seen our cause progress from the dark days of bitter last-ditch defenses of not-so-strong strongholds to the point where victory beckoned just ahead. The Army's B-29 Superfortresses roared almost unchallenged over the industrial centers of the Japanese home islands, lashed at enemy shipping and factories from the Sea of Japan to Formosa. In greater and greater numbers, Saipan-based bombers soared 30,000 feet to pulverize with their lethal calling cards vital arteries of sustenance to the palsied Jap war machine. The day was not far distant when a far more docile group of Nipponese than those who had called for blood on their samurais would come aboard our MISSOURI bleating for the peace they had defiled.

Six hundred miles north of our bomber strips in the Marianas was a diminutive isle of volcanic ash and boulders known as Iwo Jima. It was the enemy's closest approach to the American planes that were driving him underground in the Empire, and he used Iwo's airfields as bases for frequent bombing and strafing blows against Saipan and Tinian. Neutralization and annexation of Iwo was essential to assure the giant B-29s an attack-free home base.

Operating in conjunction with the Army Air Force, CHESTER and other ships of Cruiser Division Five drew the assignment of grounding Japanese planes on Iwo Jima and battering the supply lines to that strategic pin-point bastion. 11-12 November, Rear Admiral Smith's group hurled explosives toward shore and met effective return fire. CHESTER'S principal target for her 8-inch were the island's airfields.

This was followed up by a methodical 8-inch, 5-inch bombardment of Iwo on the 8th of December and another on the 24th. A number of large fires were seen from off-shore and none of the attacking ships sustained damage.

The triple-header on 5 January 1945 consisted of strikes at Chichi Jima and Haha Jima in the Bonins as well as Iwo. At the same time, aircraft of the Army's Strategic Air Force hit airstrip installations on Iwo Jima, met with little opposition. In the surface action CHESTER'S group sent one enemy cargo ship to the bottom along with several landing craft. Torpedo planes flew in to attack the group at sunset, were promptly dispersed.

CHESTER collaborated with the battleship INDIANA on 24 January, gave Iwo another going-over. During this action the cruiser's gunners brought down an attacking Japanese torpedo plane and assisted in the destruction of several cargo ships at anchor off the island.

The softening-up period was at an end after the 15-18 February shelling by CHESTER and her sister cruisers. The Marines swarmed in on the island on the 19th of February beginning what developed into the most vicious and hard-fought land campaign in the Pacific. The natural terrain features of Iwo Jima together with a very elaborate and complete underground defense system made the occupation most difficult.

Enemy gunfire, submarines, mines and air attacks were not the only hazards in such a combined operation. Just before dawn on D-Day, the Amphibious Group Flagship ESTES was picking her way through the hundreds of American vessels of every nomenclature which were milling around Iwo in the anxious moments prior to the landing. A sudden severe jolt yanked her crew members out of their bunks on to the deck. ESTES had collided with the cruiser CHESTER causing serious damage to that vessel's propeller and after plating. Fortunately, the two ships had swerved in time to avoid a disaster of major proportions, but a reluctant CHESTER was forced to discontinue any further participation in the Iwo Jima campaign and get under way for the Mare Island Navy Yard.

Captain Laurence Allen Abercrombie, USN, assumed command of the vessel on 16 July as Captain Hartley went on to another assignment.

CHESTER returned to the Western Pacific combat zone to screen carriers during a minesweeping operation in the East China Sea off Okinawa. She was in on the final stages of the Okinawa occupation and on 28 July supported the escort carriers LUNGA POINT, MAKIN ISLAND and CAPE GLOUCESTER in a bomber-fighter strike on Shanghai, China.

When the Japanese accepted the terms of unconditional surrender which a war-weary world had set for the war-makers, CHESTER was once more on a tour of duty in the Aleutians. From Attu she jubilantly steamed to the Hokkaido—Aomori—Ominato area of Northern Japan to lend her assistance to the occupation. During the landings in Northern Honshu and Southern Hokkaido she was Rear Admiral F. C. Denebrink's flagship for Task Force 56.

As a final contribution to her country's war effort, CHESTER busied herself in the Navy's "Magic Carpet" operations, offering one-way accommodations to high-point veterans whose job was over. She was subsequently placed out of commission on 10 June 1946 and is now (February 1947) berthed at Philadelphia as a unit of the Atlantic Reserve Fleet.

Statistics

Standard Displacement: 9,200 tons.
Length Overall: 600 feet 3 in.
Beam: 66 feet 1 inch.
Speed: 32.7 knots.
Complement: 1200 plus.
Armament: Nine 8-inch .55 caliber guns, eight 5-inch .25 caliber guns, plus 20mm and 40mm AA batteries.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

U. S. S. COLORADO (BB 45)

The 32,500-ton battleship USS COLORADO, first commissioned August 30, 1923, has operated in the Pacific since the outbreak of hostilities.

At the time of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, the COLORADO, then under the command of Captain Lemuel E. Lindsay, U.S.N., of Lorain, Ohio, was undergoing an overhaul on the West Coast.

During the summer and fall of 1942, Captain Elmer L. Woodside, U.S.N., of St. Joseph, Missouri, having assumed command, the COLORADO operated in the Pacific.

During the New Georgia operation starting June 20, 1943, the COLORADO was a part of the covering force under the direct command of Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr., U.S.N., of Washington, D. C.

On November 20 and 21, 1943, under the command of Captain William Granat, U.S.N., of San Francisco, California, the COLORADO took part in a shore bombardment at Betio Island, Tarawa Atoll, in the Gilbert Islands. The assault on Tarawa lasted four days and was characterized by some of the most intense fighting of the war.

After taking part in the Tarawa operation, the COLORADO returned to a Pacific base to join the force which was to carry out the assault on the enemy-held Marshall Islands stronghold of Kwajalein. The COLORADO proceeded to the objective and opened a heavy bombardment on Japanese positions in the northern sector of the atoll shortly before the troops landed on D-Day, January 31, 1944. The COLORADO'S mission, successfully accomplished, was to destroy fortifications along the beaches and support assault waves by pounding the enemy troop areas immediately adjacent to the landing sectors. Fires and large columns of smoke on her target areas indicated that the damage caused by the COLORADO was extensive. In company with other vessels, the COLORADO shelled strategic objectives throughout the day and resumed fire shortly after dawn the following day, pouring shells into Japanese troop concentrations and demolishing installations.

OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

HEAVYWEIGHT SLUGGER OF THE SEA

THE USS COLORADO, 32,500-ton battleship, operated in the Pacific with the outbreak of hostilities. Commissioned on 30 August 1923, the COLORADO was undergoing an overhaul on the West Coast at the time of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. She went into action early in 1942, and during the New Georgia operation was part of the force under the command of Admiral Halsey. The COLORADO's big rifles blasted the Japs in the Gilberts and Marshalls, and gave heavy support in some of the most intense fighting of the war.

MODERN BATTLESHIP CALLED MOST FORMIDABLE FIGHTING MACHINE EVER DEVELOPED

The United States Navy now (Oct. 20, 1945) has 23 battleships in service. From the oldest, the 33-year-old ARKANSAS, to the newest, the one-and-a-half-year-old WISCONSIN and MISSOURI, they represent an evolution that has progressed by leaps and bounds since World War I.

Last of the older battleships is the WEST VIRGINIA, commissioned in 1923. First of 11 new ships, ranging from 35,000 to 45,000 tons, is the NORTH CAROLINA, commissioned in 1941.

Only two fighting ships disappeared as a result of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the OKLAHOMA and ARIZONA. Five others emerged from that dark hour to fight again. Under the supervision of the Bureau of Ships they were rehabilitated during repair and overhaul, every conceivable improvement being added to bring them up to the battle-ready standards of the newer ships.

Teamed with carriers and other elements of the Navy, United States battleships have demonstrated time and again the effectiveness of the capital ship in modern warfare, especially in their capacity to saturate a hostile shore with high caliber shells prior to H-hour.

Through the years since World War I the battleship has grown in stature until today it is the most formidable fighting machine ever developed. Overall length has increased nearly 400 feet. Tonnage has gained by 15,000 tons with corresponding draft deepening by about 10 feet. Due to the width limitations of the Panama Canal, beam has remained virtually unchanged, necessitating major modifications of design characteristics to provide for additional displacement and length without changes in beam.

The beginning of a battleship is not a blueprint but a discussion. From talks conducted by the General Board, the Bureau of Ships is directed to draw preliminary plans of a vessel whose general characteristics have been outlined. More talks and the blueprint stage is reached. From these a model of the hull is built at the David Taylor Model Basin near Washington, D. C. If tests on the model show that Bureau of Ships preliminary design experts have properly calculated frictions, resistances and stability, the battleship is ready to go to the contract designers. More than 30,000 plans are drawn before the 45,000 tons of time-piece intricacy become a capital ship. In the yard where the battleship is to be constructed an elaborate schedule of erection and installation must be drawn up, consuming nearly 3,000,000 man-days of labor.

Before the first of the 2,700-man crew arrives to begin readying the ship for sea, welders have fused 4,000,000 feet of steel, riveters have driven 1,000,000 rivets, shipfitters have laid 422,000 feet of piping, electricians have installed 1,220,000 feet of wiring, and painters have applied 500 tons of paint.

A battleship contains 900 electric motors, 2,000 telephones, 210 pumps, and 426 tons of ventilating ducts. It is built to support, operate and supply 148 antiaircraft guns and nine 16-inch guns weighing 90 tons apiece.

Aside from the mechanical essentials such as boilers, turbines, generators, fire-fighting systems, and communications requirements, quarters and storage spaces must be provided for a complement equalled only by the largest carriers.

Sixty-four staterooms for officers and 75 berthing spaces for enlisted men must be built into the ship. In addition 29 lavatories and 18 messrooms are installed. Space is provided for 150 tons of stores. Galley equipment includes ten griddles, five ovens, five fry kettles, 12 ranges, three bake ovens, and three boilers to handle the enormous food requirements of the crew.

The mechanical features of this giant among warships is comparable only to a city of about 20,000. If the battleship's electric generating plant, comprising eight 1250 KW generators and two 250 KW Diesel emergency generators, were run at capacity, a city of 20,000 could be supplied. The monthly electric bill would amount to roughly $215,000.

Fire protection aboard a battleship is provided for by main pumps capable of forcing 4,800 gallons of water per minute through the endless fire mains penetrating nearly every space aboard. Many of the 1,000 watertight spaces of the vessel are protected by automatic sprinkler systems, and any fire that might develop in any part of the battleship would show up instantly on the automatic fire warning board at the damage control officer's station.

The propulsion machinery of battleships is powerful enough to drive these 35,000-ton and 45,000-ton heavyweights through the water at better than 30 knots, thus enabling them to maintain pace with the fast carrier task forces of which they have become major elements.

Four propellers, having a rating of better than 50,000 horsepower per shaft, are driven at more than 200 revolutions per minute by a main propulsion plant consisting of eight boilers and four double reduction geared cross-compound turbine units. The plant is divided into several watertight spaces to insure continuous

operation in spite of possible damage to any one engine room. The main condenser is supplied with 40,500 gallons of cooling sea water per minute.

Many of the major components of a battleship are manufactured far from the scene of assembly. Anchors weighing 15 tons apiece, guns weighing 90 tons, and 2,000 feet of chain weighing 121 tons must all be shipped by rail or barge to the yard. As an example of this problem the rudder post casting for the USS WISCONSIN was built at Eddystone, Pennsylvania. The casting was well over 100 tons in weight. It was shipped by barge in the middle of winter, being icebound for two days. When it arrived at the Philadelphia Navy Yard it was necessary to finish and install the great casting.

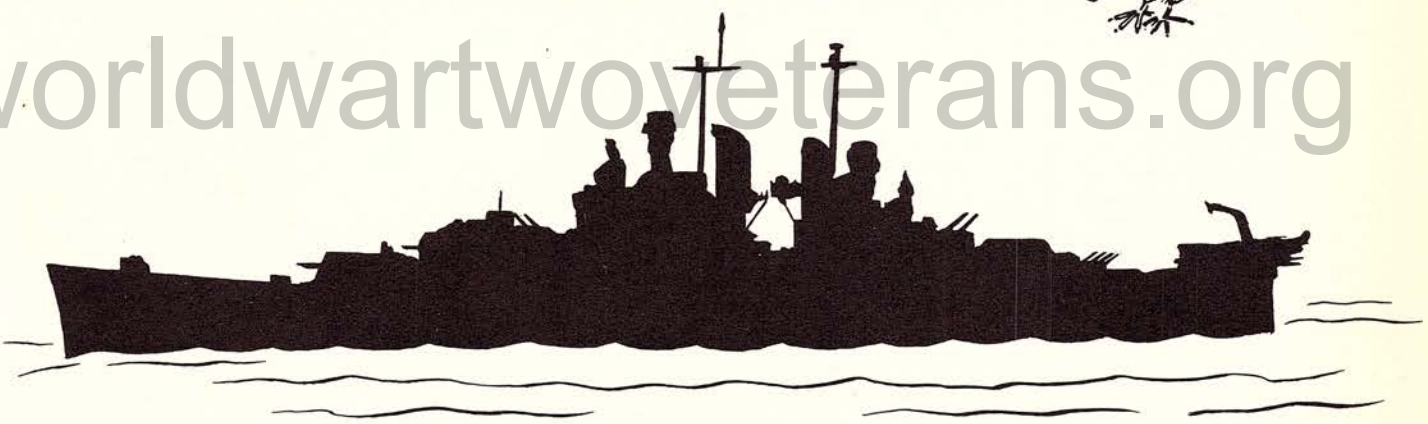
The primary purpose of a battleship is to carry destruction to the enemy. The 16-inch turrets of three guns apiece, capable of firing accurately a distance of nearly 25 miles, satisfy this requirement. A finished turret with its guns and equipment weighs over 1,800 long tons. One of the most complicated engineering feats in the building of a battleship is the installation of these turrets and their guns. The turrets are first built and completely assembled. They are then divided into sections, disassembled, lifted by a crane capable of handling 350 long tons, and placed on a barge which is towed alongside the fitting out pier. From this point the turret is reassembled aboard the battleship. Special gauges are used to insure an accuracy of 1/4 inch leveling, and 1/64 inch centering.

The turrets are installed aboard the ship about one month after launching. The operation is only less complicated than the launching operation itself.

Launching calculations develop to a fine point the launching weight, the velocity of the ship on its way to the water and the pivot point when the ship becomes waterborne. The ways themselves must be lubricated with 51,500 pounds of base-coat grease and 1,300 pounds of slip-coat grease. The vessel is held in place by six 300-ton hydraulic triggers, and six 250-ton hydraulic rams stand ready to start the ship on its slide down the ways. One hundred and ninety tons of chains are used as drag lines to govern the speed of the 36,000 tons of steel on the short slide to the water.

By the time a modern 45,000-ton battleship has been completed its cost has run to approximately $70,000,000. This, however, is only the allotment made by the Bureau of Ships. When other bureaus' expenditures have been taken into account the over-all cost runs beyond $100,000,000. It is an investment in national defense which was seen to be well warranted by the part played by battleships in their powerful strikes against the Japanese.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO



U. S. S. DENVER (CL 58)

THE USS DENVER, KNOWN AS "THE RAZOR" SHARPENS HER GUNNERY AS "LIGHTHOUSE BUSTER"

The "Razor," though still pitching steel at the Japs with the sharp efficiency which earned it that nickname in the Pacific Fleet, is now better known as the "Lighthouse Buster."

In official U.S. Navy records she still is listed as the USS DENVER, a light cruiser.

The DENVER was built after Pearl Harbor, but her battle record indicates she has been in the thick of many Pacific engagements. She took an eight inch shell hit and was crippled by a torpedo in the Solomons campaign, but came back to play a vital role in the Palau and Philippine operations.

The new nickname was given the DENVER during the Palau Islands invasion. The Japs were using a lighthouse on the island of Angaur as an observation tower and machine gun nest to strafe our troops. At first, ships were ordered not to destroy the tower, a valuable reference point. But as it developed into a threat and hazard to operations and possibly an enemy command post, the order went out to demolish it.

Battleships were given first shots. After several minutes of shooting, the lighthouse still stood. Then the Air Force was told to take a crack at it, which it did, no doubt killing the inhabitants. But the structure remained. Then the "Razor" was called in. She trained her guns on target and fired. The tower wavered, righted itself, but finally fell thundering down the precipice behind it.

That was the first of the ship's lighthouse sagas. Another was to follow soon. Shortly after dawn October 17, 1944, she arrived off Suluan Island, easternmost of the Philippines near Leyte. The blackness of night had merely given way to a murky day. A near typhoon with accompanying mountainous waves and a wind which whipped up to 70 miles tossed the Naval units around like corks. As the ships closed on Suluan, Rear Admiral Robert W. Hayler, U.S.N., of Newport, Rhode Island, surveyed the island from his flag bridge. When he spotted a lighthouse he messaged the DENVER, "Tell the lighthouse buster boys that they can bust this lighthouse whenever they are ready."

The DENVER fired, the lighthouse crumbled and enemy troops were seen to scamper out of their advantage position. Captain A. M. Bledsoe, U.S.N., of San Antonio, Texas, summed up the situation in this manner:

"Well, that's the kickoff, boys, and our salvoes will be heard in Tokyo tonight and many nights to come."

It is believed the DENVER'S opening salvoes at Suluan were the first fired by surface units in the recapture of the Philippines.

Following the softening up of Suluan, the cruiser turned to similar jobs on Homonhon, Hibuson, Dinagat and Leyte.

Early in the morning of October 25, 1944, the DENVER took up an old feud with the Japanese navy. In the dark days of the Solomons campaign she had credit for participating in the sinking of an enemy destroyer and a cruiser and with inflicting damage on other Jap ships. November 2, 1943, she had engaged three enemy cruisers, during the course of a surface action, and had

OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

CRACKSHOT VETERAN OF THE PACIFIC

THE USS DENVER, light cruiser built after Pearl Harbor, was called the "Razor" for her sharp gunnery efficiency and later nicknamed the "Lighthouse Buster" for her feats in smashing lighthouses on the Palau and Suluan Islands. Crippled in the Solomons campaign, she came back to chase the Japs all the way through the South Pacific. The DENVER was particularly active in the Philippines and played a major role in the Second Battle of the Philippines.

assisted in turning back a large enemy force bent on destroying our shipping at Empress Augusta Bay. Then at Bougainville November 12, 1943, she took a torpedo in a night attack.

The DENVER maintained her fine record in the Surigao Straits engagement. The day preceding the battle reports indicated the Japs were making an all out effort to eliminate Leyte Gulf shipping. Late in the day the loudspeaker brought every one to attention:

"Attention, all hands, this is the captain speaking.

"I have just received a radio report that the enemy force previously reported is now in the Mindanao Sea, steaming on a course which should bring us to grips with him in the Southern part of Leyte Gulf. We do not know as yet the full strength of his task force, but it is believed to number about ten or more ships. To all departments and all hands, get your equipment and personnel in order. Each officer and man do whatever is necessary to prepare himself for what may develop into a long, arduous night of combat. With your skill, courage and the faith you have in one another we can't lose. Good hunting and good luck. That's all."

With the sendoff, the crew of the DENVER took battle station for what was to develop into one of the most decisive Naval victories in the history of the U.S. Fleet. PT boats and destroyers relayed word of their successful initial attacks. Calm apprehension settled over the DENVER. Then the tenseness was lessened as some sailor passed the word over the battle phones:

"One mile to go. Roll down your bobby socks, girls.

"Our target is the leading battleship, rapid salvo fire. Commence firing."

Roger Raoul Boulais, Seaman, First Class, U.S.N.R., closed the firing key and the first 12-gun salvo was on its way. Before it landed, another was on the way. The spot came in "no change—no change" which meant that the projectiles were landing where they would do the most good. By this time, the night sky was brilliant with vari-colored tracers. How it looked from the DENVER was told jointly by Stanley John Pask, Jr., Signalman, Second Class, U.S.N.R., and Leon Kielb, Signalman, Second Class, U.S.N.R.

"After the PT's and the destroyers got in their licks, the enemy was possibly confused, but not yet disorganized. Then the ships of the main body opened fire with a terrific broadside. All firing seemed to be concentrated on the leading ships and they went down shortly afterwards. You could actually see the shells spread out toward the horizon and explode on the various ships.

"Numerous fires were raging now throughout their formation. At one time seven flaming ships could be seen from the signal bridge. The enemy didn't take it quietly, though, for this ship was straddled several times by large calibre shells, possibly eight inch. The ships in the Jap formation were going up like firecrackers on the Fourth of July.

"As suddenly as it began, all firing ceased. After retiring for some time, this ship, another cruiser and some destroyers were designated to reverse course and close the enemy. Suddenly we spotted a Jap destroyer attempting to pick up survivors. Our ship was the first to open fire on this target and, after three salvoes, it seemed to split in two due to a large explosion as our shells hit a magazine amidships. Then we shifted to another burning target, a cruiser of the Katori class and it appeared her bow had been blown off. After firing for five minutes at this ship, she burst into flame, rolled over on her side and sank.

"By this time, our guns were so hot that the paint was peeling off. By daylight all Jap cripples had been sunk and the only floating objects in a sea of oil and water were life jackets, empty powder cans, ripped canvas, halliards, overturned life rafts, boats and for several miles the sons of Nippon who were alive struggled amid the debris to escape capture or death."

The DENVER was commissioned at the Philadelphia Navy Yard on October 15, 1942, and at that time was commanded by Captain Robert B. Carney, U.S.N.

THE STORY OF THE U.S.S. DENVER (CL58)

(This story is NOT an official release of the Navy, but is an accurate factual account of the war history of the USS DENVER.)

There is plenty of reason for men of the DENVER to be proud of their ship, and they are proud of her, and not a little bit thankful for her luck. For the DENVER'S story does not quite cover three years, yet in that time she is credited with the destruction or "assist" of 7 Japanese warships and 14 Japanese aircraft and has participated in 14 shore bombardments, most of which covered amphibious landings. On the other side of the ledger, she has had her share of hits and near misses, having had 3 Nip eight-inch projectiles pass completely through her without exploding, but getting hit by an aerial torpedo within the next ten days in November, 1943. She had one Kamikaze crash close aboard in October, 1944, holing her starboard side and causing minor flooding. Her topside men have watched lots of bombs fall, and her below decks personnel have heard the explosions. But for all this, she has let the Japs take only 20 of her men and less than that number wounded.

Except for a brief training cruise in the fog banks of Chesapeake Bay after she was commissioned in October,

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

1942, the DENVER'S story is one of the Pacific War, and commences after her arrival at Noumea, New Caledonia on February 5, 1943. The consolidation of the Southern Solomons was beginning, with emphasis on disrupting the enemy's "Tokyo Express" runs to airstrips and bivouacs at Munda and Kolombangara. She joined Admiral A. S. Merrill's task force of cruisers and destroyers, which by force of circumstances then existing in the Solomons was a small and everchanging organization.

On the nights of March 5 and 6, 1943, the DENVER drew first blood. With a group assigned to bombard Kolombangara, two Jap destroyers were discovered apparently in the process of unloading supplies. Both were sunk in less than ten minutes, and the bombardment proceeded as scheduled. Thereafter, bombardment operations in the Solomons became routine to the extent that they were a complement to her training activities.

On the nights of June 30-July 1, 1943, the DENVER participated in a mine laying and bombardment operation, the purpose of which was to mine the southern outlets of the enemy's base at Buin and to destroy his air facilities in this sector preliminary to the New Georgia assault on July 1. This raid represented the greatest penetration by surface craft into enemy held territory of the war to that date. And after these preparations, the DENVER found herself in a very busy July, during which the Cruiser Division to which she was attached was running "The Slot" almost nightly.

This activity was followed by a brief period of training and rest, but by October the DENVER and her running mates, were a part of the task force which opened the Bougainville Island campaign with a bombardment of the Buka-Bonis air strips in northern Bougainville on the night of the 31st, a strike on southern Bougainville the morning of November 1, and the Battle of Empress Augusta Bay in the early morning of November 2. This action included a somewhat "timid" air attack by 70 Jap Vals, Bettys, and Zekes in which this ship shot down at least two planes.

The night bombardment of the Buka-Bonis installations caught the Japanese so by surprise that they confusedly thought themselves under air attack and fired their guns harmlessly skyward while our ships methodically pounded them from the sea. But surprise in the north alerted the Jap gunners to the south in the Shortland area and three, five, and six-inch batteries opened fire there without delay. The DENVER's gunners, however, quickly silenced three three-inch and one six-inch emplacement in her sector.

The night engagement of Empress Augusta Bay was spectacular on many counts, the Jap forces consisted of two heavy and two light cruisers and seven or eight destroyers against our four light cruisers and six destroyers. The Nip intent was to strike our amphibious forces still unloading in Empress Augusta Bay, but he was "nipped". He did, however, illuminate our forces with star shells at a range of about 12 miles, which caused a number of chilled spines, but his fire control was not equal to ours and he came out holding the short end with probably five of his twelve ships on the bottom. Here the DENVER first two-blocked her rabbit's foot—two eight-inch shells passed through the ship without striking armor and exploding, a third shell simply ventilated number one stack. But on the night of November 13 someone failed to hoist the charm, and by the light of a full moon the DENVER received a torpedo hit while under attack by 10 Jap Bettys, thus ending her combat activities until July 1944.

After emergency repairs at Espiritu Santo, the DENVER returned to Navy Yard, Mare Island for permanent repairs which required approximately four months. Work was commenced on January 1, 1944 and completed May 8, 1944. During this time her crew was given well earned leave and rest, but training for further combat was not overlooked. Post repair training was conducted in the San Diego-San Clemente area until June 1, and additional training of all types was conducted in the Hawaiian area. DENVER men still talk of their Mare Island duty; their description of it, in a word, is: Good!

Always a fighting ship, however, she (with the USS FRANKLIN) joined Task Force 58 at Eniwetok and got into the thick of the Marianas campaign by participating in the Third Bonins Raid on July 3-4, 1944. The raids on Iwo Jima, Haha Jima, and Chichi Jima Islands, now famous but then hardly known, was primarily carrier strikes, but the cruisers got in their licks too and satisfactorily supplemented the damage done by Navy fliers. Following the July 3-4 raids, the DENVER continued to operate in the famous Task Force 58 in the Marianas Campaign until early in August. This period saw the substantial completion of the Saipan Campaign and the start of the Guam and Tinian operations. Task Force 58 flew almost daily strikes against Guam, Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Late in the month a two day raid was made on Yap, Woleai, and Ulithi, but thanks to the excellence of carrier fighter operations, both day and night, all enemy aircraft were splashed outside surface ship AA range.

Early in August, 1944 she rejoined her old cruiser division, and became the flagship of Rear Admiral R. W. Hayler, USN, and in September earned the name of "lighthouse buster" when she shot down the Anguar Lighthouse during the Palau bombardment. The light was suspected of being used as an enemy command and observation post and had been the target of a number of ships to no avail. The "Razor" closed to 3,000 yards and Turret 3 put 13 hits out of 15 shots in the masonry tower which dropped with a satisfactory crash and a cloud of dust.

A bit later the DENVER was back at Ulithi—this time to cover a landing. In view of light opposition expected the bantamweight bombardment group included only this ship and two destroyers. She bombarded the islands outside the lagoon while mine sweeping was conducted inside the lagoon and maintained a scheduled fire at the northern end of the atoll. A reconnaisance detachment was put ashore and returned with two natives who informed the Army interpreter that all Japs had left three weeks before. The afternoon of "Dog Day" at Ulithi wound up with a picnic and swimming party on the beach.

But Pacific Fleet cruisers just don't have things that nice for long. The DENVER's division joined the Seventh Fleet and by the middle of October was in the thickest part of the Philippine liberation campaign. During a typhoon she fired a bombardment on Suluan Island in support of a Ranger Unit which secured the island, and thus claims to have fired the first big gun salvo in that campaign at 0801 on October 17, 1944.

The main landings on the beaches of Leyte were complicated by the still threatening typhoon, but on the 19th the DENVER's guns were again blazing away at targets in the vicinity of Dulag town, and on the 20th the landing occurred without opposition. After the landings, the bombardment group lay off the beachhead during daylight hours and accommodated the Army "spotters" by placing call fire as the troops moved inland; at night it patrolled the southern part of Leyte Gulf, ready to meet any surface threat from Surigao Straits, either east or south.

The DENVER was present when this threat materialized late on October 24, 1944. Submarine and plane sightings throughout the 23rd and 24th showed the enemy to be concentrating in the Mindoro area for what could only mean an attempt to destroy our fleet units protecting Leyte Gulf and thus cut off and annihilate our land forces on Leyte and nearby islands. Soon after 1:00 A.M. on the 25th contacts from PT boats stationed at the southern entrance reported sightings of several ships entering the straits from the southwest between Camiguan and Bohol Islands. The story written the night of the 24th and the day of the 25th is now well known, and has won its place as one of the actions that broke the back of Japanese naval strength. It is the story of the Battle of Surigao Strait where the Japs met the "ghost" battleships of Pearl Harbor. Due to the great popular appeal of these old Pearl Harbor BB's and in rendering the honors certainly due them, it is felt that the story of the splendid job done and tremendous fire put out by the cruisers has never been fully told.

The Jap forces were believed to have been composed of 2 battleships, 4 cruisers, and 10 destroyers; our forces consisted of 6 battleships, 8 cruisers and accompanying destroyers. Tactically, the situation could hardly have been more unfavorable for the enemy. He ran the gauntlet of our PT boats and destroyers only to arrive at the northern end to find on his first contact that his "T" had been crossed by the superior force under Rear Admiral Jesse B. Oldenorf, USN (now vice-admiral).

The DENVER formed part of the left flank forces, and it can be seen from her action that the cruisers were along for more than the ride. Almost from the moment of commencing fire at 3:50 A.M. observers on the DENVER saw enemy ships in flames. Her gunners opened "on target" and immediately went to rapid salvo fire, and the first target was reported on fire in one minute. By 4:00 A.M. her main battery target was dead in the water and burning fiercely; it had without doubt been hit by many other of our ships too. The five-inch battery then opened on another target, but the target was soon lost. For the next 30 minutes the action was fast, and several targets were taken under fire, only one of which appeared not to be in flames. At this time the remaining Japs who could run were doing just that.

At 6:30 A.M. the DENVER, COLUMBIA (a sister ship) and three destroyers were ordered to chase the cripples and finish them off, and shortly after 7:00 A.M. they were shooting at a Katori class light cruiser that was dead in the water with her bow blown off. The target sank in ten minutes and there was evidence of at least three other ships sinking or having sunk near the Jap cruiser at this time. Debris, fires, masts settling, small boats and wreckage littered the area. At 7:30 in the morning the engagement was broken off and the Task Group headed north to be in a position to help a group of CVE's that was reported to be engaged with another Jap force. But the DENVER did not get in on this, and it is another story.

However, the fact that she was not needed was another stroke of luck for she had nearly exhausted her allowance of armor piercing projectiles, and her high capacity projectiles had been pretty well used up on the shore bombardment. And in all Leyte Gulf she could find only 1100 six-inch AP's which she had to share with the COLUMBIA. Shooting at the Jap was an exercise the gunners enjoyed, but loading ammunition with a sky full of bogies is no fun; the lads on the DENVER knew that they had participated and done their share in a real surface action, and no one can ever talk them out of it or "snow them under."

A few days later the DENVER'S AA boys got credit for an "assist" on a Jap Val and the ship itself fell victim to one of the first Kamikaze attacks. It happened on October 28, and the plane (a Val) was repeatedly hit by AA guns and plunged into the sea about 50 feet off the starboard quarter. No personnel casualties were sustained, but the near miss of the plane and its bombs caused moderate underwater damage. Again,

Lady Luck was aboard—plus a number of fancy shooters. This Kamikaze was quickly followed by others in small numbers on that day and in force on the 29th, but thereafter the "Divine Winds" blew less strongly, and the DENVER was sent off to get patched up—this time to Manus in the Admiralties.

At Manus she was given excellent treatment by the repair ship U.S.S. MEDUSA, whose experts performed the neat trick of listing her to port some fourteen degrees and very satisfactorily patching the hole in her starboard side. By this time Manus had recreational facilities that were welcomed by all, and liberty on the beach fortified by a few cold beers was greatly enjoyed. As a matter of fact, the repair crews were a little too efficient to suit all hands, for in a few weeks the DENVER was again ready for action.

She returned to the Leyte area in late November to help complete the securing of that area. Enemy action at that time consisted only of sporadic air attacks, and the only close call was a bomb dropped 200 yards off the starboard quarter. Four men were wounded, none seriously, by the resulting bomb fragments and the Jap bomber disintegrated in pulling out of its attack dive. No wonder the men of the DENVER feel that not only can she get the job done—she'll get you back from it!

In mid-December, the DENVER participated in the Mindoro operation, working with the Carrier Escort group which provided convoy and beachhead cover. The group was subjected to numerous air attacks in which the DENVER sustained no damage, but accounted for two more Jap aircraft. This operation went well and the cruisers returned to Manus for logistic replenishment, including Christmas dinner.

At the first of the year 1945, the DENVER departed Manus for the Lingayen Gulf operation, operating as part of the covering group of cruisers and CVE's and destroyers. Operating well at sea, this group was not subject to suicide attacks on the scale experienced by the bombardment ships in the gulf, but did receive considerable attention from Jap planes in the course of which three more were splashed by her AA guns. With the Lingayen landing successfully completed, the task of cleaning up the Philippines was left to the Seventh Fleet cruisers, and the DENVER became part of the mopping up and consolidating force.

Not all of these operations required the full cruiser force, but the DENVER still got in on landing operations in Zambales, Batangas Province, Grande Island in Subic Bay, Nasugbu, the Mariveles-Corregidor assault, Puerto Princessa, Palawan, stood by (but was not needed) at Zamboanga and Iloilo, and again participated in operations at Malabang-Parang-Cotabato vicinity of South Central Mindanao, and the last amphibious operation of the Philippinees in Davao Gulf, thus firing the last as well as the first big gun salvo in the Philippine campaign. These operations became routine to the DENVER'S gunners, but this was nicely broken by a couple of liberties in war torn Manila, the first of which occurred on April 2nd and copped another first for the DENVER. Steaming as flag ship of Rear Admiral R. S. Riggs, USN, at the head of the cruiser division, in column, she was the first heavy U.S. man-of-war to enter Manila Bay since the beginning of the Pacific War.

On June 7, 1945, the DENVER got under way from Subic Bay in company with her old friends, but not for another job in the Philippines—their task was completed there. This time the mission was that of furnishing distant cover for the amphibious operations in the Brunei Bay area of northwestern Borneo—another cruiser division being the bombardment group. But the Jap cruisers reported to be at Singapore gave no trouble (one did come out at the time and was sunk by a British submarine), so the DENVER and her group were detached from the area when the landing was completed successfully about June 11. The division proceeded to Tawitawi Island in the Sulu Archipelago for replenishment before the Balikpapan operation—perhaps the longest and shootingest in the DENVER'S career.

The group left Tawitawi on June 13 to cover the preliminary mine sweeping operations and to furnish preliminary bombardment. From the 15th of June until the DENVER was detached on the 1st of July, she was in continuous Condition II (or I) during the daylight hours—along with some more of the same as conditions required at night. By "Dog Day", July 1, our Naval forces off Balikpapan totalled 8 U.S., 3 Australian, and 1 Dutch cruiser and their accompanying destroyers. Our shore bombardment was so intense that Australian troops landed at the oil rich Jap-held hot spot without casualties. The high points for the DENVER were several: she was ordered to, and did sink one of our own minesweepers that had been damaged by Jap shore batteries; got her last "assist" of the war when one of several attacking Jap planes was shot down during a night raid; and had two more close calls, once when Jap bombers dropped three sticks of bombs which landed within 800 yards of her and again when one of our own B-24s headed for a strike on the beach inadvertently dropped a bomb way too close for comfort while she was alongside—of all things—an ammunition ship. Whew! Plank owners as well as boots "cussed" and discussed that incident for some time. The DENVER doesn't claim all of the "firsts" and "lasts" of the Pacific War, but the unique experience of firing at shore installations while fueling is certainly worth mention. While alongside the U.S.S. CHEPACHET for fuel (the boatswain's mate had put out the "smoking lamp" for the operation), Jap shore batteries opened up on our minesweepers. The DENVER immediately returned that fire and silenced the batteries, for the time being at least, all to the de-

light of the crew of the tanker, for it was not often that they got to see big guns in action so near at hand.

After further replenishment and a week's rest at Leyte, the DENVER and her gang joined up with some larger fellows to go north. With rear Admiral F. S. Low, USN, in command of the task force which included the mighty battle cruisers, GUAM and ALASKA, the DENVER left Leyte the morning of July 13, 1945 for the now famous Okinawa Island in the Ryukyus and entered Buckner Bay at 0739 on the 16th.

Even the old timers aboard the DENVER felt they were entering hallowed waters, for it was in these waters that the Kamikaze attacks reached their peak, and more such attacks could certainly be expected at any time. The task force remained to fuel just that day, and before nightfall was under way again on what was expected to one of the most exciting operations of the DENVER'S career—an anti-shipping sweep of the China Coast north to Shanghai.

After playing tag with two typhoons for nearly four days, the task force entered the sweep area the evening of the 21st and early the next morning made contact with the China Coast. But except for tossing a few 5-inch at a bogy that night, which turned tailed in a hurry, the DENVER had no targets. Subsequent sweeps made during the following several weeks proved as fruitless; the Japs were gone or were saving up for another occasion. Without knowing it, the DENVER'S gunners at 9:45 P.M., the night of July 21, 1945, fired their last shot in anger driving off an enemy snooper, for at about 8:15 A.M., Aug. 15, while she was going alongside a tanker in Buckner Bay to refuel, the news of Japanese Government acceptance of Allied surrender terms was received.

While this news was somewhat anti-climactic and had been expected, it was received with great enthusiasm by all hands. The ever sharp and "on the ball" signal gang hoisted the general signal "cease present exercises designating War" along with one or two other miscellaneous and strictly irregular items in competition with other signals hoisted by other ships. But if such activity caused an arched eyebrow by a senior officer, it was certainly unnoticed; besides, everybody was feeling pretty good. So still in a spot that could be hot at any moment, the DENVER saw the end of World War II—just exactly two months short of three years of continuous fighting, or licking her wounds so she could fight some more.

Remembering that "Japs are tricky" and lacking official confirmation of the surrender of Japan, DENVER remained in a full war-time status. As time passed the fact was realized that we had won a decisive victory, and delay of the surrender was of a technical nature only.

On the 9th of September, DENVER departed Buckner Bay for good and steamed to Japan, where she was to act as a part of the covering force for the evacuation of prisoners of war, and later for the landing of our 6th Army troops in the Wakayama, Japan, area. On arrival off the "target area" she steamed back and forth for several days before entering, covering her accompanying escort carriers. On the 15th she entered and anchored in Wakanoura Wan (Bay), just off Wakanoura and Wakayama, Honshu.

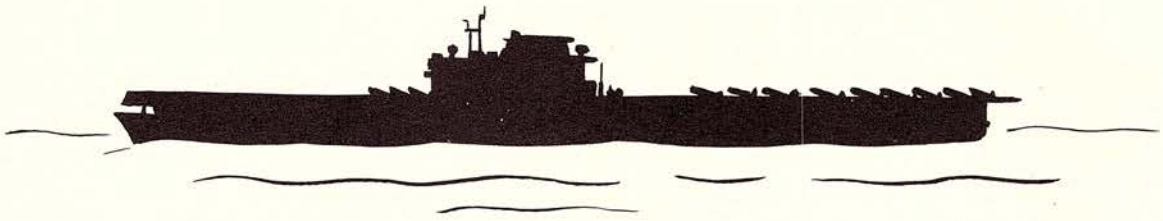
On the 17th and 18th of September the DENVER experienced perhaps the worst weather she has even faced in the form of a typhoon which swept the area. The ship rolled severely, registering a thirty-six degree roll at the height of the storm. Winds were registered up to eighty knots while gusts were as high as one hundred knots.

The ship's personnel were favored by numerous liberties during the next four weeks, going ashore almost daily in Wakanoura and Wakayama, where they traded for and bought numerous souvenirs.

At midnight, 5 October the Captain awoke the ship with the pleasing announcement, "The DENVER has just received orders to return to the United States on the 20th of the month."

DENVER departed Japan on the 20th, heading east. After a two day stop at Pearl Harbor she left, streaming her 1040 foot "homeward bound pennant", supported by aerological balloons. On November 4th she arrived at San Pedro, California, and moored in continental U. S. waters for the first time in more than seventeen months. After four days of liberty for the men she headed south to the Panama Canal, which was transited on the 16th of November. On the morning of the 21st of November, the DENVER arrived in Hampton Roads—home at last, as she is now assigned to the Atlantic Active Fleet.

A few facts will round out the story of the DENVER at war. Her war time commanding officers were Captains (now Rear Admirals) R. B. Carney, and R. P. Briscoe, USN, and Captains A. M. Bledsoe and T. F. Darden, USN. The DENVER'S gunners fired 18,249 rounds of six-inch, 22,746 rounds of five-inch, 65,993 rounds of 40 millimeter and 32,073 rounds of 20 millimeter—and that's some shooting; she steamed slightly over 150,000 war time miles—and that's getting around. Her mileage record is relatively not as high as her shooting record, but her men are willing to attribute that to the fact that she got where the fighting was going on and stayed there until it was over.



U. S. S. ENTERPRISE (CV 6)

"THE GALLOPING GHOST OF THE OAHU COAST"

Sunk six times by Japanese claim, the USS ENTERPRISE is still afloat.

"The fightingest carrier in the fleet" accounted for 911 Jap aircraft shot down by the mighty flat-top's planes and guns, 71 enemy ships sunk by her pilots and another 192 damaged or probably sunk. While accumulating 18 of 22 possible combat stars for carriers in the Pacific area, the gallant ship steamed more than 275,000 miles—the equivalent of 12 times around the world at the equator—in pursuit of the foe.

Although her log is practically a summary of the naval war in the Pacific from the sad and desperate beginning on December 7, 1941, through the tide-turning days at Midway and Guadalcanal, nothing was tougher than the last 19 action-packed months taking her through the bloody victory at Okinawa.

During the last two months of the Okinawa campaign, where as part of Vice Admiral Marc A. Mitscher's TASK FORCE 58 she was helping protect troops on the beach from Japanese air attacks, the ENTERPRISE was hit four times. Twice she retired briefly for temporary repairs at a nearby base. Then on the morning of May 14, 1945, a bomb-laden Japanese plane crashed into the forward part of the giant ship's flight deck.

The resulting explosion blew her forward elevator cleanly out of its well and more than 400 feet in the air as well as causing a sizeable bulge in the flight deck. But worst of all, it killed 14 members of the crew and wounded another 34. Reluctantly, the ENTERPRISE withdrew from action.

"We could have stayed there and operated at 80 per cent efficiency," explained her commanding officer, Captain G. B. H. Hall, U.S.N., of Annapolis, Maryland. "But we were due for overhaul, and the fleet didn't need us. So we came back."

The ENTERPRISE was serving as Vice Admiral Mitscher's flagship at this time, he having just transferred his flag from the USS BUNKER HILL, when the latter ship was damaged by Kamikaze attack a few days before. His comment on the seamanship which brought the fires under control in 17 minutes and had them extinguished in half an hour clearly illustrates the spirit of the ENTERPRISE.

"The performance of duty of the officers and men of the ENTERPRISE under fire and their effective damage control measures were outstanding, of the highest order and the most effective that I have seen during one year's service in the Force (TASK FORCE 58)," he wrote. "I was particularly impressed with the attitude of the ship's company in combatting fires when under fire; your ship is indicative of the high order of efficiency that is rapidly winning the war."

To the more than 10,000 men who served aboard the ENTERPRISE since the war began, such achievements were routine. The enemy damaged her 15 times with hits and near misses in the nearly four years of war. She was often called the "Lucky E," as was the second of the five ships in Navy history which have carried the illustrious name, but her officers and men know it is more

than luck which brought her through. They prefer to call her the "Big E," because "E" in the Navy stands for Excellence; and it is as the "Big E" that she is known throughout the fleet. Her men recall how the will to fight brought her through her blackest days—the Battle of the Eastern Solomons and the Battle of Santa Cruz in the summer and fall of 1942.

Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr., U.S.N., Commander of the Third Fleet, prefers to call her, "The Galloping Ghost of the Oahu Coast," or just "The Galloping Ghost." She was his flagship on the ill-fated December 7th and for several months thereafter when he took her on defiant forays into the Marshall Islands, then against Wake and Marcus Islands, and finally as escort for the USS HORNET carrying Lieutenant General James H. Doolittle's Tokyo raiders. In those days Admiral Halsey's "Galloping Ghost" symbolized the American resistance against a foe advancing with seemingly overwhelming strength.

In the fall of 1944 when the ENTERPRISE joined Admiral Halsey's tremendous new Third Fleet, bulging with the Navy's powerful new carriers, battleships, cruisers and destroyers, the Admiral welcomed her to his "big blue team" in a message saying:

". . . I am happy to have the ENTERPRISE back in her regular position. From past experience I know we can expect great things from 'The Galloping Ghost.' "

From Admirals to seamen, men who have served aboard the "Big E" are indelibly stamped in the fleet as "ENTERPRISE men." They look with tolerance on the newer, slightly larger flat-tops. When they mix with other crews ashore, and the inevitable argument starts about which is the best ship, ENTERPRISE men say loftily, "Go out and get yourself some experience and then come back and talk to us."

Recently the "Big E" stopped at Pearl Harbor on her way back to the Puget Sound Navy Yard, Bremerton, Washington, for repairs and general overhaul. As she steamed slowly into port, a flight of fighter-bombers flew over forming the letter "E." Then the planes swooped low alongside the ship so the crew could read the signs painted on their sides which read, FOR — CARRIER — CHAMP — TAKE — ENTERPRISE. After the ship docked, crew members learned the planes belonged to AIR GROUP SIX, the group which had flown from the ENTERPRISE during the first eight months of the war. At heart, they were still ENTERPRISE men.

But it remained for a seaman, second class, to express the true feelings of an ENTERPRISE man. He said, "I wouldn't take any other ship in the fleet. The ENTERPRISE has a soul."

The ENTERPRISE epic began the morning the Japanese made their sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. The ship had been busy during the previous months shuttling planes and squadrons around the Pacific, bringing them from the States to various island bases. Late in November she carried Marine fighter planes to Wake Island. Although the nation was at peace, the tense atmosphere of impending trouble was in the air, and Admiral (then Vice Admiral) Halsey had the carrier and her escorts working on a wartime basis. With the mission to Wake completed, the small force started back for Pearl, expecting to make the harbor by Saturday, December 6. All hands were looking forward to a gay Saturday night liberty ashore.

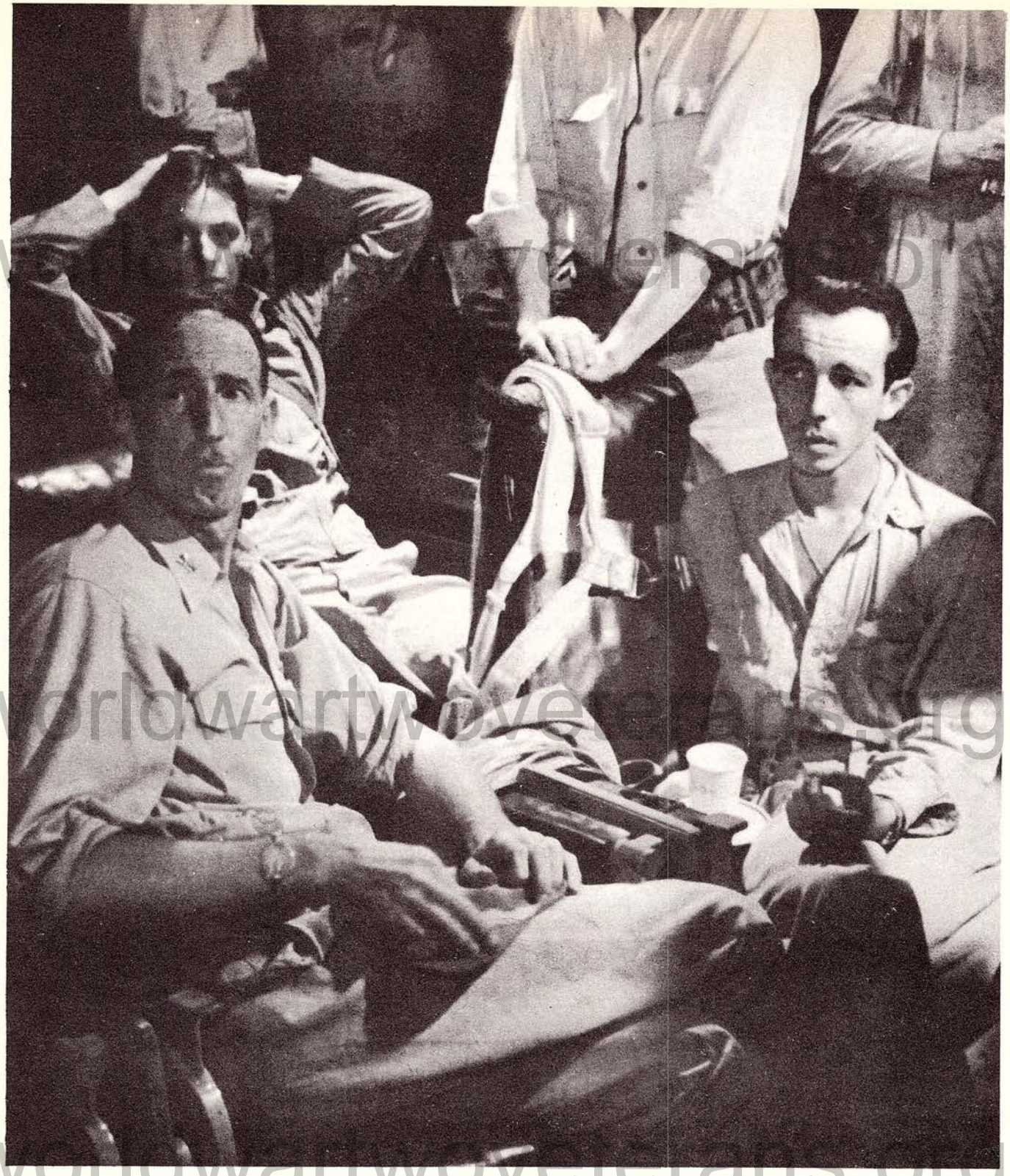
Several days before she was due to arrive, the "Big E" had her first great stroke of luck. She ran into a storm. Admiral Halsey was forced to slow the force to save his destroyers from excessive pounding in the high seas, thus delaying the arrival until Sunday, the seventh.

The plan was to send the ENTERPRISE planes into the airfields near Pearl Harbor before the ship entered port. A small group of DAUNTLESS dive bombers from SCOUTING SQUADRON SIX and BOMBING SQUADRON SIX left the deck first on what seemed to be a peaceful, ordinary Sunday morning in the tropics. But when the planes reached the island they ran right into the middle of the Japanese attack. The radio reports they sent back to the "Big E" were the first news the ship had that the Nation was at war.

It is believed that at least one enemy fighter plane was shot down that morning by a rear seat gunner in one of SCOUTING SIX'S planes, but no proper evaluation was made, and the claim is not officially allowed in the squadron's score. However, "Big E" men are sure that one of their planes shot down the first Jap of the war.

All during the day of the seventh Admiral Halsey kept his bombers armed and ready to send against the enemy ships, but no contact message was received on the Japs' position. Eventually, the ENTERPRISE dispatched a search of her own, and one of the planes reported sighting enemy ships. A flight of DEVASTATOR torpedo bombers and DAUNTLESS dive bombers escorted by WILDCAT fighters was launched to attack this group, but they were unable to locate the objective and returned to Pearl Harbor and the ship.

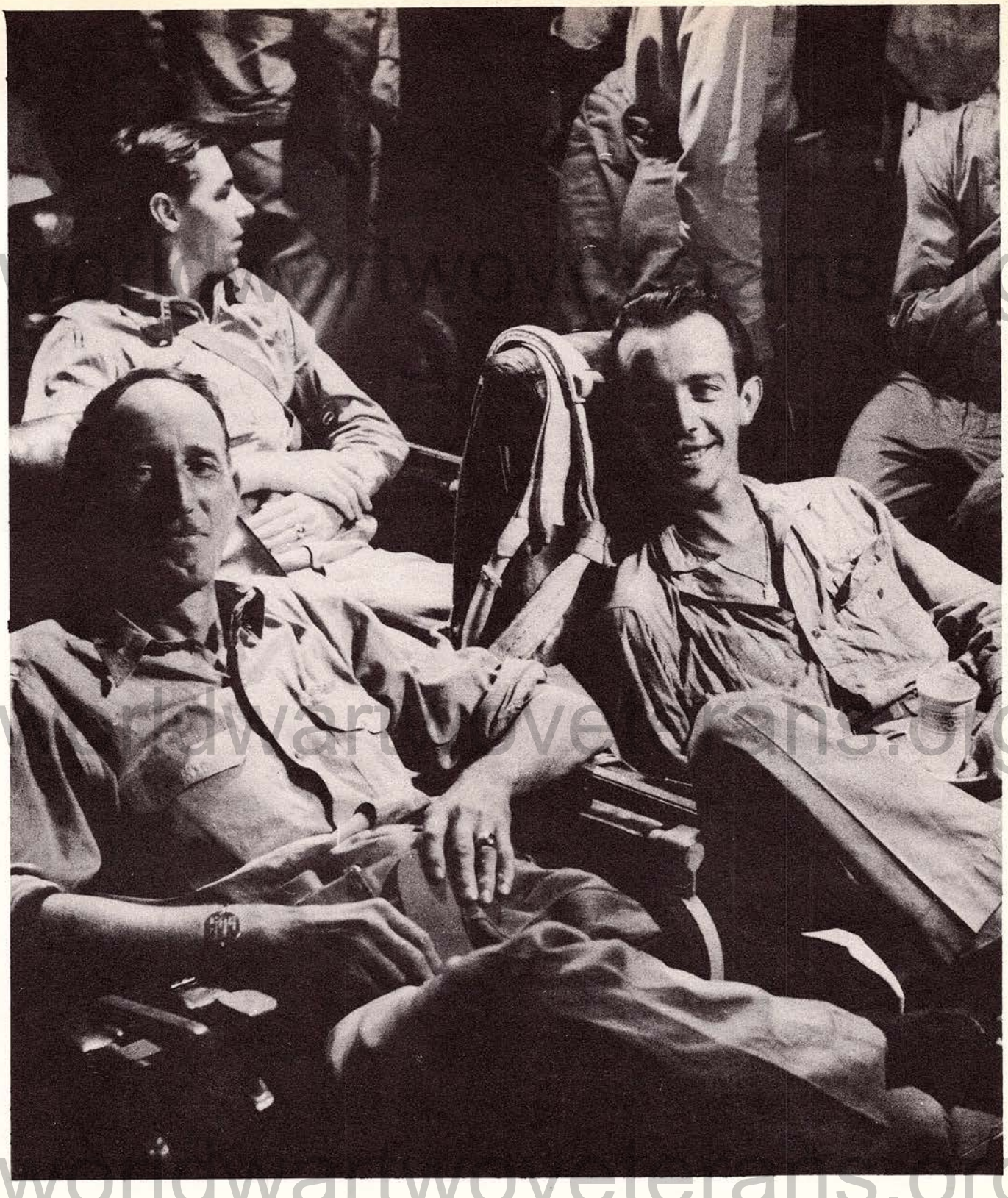
For the next year, the ENTERPRISE was constantly in the thick of the fight to stop the Jap advance and start the push in the other direction—missing only the Battle of Coral Sea. After the costly victory in the Battle of Midway which she fought side-by side with her two sister ships, the HORNET and the USS YORKTOWN, which was sunk in the engagement, her commanding officer, Vice Admiral (then Captain) George D. Murray, U.S.N., delivered a message to the crew which illustrated the ship's spirit throughout this arduous period.



OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

WAITING TIME IN A CARRIER'S READY ROOM

ANXIOUS VIGIL. Surrounded by Navy bomber pilots who have completed their missions and returned to their carrier, Captain Stuart H. Ingersoll, USN (left), keeps a nerve-wracking vigil in the ready room of his flat-top as he awaits the appearance of fighter pilots sent aloft to engage Jap fighters from Saipan. Captain Ingersoll skippered one of the powerful aircraft carriers of Task Force 58.



OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

"MISSION COMPLETED — ALL'S WELL"

HIS BOYS ARE COMING HOME. Captain Ingersoll, Commanding Officer of a hard-hitting carrier, relaxes as the pilots report over the interplane system that their mission is completed and that the fighters are on the way home. The assignment of Task Force 58 was to eliminate Japanese air opposition on the 600-mile chain of the Marianas and to smash coastal defenses in readiness for invasion by United States forces.

"I wish to extend my grateful thanks," he wrote, "to every officer and man of the Ship's Company for their outstanding performance of duty against the enemy.

It is our fervent hope that many of our gallant and heroic shipmates in the Air Group who are now unaccounted for will be rescued by our own forces. Those who are not, and who have made the supreme sacrifice have done so that our country might live.

"We salute our honored dead and are determined to exterminate the enemy and drive him from the seas.

"To all hands, 'Well done'."

The recognition of a grateful nation for her services during this period was paid when she was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation. The first and still the only Pacific carrier to receive this honor, the "Big E" carries a large red, white and blue record of the events for which she was cited painted on the bulkhead of her hangar deck. The Citation itself reads:

"For consistently outstanding performance and distinguished achievement during repeated action against the enemy Japanese forces in the Pacific war area, December 7, 1941, to November 15, 1942. Participating in nearly every major carrier engagement in the first year of the war, the ENTERPRISE and her Air Group, exclusive of her farflung destruction of hostile shore installations throughout the battle area, did sink or damage, on her own a total of 35 Japanese vessels and shot down a total of 185 Japanese aircraft. Her agressive spirit and superb combat efficiency are fitting tribute to the officers and men who so gallantly established her as an ahead bulwark in defense of the American Nation."

By the early summer of 1943 the first of the new ESSEX-class carriers were arriving in Pearl Harbor to mount the coming offensive through the Central Pacific. After having stood a long vigil as the only U. S. carrier in the South Pacific, the ENTERPRISE had eventually been joined by the USS SARATOGA and later the British carrier, HMS VICTORIOUS. So it was decided that the "Big E" could be spared from the front line long enough to return to the States for much-needed overhaul. She still showed prominent scars from grievous wounds she had received at the Battles of the Eastern Solomons and Santa Cruz—scars such as the "tent city" in officers' country where canvas bulkheads had been hung to replace the steel knocked out by bombs.

Excitement ran high on the voyage home. The ship's popular executive officer, Captain (then Commander) John Crommelin, U.S.N., encouraged the crew to practice close-order drill on the flight deck, as it was generally felt that a victory parade would be held to celebrate the homecoming. All hands had visions of marching down San Francisco's Market Street to the welcoming roar of tens of thousands of citizens. Instead, wartime secrecy demanded that the ship slip quietly into Seattle harbor, where she lay for three days before anyone was allowed to go ashore for liberty.

The disappointments were soon forgotten when it was announced that everyone would have a full 30-day leave while the ship was in the Puget Sound Navy Yard. And thus ended Chapter One in the ENTERPRISE epic.

Chapter Two commenced in November, 1943. By then the U. S. shipyards had disgorged dozens of new first-line carriers, battleships, cruisers and destroyers. The fleet was ready to launch the offensive which was to carry it to the gates of the Japanese Empire in 18 months. Once again the "Big E" was to be in the forefront, this time advancing as part of the largest fleet in history.

As if it were always the lot of the ENTERPRISE to distinguish herself, she immediately inaugurated a new type of carrier warfare—night fighting. During the invasion of the Gilbert Islands in November, 1943—the first step in the advance across the Pacific—the Japanese found that their bombers were unable to penetrate the screen of new HELLCAT fighters which the large carrier fleet could keep in the air during daylight hours. So they took to night tactics, sending in medium bombers carrying torpedoes. This was an extremely serious threat to the fleet, as there was no effective counter measure immediately available.

Aboard the "Big E" as Air Group Commander was a man who had been awarded the Medal of Honor the year before for his achievements as a fighter pilot in the South Pacific. He was the late Commander Edward H. "Butch" O'Hare, U.S.N. Together with the Task Group Commander aboard the ENTERPRISE, Rear Admiral Arthur W. Radford, U.S.N., Commander O'Hare worked out a three-plane element for searching out and knocking down Jap planes at night.

These units were called "Bat Teams," and were composed of one radar-equipped AVENGER torpedo plane leading two HELLCAT fighters. The AVENGER was to be directed to within a few miles of the enemy target by the ship's fighter director by means of the ship's radar. Then it was to use its own radar to lead the fighters to within visible range where they could shoot him down.

On the night of November 26, 1943, while the "Big E" was operating off Tarawa, enemy torpedo bombers were detected approaching the carriers. Commander O'Hare's "Bat Team" was launched at once. Two and possibly three Japs were destroyed by the hastily improvised method, and the rest were driven off without inflicting any damage on the force. But the price was high; Commander O'Hare was lost on the flight.

From that time on the ENTERPRISE was to be the foremost pioneer in the developement of the art of night combat—an art that was to reach the point where carrier operations could be placed on a 24-hour basis.

But there was still plenty of day work to be done by the hardy veteran. Then commanded by Rear Admiral (then Captain) H. B. Gardner, U.S.N. With AIR GROUP TEN aboard, the ship plunged earnestly into the early stages of the advance across the Pacific—the invasions of the Marshall Islands, Hollandia and the Marianas and the devastating strikes of TASK FORCE 58 (described in Navy Department press release, "COMBAT RECORD OF AIR GROUP TEN," dated August 13, 1944).

The "Big E" didn't look quite so big the first time TASK FORCE 58 assembled in the new fleet anchorage at Majuro Atoll in the Marshall Islands. Her mooring was the last in line of the big carriers, and her new sisters somewhat overshadowed her for size. But they all knew who she was. Men who were fresh in the fleet would appear alongside the ENTERPRISE in small boats, gaping at her patched-up sides; some went aboard to gaze in awe at the Presidential Unit Citation on her hangar deck.

While she was at sea, the ship was equally prominent. It was her night-flying torpedo planes which sparked the success of the first carrier strike on Truk in February, 1944, by making a highly successful night radar bombing attack and thereby setting the pace for the second day's memorable achievements by the other air groups. During the Battle of the Philippine Sea, while under the command of Captain Cato D. Glover, Jr., U.S.N., it was ENTERPRISE search planes which finally located the Jap fleet when it looked as if it had escaped free. And finally, with AIR GROUP 20 aboard, she achieved the distinction of being the only carrier in action against all three of the widely scattered Jap forces used in the Battle for Leyte Gulf.

This last battle highlighted her victories since she had returned to the fleet. On the first morning her planes delivered a severe attack on the Jap force in the Sulu Sea, damaging two battleships and a heavy cruiser. That afternoon her bombers blasted the huge new battleship MUSASHI in the Sibuyan Sea. The ship later sank and thus became the first modern battleship with advanced anti-aircraft defenses to go down under aircraft attack alone. The following day the "Big E" participated in an all-day battle against a Jap carrier force, assisting in the sinking of four enemy carriers, two cruisers and several destroyers, and damaging two more battleships.

The climax of the ENTERPRISE's experiences and achievements in night combat flying came during the first five months of 1945, when she operated the first night air group to fly from a large carrier. This was Night Air Group 90, led by Commander William I. Martin, U.S.N., later with Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet Headquarters in Washington — the same Commander Martin whose TORPEDO SQUADRON TEN had made the night attack on Truk.

With this group flying more than 1,000 target sorties from her deck, the "Big E" definitely established herself as the leader in this form of combat. These planes took part in covering the invasion of Luzon; the sweeps against the Jap air force and installations in French Indo-China, Hong Kong, the China Coast, Canton, Formosa and Okinawa in January; two carrier strikes against Tokyo and the Japanese Inland Sea, and the air support for the Iwo Jima landings in February and March; the preliminary softening bombardment and air support for the Okinawa landings in April and May.

That night combat had come of age was well proved in the course of the Iwo Jima supporting operation. From February 23 to March 2, the ENTERPRISE had planes in the air day and night for 174 consecutive hours, or more than one full week. On March 19, during the strike on the Jap fleet in the Inland Sea, Night Air Group 90 proved how much damage night flying carrier planes can inflict using the pin-point bombing technique of carrier pilots. Five AVENGERS from the ship conducted search and attack missions into the Inland Sea at ranges up to 350 miles, and there they damaged a carrier and a battleship with bombs and rockets; damaged a destroyer with rockets; struck three merchant vessels with 500-pound bombs; shot down a four-engine Jap flying boat; and scored 500-pound bomb hits on the Mitsubishi plant at Honshu, causing violent explosions.

At about the time the Philippine invasion began, the Japanese uncovered their first kamikaze attacks. The ENTERPRISE had seen such antics before—as far back as February 1, 1942, off the Marshall Islands a Jap pilot bent on crashing her flight deck came close enough to knock a parked plane overboard—but never on an organized basis. The ship managed to endure these suicide attacks unscathed for the first few months in spite of some narrow escapes, but their weird nature and the constant threat of destruction that they imposed gave the war a new horror.

Lieutenant Gerald J. Flynn, U.S.N.R., who has served two years aboard the ENTERPRISE as Recognition Officer, Public Information Officer and Gunnery Officer, described one peculiar episode among the ship's close calls which occurred last March when a suicide pilot was making a death dive on the carrier. "The pilot must have been killed," he said, "because the plane began circling the carrier. It came down, then leveled off and made a complete circle of the ship before it crashed aft—and fairly close. I'll never forget that plane, though, as it winged around the ship. Every moment you expected it to turn on you, and it was so close you could almost hit it with a baseball. The gunners pumped shells into it continuously, but it kept on circling until they finally got it.

"When they come down out of the clouds at you," continued Lt. Flynn, "you're sure they're headed straight for you. Then when they miss you by a few feet, you

discover that you were wrong—much to your relief."

On March 18, the "Big E" suffered her first direct hit from these constant attacks. As Task Force 58 was attacking Kyushu, a Jap dive bomber split the defenses to drop a bomb on the forward elevator of the carrier. Carl J. Smith, Aviation Machinist's Mate, First Class, U.S.N.R., described the scene as follows:

"I was standing on the flight deck enjoying the sunshine.

"All at once this Jap bomber came out of the clouds and made his run over the ship. He dropped a single bomb and started strafing at the same time.

"When I saw the bomb coming down, I took off—down the flight deck, up over a cat-walk and down a ladder. That bomb hit about five feet from where I had been standing and rolled along the same path that I had taken along the flight deck. I couldn't have been more surprised or scared if it had followed me down the ladder, too.

"The only reason that I am able to tell the story is because that bomb was a 'dud.' That Jap was so low over our deck that the bomb was still falling in a flat position when it hit. It never did get the detonating head pointed down."

When the dud bomb came to rest it was quickly thrown overboard by Pedro Sandoval, Shipfitter, First Class, U.S.N.R., Robert G. Terreberry, Shipfitter, Second Class, U.S.N.R., and James Vest, Seaman, First Class, U.S.N.R.

Two days later the ENTERPRISE was not quite so lucky. Four kamikaze pilots singled her out for destruction and made their dives. She managed to shoot them all down, although three of them jarred the ship badly with near misses. During the action an anti-aircraft shell from a nearby ship in the force exploded over the deck of the "Big E," spreading shrapnel and causing serious fires on the deck.

One of the near misses has been described by Leslie P. Nancolas, Coxswain, U.S.N.R., who has been awarded the Purple Heart for injuries received in this action. Nancolas was serving in an anti-aircraft battery on the side of the ship when the plane struck and said, "That plane looked so low when it passed over us that I think I could have reached up and touched it. At the last second the pilot flipped the plane over on its back. That twist caused it to plunge into the sea instead of onto the flight deck.

"When she hit the sea," Nancolas recalls, "the explosion was so terrific that we were all knocked off our feet. Ammunition was scattered all over our gun position. The whole place was a mess, but not nearly as bad as it would have been if he had hit the flight deck."

Boatswain Lewis Elmer Sinz, U.S.N., has been awarded the Bronze Star Medal for sticking his finger in the ruptured belly tank of an airplane on the ENTERPRISE flight deck during the fire which followed. He noticed gasoline leaking from the tank and plugged it up "for what seemed like hours." A dozen nearby planes were afire and the additional gasoline would have caused even greater damage. The tank was thrown over the side of the ship when the fires were brought under control. The following day Sinz was wounded in the neck by a piece of shrapnel when Jap planes renewed the attack.

"Come on! Let's throw this hot ammunition overboard before it explodes," Lieutenant John Anthony Flood, Jr., U.S.N.R., urged crew members when fire began roasting the ENTERPRISE flight deck. Enlisted men later praised Lieutenant Flood, "because he was all over the ship and did a marvelous job—not just telling us what to do, but also doing it with us."

Lieutenant Flood said it was nothing exceptional. "If you know what you're doing," he said, "you can handle dynamite without any trouble."

As a result of the fires and explosions, it was necessary for the ENTERPRISE to make a brief trip to an advance base for temporary repairs, but she was back on the scene within two weeks.

Once again her pilots kept the kamikaze bases under bombardment day and night; in between these attacks they supported the ground troops fighting on Okinawa. Then, on April 11, the "Big E" took another damaging hit.

Four suicide planes attacked the flat-top. One scored a near hit and left his engine imbedded in the port side of the ship. Three crashed so close they were classified "near misses." One burning kamikaze plummeted over the deck, just missed, and exploded in the water alongside, sending his wing up on the flight deck. Another circled the ship crazily before it crashed into the water. All of the attacking planes were hit and in flames as they came down.

The "Big E's" Chief Engineer, Commander Charles H. Meigs, U.S.N., in explaining the hit on the side of the ship, said, "The explosion was under the ship and it lifted us about three feet. The noise and shock were terrific. We suffered 'major damages' to the machinery, but our veteran 'black gang' restored full cruising speed within a few minutes."

Terming the sustained action off Okinawa and southern Japan the worst that the engineers underwent, Commander Meigs said, "Those men stayed at their battle stations 16 hours a day, days on end. The heat was intense and the bombs and near misses that we took made the situation nerve-wracking. Many of those engineers have been in action since Pearl Harbor, and the sustained effort has been anything but easy."

Earl L. Botkin, Radarman, First Class, U.S.N.R., who holds a Letter of Commendation for his part in the

Battle of the Philippine Sea, gave his version of the same suicide hit. "When I looked off the starboard side, a kamikaze was bearing down on the ship, and our gunners were on him all the way in. That pilot either lost control or was killed during the dive, because the plane flipped over, missed the flight deck, and buried itself into the side of the ENTERPRISE.

"That kamikaze," he continued, "crashed into the ship about 30 feet from where I was standing, and my knees turned to jelly. Maybe it's just as well that I don't see all the action."

Charles R. Findlow, Seaman, First Class, U.S.N.R., was recommended for the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for using his body to protect a wounded shipmate from strafing by a Jap plane during the action.

"I dragged him away from the flames and tried to make him comfortable until medical help arrived," Findlow said. "About that time some more of our ammunition began to explode, and a couple of Japs were making runs on the ship and trying to finish it off. I just spread myself over my 'buddy' to keep him from getting hit by any more shrapnel or Jap machine gun bullets. When the action slowed down a little and I could see what I was doing, I carried him to the Admiral's cabin and covered him with the Admiral's blanket. A pharmacist's mate got there in a hurry and took care of him."

How it felt aboard ship when the plane struck was described by Harrison J. Welton, Aviation Machinist's Mate, Third Class, U.S.N.R., "I squatted down to absorb the shock," Welton said, "and then came the crash. My headphone spun around and ended up over my eyes. For a while, I thought I had gone blind."

Clarence E. Gilliam, Painter, Second Class, U.S.N.R., received a pleasant surprise down in the lower spaces of the ship. He was shot into the air by the impact, and by the time he landed on his back the lights had gone out. "Something fell across my legs," he said, "and when the lights flashed back on within a minute I was afraid to look. I was a happy sailor when I saw that it was just a stack of buckets and both my legs were still there."

Again the ENTERPRISE was forced to retire from action to undergo repairs. Her frame was bent, fuel tanks were destroyed, catapults were damaged, and two large diesel generators aft had been blown against the overhead. In spite of these battle damages, she was back fighting in three weeks.

As flagship for Task Force 58, the "Big E" steamed to within 60 miles of Kyushu on May 12th, and from that point on the doorstep of the Japanese Empire she joined in a systematic pounding of enemy suicide plane bases. Vice Admiral Mitscher's planes pounded these fields day and night through the 13th with excellent results. It is believed that no kamikaze attacks were launched from this particular area at any time during the strike.

The ship's Air Combat Intelligence Officer, Lieutenant Commander Frank G. Belcher, U.S.N.R., explained the success of the mission. "Our planes went after the Japs all night long," he said. "They'd spot Jap planes warming up and then swoop in to bomb and strafe them. The first time we went in the Japs thought that our planes were theirs. They even turned on the lights and lit up the runways for our planes to land. When our pilots bombed and strafed the field, the Japs turned their lights off in a hurry."

On the morning of the 14th the enemy counter-attacked in force. Thirty raids, apparently sent from an area not covered by Vice Admiral Mitscher's raiders, were sent after the Task Force. The "Big E" was "buttoned up" tightly as she took aboard four members of her dawn patrol and waited for 13 more to land.

A Hellcat fighter plane from the ENTERPRISE reported knocking down an enemy plane close by. Three more attackers were splashed, and the weary gunners and lookouts on the ship breathed more easily until a single enemy plane was spotted maneuvering in cloud cover over the ship.

Evading the task force fighters and fish-tailing through the curtain of flak, the kamikaze screamed down on the "Big E." When it appeared certain he would overshoot his mark, the Jap pilot flipped his plane on its back and plunged into the forward part of the flight deck. His bomb exploded under the forward elevator, sending it flying into the air. Reports on how high it went vary from 400 feet, proven by photograph, to 1,500 feet, claimed by pilots flying at that altitude.

Fires immediately roared through the forward part of the ship. Officers and men pushed through smoke and flame to pour tons of water into the burning area, which had been considerably localized as a result of the fact that the ship was "buttoned up."

Guns crews jettisoned ammunition until heat drove them from their posts. Then they broke out fire hose and kept the explosions at a minimum. They worked fearlessly, expertly, heroically. Within 17 minutes after the ship was hit, the fires were under control. Within 30 minutes they were completely extinguished—and the crew returned to the job of driving off more attacking planes.

In all, the Force underwent 21 more raids. Nine planes succeeded in getting close enough so that the ENTERPRISE could bring her guns to bear on them. No action in the ship's long career produced greater acts of courage and selflessness.

The carrier's Executive Officer, Commander W. L. Kabler, U.S.N., said afterwards, "Bringing those fires under control in 17 minutes and putting them out in a half hour was an outstanding accomplishment. I never

saw such spirit in a crew. They even wanted to go back, for they had confidence in themselves and the ship."

Charles Michael Fronzuto, Jr., Torpedoman, Second Class, U.S.N.R., offered his own idea on how the Jap pilot selected his target. "The plane was headed right for us," said Fronzuto, who was at his battle station on the ship's island structure. "Then it suddenly changed its course and hit the ship near the forward elevator, which was knocked a thousand feet into the air. The Jap pilot must have changed his course when he saw the look of terror on my face."

Franklin C. Storms, Coxswain, U.S.N.R., was gun director on one of the anti-aircraft teams. He explained the gunners' difficulties in knocking down the Jap in the brief time after he left the cloud. "It was hard to keep on him," Storms said. "He seemed to fishtail, as we call it, and weave from right to left as he came in. And boy, he came fast!"

Patrick D. Daly, Fire Controlman, First Class, U.S. N.R., also had trouble training his guns on the suicider. "Our big guns were firing at the plane, but the low cloud bank saved it. When the plane did come out of the clouds and started its dive toward the ship, our gunners couldn't stop it."

Recalling the seconds following the crash, Daly related that smoke, flames and sections of the flight deck came floating up to his battle station on the island. "It was a scene I'll never forget," he continued. "That deck was an inferno. As I watched, men would walk into the flames and come out carrying wounded shipmates. Then they would turn around and wade right back through the flames and come out with those heavy, hot shells in their arms. Every one of those boys was a hero."

Roger M. Van Frank, Aviation Ordnanceman, Third Class, U.S.N.R., started running as he saw the Jap plane coming directly towards him on the flight deck. "The explosion tossed me into the air against the cat-walk and then the deck buckled and I landed on top of some other men," he related. "By that time the gunners were fighting their way out of the flaming anti-aircraft battery and they used us for carpets. That suicide plane went through the deck not 20 feet behind me and it darned near scared me to death. How I missed getting killed I'll never know."

Private First Class Bert L. Pyles, U.S.M.C., was in a gun battery alongside the flight deck which was showered with shrapnel when the plane struck. "That was the worst attack I've undergone," he said, "because we were hit so early in the morning and had to fight off attacks all day. It's sweatin' 'em out that really gets you."

Alfred Gabarra, Chief Boatswain's Mate, U.S.N.R., was stationed on the hangar deck about 50 feet from where the kamikaze came crashing through. Gabarra, who has served aboard the ENTERPRISE since Pearl Harbor and holds the Purple Heart for wounds received in an earlier battle, explained modestly:

"I had charge of a group of fire-fighters and we simply went to work and got the fires out in a hurry. Now, if you want a story, see the Chief Carpenter. That man waded back and forth through the gasoline and ammunition fires with heavy shells in his arms." What Gabarra doesn't say was that he had been beside the Chief Carpenter doing the same thing to prevent the gasoline fires from exploding the ammunition.

In spite of these experiences, Gabarra recalled that the earlier battles, especially the Battle of Santa Cruz, were more terrifying. "They lasted longer, and we didn't have half enough fighting ships then," he said.

Alexander J. Nedzynski, Chief Machinist's Mate, U.S.N., is a veteran of 55 months aboard the "Big E" and has been in every major Pacific battle except Coral Sea. As a member of the engineering department he has contributed to the amazing record of the ship for never having a major engineering breakdown. As Nedzynski explains it, "After the action is over the engineers go topside and see what has happened."

"During the May 14 action," the Chief said, "we couldn't see anything, but we did have plenty of excitement in the engine room. When that kamikaze hit the flight deck, the lights went out and the ventilation system began pouring smoke down to us instead of fresh air. We restored the lighting system in 30 seconds and the ship was swung around so the vents picked up fresh air instead of smoke and fire. We didn't even loss speed. After all, the 'Big E' was built to stand lots of punishment."

When the ENTERPRISE sailed for the States this last time, streaming a 578-foot homeward-bound pennant—one foot for every day at sea—she had taken about as much punishment as the enemy could give her, and had given hundreds of times as much in return.

Eight officers have commanded the ENTERPRISE since the beginning of the war. They are:

Vice Admiral George D. Murray, U.S.N., who commanded the ship from March, 1941, to June, 1942. Vice Admiral Murray later served as Commander, Marianas, in the Central Pacific.

Rear Admiral Arthur C. Davis, U.S.N., who commanded the vessel from June to October, 1942. Rear Admiral Davis later served in the Pacific as Commander, Carrier Division Five.

Rear Admiral Osborne B. Hardison, U.S.N., who was in command from October, 1942, until April, 1943. Rear Admiral Hardison later served as Chief Naval Air Primary Training Command, Kansas City, Kansas.

Captain Carlos William Wieber, U.S.N., who was in command from April 6 to April 16, 1943. Captain Wieber was Commander, Naval Air Bases, Third Naval District, New York, N. Y.

Rear Admiral Samuel P. Ginder, U.S.N., who was in command from April 16 to October, 1943. Rear Admiral Ginder was later Commander, Carrier Transport Squadron, Pacific.

Rear Admiral Matthias B. Gardner, U.S.N., who commanded the ship from October, 1943, until July, 1944. Rear Admiral Gardner was later on duty with the staff of the Commander in Chief, U. S. Fleet, in Washington.

Captain Cato D. Glover, Jr., U.S.N., who was in command from July until December, 1944. Captain Glover was later on duty in Washington as head of the Plans Division on the staff of the Commander in Chief, U. S. Fleet.

Captain G. B. H. Hall, U.S.N., the latest commanding officer.

PRESIDENT APPROVES PRESERVATION OF USS ENTERPRISE

(Nov. 1, 1945) The President of the United States has approved a proposal to preserve the famous USS ENTERPRISE "as a visible symbol of American valor and tenacity in war, and of our will to fight all enemies who assail us."

Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal requested the President to authorize the preservation of the "Big E," which participated in most of the major battles in the Pacific and which at one time was the only United States aircraft carrier operating in the entire Pacific Ocean.

Mr. Forrestal first announced at a press conference of August 27, that he approved of the idea of preserving the ENTERPRISE, saying the suggestion was not original with him.

At this press conference Mr. Forrestal first disclosed that the suggestion had been made to him that the ENTERPRISE "be made available for preservation as the one ship that most nearly symbolizes and carries with it the history of the Navy in this war."

Discussing the proposal at that time, Mr. Forrestal continued:

"We should like to have, if we can, a combination battleship, submarine, destroyer, cruiser, escort and aircraft carrier; we'd have the symbolic ship for the Navy, but it's not possible to have that kind of a ship. Therefore, I think it would be appropriate to have the ENTERPRISE, which has been identified with the war since its beginning, and has fought successfully against the Japanese, sometimes under very unfavorable conditions and more lately under the shadow of victory. I think it is an appropriate ship to take its place with the CONSTITUTION, the CONSTELLATION, the HARTFORD, and the OLYMPIA as the historic vessels in the history of the American Navy."

Details concerning the preservation of the big carrier have not been completed, and the place where she will be berthed has not been decided.

President Harry S. Truman authorized the preservation of the famed ship by approving the following letter written to him by the Secretary of the Navy:

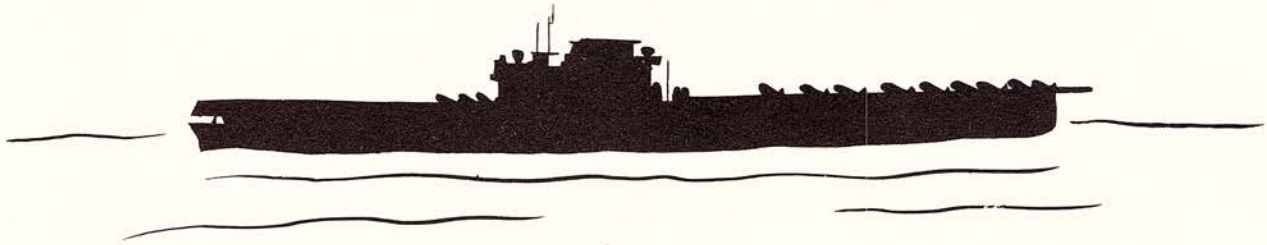
"Time has accomplished what the enemy failed to do in four years of desperate and costly effort; the USS ENTERPRISE must be taken out of service because modern planes cannot be flown in combat from her flight deck.

"This ship was the heart of the Fleet when the war was going badly for us. The names of more than a score of battles are in her record of service and she has survived many attacks. She made our first attack on Japanese territory at the Marshalls and Gilberts in February of 1942, she flew the flag of Admiral (then Rear Admiral) Spruance in the Battle of Midway, one of the decisive battles of history, and after the HORNET was lost in the Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands the ENTERPRISE was our only carrier in the Pacific. Her crew proudly proclaimed that it was ENTERPRISE against Japan and steamed into the Battle of Guadalcanal. Her squadrons shot down nearly a thousand of the enemy's planes and sank seventy-four of his ships.

"The men who have fought her love this ship. It would grieve me to put my name to the documents which would consign her to be broken up for scrap.

"I believe, Mr. President, that the ENTERPRISE should be retained permanently at some proper place as a visible symbol of American valor and tenacity in war, and of our will to fight all enemies who assail us, and I request your approval of this proposal."

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO



U. S. S. FRANKLIN (CV 13)

THE USS FRANKLIN COMES HOME

(May 17, 1945) A ship which the Japanese boasted they had sunk is safely back in New York. The enemy's boast was not entirely unreasonable, for this ship was in such condition as a result of explosions and fire caused by aerial bombing that she should by all accounts have gone to the bottom. That she was saved is due to the super-human efforts of the survivors of her crew, who with the high courage that is the rule among Navy men at sea fought a seemingly hopeless battle against searing flame and destructive ammunition blasts within 60 miles of the Japanese coast.

She is not one of the Navy's "hero ships." She had participated, along with many others of her kind, in attacks against the dwindling sea power of the Japanese Empire, carrying her full share of the burden. During her stay in the Pacific area she had no opportunity to win laurels such as have gone to her more battle-experienced sister warships. But in her hour of travail, the American men, young and not so young, who comprised her crew, wrote another bright paragraph in the long story of naval heroism at sea. The kind of fight they waged to save their ship is typical of what their fellow seaman have frequently done during the Pacific war. Other stories, involving ships which were saved by their heroic crews to return to battle after sustaining damage, must in many cases remain cloaked by security for some time.

The ship is the USS FRANKLIN, 27,000-ton carrier of the Essex Class. After sailing home more than 12,000 miles, manned by a skeleton crew of survivors, her charred and battered hull rests in the Navy Yard at Brooklyn, N. Y.

Many of her crew will again go to the combat area to help deliver the final blows which crush the enemy. But many others of her original complement will never man planes or guns again. Three hundred forty-one lost their lives in the fight to save their ship. Four hundred thirty-one others are missing. More than three hundred were wounded.

The ship was operating with the Fast Carrier Task Force, on the morning of March 19, in the air strike against remnants of the Japanese Fleet sighted in the Inland Sea. Many of her planes were still on deck, loaded with bombs, rockets and machine-gun ammunition, preparing to take off.

Suddenly, a Japanese dive-bombing plane streaked down out of the clouds. He was no suicide pilot. He was doing a straight dive-bombing job. Pulling out of his dive at low altitude, he released two armor-piercing 500-pound bombs. Both scored hits. One detonated beneath the flight deck on which the armed planes were spotted ready for take-off. The second bomb went off on the hangar deck, where other planes, fueled and armed, were waiting to be taken to the flight deck.

Within a minute after the enemy plane had dropped its bombs, it was shot down by pursuing fighters of the carrier's combat air patrol. But the bombs, exploding where they did, had started a train of fires and explosions which for hours were to rend the carrier's frame.

Many major explosions followed the initial blasts. Large bombs exploded and threw men and planes the length of the ship. Smaller bombs, rockets and machine-gun ammunition killed dozens of men who had survived the first explosions. Many tons of bombs and ammuni-

tion had exploded aboard the carrier, and the resulting fires were fed by thousands of gallons of aviation gasoline.

The whole after end of the carrier's flight deck had become a mass of flames and smoke. Airplanes disintegrated, as did their pilots and crewmen. Aviation gasoline poured over the sides of the hangar deck like a blazing Niagara. Bombs, rockets, bullets, splinters of wood and steel fell all around survivors who hugged the decks for safety. There was no panic.

When many of the ship's regularly assigned damage control parties were either killed or trapped by flames, volunteer fire fighters took charge. It was not uncommon for a pilot, a mechanic, a ship's officer and a steward's mate to be manning the same hose. Everywhere, the slightly wounded and those who had escaped injury fought desperately in the face of exploding ammunition to bring the fires under control.

One of the persons eminently responsible for organizing the fire-fighters was the ship's Catholic Chaplain, Lieutenant Commander Joseph O'Callahan, U.S.N.R. The lean, scholarly Jesuit rushed about the horribly exposed slanting flight deck administering last rites to the dying and then led officers and men into the flames, carrying hot bombs and shells to the edge of the deck for jettisoning, inspiring everyone about him with his high spirit. Father O'Callahan personally recruited a damage-control party and led it into one of the main ammunition magazines to wet it down and prevent its exploding. One of the carrier's senior officers pointed out that the Padre had risked his life on at least ten occasions, and called him "the bravest man I ever saw."

Below decks, several hundred men were at breakfast in their messing compartment when the initial explosions shook the ship. Smoke, flame and smashed bulkheads blocked all available exits. When the oxygen began to grow scarce, panic seemed imminent. James E. Russell, Signalman, First Class, U.S.N.R., told how the flight surgeon, Lieutenant Commander James L. Fuelling, U.S.N., averted the panic.

"Everybody sit down," the doctor ordered. "We're trapped here for the time being. Stay calm and be quiet. Use as little air as possible. Stay close to the deck and say a prayer."

The men waited, and rescue finally came. Lieutenant Donald A. Gray, U.S.N., a former enlisted man, promising the men he would return, left the messing compartment, groped through the suffocating smoke and flames for a way out. When he succeeded in finding an exit, through the ventilation tubing to the flight deck, he returned and made trip after trip, leading survivors to safety. All but one of the trapped men were saved.

A Marine orderly, 19-year-old Corporal Wallace L. Klimkiewicz, U.S.M.C.R., when ordered to abandon ship, requested and obtained permission to man a forward 40-millimeter antiaircraft gun. He stayed at his weapon, as did the crews of the other undamaged guns, in face of repeated determined attacking waves of enemy planes. Although many more bombing runs were attempted, the accuracy of the stricken carrier's remaining guns turned the enemy back before more hits could be scored.

James P. Odom, Machinist's Mate, First Class, U.S.N.R., was standing his watch in a fire-room when the Jap bombs touched off terrific explosions from ready ammunition magazines and ready-boxes. Disregarding his own safety, Odom donned a gas-mask, remained at his station and kept steam up in one of the ship's boilers for three hours. Finally, almost overcome by smoke, he made his way to the charred flight deck and manned a fire hose. Then, the fires under control, Odom volunteered for a rescue party and worked ceaselessly in helping to bring trapped men topside. Over a stretch of five days, he slept a total of six hours. He was promoted to Chief Machinist's Mate on the spot for his heroism.

Gerald Smith, Fireman, First Class, U.S.N.R., risked his life to keep fire hose in operation during the desperate hours in which the ship was threatened by the spreading flames. As the cruiser SANTA FE came alongside to take off wounded, one of the fire hose which had been pumping water on the carrier's flight deck was slashed in two. Smith volunteered to remove the fouled hose and bring a new line into play. Held by the ankles by two of his shipmates, he dangled head down over the deck-edge, and unfastened the damaged hose while the SANTA FE kept banging up against the gun sponsons on the side of the carrier.

But while heroic survivors were battling to keep the blazing ship afloat, men were dying by the scores. Below decks, a warrant officer was walking along a passageway when a blast threw him 40 feet against a steel bulkhead. Other men were blown clear of the ship and drowned or were killed outright by the force of the bomb concussions. Hundreds of other survivors were picked up by destroyers assigned to patrol the area. Two destroyers, the USS HUNT and USS MARSHALL, rescued more than six hundred of the FRANKLIN'S crew; the HICKOX and MILLER saved others.

In the first hour that followed the attack, the condition of the carrier grew steadily worse. Groups of men were trapped in the stern. Others began to go over the side to escape what seemed to be certain death. But damage-control parties succeeded in flooding some of the magazines below decks.

At about 9:30 A.M., the light cruiser SANTA FE

came alongside to remove wounded. The two ships were so close together that gun platforms on the FRANKLIN'S starboard side were damaged. Scores of wounded were removed from the carrier by make-shift mail-bag breeches-buoys, and others were carried out on the carrier's horizontal antennae masts and lowered into the waiting arms of bluejackets on the SANTA FE'S deck.

The rescue operations had to be interrupted, however, when one of the carrier's forward five inch gun mounts caught fire and threatened to explode. The SANTA FE drew away until the danger passed; then she came alongside again to continue for another hour and a half her mission of mercy. When all possible wounded had been taken off, the surviving members of the carrier's air group were ordered to leave the ship.

Early in the afternoon, when the fires had been brought under control, the listing carrier was taken in tow by the heavy cruiser PITTSBURGH. Overhead, fighters flew a constant protective patrol. By morning of the following day (March 20), one of the carrier's fire-rooms had resumed operation, adding two knots to the PITTSBURGH'S towing speed, and the severe list had been corrected.

During the day, more boilers were put into operation, and the tow-line was dropped. But the ship was still in bad shape. She had no electric power and very little food. A small walkie-talkie, powered by batteries, was her only radio equipment. The steering gear was completely wrecked, and it was necessary to control her heading by varying the speed of the main engines.

But the courage and determination of the men who manned the ship pulled her through. The skeleton crew which had been kept aboard worked day and night to insure that the ship would stay afloat. So well did they do this job that the carrier worked up to 23 knots speed under her own power.

On March 21st, the FRANKLIN reembarked about 300 of her men from other ships which had picked them up. An offer of additional crewmen, food and equipment was refused. The ship's walkie-talkie radioed back:

"We have plenty of men and food. All we want to do is get the Hell out of here."

On March 22nd the FRANKLIN and a cruiser-escort headed for home. She reached New York with her main mast leaning at a sharp angle, her foremast a jagged stump, her steel plates buckled and torn and her flight deck completely destroyed. She had lost a greater number of men and sustained more battle damage than any ship ever to enter New York Harbor under her own power.

A tribute to the spirit of the officers and bluejackets who man the Navy's fighting ships, this "Fighting Lady" stayed afloat as others have similarly survived through the heroism of those who manned them. It is also a high tribute to the skill and devotion of those who design and build these sturdy warships for the Navy's fighting fleets.

The USS FRANKLIN was built by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, Newport News, Virginia. She was launched October 14, 1943, and was commissioned January 31, 1944.

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESS: (May 17, 1945)

The USS FRANKLIN, subject of the press release, "The USS FRANKLIN Comes Home," had previously been damaged in action against the Japanese and returned to the battle areas only shortly before March 19, the date on which she was bombed again.

It was in October 1944 that she was hit, while operating off the Philippines.

Earlier, on October 14, 1944, a year to the day after she had been christened by Captain Mildred McAfee, U.S.N.R., Director of the Women's Reserve, the FRANKLIN was attacked by four Japanese torpedo planes during a two-day strike at Formosa. Previously the carrier had been through the support phase of two invasions and had participated in six carrier strikes against Japanese-held islands.

The Japs attacked at dusk on October 14.

They came just as the last of the FRANKLIN'S planes was preparing to return aboard from sorties that had smashed Japanese installations, sunk and damaged several Japanese merchant ships, accounted for six Japanese planes in the air and 54 on the ground.

They were spotted from the bridge. Barely had the warning, "Torpedo Attack!" been called into the loud-speaker system when antiaircraft guns on the carrier's island and the port side poured death into two of the Bettys—but they had already launched their lethal load.

One torpedo crossed the FRANKLIN'S bow. Another slid just below the fantail—missing by a few feet the giant screws that propell the 30,000-ton ship. Maneuvering avoided them.

Lieutenant (junior grade) Albert James Pope, U.S.N.R., the pilot of the last of the FRANKLIN'S planes seeking to land, was waved off. He spotted the attackers as he soared over the deck, zoomed upward, turned, dived on the tail of a Jap about to attack and splashed the Jap with his first burst of machine gun fire.

Another of the enemy planes, hit by the port batteries, skidded in flames across the FRANKLIN'S flight deck and fell into the sea. It narrowly missed Lieutenant Daniel M. Winters, U.S.N.R., assistant landing signal officer, who fell flat on the deck. A wing tip however ripped out the seat of his trousers.

One man was killed and nine were wounded in the engagement. Commander Joe Taylor, U.S.N., air officer on the carrier who went through the Battle of the Coral Sea and other engagements without a scratch, sustained his first battle injury—a broken finger.

It was off the Philippines late in October, during the Battle for Leyte Gulf, that the FRANKLIN was again attacked by Japanese planes while her own planes were smashing enemy targets on Luzon. The FRANKLIN was moving in formation when a Japanese Zero scored a direct hit aft on the flight deck. The aerial bomb set fire to the flight deck, a nearby plane, and penetrated to the hangar deck, causing additional fires.

The flames were brought under control in less than two hours, and meanwhile planes of the FRANKLIN were taken aboard by nearby carriers. Damage necessitated the FRANKLIN'S returning to the States for repairs. They were made at the Puget Sound Navy Yard, Bremerton, Washington, and the FRANKLIN—called "Big Ben" by her crew—returned to service. Navy Yard civilians and ship repair unit trainees worked night and day to put the ship back in action in the quickest possible time.

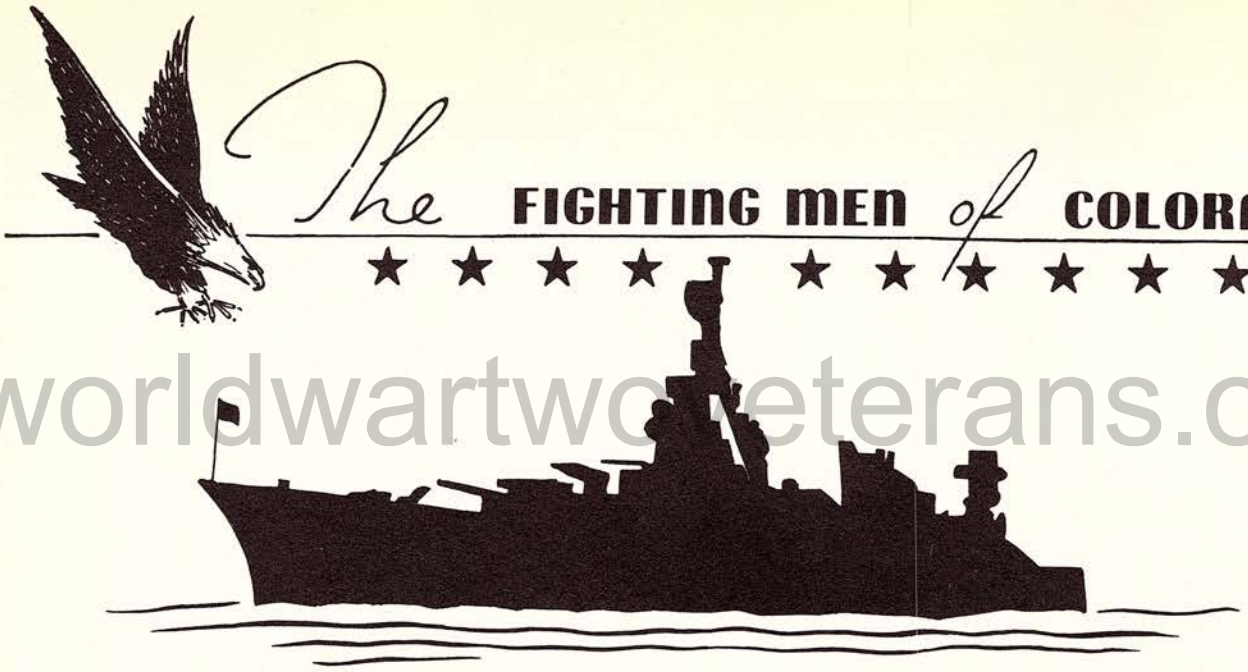
On June 16, 1944, the FRANKLIN left Pearl Harbor for her first engagement with the enemy. Air Group THIRTEEN, on board, was under command of Commander Charles C. Howerton, U.S.N., of Quero, Texas.

The first strike was against the then Japanese-controlled island of Iwo Jima in the Bonins on July 4. With appropriate fireworks, the island's airfields were temporarily neutralized. Later in July the FRANKLIN was part of a task force which supported the invasion of Guam.

Another air smash on the Bonins was made in the first part of August. The Air Group accounted for three Japanese desroyers and four merchant vessels. The FRANKLIN next prepared for the invasion of the Palaus. En route to Peleliu, first of the Palaus to be hit, "Big Ben" made another trip to Iwo Jima. She again neutralized Jap airfield facilities and destroyed 52 planes in the air and on the ground.

Then followed the titantic blows which the FRANKLIN, as part of Admiral William F. Halsey's Third Fleet, helped pour on the Japanese in their own back yard, hitting first at the Philippines, then entirely enemy-held, and then striking the Ryukyus and Formosa.

During these actions, Air Group THIRTEEN was credited with downing 87 Japanese planes and participating in desrtuction of another. Pilots of the group took part in sinking or damaging 148,500 tons of enemy warships and 275,000 tons of merchant shipping.



U. S. S. GUAM (CB 2)

The large cruiser GUAM (CB-2), second vessel so named, was authorized by act of Congress on 1 May 1941, and her building was awarded to the New York Shipbuilding Corporation, Camden, New Jersey. Her keel was laid on 2 February 1942, and she was launched 21 November 1943. The ship's sponsor on that occasion was Mrs. George Johnson McMillin, wife of the former Governor of Guam, Captain George Johnson McMillin, USN. At the time of the GUAM'S christening, Captain McMillin was a prisoner of the Japanese on Formosa.

Sixteen years separated the launching of the two U.S. Navy ships to share the name GUAM. The first GUAM was a gunboat with an overall length of 159 feet, five inches; a beam of 27 feet one inch and a displacement of 370 tons. The new GUAM, second large cruiser (often called "battle cruiser") in the history of the U. S. Fleet, was described as "the American version of the pocket battleship." With an overall length of 808 feet, six inches, an extreme breadth of 89 feet, six inches and a displacement of 27,000-plus tons, she exceeds in length and tonnage many present-day battleships.

The original GUAM had a firing power which included two, three-inch, 23-caliber guns and eight 30 caliber machine guns. Her ship's complement consisted of five officers, six chief petty officers and 38 enlisted men. The armament of the large cruiser GUAM consists of nine 12-inch, 50-caliber guns in three triple mounts; 12 five-inch, 38-caliber guns in six twin mounts; 14 forty-millimeter quadruple mounts and 34 twenty-millimeter gun mounts. Her ship's complement consists of approximately 125 officers and 2000 enlisted men, including a detachment of 80 marines.

The first GUAM, re-christened USS WAKE, was captured by the Japanese at Shanghai on 7 December 1941. The new GUAM, as was her sister ship USS ALASKA, is named for a United States territory or dependency, the largest and most populous islands of the Marianas group, the island destined to become Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz's headquarters for a few months following its re-capture from the Japanese.

The present GUAM was commissioned at the Philadelphia Navy Yard on 17 September 1944, and her first Commanding Officer was Captain (now Rear Admiral) Leland P. Lovette, USN, former Director of Navy Public Relations in Washington. Following the commissioning a period of fitting out extended from 17 September up to and including 25 October 1944. On 25 October she departed from the Navy Yard, Philadelphia, for the first leg of her shakedown.

On 8 November, following several trial runs, GUAM departed for Dragon's Mouth, Trinidad, arriving there on 13 November 1944 and from then on until 9 December, intensive gunnery drills were held in the Gulf of Paria. During this period the GUAM scored the best night gunnery record of any ship, up to that time, at night battle practice. She completely demolished the target.

Returning to Hampton Roads, GUAM weathered a very severe storm. When she arrived there on 13 December much equipment had been lost overboard but no serious injuries were suffered by officers and crew

despite heavy rolls up to 40 degrees at times during the storm.

On 6 January 1945 Rear Admiral F. S. Low, USN, assumed command of Cruiser Division 16 on board the GUAM, which was to be his headquarters throughout the ship's participation in the war.

Throughout the next six days GUAM made final preparations for her combat assignment. Munitions and stores were loaded, guns and equipment finally checked, and on 17 January 1945 she took formal departure from her birthplace and headed for the Pacific, arriving Hawaiian Islands on 8 February. During the trip gunnery practice was conducted for all batteries, the effectiveness of which was demonstrated when 16 sleeves were blasted from the sky by anti-aircraft fire.

Anchored at Pearl Harbor, the ship was visited by Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal who was piped aboard at 1014 on 13 February.

The next step in the GUAM'S push westward began on 3 March when the ship cast off from Pearl Harbor enroute for Ulithi. During the ten-day run GUAM was a part of Task Group 12.2, which was comprised of the carriers USS INTREPID, FRANKLIN, and BATAAN plus eight escorting destroyers. Firing exercises were conducted at frequent intervals, and on 11 March Captain Lovett addressed all hands over the ship's public address system. Praising his officers and men for their development into an efficient combat unit, he announced that the real test was near at hand and called upon every man to be prepared to do his own job thoroughly and efficiently.

On 13 March the group steamed into Ulithi anchorage, where for the first time the GUAM joined forces with her sister ship the ALASKA, which force and other fleet units combined to form another of Admiral Marc A. Mitscher's famed task forces.

14 March saw Task Group 58.4, under the direct command of Rear Admiral A. W. Radford, USN, sailing from Ulithi anchorage for the home waters of the enemy. The GUAM had joined Admiral Mitscher's first team and had become a unit of the most powerful task force in naval history. In her task group alone sailed such historic ships as the carriers USS YORKTOWN, INTREPID, ENTERPRISE, INDEPENDENCE, and LANGLEY. Steaming to port and starboard of the GUAM were the mighty battleships USS MISSOURI and WISCONSIN. Her sister ship the ALASKA was part of the group and the cruisers ST. LOUIS, SAN DIEGO and FLINT lent their veteran support. In addition, 15 destroyers steamed on the outer fringes of the group to insure against submarine attack.

GUAM'S battle debut was not slow to come. It came on the morning of 18 March when the group had reached a point approximately 70 miles from the Japanese Home Island of Shikoku. A new ship with a new crew, she was initiated into the battle by Hirohito's flying fanatics, with five Kamikaze attacks on the carriers which were her escorts. Uncounted land-based Jap fighters and bombers tore viciously into the formation. Within a matter of minutes, the men of the GUAM learned that their months of gunnery practice paid dividends.

During this first battle, the carriers ENTERPRISE and INTREPID, both in the GUAM'S force were damaged. The ENTERPRISE was hit near her island by a bomb; the INTREPID was struck on her flight deck aft by a suicide plane which glanced off and plunged into the sea. Fire on both carriers was controlled quickly and damage was light. Continued air attacks during the afternoon resulted in the destruction of four enemy planes by the GUAM'S group. The GUAM was credited with one of these plus a probable.

On 23 March the task group turned southwest toward what shortly thereafter became one of the most bitterly contested islands in the Pacific war—Okinawa. En route for Okinawa, the GUAM and ALASKA, the cruisers SAN DIEGO and FLINT and a destroyer screen were detached from the task group for the purpose of bombarding Minami Daito Shima, a tiny Jap island 160 miles east of Okinawa. When the mission was completed at midnight, 27 March, fires and explosions on the island were visible for miles.

During the days following, GUAM cruised off Okinawa and Kyushu lending the protection of her guns to the carriers of her group which were daily sending sweeps of Hellcats and Corsairs over enemy airfields, shore installations, shipping, etc. On 11 April another encounter between her group and enemy planes saw a Kamikaze crash into the starboard side of the battleship MISSOURI. Fire was quickly brought under control and damage was negligible.

The next day all hands aboard the GUAM were stunned by the news of the President's death. Men were shocked and saddened, silent prayers were spoken by all, the men of the GUAM mourned the loss of a great American.

On the afternoon of 16 April, in another enemy attack, five of Hirohito's Kamikazes were splashed by units of the task group. The INTREPID was hit a second time. The GUAM'S guns were credited with another plane.

On 26 April the men of the GUAM caught their first brief and distant view of the island of Okinawa where the battle raged which they had been supporting with the planes of their task group. From this time onward, until 14 May, when the task group, completing 61 days of war patrol finally dropped anchor in Ulithi harbor for a well-earned rest, the GUAM continued to cruise the waters in the vicinity of Okinawa. When the hook

was dropped at Ulithi, the men of the GUAM examined the score of the task group which their ship, on its first combat mission, had met the enemy. From 18 March up to that date, the planes had destroyed, probably destroyed, or damaged in the air and on the ground, 1013 enemy planes. A further breakdown was as follows: Two hundred ninety-two shot down, 16 probables and 20 damaged by planes. Twenty-two enemy aircraft, plus two probables, knocked out of the air by ship's guns. Seven Jap suiciders down. On the ground—172 planes destroyed, 93 probables and 389 damaged.

The shipping score (including only combat ships): One battleship, one light cruiser, two destroyers and two submarines sunk. Probably sunk: one destroyer. Damaged: One battleship, one CV, one CVE, four destroyers and one submarine.

Planes in the group flew a total of 11,247 sorties of which 6920 were over the target. Task group plane losses included 61 combat, 55 operational and 40 when the INTREPID was struck by a Kamikaze.

For the GUAM'S own score, and the activities of her personnel, the following was tabulated: Officers and men went to their air-defense stations 91 times. Twenty-three Jap planes were taken under fire by the GUAM, of which she received sole credit for blasting two. Of that 23, thirteen were shot down by ship's gunfire. From the time of the GUAM'S commissioning until this second anchoring at Ulithi, she had covered 49,101 nautical miles. Of that distance 26,667 miles were traversed during the two months at sea between Ulithi and the coasts of Japan and Okinawa.

The return to Ulithi afforded crew members their first opportunity in more than two months to set foot on land. On Mog Mog, a small island of the Ulithi group, a series of beer picnics were held.

On 24 May GUAM weighed anchor and departed once again for the waters east of Okinawa. She was now a unit of Admiral Halsey's Third Fleet, Task Group 38.4. Included in this powerful group were two new fighting partners, the battleship IOWA and the carrier TICONDEROGA. Again during these operations the GUAM and ALASKA were assigned to bombard a Jap held island. This time it was Okino-Daito, a smaller island just south of Minami, and the site of Jap radar installations. The bombardment took place on 9 June.

The task group then set out on a southwesterly course, its destination San Pedro Bay, lying between the islands of Leyte and Samar in the Philippines. Shortly after 1400, 13 June, the ships in column formation entered the lower reaches of the bay and steamed slowly toward the anchorage area. This anchorage was only a few miles north of the point where General MacArthur had established his first beachhead on Leyte when his forces returned to drive the Japs from the Philippines.

It was here that the GUAM was destined to receive a new assignment, became the flagship of an entirely new task group. Admiral Low, who had commanded Cruiser Division Sixteen from the GUAM throughout previous operations was flown to the island of Guam for a two-day conference with Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz. When he returned, the GUAM became the flagship of Cruiser Task Force 95, a consolidation of Cruiser Division 12, commanded by Read Admiral R. S. Riggs and Admiral Low's Cruiser Division 16. Early in July this force proceeded to Okinawa where they anchored in Buckner Bay.

On 17 July the GUAM led this powerful cruiser force consisting of the USS MONTPELIER, CLEVELAND, COLUMBIA, DENVER and ALASKA through the submarine nets guarding Buckner Bay, Okinawa, for the first surface sweep of the war into the East China Sea up the coast of China. A division of destroyers consisting of the USS ANTHONEY, BEALE, WADSWORTH, DALY, VAN VALKENBURG, AMMEN, MASSEY, WILLARD KEITH and the JAMES C. OWENS screened the main cruiser force.

This formidable force cut diagonally across the East China Sea to converge at a point a few miles off the northern tip of Formosa. Striking from there at night, directly across the mouth of the Formosa Straits toward the mainland of China, the second side of an historic triangle was begun. These waters unvisited by U. S. ships since Pearl Harbor, might hold opposition in surprising force. Surface opposition was a hoped-for possibility; submarines were a constant threat, uncharted mine fields a hazard and shore batteries and China-based enemy planes were anticipated. But the morning landfall of "occupied China" brought nothing.

Hour after hour the force continued northward. When Yungkia (Wen Chow), the third point of the triangle was reached, they swung east, 250 miles south of Shanghai. Aboard the GUAM not a shot had been fired. The ships returned to Buckner Bay. Commented Captain Lovette, "We went prepared to tangle with a hornet nest and wound up in a field of pansies—but we've proved a point and the East China Sea is ours to do with as we please."

At Buckner Bay Task Force 95 was reorganized into task groups, the command diversified. On the following sweep, the GUAM led her group to the mouth of the Whangpoo River of Shanghai; opposition was so negligible that men began to speculate on how long the war would last. Peace loomed as a possibility, but when it did come, just a few days following the return of the ship again to Buckner Bay, it came sooner than the most optimistic of these speculation. The ship's crew heard the first peace flash at Buckner Bay on the evening of August 9. Extreme jubilancy was supplemented by optimistic, anxious waiting as official peace negotiations

got underway, but anxiety and high hopes were supplanted with sorrow and intense anger when, at 2055 on the night of 11 August, the battleship PENNSYLVANIA, riding at anchor just a few thousands yards to starboard of the GUAM, was seriously damaged by a torpedo launched by a lone Jap plane. A few days later when peace was officially declared, the PENNSYLVANIA had effected emergency repairs in readiness for a slow voyage home, the last U. S. ship to be victim to enemy air attack.

When the war ended the GUAM was made flagship of the North China Force under the overall command of Admiral T. C. Kinkaid, USN, Commander Seventh Fleet.

On 8 September she steamed into Jinsen, Korea, the guns and planes of her force insuring the quiet occupation of that liberated country. For two weeks preceeding this occupation Admiral Low's North China Force had circled the Yellow Sea, parading American naval might before major ports of Tsingtao, Port Arthur and Darien.

On 6 October Captain F. T. Watkins, USN, relieved Captain Lovette as Commanding Officer of the GUAM.

For nearly two months the ship rested at anchor in Jinsen, Korea, the mightiest ship in the harbor and by far the largest ever to visit there. She left Jinsen on 14 November, arriving San Francisco on 3 December, carrying a large contingent of Army personnel eligible for demobilization.

As of June 1946 the GUAM was flagship of the Atlantic 16th Fleet (inactive).

OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

"CANS" ARE WORKHORSES OF THE FLEET

HARD WORKING DESTROYERS are proudly and affectionately dubbed "cans" by their crews. Swift and thinly armored, they take on such versatile duties as escort, scout, decoy, fighting and rescue work. Steady and reliable, they bore the brunt of the early fighting in the Pacific naval war. Above is the destroyer USS TOLMAN slashing through a heavy sea.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

U. S. S. HUGH W. HADLEY (DD 774)

USS HUGH W. HADLEY (DD 774) was constructed at the Bethlehem Steel Company Shipbuilding Yards at Terminal Island, California during the first months of 1944. She was launched on 16 July of that year with Mrs. Hugh William Hadley acting as sponsor. The ship had been named in honor of her late husband, Commander Hugh W. Hadley, USN, who had gallantly given his life in the service of his country while serving as Commander of a transport division during action against enemy Japanese forces in the Solomon Islands.

This vessel was placed in full commission on 25 November 1944 and Commander Leonard C. Chamberlin, USN, assumed command. The nucleus crew of rated enlisted men was believed to be one of an exceptionally high standard of excellence, and the roster of former destroyers on which these men had served would include most of the destroyers which had distinguished themselves during World War II.

HADLEY reported to Commander Operational Command, Pacific, in San Diego, for shakedown on 23 December 1944. The following period of training which included important practice in all phases of anti-submarine warfare, torpedo firing, gunnery, amphibious warfare, engineering, communications, fighter direction, and damage control, was under the supervision of Captain Glenn Roy Hartwig, USN, Commander Destroyer Squadron 66, the squadron to which HADLEY was attached. He had shifted his flag to this ship and remained aboard throughout the shakedown period. On 13 January 1945, Commander Baron J. Mullaney, USN, relieved Commander Chamberlin as Commanding Officer. The final inspection took place on 5 February and the ship was classified as "very good" in all departments. HADLEY was ready for combat.

Following a fourteen-day post-shakedown availability at the San Diego Naval Repair Base, the new destroyer left on 21 February 1945, taking screening station on HMS RANEE (CVE 03) the next day, and escorting the British carrier to Pearl Harbor. Upon arrival, HADLEY reported to Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, for further orders. On 7 March she proceeded as the single escort member of Task Unit 12.5.6 in company with USS SANTEE (CVE 29) enroute to Ulithi Atoll in the Caroline Islands Group. The crossing took twelve days, and five days were spent in provisioning and taking on fuel and ammunition at Ulithi.

Under orders of the Commander Fifth Fleet, HADLEY left Ulithi on 25 March in company with Task Unit 53.3.2, which consisted of a large group of LSTs and escorts, bound for Okinawa. The passage was without incident and at 1650, 31 March, Takashiki Jima of the Okinawa group was sighted. The crew stood at general quarters throughout the night as Japanese planes were reportedly active in that vicinity. HADLEY fired at the enemy for the first time and drew her first blood by shooting down one of the harrassing Bettys (Japanese twin-engined bombers). Fortunately, none of the group was damaged and the LSTs landed their troops on Okinawa on the morning of 1 April 1945. The task unit was dissolved upon arrival, and HADLEY was assigned an anti-submarine patrol station outside the transport area off Hagushi Beach. Low-flying enemy planes again kept the crew at general quarters the following night. After fueling at Kerama Retto, she

was ordered to report to Commander Task Group 51.2 on the USS ANCON (AGC 4), then patrolling in a retirement area to the east of Okinawa.

During the fourth day of this patrol, Task Group 51.2 was ordered to proceed to Saipan. With this task group of transports and a destroyer screen, HADLEY had her first experience with screen maneuvers in fast and veteran company. She also succeeded in exploding her first exploding mine with machine gun fire. Saipan was reached on 14 April and six days later, the ship was again underway for Okinawa in company with Task Unit 94.19.12, exploding another floating menace en route.

On 27 April, HADLEY arrived at Okinawa and was returned to the familiar anti-submarine patrol station. The next day, she was directed to join the USS R. H. SMITH (DM 23) as support picket with two LSMs and four LCS (L)s on radar picket station. She subsequently picked up a marine pilot from the water after the motor of his F4U Corsair fighter failed and he was forced to make an emergency landing. The first two days in May were restful days, as the Okinawa area was blessed with an overcast that made the enemy air raids impractical but the advent of blue skies brought the Japs over in force. The AARON WARD (DM 34), predecessor to HADLEY at the Terminal Island Shipbuilding Yards, was reported in a sinking condition after having absorbed six suicide plane hits in her unequal match on a picket station to the south of the HADLEY's position. The night of 3-4 May was not pleasant as several enemy raids from the north had the at general quarters continuously during the seemingly endless night.

At sunrise, HADLEY secured from general quarters, but at 0745 the crew raced to their battle stations to learn that the SHEA, 1000 yards on the port quarter, had been hit by a Baka bomb and was burning badly. HADLEY took over control of the CAP (Combat Air Patrol) until relieved two hours later by a fighter-direction equipped destroyer. When relieved, HADLEY reported to Kerama Retto for logistics, after which she resumed station off Hagushi Beach. On 7 May, HADLEY was directed to go alongside the USS BROWN (DD 546), a veteran radar picket ship, for transfer of communication equipment from the BROWN to make HADLEY a fully equipped fighter direction ship. This job was completed in record time. The BROWN radio technicians were well aware of its significance and that destroyer had been one of the few regulars who had survived the picket line.

Radar picket ships were scarce, and at 1350, 10 May 1945, HADLEY took station with USS EVANS (DD 552) to act as support ship. At 0636, 11 May, a Japanese plane was shot down by the CAP but it proved to be only a fore-runner of an estimated 150 planes which were approaching from the north. The CAP soon had their hands full and at 0750, an enemy scout observation plane was taken under fire to be shot down close to HADLEY. At about 0755 the entire CAP was ordered out in different formations to intercept and engage the horde of enemy planes closing in and reports were later received from them that they had destroyed about forty or fifty planes. From this time on, HADLEY and EVANS were attacked continuously by numerous enemy aircraft coming in groups of four to six on each ship. During the early period, enemy aircraft were sighted trying to pass the formation headed for Okinawa. These were flying extremely low on both bows and seemingly ignoring HADLEY. The ship accounted for four of these. From 0830 to 0900 she was attacked by groups of planes coming in on both bows. Twelve enemy planes were shot down by the guns of HADLEY during this period, at times firing all guns in various directions. EVANS, which, at this time, was at a distance of about three miles to the north, was seen fighting off a number of planes by herself, several of which were seen to be destroyed. At 0900 EVANS was hit and put out of action. At one time toward the close of the battle, when friendly planes were closing in to assist, the four support ships were prevented from shooting down two friendlies whom they had taken under fire.

For twenty minutes HADLEY fought off the enemy single-handed. Finally, at 0920, ten planes which had surrounded HADLEY, four on the starboard bow under fire by the main battery and machine guns, four on the port bow under fire by the forward machine guns, and two astern under fire by the after machine guns, attacked the ship simultaneously. All ten planes were destroyed in a remarkable fight and each plane was definitely accounted for. As a result of this attack, HADLEY was (1) Hit by a bomb aft (2) By a Baka bomb released from a low-flying Betty (3) Was struck by a suicide plane aft (4) Hit by a suicide plane in the rigging.

HADLEY's gunners were not the only ones whose ammunition was running low as more and more Jap planes splashed into the sea. The Corsair fighters overhead, flown by U. S. Marines, called by radio to say "We are out of ammunition but are not leaving the fight." One twin-motored Betty was forced into the sea by a Corsair which got above him and forced him down; another Corsair flew through a hail of shells from HADLEY in an attempt to divert a Jap plane from a suicide dive. Twice, he threw the Jap out of his dive, but even though the intrepid Marine flew almost into the muzzles of the HADLEY's guns, he was unable to prevent the Jap, riddled form tail to prop, from hitting the ship.

By this time the ship was badly holed with both engine rooms and one fireroom flooding as the ship settled down and listed badly. All five-inch guns were

out of action, a fire was raging aft of number two stack, ammunition was exploding, and the entire ship was engulfed in a thick black smoke which forced the crew to seek safety, some by jumping over the side, others by crowding forward and awaiting orders. The ship was helpless to defend herself and at this time the situation appeared very dark. The Commanding Officer received reports from the Chief Engineer and the Damage Control Officer which indicated that the main spaces were flooded and the ship was rapidly developing into a condition which would capsize her. The exploding ammunition and the raging fire appeared to be extremely dangerous. The engineers were securing the forward boilers to prevent them from blowing up. The order "Prepare to abandon ship" was given and life rafts and floats were put over the side. A party of about fifty men and officers were being organized to make a last fight to save the ship and the remainder of the crew and the wounded were put over into the water.

From this point on, a truly amazing, courageous and efficient group of men and officers with utter disregard for their own personal safety approached the explosions and the fire with hoses and for fifteen minutes kept up this work, one officer having to fight the fire without shoes on the blistering hot deck. The torpedoes were jettisoned, weights removed from the starboard side, and finally, the fire was extinguished and the list and flooding controlled. Although the ship was still in an extremely dangerous condition, one fireroom bulkhead held and she was finally towed safely to the Ie Shima anchorage.

Today, HADLEY proudly displays the 25 Japanese flags painted on her bridge, testifying to the number of enemy planes she has destroyed. DD 774 established a record for destroyers in adding 23 of those flags to her scoreboard as a result of a single engagement. 27 of her crew died at their battle stations, two died later of injuries sustained, and 68 others were injured. Not one of these men left his post of duty as the enemy planes came in, even after the ship had been hit and ammunition was running low, and examples of bravery and resourcefulness had been continuous throughout the action.

The mission was accomplished. The transports at the Okinawa anchorage were saved from an attack by one hundred fifty-six enemy planes by the action in which HADLEY took such a great part. She had borne the brunt of the enemy strength and absorbed what they had to throw at her. It was a proud day for destroyer men.

In the afternoon of 11 May 1945, the groggy vessel was towed into Ie Shima where she remained until considered in safe enough condition to be towed to Kerama Retto on 14 May.

There, the hard-working ZANIAH ship repair unit started patching, bracing, and strengthening the battered hull. Underwater explosion from delayed action bomb or bombs had smashed in a large portion of the after keel section. A patch was soon secured to the hole in the starboard side where a suicide plane had entered the engineering spaces. In the early morning hours of 19 June, the crew manned the rail to say goodbye to Captain Mullaney who had been relieved as Commanding Officer by Commander Roy A. Newton, USN, the day previous.

After leaving Kerama Retto on 15 July, the ship proceeded, while resting on the keel blocks of ARD 28, as the drydock was being towed by the ATF 150, to Buckner Bay off eastern Okinawa. 22 days later, she was undocked and taken alongside ZANIAH in Buckner Bay.

The 6,800 mile voyage home at the end of a tow line began when the ATA 199 took her in tow and joined a slow convoy enroute to Saipan, on 29 July. The third day underway, heavy seas and a violent wind verified radio reports that a 65 knot typhoon was being encountered. On 1 August, the ship rolled as far as fifty-seven degrees to port, but the tow line held. At Pearl Harbor it was learned from Commander Destroyers, Pacific Fleet, that the ship was to be decommissioned upon arrival in the United States. HADLEY and the ever-present ATA 199 left Pearl Harbor on the final leg of this trek on 12 September to arrive at Hunter's Point, San Francisco, California on 26 September 1945.

Thus, was the USS HUGH W. HADLEY entered in the honor roster of America's combatant ships, another fighting constituent of the United States Navy whose crew would not give up their ship. On 15 December 1945 HADLEY was decommissioned.

STATISTICS

Standard Displacement: 2,200 tons.
Overall Length: 376 ft. 6 in.
Beam: 40 ft. 10 in.
Speed: 35 knots plus.
Crew: Excess of 350.
Armament: 6 5-inch 38 caliber dual-purpose guns, 10 21-inch Torpedo Tubes, plus smaller AA guns.

U. S. S. HOUSTON (CL 81)

Commissioning exercises completed at the Norfolk Navy Yard on 20 December 1943 with Captain William W. Behrens in command was the new cruiser U.S.S. HOUSTON (CL 81), proudly awaiting the task to avenge the loss, in Sundra Straits, May 1942, of her fore-runner by the same name. The people of the city of Houston, Texas, had been so enthusiastic about the building of this new ship that they pledged subscriptions for the purchase of war bonds to cover the cost of her being built. Not only was the amount raised, but enough in excess was subscribed to build a cruiser type carrier. At the same time about 1000 Houston sons volunteered for the Navy to replace those lost on the new HOUSTON's gallant predecessor.

The next few days saw much activity aboard in an endeavor to make this new ship ready for sea. No time was lost, for the men and officers of the HOUSTON were eager to form an efficient fighting ship and join the United States fleets in one of their many battle areas. Many of the comforts of the pre-war ships were missing, and in their stead were new devices to make our ships a more efficient fighting machine. The shakedown, consisting of all conceivable drills and exercises which were likely to be encountered in action, was typical of the speed with which we made ready for our duties. On the first of February 1944 we left Hampton Roads for Trinidad in the British West Indies and on the twenty-fourth day of the same month, after much hard work and loss of sleep by all hands, we were once again in Norfolk, Virginia, for necessary repairs and the installation of additional equipment.

With this post-shakedown availability period completed we were, on the second of April, again underway for Boston, Massachusetts, in company with the destroyer USS WAINWRIGHT. From the third of April, 1944, to the sixteenth, the HOUSTON operated in the Boston area while conducting tests of the main engines, calibrating compasses, and direction finders. We reported for duty on the fourteenth of April, 1944, to Commander Cruiser Division FOURTEEN, who was at that time Rear Admiral W. D. Baker, U. S. Navy, aboard the new cruiser USS VINCENNES, his flagship. On the sixteenth, we were en route, together with the cruisers VINCENNES and MIAMI from Boston to San Diego, California, via Mona Passage and the Panama Canal. We arrived at Colon, Canal Zone, the morning of 22 April, 1944, transited the Canal, and after fueling at Balboa, Canal Zone, continued our journey to San Diego.

Our task group got underway from San Diego, at noon the first of May, 1944, for Pearl Harbor, T. H. and at dawn on the morning of the sixth passed Diamond Head abeam the starboard. The next two weeks were devoted to last minute preparations, more drills in damage control, gunnery, and ship handling.

In the forenoon of 23 May 1944, we, as part of a task group consisting of the Cruiser Division FOURTEEN less the ASTORIA plus the battleships WASHINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA, the fast minelayer TERROR, the destroyers DORTCH, COTTEN, BOYD, LANG, STERRETT, WILSON and the McCALLA were underway for Majuro in the Marshall Islands. Upon sighting what was supposed to be land on the 31st of May 1944, the majority of officers and men aboard saw for the first time the desolate mounds of sand covered with coconut trees that makes up a Pacific Atoll and, in the months to come, were to regard these mounds

of sand as a haven for relaxation and limited recreation. We anchored at the Atoll and remained until the 5th of June 1944. While at this anchorage the HOUSTON was attached to the Fast Carrier Striking Group 58.4, a part of the Task Force 58 under the command of Vice Admiral Marc A. Mitscher, U. S. Navy.

The Marianas Campaign constituted our first wartime operation. We arrived at the designated point for launching of the first strike against our objective at about 0400 of the 12th of June 1944. We were part of a task group whose heavy units consisted of the carriers ESSEX, LANGLEY, COWPENS, the cruisers VINCENNES, MIAMI, HOUSTON, SAN DIEGO, and RENO. Our group maneuvered in the vicinity throughout the day while the scheduled strikes proceeded according to plan. No enemy aircraft were sighted.

At 1100 an order from the Task Group Commander sent both our scout planes escorted by two carrier fighters, to the vicinity of Pagan Island to rescue some carrier pilots who were downed and had taken to their rafts. While on the water, one plane capsized and the other stood by to serve as a marker for the search party. The Officer in Tactical Command despatched the destroyers AUSBURNE and STANLEY to the rescue of the whole group. They returned to the formation prior to daylight and following morning reporting that all personnel were safe on board and that both planes had been sunk.

Beginning at dawn and continuing throughout the next day, the carriers launched heavy air strikes against objectives on Saipan and Pagan Islands. Bogies were reported in the afternoon and at least one was shot down by the combat air patrol. Upon completion of the day's strikes, the task group proceeded toward next morning's fueling rendezvous. Thus ended our very quiet initiation into the war.

We rendezvoused at dawn of the 14th with a fueling task unit consisting of the tankers SABINE, KASKASKIA, CIMARRON and their escorts and after an uneventful day of fueling, proceeded toward position for strikes the next day against the islands of Iwo Jima and Chichi Jima in the Bonin Island group. An additional task group, 58.1, was ordered to accompany us. This operation was to put us closer to Japan's home island and Tokyo than any other United States ships had ventured thus far. About 1200 on the 15th of June, we entered a low pressure area, the wind increased to about 30 knots, the sea became rough and the sky became overcast with a ceiling between 1000 and 4000 feet, lowering eventually to zero with frequent rain squalls. Under these conditions a very hazardous but successful strike was launched, during the afternoon, by the carriers with the planes returning about dusk. In spite of prevailing bad weather the two task groups maneuvered throughout the night so as to be in position for more strikes the following day.

During a break in the weather on the afternoon of the 16th the carriers launched a strike against Iwo Jima, recovering aircraft prior to sunset, and then set a southerly course, timed to form a junction with other groups of Task Force 58, on the morning of June 18th. While steaming for this rendezvous the carriers launched a diversionary strike, in the afternoon of the 17th from the western side of the Marianas, against air installations on Pagan Island.

With all groups of Task Force 58 operating together once again, contact was made with enemy aircraft about noon the 19th of June 1944. Several attacks on the various task groups developed and enemy planes were in the vicinity until 1800. Only one attack was directed at our task group with no resultant damage to our ships. One of the more interesting events which certainly could have proved disastrous, but later became the subject of much discussion and even laughter in the Wardroom, occurred early in the afternoon when the task force fighters were sectored onto an approaching bogie which they reported to consist of sixteen "Zekes." Shortly afterward they reported all but one shot down. This last one was not seen on the radar screen of any vessel in the vicinity, but suddenly became very apparent when one "Zeke" suddenly dived out of a cloud at the carrier ESSEX, narrowly missing her, on the port side forward, with a small bomb. The plane was lower than the flight deck of its target when it recovered fully from the dive. At tremendous speed the plane streaked ahead through the screen, which could not take it under fire immediately because of the danger of hitting one of our own vessels. The plane made good its escape although flying erratically in a manner which indicated that some ship had scored a hit. The air attacks so successfully repelled by the task force during the day were the largest carrier borne aircraft attacks ever launched by the enemy. More than 400 aircraft were shot down by our fighters and ships of the force.

During the 22nd day of June, we proceeded toward the point from which air strikes on Guam and Rota could be made the following morning. From the 23rd of June until the 3rd day of July the HOUSTON operating with her task group, lending support to the landing operations on Saipan and to the air strikes on Guam and Rota, was fast becoming a veteran.

On the 13th of July we proceeded to Eniwetok for supplies and fuel again. Getting under way the next day, we operated in the area around Guam until the 22nd of July lending support to the carriers while they were conducting strikes.

The task group operated in support of the landings on Tinian during the period of 23 to 31 July, and at the same time supported the ground forces on Guam with air strikes. On the 31st of July we anchored on the west side of Saipan and were close enough inshore to observe the ground troops in action.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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During the first five days of August 1944 our group again approached the Bonins and launched air strikes against Iwo Jima, Haha Jima, and Chichi Jima.

On the 7th of August we were detached from Task Group 58.4 and assigned to Task Group 58.3. Other ships of this group were the battleships IOWA, INDIANA, the cruisers VINCENNES, MIAMI and the destroyers MILLER, TINGEY, MARSHALL, STEPHEN POTTER, OWEN, COTTEN and THE SULLIVANS. From 12 August until 24 August 1944 we were at Eniwetok Atoll for supplies and upkeep. On the 27th of the month our group became part of the Third Fleet under the command of Admiral W. F. Halsey, USN, and was assigned to Task Group 38.2.

At 1300 on 6 September the carriers of our group launched a fighter sweep against the Palau Islands. The next day, during the early morning hours the HOUSTON proceeded in company with Cruiser Division 14 and Destroyer Division 100 to bombard the islands of Peleliu, Anguar, and Ngesebus. This mission completed we returned to support the carriers in the area between the Palau Islands and the Marianas Islands until the 10th of September. Changing our area of operations on the 12th of September and until the 6th of October, we again assisted in providing support for aircraft carriers while air strikes were being made against the islands of Leyte, Cebu, Negros, Luzon and the Manila Bay area in the Philippines.

We returned to Saipan for the replenishment of ammunition and then proceeded to Ulithi to be reassigned. Our new assignment was with Task Group 38.3 for strikes against Nansei-Shoto and Formosa in support of the Philippine operations. On the 10th of October the task group arrived at the launching point. Carriers launched the scheduled strikes against Okinawa Jima throughout the day. Several snoopers were observed in the area although enemy reaction to our presence had been noticeably absent. It did not appear that our strike on Formosa would be a complete surprise to the Japanese.

On the 12th of October, commencing at dawn, the carriers launched several scheduled air strikes against Formosa. Unidentified aircraft approached the formation once in the morning and were reported again at 1715 but left the area shortly thereafter. At 1855 in the evening twilight enemy aircraft again approached the formation, this time in earnest. We went to General Quarters. Between 1902, when we commenced firing and 1908, we shot down three low flying torpedo planes attempting to pierce our sector. Altogether we fired five separate times at enemy aircraft which usually sheered off as the AA fire became too heavy. We scored on one more before the attackers withdrew at about midnight, leaving us with a score of four Jap planes shot down by our own gunfire. The next evening we once again had bogies in our vicinity, but we fired at only one, and the plane, taking heed, remained outside our effective range. Later we received word by radio that the cruiser CANBERRA operating in Task Group 38.1 to the south of us, had been torpedoed at about 1835 that evening. In order to cover the withdrawal of the CANBERRA, the movements of our task group were changed. During the forenoon of the next day the HOUSTON was detached and sent to reinforce Task Group 38.1 which was giving close support to the CANBERRA and the ships assisting her. We had barely reached our statiion in formation with this new task group when, at about 1640, the carriers commenced launching aircraft to intercept a large group of bogies reported coming in from the northwest. The fighters returned at sunset, and as they landed on their carriers, the general belief was that they had largely broken up the raid, but at 1836 several low flying aircraft were detected by radar to be coming in sharp on the starboard bow. Four Jap planes were headed for the HOUSTON. Three of these were shot down, but not before they had pressed their attack and launched their torpedoes at a very close range. The ship turned to starboard with full rudder; one torpedo passed close astern, but another found its mark near the keel in the control engine room. We were making 26 knots but in less time than it takes to tell it the HOUSTON was dead in the water.

As a result of this hit, all power and lighting were lost immediately. The ship took a list of 16 degrees to starboard, four main engineering spaces flooded, three of them very rapidly. Water and live steam entered the third deck through a large rupture in the deck armor over the spot where the hit occurred. In the center section of the ship, green water swept across the main deck as the ship rolled to starboard, and as personnel ordered from the below decks stations came topside in this area the sea would pour through escape scuttles. Rivets in bulkhead 79, in the longitudinals and other members in that vicinity, were shearing off. Longitudinals and decks amidships were buckling as the HOUSTON settled under the load of five thousand five hundred tons of water shipped in flooded compartments. The danger of capsizing or of breaking up under this load, was immediate and real. The flooding on the third deck continued, and as the blower trunks, bulkheads, doors, hatches and other distorted fittings began to leak under the heavy pressure, it was difficult to determine where the flooding could be checked.

In view of this situation, the removal of excess personnel to the destroyers standing by was deemed advisable and was commenced. The operation proceeded in orderly fashion under the difficult conditions of total darkness, choppy seas and oil covered water, with a minimum loss of life. While this was in progress the destroyers standing by fought off another air attack, and

HOUSTON gun crews stood ready at all guns that could be brought into action. The commanding officer of the destroyer GRAYSON reported seeing another Jap torpedo launched in the direction of the HOUSTON during this attack, but fortunately its aim was bad. Other ships of the task group successfully fought off other attacks, since no other ships were hit during the night.

With the situation below decks becoming increasingly critical, damage control parties went to work in an effort to check further failure of the ship's main longitudinals, caused by the weight of flooding amidships. At length, it appeared that progress was being made and the flooding could be checked. The HOUSTON had a chance to remain afloat, at least for the night. Vice Admiral McCain sent the USS BOSTON, flagship of Rear Admiral L. H. Wiltse, USN, to take us in tow, another difficult operation in which expert seamanship was displayed. Thus the retirement to our nearest advance base, 1300 miles away, began.

The situation below decks remained critical. Both engine rooms, both firerooms, and three magazines were flooded to the overhead. The flooding on the third deck was temporarily confined to five compartments. To hold this line against weakening bulkheads and seepage required the utmost haste, and all hands remaining on board went to work immediately. Men worked in these below-deck spaces with flashlights and battle lanterns, shoring doors, hatches, distorted bulkheads, and working in bucket brigades. Every available portable submersible pump was put to work removing water from partially flooded spaces, and every conceivable item such as boat booms, stanchions, etc., was used for shoring. At best the footing was precarious as the heavy roll, of a none too stable ship, threw water from one side of compartments to the other. Holes left by rivet failures and electrical leads through bulkheads were plugged and the endless work of the bucket brigades continued. When men became exhausted, while working below decks in dampness without ventilation, they were brought topside and replaced by others. Diesel oil, for the small casualty power generators on the second deck, was brought up from a tank below by bucket; even so, the oil was contaminated with water, so that the problem of keeping the last remaining, and entirely inadequate, source of power in continuous operation, was a major problem in itself. Heavy rolling kept the Main Deck awash much of the time, placing a serious strain on the hull structure. At every indication of members buckling and decks parting, box beams were immediately welded in place. In order to decrease the list and accompanying roll, topside weights were jettisoned. This operation continued throughout the trip.

Salvage operations, along with minor irritations, such as electrical fires, kept all hands so thoroughly occupied that the ordinary business of living was practically forgotten. Meals consisted primarily of canned goods; drinking water came from brackish ballast tanks forward; with no flushing water, toilet facilities were by over-the-side method; living compartments were without light or ventilation, and generally completely deranged by salvage operations, so that all sleeping was necessarily done topside. By the end of the first day the problem of providing for over five hundred men was pressing for a solution and there seemed no alternative but to transfer at least half of those remaining to other ships.

At 0730 the sixteenth of October the U. S. Navy tug PAWNEE took over the tow from the BOSTON. During the afternoon of the same day a large group of enemy aircraft was discovered following the broad oil-covered trail left by the crippled HOUSTON. One of the three planes, fortunate to get through the very excellent air coverage being furnished by the USS CABOT and USS COWPENS, launched a torpedo at the HOUSTON. Although this plane was shot down by the USS HOUSTON'S 20mm and 40mm gunfire, the torpedo struck the starboard quarter, starting a large gasoline fire, admitting another thousand tons of water into the hull, and causing additional injury and loss of life. The explosion blew the hangar hatch and much debris hundreds of feet into the air. Since there was no power available to keep pressure on the fire main, the fire was fought with handy billies and foam generators. After about thirty minutes of hard work with the possibility of a serious explosion the fire was brought under control.

The buckling amidships increased after this second hit, but, though the situation was in doubt, it was decided to continue the fight as long as the main deck remained above water. To ease the living situation, however, permission was granted by the Task Group Commander to transfer an additional 300 men to destroyers. The sea still being too rough for the destroyers to come alongside, they took stations astern and picked up the personnel as they went over the side in groups of one hundred.

On 19 October, sea conditions for the first time permitted transfer of stretcher cases, though all expressed the desire to remain on board. Strongly protesting, six stretcher cases were transferred by boat to the USS THE SULLIVANS.

Four officers and fifty-one enlisted men lost their lives during these engagements. Some were buried at sea; the majority of them are buried in burial plots at our advanced bases. Instances of individual courage, initiative and devotion to duty are too numerous to be separately cited. Every officer and man did his duty in a manner which inspired others and contributed to the high morale which prevailed. The salvage party now consisted of 48 officers and 146 enlisted men. These officers and men worked side by side, day and night, without regard to rank, and, as a result of their combined

efforts, the ship was kept afloat. Two weeks later the HOUSTON was brought into port.

Arrival in Ulithi brought no respite to the weary crew. The nearest drydock was a thousand miles further away, and all hands knew that this thousand miles had to be negotiated at the end of another tow rope with a speed of advance of four knots. During the seven weary weeks at this base the HOUSTON sweated out a typhoon and a Jap midget submarine attack on ships in the harbor. It was reported that four midget subs were sunk by our patrol craft and scout planes, but not before one tanker had been sunk.

With the help of the repair ship, USS HECTOR, the HOUSTON was strengthened sufficiently to be towed the remaining distance to the nearest drydock, at Manus in the Admiralty Islands. On the 14th of December 1944 the HOUSTON cleared Ulithi Atoll under tow of the Navy tugs ARAPAHO and LAPON, destination Manus, arriving there the twentieth of December.

Because of crowded facilities and the necessity for effecting emergency repairs on other ships, it was necessary for the HOUSTON to remain at anchor in Manus harbor until the 8th day of January 1945 at which time the floating drydock was made available.

On the 16th day of February, after five weeks in drydock, temporary patches had been installed over the torpedo holes, and part of the HOUSTON'S engineering plant, some of which had been under water for eighty-six days was back in commission and in readiness for the 12,000 mile journey to the New York Navy Yard. The greater portion of this work had been accomplished by HOUSTON officer and enlisted personnal.

En route to the New York Navy Yard the struggle continued. Though the damaged compartments were now free of water, the head seas caused a heavy strain on the weakened hull. Welding and shoring continued day and night, and vigilance could not be relaxed until the HOUSTON rested safely in drydock at the Navy Yard. Pride of ship continued, and, as time permitted, the limited number on board scrubbed and cleaned her up so that, upon arrival, little evidence of her condition was visible to those who saw her steam into port making 20 knots.

From the 24th of March to the 10th of October 1945 we were in the New York Navy Yard undergoing battle damage repairs, and getting ready once again for active sea duty. The ship's company took a well deserved period of rest and relaxation in New York, and at the same time helped in getting their ship ready once again for sea. Replacements for those who were lost or transferred came on board and were absorbed into the organization. On the 30th day of July, 1945, Captain William W. Behrens, USN, was relieved as Commanding Officer of the HOUSTON, by Captain Howard E. Orem, USN.

On 11 October, 1945, almost one year to the day after our first torpedo hit, the HOUSTON, almost completely rebuilt and with many of her crew fresh from recruiting centers, steamed out of New York harbor headed for the Caribbean Sea where she was scheduled for another period of refresher training.

This training cruise would be broken by a trip to Houston, Texas, for Navy Day, so upon arrival in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba on the 14th of October 1945, and between drills and exercises, all hands began the tremendous task of readying the ship for Navy Day ceremonies and receiving visitors aboard. We arrived in Houston, accompanied by the destroyers DUNLAP and FANNING, the destroyer escort MUIR, and the submarines CAPON, BILLFISH, and ODAX, on the 26th of October, and departed the 3rd of November after a week of entertainment and sincere cordiality. Many thousands of citizens of Houston had been escorted throughout the ship that bore the name of their city. As we got under way and again set our course for Guantanamo Bay, thoughts of revelry were set aside as we realized our most difficult task lay ahead; the task of preparing the HOUSTON for the admiral's inspection that would terminate our refresher training cruise. This would be a test of the willingness of every man aboard to put the HOUSTON over the top. On the 10th of December 1945 the inspection party was received on board and was met by confidence on the face of every man. This confidence was well founded.

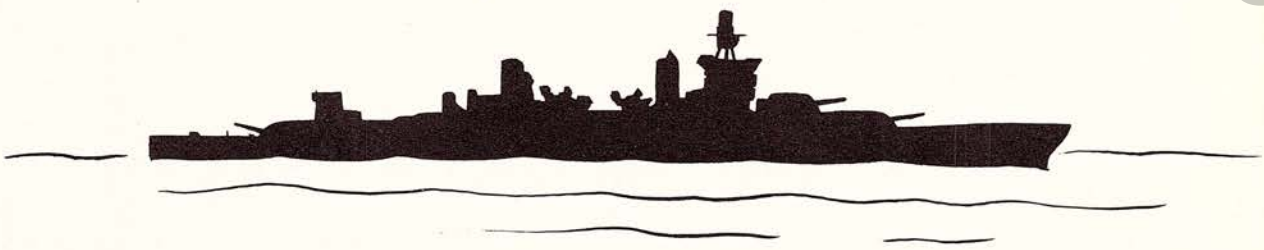
HOUSTON left Guantanamo Bay and proceeded to Culebra in the Virgin Islands, where we were scheduled to conduct a bombardment practice. At dawn on the 12th of December we were in position, and soon thereafter were throwing salvo after salvo at the beach. This continued throughout the day and into the night. At 2100 when the order was given to secure, every man aboard was proud of the superior rating that his ship had attained in the bombardment. We departed Culebra immediately thereafter, and set course for U. S. A. and Christmas at home.

The USS HOUSTON is now assigned to Second Active (Atlantic Fleet).

STATISTICS

Standard Displacement: 10,000 tons.
Overall Length: 608 ft. 4 inches.
Beam: 63 feet.
Speed: 33 knots.
Armament: Twelve 6 in., 47 cal. dual-purpose guns; Twelve 5 in., 38 cal. AA guns; 20mm and 40mm AA guns.
Crew: Excess of 1200.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO



U. S. S. INDIANAPOLIS (CA 35)

USS INDIANAPOLIS, which, with USS PORTLAND (CA 33) constituted the 1929 Class of heavy cruisers, was the first major naval vessel authorized in the building program of February 13, 1929, and the first to be laid down and completed after the London Treaty limiting naval armament.

She was built by the New York Shipbuilding Company of Camden, New Jersey, and slid down the ways there on the morning of May 15, 1931, when war, to us, was still too remote for serious consideration. Miss Lucy Taggart, daughter of the late Senator Thomas Taggart, former mayor of the city of Indianapolis, acted as sponsor.

The heavy cruiser was the second USS INDIANAPOLIS. Her predecessor was a vessel of 16,900 tons, taken over by War Shipping Board and used during the First World War as a transport. She was commissioned by the Navy, December 12, 1918, and returned to the Shipping Board the following July.

The present INDIANAPOLIS was placed in full commission at the Philadelphia Navy Yard on November 15, 1932, with Captain (now Rear Admiral, retired) John M. Smeallie, USN, her first commanding officer. At the time her anti-aircraft consisted only of 5-inch guns and her complement was 49 officers and 553 men.

INDIANAPOLIS left the Navy Yard January 10, after fitting out, for a shakedown cruise in Atlantic waters which included gunnery exercises and tests off Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. On February 23 she was joined by USS BABBIT (DD 128) with which she steamed to Panama and continued training exercises. Transiting the Canal she then operated in Pacific waters off the coast of Chile; and returned to the United States. She was then assigned special duty and embarked the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his party at Campobello Island, New Brunswick, and cruised with them until August 1, 1933, when she arrived at Annapolis, Maryland. In September 1933 the then Secretary of the Navy Claude A. Swanson chose the ship for his inspection tour of the Pacific which included the Canal Zone, the Territory of Hawaii, West Coast bases and an inspection of the Fleet in the San Pedro-San Diego area.

Again she played host to President Roosevelt when he reviewed the Fleet from her bridge off New York on May 31, 1934. Next INDIANAPOLIS visited the West Coast again, in the fall of 1934, and operated as flagship of scouting force engaged in a fleet problem. On December 11, 1934, Captain Smeallie was relieved by Captain (now retired) W. S. McClintic, USN.

Early in June of 1935 she returned to Hampton Roads, Virginia, visited Annapolis and New York, then entered the New York Navy Yard for overhall. Here she was fitted as a flagship, with quarters for an admiral and 14 staff officers. Captain McClintic was relieved in March by Captain (now Admiral) Henry K. Hewitt, USN.

From then until the outbreak of the war her only deviation from normal peacetime routine came when she once more received President Roosevelt aboard in November, 1936, for a South American cruise. In May 1937 Captain (now Admiral) Thomas C. Kinkaid, USN, assumed command; he was relieved in August, 1938 by Captain (now Rear Admiral) J. F. Shafroth, Jr., USN, who in turn was relieved, in July, 1940 by Captain (now Rear Admiral) E. W. Hansen, USN, who was to be her first war-time commanding officer.

War found the heavy cruiser carrying out a simulated bombardment of Johnston Island, about 500 miles southwest of Oahu. She immediately joined a task force searching for Japanese carriers which were reported to be still in the vicinity and scouted waters around Hawaii for a possible follow-up of the Pearl Harbor attack. She returned to Pearl Harbor in a week.

Her first action came in the South Pacific, about 350 miles south of Rabaul, New Britain, deep in enemy-dominated waters, where she was serving as a unit of a task force built around the carrier LEXINGTON. Iate in the afternoon of February 20, 1942, the force was intercepted by 18 twin-engined bombers, flying in two waves. In the action that followed 16 of the planes were shot down due to the combined efforts of the guns of the escorting vessels and LEXINGTON'S aircraft. None of our ships was hit, and two trailing Japanese seaplanes were also splashed. This was the famous action in which Commander (then Lieutenant Junior Grade) Edwin H. O'Hare, USN, earned the Congressional Medal of Honor for shooting down six enemy planes in one flight.

After spending the last days of February patrolling the northern part of the Coral Sea, the Task Force was joined by the carrier YORKTOWN and proceeded to attack enemy positions at Lae and Salamaua, New Guinea, where enemy invasion forces were being marshalled. March 10 both ports were hit hard by carrier-based planes; striking from the southern coast then swooped down on harbor shipping after crossing the high Owen Stanley mountain range and gained complete surprise. Heavy damage was inflicted on Japanese warships and transports and many planes were shot down as they rose to protect the ports; our losses were exceptionally light.

INDIANAPOLIS then returned to the United States and underwent a period of overhaul and alterations in the Mare Island Navy Yard. In July Captain Hanson was relieved by Captain (now Rear Admiral) Morton L. Deyo, USN.

Overhaul complete, INDIANAPOLIS escorted a convoy to Australia, then headed for the North Pacific where Japanese landings in the Aleutians had created a precarious situation. The weather along this barren chain of islands consists of continuous cold, persistent and unpredictable fogs, sudden storms accompanied by violent winds with resultant heavy seas, with constant rain, snow and sleet. To make conditions more unsuitable for operations, the waters were very poorly and insufficiently charted.

On August 7, the Task Force to which INDIANAPOLIS was attached, operating under Rear Admiral W. W. Smith, USN, finally found an opening in the thick fog around the Japanese stronghold at Kiska Island. INDIANAPOLIS' 8-inch guns opened up, as did the guns of our other ships. Fog conditions remained unfavorable for observation of fire, but scout planes flown from the cruisers were able to observe the effects of our surface fire to a limited extent.

Ships were seen to sink in the harbor and fires were started among shore installations. So complete was the tactical surprise obtained that it was fifteen minutes before shore batteries began to answer, and some of them fired into the air, believing they were being bombed. Most of them were silenced by accurate gunnery from our force.

Japanese submarines then made their appearance and were depth charged by destroyers of the Task Force; Japanese sea planes also made an ineffective bombing attack. While the operation was considered a success in spite of the scanty information as to results obtained, it also demonstrated the necessity of obtaining bases nearer the Japanese-held islands. Consequently, we occupied the island of Adak later in the month which gave us a base suitable for surface craft and planes further along the chain than the previously most-advanced base at Dutch Harbor.

In January, 1943, INDIANAPOLIS acted in support of our occupation of Amchitka, which gave us another base in the Aleutians, between Adak and the enemy-held islands of Kiska and Attu. Landings at both Adak and Amchitka were unopposed except by spasmodic and ineffective bombing by float-type Zero planes. In January, 1943, Captain Nicholas Vytlacil, USN, became the ship's Commanding Officer, relieving Captain Deyo.

With two destroyers, INDIANAPOLIS was patrolling southwest of Attu in an attempt to intercept any enemy ships attempting to run reinforcements and supplies into Kiska and Attu. The night of February 19 contact was made with a Japanese cargo ship. She was challenged and when she tried to fake a reply she was blown out of the water by INDIANAPOLIS' 8-inch guns. There were no survivors and from the force of the explosioin it was presumed that she was loaded with ammunition.

Throughout the Spring and Summer of 1943 INDIANAPOLIS operated in Aleutian waters. She was largely engaged in convoy and covering duty which included the amphibious assault on Attu Island in May —the first instance in which territory seized by the Japanese was reclaimed—and the Kiska operation in August.

After Attu was proclaimed secure our forces turned their attention on Kiska, the last enemy stronghold in the Aleutians. In spite of numerous bombardments, in which INDIANAPOLIS participated, continuous bombing from the air and constant patrol around the island by submarines and surface craft, as well as planes, the Japanese managed to evacuate all personnel under cover of persistent, thick fogs.

However, our unopposed landing on August 15 gave us possession of the entire chain with bases for operations against Japanese bases in the Kurile Islands and at Paramushiru. In August, 1943, Captain Vytlacil was relieved by Captain Einar R. Johnson, USN. During this tour of duty in the Aleutian area INDIANAPOLIS returned to the Mare Island Navy Yard for overhaul, returning to the area upon completion.

The ship next moved to the Central Pacific and participated in the operations leading to the occupation of the Gilbert Islands. Bases in these islands were necessary since they were in close proximity to powerful Japanese bases in the Carolines and in the Marshall Islands. The Marshall Islands were to follow on the invasion schedule and with bases in the Gilberts we could neutralize the enemy in the Carolines and strike at the Marshalls.

November 19, 1943, a force of cruisers, INDIANAPOLIS included, under Admiral Raymond A. Spruance, bombarded Tarawa. Makin Island was worked over by the guns of the cruisers the next day. The ship then returned to Tarawa and acted as a fire support ship for the invasion; during this operation an enemy plane fell to her guns.

In preparation for seizure of Kwajalein, in the Marshall Islands, INDIANAPOLIS rendezvoused at newly-captured Tarawa with other vessels of the task force to which she was assigned and on D-Day minus 1, February 1, 1944, she was a unit of the cruiser group which heavily bombarded the islands of Kwajalein Atoll.

The shelling continued on D-Day with INDIANAPOLIS silencing two enemy shore batteries. Next day she obliterated a blockhouse and other shore installations and supported advancing troops with a creeping barrage. D plus two the ship entered Kwajalein Lagoon where she remained until the islands were announced secure.

During March and April of 1944 INDIANAPOLIS, attached to a powerful Fifth Fleet force which included battleships, cruisers and carriers, attacked the Western Carolines. March 30 and 31 carrier planes struck at the Palau Group with shipping their primary target. They sank 3 destroyers, 17 freighters, 5 oilers and damaged 17 other ships. In addition, airfields were bombed and surrounding waters mined to immobilize enemy ships.

Yap and Ulithi were struck also the 31st and Woleai April 1. During three days enemy planes attacked but were driven off with no losses to our ships. INDIANAPOLIS shot down her second plane, a torpedo bomber and the enemy lost 160 planes in all, including 46 destroyed on the ground. These attacks were successful in obtaining the desired effect of preventing enemy activity from the Carolines from interfering with our landings on New Guinea. Throughout the operations INDIANAPOLIS acted as a support ship for the carriers, assisting the combat air patrols in driving off attacking planes and protecting them from any enemy surface craft that may have ventured to come out.

During June, 1944, INDIANAPOLIS was busy with the Marianas assault which began with surface bombardments on June 13. On D-Day, June 15, Admiral Spruance received reports that a large enemy force of battleships, carriers, cruisers and destroyers was headed south to relieve their doomed garrisons in the Marianas. Since amphibious operations at Saipan, the first island so assaulted, had to be protected at all costs, Admiral Spruance could not draw his powerful surface units too far from the scene. Consequently a fast carrier force was sent to meet this threat while another force attacked enemy air bases on Iwo Jima and Chichi Jima in the Bonin and Volcano Islands, bases potentially dangerous as sources of enemy air attacks on our invasion forces.

The two forces rendezvoused and together met the enemy attack which materialized June 19 and is known as the Battle of the Philippine Sea. Enemy carrier planes which hoped to use the airfields of Guam and Tinian for refuelling and rearming and from which to attack our off-shore shipping were met by carrier planes and the guns of the escorting ships. Before the day was over the enemy had lost 402 planes with our losses standing at 17.

INDIANAPOLIS, which had operated with the force striking Iwo Jima and Chichi Jima, shot down one torpedo plane. This day's work was known throughout the Fleet as the "Marianas Turkey Shoot". With enemy air opposition wiped out, our carrier planes pursued and sank two enemy carriers, two destroyers and one tanker, with severe damage inflicted on other ships.

INDIANAPOLIS returned to Saipan June 23 and furnished fire support there. Six days later Tinian received the same honors from her 8-inch guns as they smashed shore installations. By this time Guam was also secure and INDIANAPOLIS received the distinction of being the first large United States combatant vessel to enter Apra Harbor since the outbreak of hostilities with Japan.

During the next few weeks the ship operated in the Marianas area, then moved to the Western Carolines where further landings were in the air. From September 12 to September 29 she bombarded the Island of Peleliu in the Palau Group of the Carolines, furnishing both pre-invasion and support fire. She then went to Manus in the Admiralty Islands where she operated for ten days before returning to the Mare Island Navy Yard for overhaul again. Back in the United States, on November 18, 1944, Captain Johnson was relieved by Captain Charles B. McVay, USN, who was to be the ship's last Commanding Officer.

INDIANAPOLIS joined the Carrier Task Force of Vice Admiral Marc A. Mitscher on February 14, 1945. This force was destined to make the first attack on

Tokyo since General James H. Doolittle's famous bombing raid of April 1942. The action was designed to cover our landings on Iwo Jima, scheduled for February 19, and the preinvasion operations by destroying Japanese air facilities and other installations in the Home Islands and to bring home forcibly to the Japanese people that, to quote a Japanese general: "Things have turned out contrary to expectations."

Complete tactical surprise was achieved by approaching the Japanese coast under cover of adverse weather and attacks were pressed home viciously for two days. On February 16 and 17 we lost 49 carrier planes but either shot down or destroyed on the ground 499 enemy planes, sank a carrier at Yokohama, sank nine coastal vessels, a destroyer, two destroyer escorts and a cargo ship. In addition, hangars, shops and aircraft installations were wrecked, as well as factories and other industrial targets. Throughout the operation INDIANAPOLIS played her old role of support ship.

Immediately after the strikes the Task Force returned to render direct support to the landings at Iwo Jima. Here the ship remained until March 1, aiding in the bloody struggle for that little island by protecting the invasion ships and bringing her guns to bear on any targets on the beach which needed their attention. This period of duty was broken when the ship returned with Admiral Mitscher's task force and struck Tokyo again on February 25 and the island of Hachijo, off the southern coast of Honshu, the next day. Weather conditions were extremely adverse, but 158 planes were destroyed and five small vessels sunk. Ground installations were also pounded and two trains demolished.

The Island of Okinawa and some of the surrounding small islands were needed next to give us a large base close to the home islands for the actual invasion of Japan. To accomplish the invasion it was necessary that airfields in southern Japan be placed in an inactive status so as to be incapable of supporting air-borne opposition to the impending assault on Okinawa.

INDIANAPOLIS, still a unit of Vice Admiral Mitscher's Fast Carrier Force left Ulithi in the Caroline Islands on March 14 and proceeded towards the Japanese coast. On March 18, from a position 100 miles southeast of Kyushu, the southernmost home island, air strikes were launched against airfields on the Island while Fleet units in the harbors of Kobe and Kure, on southern Honshu, were also attacked.

Our carrier FRANKLIN received its now historic battle damage on March 19, when she was hit by two bombs; dead and missing totalled 772. Since other ships were hit less seriously the Task Force retired slowly to the south, launching continuous attacks on enemy air fields to prevent any organized attacks on the impeded Task Force. March 21st, 48 enemy planes located our ships, but were intercepted 60 miles away by 24 of our carrier based planes. When the shooting was over every one of the Japanese planes were in the sea at a cost of only two planes to us.

Pre-invasion bombardment of Okinawa commenced March 24 and for seven days INDIANAPOLIS poured 8-inch shells into the beach defenses. During this time the ships were attacked repeatedly by enemy aircraft and INDIANAPOLIS was credited with shooting down six planes and assists on two others.

On the day before the landing, March 31, a Japanese single-engined fighter plane was spotted by the ship's sky lookouts as it emerged from the morning twilight and roared at the bridge in a vertical power dive. The ship's 20-millimeter guns opened fire but less than 15 seconds after it was spotted the plane was over the ship.

Tracer shells were seen to crash into the plane, causing it to swerve somewhat, but the pilot was able to release his bomb from a height of 25 feet and crash his plane on the port side of the after main deck. The plane toppled into the sea, causing little damage, but the bomb crashed through the deck armor, penetrated the crew's mess hall, the berthing compartment below it and the fuel tanks beneath to pass through the bottom of the ship and explode in the water under the ship. The resultant concussion blew two gaping holes in the ship's bottom and flooded compartments in the area. Nine men in the berthing compartment were killed, but those in the mess hall were injured only slightly as were two men on the weather deck. Admiral Spruance, who was flying his flag in the ship at the time, escaped injury.

INDIANAPOLIS settled slightly by the stern and took a list to port, but there was no progressive flooding, and she limped to a salvage ship for emergency repairs. Here it was found that her fuel tanks were ruptured, her water-distilling equipment ruined and her propeller shafts damaged, but the ship made the long trip back across the Pacific to the Mare Island Navy Yard under her own power. Except for a light Japanese shell from a shore battery on Saipan which struck the shield of an antiaircraft gun a glancing blow, this was the first battle damage sustained by INDIANAPOLIS in her long and distinguished war career.

After repairs and overhaul INDIANAPOLIS received orders for a special high speed run to Tinian with essential atomic-bomb material, which was to be used if further bombings from our advanced bases had proven necessary, for we were now seriously preparing for the invasion of the home islands, scheduled for November, 1945. INDIANAPOLIS, due to the urgency of the situation, departed from San Francisco on July 16, foregoing her post-repair shakedown period.

After touching at Pearl Harbor, the parts were landed at Tinian, the location of one of our large fields from which army bombers were operating against Japan proper. Enroute all opportunities for training and exer-

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cises were taken advantage of, although the large number of passengers who were being transported to the forward area interfered with this program. The run to Tinian was made without escort as the Okinawa campaign had cost us 30 vessels sunk and 223 damaged, most of which were destroyers or other vessels used for escort work.

After delivering her cargo at Tinian, INDIANAPOLIS was dispatched to Guam where she was to discharge certain personnel and report for onward routing to Leyte, in the Philippine Islands. From there she was to proceed and report to Vice Admiral Jesse B. Oldendorf for further duty off Okinawa.

Then came one of those terrible tragedies which occur in time of war and will continue to occur as long as there are wars. INDIANAPOLIS was torpedoed twice by a Japanese submarine on July 30, 1945, while steaming between Guam and Leyte. She sank in 12 minutes, leaving the survivors of her complement of 1196 men struggling in the sea.

When the ship did not reach Leyte on time no report was made that she was overdue. This omission became the subject of investigation and an official report was issued by the Navy which covers all phases of it in detail. Conduct of all officers and men of the INDIANAPOLIS in the face of the emergency was highly satisfactory and many details of individual heroism have been reported.

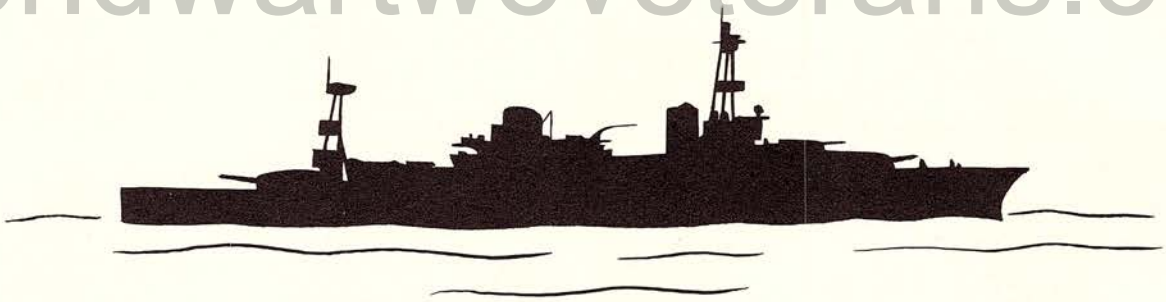
However, it was not until 1025 on August 2 that the survivors were sighted, mostly held afloat by life jackets, although there were a few rafts which had been cut loose before the ship went down. They were sighted by a plane on routine patrol, the pilot of which immediately dropped a life raft and a radio transmitter. All air and surface units capable of rescue operations were dispatched to the scene at once and the surrounding waters were thoroughly searched for survivors.

Upon completion of rescue operations on August 8, a radius of 100 miles had been combed by day and by night. All members of the ship's crew were listed as casualties and 845 Naval personnel, including 63 officers; and 30 marines, including two officers, were missing. Some of these survivors died after rescue. Thus the loss of this gallant ship became what is probably the most tragic loss of the war.

Traditionally the flagship of the powerful Fifth Fleet, she had served with honor from Pearl Harbor through the last campaign of the war and had gone down in action a scant two weeks before the war's end.

Length Overall: 610 feet.
Beam: 66 feet.
Standard Displacement: 9,800 tons.
Crew: Excess of 1200.
Speed: 32 knots.
Armament: Nine 8-inch, 55 caliber guns, eight 5-inch 25-caliber dual purpose guns, six 40-millimeter quad AA mounts (24 guns) and twelve 20-millimeter AA guns.

Three observation-scout planes and two catapults.



U. S. S. LOUISVILLE (CA 28)

The USS LOUISVILLE was launched on 1 September 1930 at the Puget Sound Navy Yard with Miss Jane Kennedy Brown, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John J. Kennedy of Louisville, Kentucky, as sponsor. The cruiser was commissioned there on 15 January 1931 and her first commanding officer was Captain E. J. Marquart, USN.

In the spring of 1931, she made her first trial runs, including calls at Port Angeles, Washington; San Francisco, California; and Bremerton, Washington.

The shakedown cruise of the LOUISVILLE ran through the summer, fall, and winter of 1931, and took her from Bremerton to San Pedro; Corinto, Nicaragua; Balboa, Canal Zone; Cristobal, Canal Zone; Norfolk, Virginia; Fast Land Bay, New York; Block Island, New York; New London, Connecticut; Newport, Rhode Island; ending at New York City for post trial repairs and drydocking.

During the spring of 1932 she took part in Fleet Problems including firing of gunnery practices and calling at ports of Norfolk; Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; Balboa, Canal Zone; San Pedro, California; arriving at San Francisco, by the end of June.

During the summer of 1932, the LOUISVILLE conducted gunnery and torpedo exercises in the San Pedro-San Diego area, basing at San Pedro, California. Near the end of the summer she returned to Mare Island Navy Yard for drydocking and overhaul. In October 1932, Captain B. L. Canaga, USN, relieved Captain Marquart as Commanding Officer.

Fall, 1932: Operated in San Pedro-San Diego area, conducting gunnery exercises.

Winter and Spring, 1933: Made cruise to Hawaiian Islands, and later to Puget Sound area. During this period she conducted gunnery practices and calls at Hawaiian Island Ports, Puget Sound, and San Francisco, returned to San Pedro to become school ship for anti-aircraft training.

Summer and Fall, 1933: Served as school for anti-aircraft training. Operated in San Pedro and arrived at Puget Sound Navy Yard in late September for scheduled overhaul. This overhaul lasted until 20 December, at the completion of which the LOUISVILLE sailed to Long Beach.

Winter, 1934: No cruises were made during the winter, but the LOUISVILLE utilized this period for extensive gunnery practices.

Spring, Summer and Fall, 1934: In April 1934, Captain Canaga was relieved by Captain G. V. Stewart, USN, as Commanding Officer.

The year of 1934 was one of record cruising for the LOUISVILLE in regards to the large number of ports of call. The cruise began at San Pedro, California, in the middle of April and ended at San Francisco in December.

Ports visited by the LOUISVILLE during this nine months showing of the flag were called on in the following order: from San Pedro to Balboa, Canal Zone; Port au Prince, Puerto Rico; Cape Haitian, Haiti; Annapolis, Maryland; New York City by 1 June; Norfolk, Virginia; Newport Rhode Island; Provincetown, Massachusetts; Bar Harbor, Maine; Newport, Rhode Island; New York City; Norfolk, Virginia; Mobile, Alabama; Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; Conives, Haiti; Colon, Repre-

sentative of Panama; Balboa, Canal Zone; Long Beach, California; and San Francisco, California.

Winter, 1934; Spent this period in San Francisco, California and at Long Beach, California, undergoing gunnery and tactical exercises.

Spring, 1935: After leaving Long Beach, California, moved northward to Port Angeles, Washington; Dutch Harbor, Alaska; then westward to Pearl Harbor, T. H.; back to San Diego, California, and San Francisco, California. From the last of April to the tenth of June participated in Fleet Problems.

Summer, 1935: Overhaul period in Mare Island Navy Yard, San Francisco, California and post repair trials, then to Long Beach for tactical exercises.

Fall, 1935: Captain W. S. Farber, USN, relieved Captain G. V. Stewart, USN, as Commanding Officer in November 1935. The LOUISVILLE spent nearly all fall conducting all types of gunnery exercises and damage control problems out of Long Beach with a short time spent in San Francisco, California, the last of October for full power runs.

Winter, 1936: In Long Beach, San Pedro, and San Diego for gunnery and tactical exercises.

Spring, 1936: Long Beach and San Francisco, then to Balboa, Canal Zone, participating in Fleet Problems, and Callao, Peru, for tactics and visit. Return to Long Beach towards the last of June for overhaul alongside the USS VALTA.

Summer, 1936: Operated mostly out of Long Beach for tactical and gunnery exercises, with runs to San Francisco, California, for short periods.

Fall, 1936: Spent in Long Beach for exercises, San Francisco, California, for military inspection, then to Navy Yard, Pearl Harbor, early in November, for overhaul.

Winter, 1937: Finished overhaul last part of February, then operating with Submarine Squadron 4 early in March. Returned to States and Navy Yard, Puget Sound, for overhaul.

Spring, 1937, Captain R. W. Mathewson, USN, relieved Captain W. S. Farber, USN, in May.

After overhaul, she steamed to Hawaiian Area for Fleet Problems, then back to San Francisco, California, and Long Beach en route to Bellingham, Washington, last of June.

Summer, 1937; Summer cruise up along southeastern Alaska and then to Portland, Oregon. Then to San Francisco, California, and Long Beach for annual military practice and Pyramid Cove for gunnery exercises.

Fall, 1937: Continued gunnery exercises in Long Beach, then to Mare Island Navy Yard for docking; Santa Barbara, California, and then to Long Beach where she underwent a short overhaul alongside the USS VESTAL, repair ship.

Winter, 1938: After Long Beach, began a long Pacific Cruise commencing the first part of January to Pearl Harbor, T. H.; Pago Pago, Samoa; Sidney, Australia; Melbourne, Australia; Adelaide, and Hobart, Australia; Tasmania, Auckland, New Zealand; Papeete, Tahiti; then to Pearl Harbor for Fleet Problems.

While in Sidney, Australia, the crew of the LOUISVILLE did the ship and its flag proud by effecting quite a spectacular rescue. A sightseeing ferryboat capsized when most of her passengers crowded the rail while seeing the LOUISVILLE off. Several of the crew responded by going over the side and rescuing quite a few people who were brought to the ship by the LOUISVILLE's boats.

Summer, 1938: Cruise from Port Angeles, Washington, to Sitka, Juneau, and Ketchikan, Alaska, and return to Seattle and Bremerton last of July, then to Puget Sound Navy Yard for overhaul.

Fall, 1938: Captain F. T. Leighton, USN, relieved Captain R. W. Mathewson, USN, in October as Commanding Officer.

Out of Puget Sound Navy Yard by 1 November, then to San Francisco and Oakland for fleet tactics, and Long Beach for gunnery exercises.

Spring, 1939: From Guantanamo Bay to St. Petersburg, Florida, for a while in April and to Cristobal, Canal Zone and Mare Island Navy Yard last part of May to middle of June, then to Long Beach.

Summer, 1939: Spent in San Francisco, California, Long Beach and Pyramid Cove in gunnery exercises.

Fall, 1939, Winter, 1940: Long period of gunnery exercises and some tactics in Long Beach, Pyramid Cove, and Santa Barbara.

Spring and Summer, 1940: Hawaiian Area for Fleet Problem, Pearl Harbor, and back to San Pedro for overhaul. With a long period from 1 June to the last of August at Puget Sound Navy Yard for repairs and post repair shakedown. After which returned to Long Beach, then Balboa, Colon and Pernambuco, Brazil.

Fall, 1940, Winter, 1941: Commander H. J. Nelson, USN, relieved Captain F. T. Leighton, USN, in December.

Following an extended cruise, visited the following ports in order: Pernambuco and Rio de Janiero, Brazil; Montivedeo, Uruguay; Buenos Aires, Argentina; Santos, Rio Grande, Rio de Janiero again, and Bahia, Brazil; from there to Simonstown, South Africa, where the ship took aboard 148 million dollars worth of gold which was brought to New York City. A short cold period in Brooklyn Navy Yard followed.

Captain E. B. Nixon, USN, relieved Commander H. J. Nelson, USN, in February.

Returned to Long Beach by way of Norfolk, Vir-

ginia; Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; Balboa, Canal Zone; then to Pearl Harbor to join Scouting Force, Pacific.

Spring and Summer, 1941: After gunnery exercises in Pearl Harbor, visited San Diego, California for one of first big amphibious exercises, then to San Francisco, California, and Hawaiian Islands Operating Area for gunnery and tactical exercises while acting as flagship for Vice Admiral Brown, Commander Scouting Force.

Fall, 1941: Continued gunnery exercises till sailed to Guam and Manila early in November. Then to Tarakan, Borneo, and enroute to Pearl Harbor from Torres Straits when war broke out on 7 December 1941.

At the outbreak of war on 7 December 1941, the LOUISVILLE found herself far from friendly waters acting as escort for the USS A. T. SCOTT and SS PRESIDENT COOLIDGE, enroute from Tarkaran, East Borneo, to Pearl Harbor, T. H. The ship received word of the catastrophe at Pearl Harbor from our base at Cavite, P. I. and was immediately ordered to Pago Pago rather than the Hawaiian area. However, on 11 December new orders were received directing us to return to Pearl Harbor and the ship reached there on 16 December where a heartsick crew viewed the disastrous results of the Japanese raid. The LOUISVILLE then proceeded to San Diego, California, where she joined Task Force 17 which was composed of the YORKTOWN and ST. LOUIS plus a number of destroyers, transports and tankers.

A cruise to Samoa commenced on 6 January 1942, and ended with the landing of troops there the 22nd of January. Then while enroute to Pearl Harbor, the ship engaged in her first offensive operation, taking part in the carrier plane raids on the Gilbert-Marshall Group, during which action one of the ship's planes was lost. After a short stay in Pearl Harbor, the LOUISVILLE got underway to patrol the Canton-Ellice area to assist in protection of our bases in that region. Early in March 1942, the LOUISVILLE found herself steaming toward Noumea, New Caledonia, as a member of Task Force 11, a carrier force which included all of our then available combatant units. The several groups in this task force operated in the Salamaua-Lae-Rabaul sector for a number of days making air strikes on numerous objectives in the vicinity in an effort to slow down the Japanese tide of aggression. During these operations, two of our scouting planes were presumed to be lost, but somehow each plane managed to reach the friendly island of Rossel safely, and both pilots and radio operators eventually returned to the ship several months later.

Following the completion of this operation, the ship returned to Pearl Harbor, T. H., and from there proceeded to Mare Island Navy Yard, California, for a scheduled overhaul and an increase in armament which up to this time was inadequate for modern warfare.

Due to the urgency of the situation, the Navy Yard availability was cut short, and, on May 31st, 1942, the LOUISVILLE steamed north to Kodiak, Alaska, to become a member of Task Force 8 which was composed of a number of heavy and light cruisers and destroyers. This force operated in the fog-bound, depressing Aleutian vicinity of Dutch Harbor and engaged in a shore bombardment of Kiska Island on 7 August 1942 covering, in all, a period of about four months. Convoy duty was of a prime importance too, as this was the period of the strongest Japanese encroachment upon our northern outposts. In the first part of September, Captain C. T. Joy, USN, relieved Captain Nixon, USN, as Commanding Officer.

On the 11th of November, the ship took departure from San Francisco enroute to Pearl Harbor, and after a few days in the Navy Yards there, continued on to the South Pacific acting as escort for several troop transports as far as Noumea, New Caledonia. The LOUISVILLE then proceeded north to Espiritu Santo, becoming a unit of Task Force 67 which had been battling the Japs for several months in the waters adjacent to Guadalcanal. On 6 January 1943, while steaming off the northwestern coast of Guadalcanal following the completion of a night bombardment of Munda Island by several of the light cruisers, the force was attacked by a group of Japanese dive-bombers, with only the ACHILLES, a veteran of the Graf Spee incident, suffering any damage. Shortly thereafter, the LOUISVILLE moved southward a few miles to the base at Efate Island, New Hebrides where she joined Task Force 18, another cruiser group. On the 29th of January, this force fought what is known as the battle of Ronnel Island, being attacked at sunset by a large group of Japanese torpedo planes. In this brief but spectacular action the USS CHICAGO was torpedoed and the LOUISVILLE took her in tow until relieved by a fleet tug the following morning. The mission was accomplished, but only by the superb seamanship and excellent ship handling displayed by Captain (now Rear Admiral) C. T. Joy. Early in February the force operated eastward of Guadalcanal until the Island was entirely secured.

In the latter part of March, the ship sailed to Wellington, New Zealand for minor repairs and a pleasant period of relaxation, and upon returning to Efate in April, took departure for Pearl Harbor, arriving there on April 14, 1943. Adak Island in the Aleutians was the next stop where the ship became part of Task Force 16 operating under Vice Admiral Kincaid. The next few months saw a covering operation for the assault and occupation of Attu Island in May and several pre-invasion bombardments of Kiska Island in July. Captain A. S. Wotherspoon, USN, succeeded Captain Joy as Commanding Officer in August. Following the capture of Kiska in August and several weeks of convoy duty, the LOUISVILLE then steamed toward San Fran-

cisco, California, and a scheduled overhaul at Mare Island Navy Yard commencing in October, 1943. Captain S. H. Hurt, USN, relieved Captain Wotherspoon as Commanding Officer in December 1943.

In January 1944, the LOUISVILLE became the flagship of Rear Admiral (now Vice Admiral) J. B. Oldendorf, who was to command the great naval gunfire support group through all of the epic amphibious schedule ahead. The ship then joined the forces which were to invade the Marshall Islands in the first great offensive action of 1944. Following shore bombardment of Wotje Island on the 29th of January, the LOUISVILLE turned her guns on Roi and Namur Islands of the Kwajalein Atoll with devastating results. In the latter part of February, the ship led the gunfire group into action against Eniwetok Atoll, aiding the successful capture of that important point. Then in March with amphibious operations temporarily at a standstill, the LOUISVILLE joined the fast carrier force which was becoming a tremendously powerful striking force. With Task Force 58 the ship took part in the strikes against the Palau Islands in March and, later in April, in supporting operations of the Hollandia and New Guinea landings. On the return cruise from Hollandia, the ship steamed off Truk Island while the second big raid on Truk was unleashed and then led the way in a successful shore bombardment of Sawatan Island.

June 1944, saw the major campaign against the Marianas where the LOUISVILLE was the leading unit of the short bombardment group at Saipan and Tinian. Admiral J. B. Oldendorf made the statement that he believed the LOUISVILLE had set an all time gunnery record by being on the firing line night and day during the first eleven days of the Saipan operation with the time necessary for replenishment of ammunition being the only break. When the island of Tinian had been secured, the ship moved south to assist in bringing the assault on Guam to an earlier close, and on the first day there, the LOUISVILLE successfully made a daring rescue on enemy-held coastline of four natives who were sought by the Japs. The ship spent a total of two months in the waters adjacent to Saipan, Tinian, and Guam during this operation, and then moved to the rear area to await the commencement of the assault on Pelelieu Island of the Palau Group in September. The ship bombarded enemy positions on Pelelieu with telling effect and also delivered diversionary bombardment on the Arakabesan Island which is adjacent to the main island of Babelthaup.

The long awaited invasion of the Philippines began in October and on the 17th, the LOUISVILLE once again led the parade, this time into Leyte Gulf for the amphibious operations on Leyte. Then, on the 27th of October, came the momentous battle of the Surigao Straits with the LOUISVILLE and Admiral Oldendorf once again making a brilliant record. In this spectacular night engagement the LOUISVILLE fired the first shot from a heavy ship and more main battery rounds than the total of all the six battleships added together. At the end of October, when the operation was practically completed, the ship once again joined up with the carrier force becoming a unit of Task Group 38.3 and participated in one of the strikes against Manila and other points on Luzon in the early part of November.

On 8 December, 1944, Admiral Oldendorf hauled down his flag and the LOUISVILLE embarked Rear Admiral T. E. Chandler as Commander Cruiser Division Four. On 15 December, Captain R. L. Hicks, USN, relieved Captain S. H. Hurt as Commanding Officer of the LOUISVILLE, becoming the twelfth Captain to command her. Christmas Day found the ship and three other cruisers making a high speed run from Leyte Gulf to the area off Mindoro Island in a vain effort to contact enemy surface units which had bombarded our positions on Mindoro the previous night. The group returned, however, to Leyte Gulf to await the invasion of Luzon in January.

The LOUISVILLE'S guns would have been blasting enemy positions on Luzon once again as she steamed forth with other units of the fire support group en route to Lingayen Gulf Area, but heavy air attacks were encountered on the way and the LOUISVILLE was hit twice by enemy suicide planes and forced to retire from active participation in the operation. However, the ship bombarded the beaches for a day and destroyed several enemy planes before the severity of the damage made a withdrawal necessary. Rear Admiral Chandler was one of the many who lost his life in this operation. The LOUISVILLE returned to the rear area and finally, being ordered to Mare Island Navy Yard, California, for repairs, but the "Lady Lou", as she is often called by her crew, would soon be back for the final push on the enemy's stronghold.

After being hit on the 5th and 6th of January, 1945, the LOUISVILLE proceeded in convoy to Pearl Harbor, thence to Mare Island Navy Yard to undergo battle damage repairs. These repairs were completed on 13 April, and the ship proceeded to San Diego for refresher training under Commander Fleet Operation Training and Task Group 14.1, a shakedown group. Then followed intensive shakedown and refresher training until 29 April, when the LOUISVILLE got underway for Pearl Harbor, T. H., arriving on 5 May.

On May 8, officers and men of the Commander Third Fleet (Admiral Halsey) staff were received aboard, and on the 10th sailed for Guam. The ship was then assigned to Task Force 51, Vice Admiral Turner, USN, commanding.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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The LOUISVILLE was ordered to the Okinawa Jima area, and assigned to Task Force 54, composed of fire support ships. Then followed a period during which the ship did fire support work, providing various types of fire as needed by the ground forces in their relentless push deeper into enemy soil. The all-out effort of the enemy's depleting air force made the work much more difficult, and the alertness and precision required by the LOUISVILLE'S officers and men was a fitting test of the stout heart and the strong spirit of the "Lady Lou".

The duty continued until the evening of July 5, when a kamikaze came in low from over the island and crashed into the ship in the vicinity of No. 1 stack. The next couple of days were taken with repairing the damage as much as possible and cutting away the wreckage. In spite of damage, the LOUISVILLE returned to her position in the firing line on the ninth and stayed until the 14th when she made preparations for returning to the Navy Yard, Pearl Harbor for battle damage repairs. Under way on the 15th, she arrived in Pearl on the 28th, and underwent repairs to No. 1 stack, including alterations and installations, until 4 August when the availability period expired.

Two four-day periods of gunnery and shakedown in Hawaiian training areas began on the 7th of August, and ended on the 15th when the ship was recalled to Pearl Harbor with the cessation of hostilities. But there was no layover—the next day the ship sailed for Guam and there embarked Rear Admiral T. G. W. Settle, USN and staff. The LOUISVILLE had taken a telling part in the winning of a hard fought war; now she was to take her part in the settling of the peace.

On 27 August, as part of Task Group 10.3, the ship sailed for Okinawa Jima. There she laid over for several days, taking only a short two day cruise to the eastward to avoid a northbound typhoon. Once under way again on the 7th of September, the ship headed for Dairen, Manchuria, there to supervise the evacuation of about 1,700 Allied ex-prisoners-of-war. When this task was completed, the LOUISVILLE headed for Jinsen, Korea, but en route orders were changed to Tsingtao, China. In a ceremony aboard the USS HERNDON, in Tsingtao, Rear Admiral Settle accepted the surrender of Japanese Vice Admiral Kaneko of all the Japanese vessels in the area, 2 DD's (KURI & HASU), 3 SC's, 1 DMS and various merchant vessels. This was the afternoon of 16 September. During the next six days, these prizes were completely demilitarized, then sailed to Jinson, Korea, under the supervision of the LOUISVILLE and some of her officers and men aboard the Japanese vessels as prize crews.

Once in Jinsen, this mission was completed and further orders were received to proceed to Chefoo, China, arriving there 29 September, to show the flag and to await further developments in that area.

On 13 October, Rear Admiral T. G. W. Settle and staff left the LOUISVILLE and embarked in the SAN FRANCISCO, where Rear Admiral Settle hoisted his flag as Commander Cruiser Division Six, and as Commander Task Group 71.6.

During the LOUISVILLE'S stay in Chefoo, the Chinese Commissioner of Foreign Affairs, concurrently Mayor of Chefoo, presented Admiral Settle and the ship with a large quantity of brandy, vermouth, beer and fresh provisions including 200 live chickens, as a gift from the Chinese Communist Army, in control of that section of China.

On 14 October, 1945, the LOUISVILLE sailed for Jinsen, Korea, arriving there 15 October, to replenish supplies at that Base, and to proceed on her next assignment as part of the Yellow Sea Force, operating under Commander Task Group 71.6.

On 17 June, 1946, the USS LOUISVILLE was placed out of commission in reserve at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

STATISTICS

Standard Displacement: 9,200 tons.
Length Overall: 600 ft. 3 in.
Beam: 65 ft. 3 in.
Speed: 32.7 knots.
Complement: 1200 plus.
Armament: Nine 8 inch 55 caliber guns, eight 5 inch 25 caliber AA guns, plus 20 mm and 40 mm guns.

U. S. S. MASSACHUSETTS (BB 59)

Tossing the first sixteen-inch shell to open the European offensive and firing the last big naval missile in the Pacific campaign—these are the outstanding mileposts in the 39-month fighting career of the USS MASSACHUSETTS.

When peace came to the Pacific, Big Mamie (the affectionate title conferred by her crew) could look back on a long and action-packed career. From the time of commissioning, 12 May 1943, until the end of the war in mid-August, 1945, she had logged over 225,000 miles, or nine times around the world, her journeying taking her all the way from Casablanca to Tokyo and the China Coast. She had taken part in some thirty-five engagements with the enemy. She had sunk or damaged five ships, including the mighty Vichy-French battleship, JEAN BART.

She had taken part in nine bombardments of enemy territory, three of which were directed at the Japanese home islands. She had destroyed at least eighteen Jap aircraft. Her scout Kingfisher planes had rescued seven aviators downed by enemy fire, often performing the rescues within sight and range of enemy guns. Thanks to her firepower and speed, she had lent invaluable support to the fast carrier task forces as they carried out their mission of crippling Japanese airpower and seizing control of Pacific skies.

MASSACHUSETTS was a workhorse of the fleet. She was always "in there pitching" when there was fighting to be done. She went about her tasks without ostentation and with a high degree of competence and skill gained from long hours of practice and of combat.

BB 59 was not the first American man-o-war to bear the illustrious name of MASSACHUSETTS, however. Back in 1845 the Boston Navy Yards built a 765-ton, screw steamer for the Army to be used as a troop ship. This four-gun ship was the first MASSACHUSETTS. In 1847 she was returned to the Navy and served off the coast of California during the Mexican War. She was attached to the Pacific Squadron in 1849, and operated in Puget Sound from 1856 to 1857 suppressing hostile Indians. In 1862, the ship was converted into a storeship at the Navy Yard, Mare Island, and under the name of FARRALLONES, remained in the Naval service until after the Civil war, when in 1867 she was sold at San Francisco, California.

MASSACHUSETTS No. 2 was a supply ship of 1,055 tons, carrying five guns. She was employed in the Gulf of Mexico and between New York and the vessels of the North and South Atlantic Squadrons, transporting men, mail and supplies to the Squadrons and returning with the same type of cargo. Her duty was most arduous and during the war she captured, or participated in the capture, of more than a score of prizes. She was sold 1 October 1867.

Toward the end of 1863 it was decided to build four double-turreted monitors to be heavily armed, and armored, and adapted to ocean cruising. One of these was to be the third MASSACHUSETTS. However, these warships were never completed and, after standing in the docks for several years, the MASSACHUSETTS was broken up in 1884.

The fourth MASSACHUSETTS was built by William Cramp and Sons, Philadelphia, for a contract price of $3,063,000. The keel was laid 22 June 1891, and the vessel was launched 10 June 1893. Her dimensions were: length, 348 feet; beam, 69 feet three inches; draft 24

feet; and she was of 10,288 tons displacement. At the date of her commissioning, 10 June 1898, she carried a main battery of four 13-inch rifles, eight 8-inchers, four 6-inchers, six torpedo tubes, and a secondary battery of 20 6-pounders and six one-pounders plus four gatling guns.

After commissioning, MASSACHUSETTS No. 4 was assigned to the North Atlantic Squadron. Her actions for the next ten years consisted in fleet maneuvers, gunnery exercises, and participation in patriotic celebrations. The only exception to this was in the summer of 1898 when she participated in the blockades off Cuba.

From 1906 to 1910, she was at the New York Navy Yard, during the summer months of 1910 and 1911 she went to Europe with the Naval Academy Practice Group and in 1912 she cruised along the Atlantic seaboard with the midshipmen. At the outbreak of World War I, she was used as a practice and training ship, her name changed to Coast Battleship No. 2. On 22 November, 1920, she was stricken from the Navy lists and turned over to the Army as a target vessel. The hulk of the old MASSACHUSETTS still remains on Pensacola Bar, where it was used as a target for the Army, after unsuccessful attempts to sell it.

Fifth ship to bear the name MASSACHUSETTS (BB 54) was authorized by Congress and her contracts awarded to the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation on 15 November 1919. Under the terms of the Washington Treaty for Limitation of Naval Armament, the MASSACHUSETTS was scrapped and the material disposed of as scrap.

The name, then, of MASSACHUSETTS, is an old and illustrious one. Worthy of the state from which it is taken, worthy of the ship for which it is a name.

Big Mamie's keel was laid 20 July 1939. The long backbone was laid with all naval tradition and observance of superstitions. . . . Then the ship began to take form. Those were the days when shipbuilding was still an art, and master craftsmen poured more than steel and rivets into the masterful lines of the battleship. For two years and two months, artisans labored on the dreadnaught and finally the 704-foot seagoing city was ready for launching on September 23, 1941—a few scant months before the attack on Pearl Harbor.

On the morning of the 23rd, Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox spoke briefly and then Mrs. Charles Francis Adams, wife of the former Secretary of the Navy, swung the gaily-beribboned bottle of champagne across the proud prow of the MASSACHUSETTS, officially christening her. Slowly, among cheers and the music of a band, the great ship slid down the ways into the Fore River, adding to the list of illustrious ships that first made their debut in those waters.

Again, the Big Mamie was covered with myriads of workmen who riveted, welded, wired and the hundreds of other operations which go to build a monarch of the seas. Huge cranes swung over the ship and gently lowered the huge sixteen-inch rifles which were to make Big Mamie one of the most devastatingly potent examples of modern naval firepower on the high seas. When finished, the menacing snouts of nine 16-inchers and twenty five-inch guns bristled from turrets of the MASSACHUSETTS, and 40mm and 20mm AA batteries balanced her armament. Two seaplanes rode aft on the catapult and the massive lines of the firecontrol tower and superstructure added to the ponderous, but sleek, lines of this super-dreadnought. Any sailor might well have been proud to stand with the lady of his choosing and say—"That's MY ship!"

On the morning of 12 May 1942, there was an unusual bustle aboard the Mighty Mamie. In the crew compartments, men were up before reveille, the heads were crowded three deep with men shaving, and the slap of shining rags against shoes was audible from one bulkhead to another. Topside, Captain Francis E. M. Whiting ran over his speech for the last time, and the First Lieutenant checked over his cleaning detail lists.

The sun had scarcely started its climb toward the zenith, when hundreds of men could be seen polishing the brightwork; giving the deck that final "sweepdown, fore and aft"; signs such as "head secured until after ceremony" went up and there was much industry from stem to stern. Big Mamie was getting her final manicuring before joining the U. S. Fleet. At the last moment all hands got into immaculate white uniforms, and smoked the last cigarette and then proceeded to Quarters. There the customary words were spoken at this customary ceremony; Captain Whiting successfully made his acceptance speech; the colors flowed red, white and blue from the main truck, and the United States Battleship MASSACHUSETTS formally became a component of the greatest naval force in history.

The men, most of whom were new recruits, were soon to learn, however, that immaculate uniforms and ceremonies did not comprise the main part of a sailor's life. For immediately after commissioning, the oil-fired burners roared with new life, the turbines powered the screws with approximately 115,000 horsepower and the MASSACHUSETTS slipped down to the mouth of the Fore River, out into the Bay of Boston, the Bay of Massachusetts, and into the waters of the Atlantic. From Boston to Hampton Roads to Casco Bay, all in a period of two months, the MASSACHUSETTS trained. Her guns fired many salvos, her men answered many calls to general quarters, and her machinery received a grueling test. And she came through. Came through with colors flying—back to Boston, where slight repairs were made. The crew, now trained and ready for battle, were anxious for action. They did not have to wait long.

In early November of 1942, MASSACHUSETTS

moved, along with an armada, across the Atlantic toward the French Morocco port of Casablanca. It was the signal that the United States, having marshalled its strength, was now ready to throw its might across the seas.

In the early morning hours on 8 November, MASSACHUSETTS, as flag ship of the huge task force of American warships and transports moved in. At Casablanca, Vichy-French fleet units, including the huge new battleship, JEAN BART, were at anchor in the harbor. Slowly, the American force approached, under orders not to fire unless resistance developed.

Suddenly, starshells lit the sky and the JEAN BART fired four salvos. Rear Admiral R. C. Giffen, Commander of the American force, gave the agreed signal for action—"Play Ball!"—and Big Mamie found herself in one of the hottest battles she was ever to fight.

Salvo after salvo poured from her main battery in reply to fire from the French ship as well as that coming from the shore batteries. Her Kingfisher planes, sent up to spot the fire for her main batteries, were attacked by enemy planes and Big Mamie's anti-aircraft batteries went into action. Shells were falling all about her as she was bracketed by fire from the direction of Casablanca. At length, the once proud JEAN BART was reported afire, and in a short time her guns were silenced as she lay at her berth—a blazing wreck.

Shore batteries continued to pound away and under cover of a smoke screen, enemy cruisers and destroyers got underway and attempted to sortie from the harbor. The battle roared to a new crescendo as enemy planes zoomed in for fresh attacks; and again Mamie's AA fire drove them off. A shell fired by one of the shore batteries struck the ship abreast one of the forward turrets; a small fire broke out in a lower compartment and was quickly extinguished. Mamie began to close the enemy ships and again was bracketed with heavy fire. She was hit a second time; the shell striking abreast the after turret.

Meanwhile, her accurate fire was taking a heavy toll; two enemy destroyers had been hit, one was sunk and the other down by the stern. Then one of her salvos struck another destroyer amidships and in less than a minute she went down.

Laying another smoke screen, the French ships tried to head back into port but were cut off by our cruisers and caught in a withering cross-fire. Another destroyer went to the bottom before the opposing ships succeeded in withdrawing to the protection of the shore batteries. A final salvo at the beach guns—and the battle was over. A battle in which the MASSACHUSETTS was credited with sinking the battleship JEAN BART and two destroyers and silencing the shore batteries. That night at colors, it was discovered that the ship's battle flag had received a shell hole. It was a fitting badge.

Big Mamie returned to the States and her battle-tested crew was granted leaves and liberties. Captain Whiting was promoted to Rear Admiral and relieved of command by Captain Robert Ogden Glover, USN.

Minor repairs completed and all hands back on the ship, MASSACHUSETTS stood out of Portland, Maine, 6 February, 1943, and sailed out of the frigid temperatures of the North Atlantic and down the eastern seaboard into the warmer climes of the B. W. I. area. She passed (with little room to spare) through the Panama Canal on 12 February and steamed on to Noumea, New Caledonia. Another period of intensive training and Big Mamie was ready to add her weight to the warfare in the Pacific which at that time was just beginning to emerge from the defensive stage to the "offensive-defensive" phase.

In April the MASSACHUSETTS pushed into the Coral Sea as a member of a task force group supporting operations against Russell Island. The following month she was back in the Coral Sea, again, this time covering operations against Munda, New Georgia, in the Solomon Islands. Her final operations in this area took place late in August and early in September when she supported action against Vella Lavella. There followed a lull during which the ship was based first at Efate in the New Hebrides Islands and later in the Fijis.

On 19 November she returned to the attack, accompanying a task force making air strikes on Makin in the Gilbert Islands. During the next five days she played a supporting role in the landing operations on Makin and Tarawa.

Thanksgiving evening saw the Big Mamie's first brush with Japanese aircraft; her guns opened up and splashed two enemy planes. That night and the next, the task force fought back repeated attacks by Jap torpedo planes in the Gilbert Island area.

For several days there was a respite. And then, on 8 December 1943—two years and a day after the attack on Pearl Harbor: FIRE!! The stupendous roar of the big guns shook the ship violently. Seconds after the first salvo, Japanese-held Nauru Island began to explode. American planes winged in to drop their bombs and in a short while Nauru was lost to sight in the blanket of smoke which plumed hundreds of feet into the sky. When Mamie left the scene, Nauru, once a formidable stronghold of the Jap, was no more. All that was left was a smoking, blackened stretch of South Pacific sand.

Meanwhile, the strength of the Pacific Fleet was rapidly being strengthened and by the first of 1944 the Navy was ready to begin its all-out offensive against the network of Japanese Island defenses, which had been heavily fortified in direct violation of treaty stipulations.

The first assault was against the Marshall Islands. On 29 January the MASSACHUSETTS was part of a

fast carrier task force which made initial strikes against Taroa and Maleolap Atolls. The following day, Mamie and other battleships moved in for bombardment of Kwajalein. There, some reply by the shore batteries was quickly silenced. A salvo from the Mamie struck an ammunition dump, causing a tremendous explosion which sent debris and smoke hurtling 5,000 feet into the air. The skipper of another ship promptly messaged—"You hit the jackpot that time!"

On 1 February, the MASSACHUSETTS covered landings on Kwajalein Atoll successfully, and several days later anchored at Majuro—the first pre-war Japanese territory to be occupied by American forces.

In mid-February the MASSACHUSETTS took part in the strife that partially avenged Pearl Harbor; a surprise air onslaught against the Japs' mighty Naval stronghold at Truk. A total of 209 Jap planes were destroyed both in the air and on the ground, and forty-one ships of various types were sunk or damaged. Lieutenant C. C. Ainsworth, USN, flying one of Mamie's Kingfishers made a daring rescue of a fighter pilot forced down in Truk Lagoon, for which he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Instead of the usual return to base for a second wind, the Fleet steamed swiftly to the west to launch air strikes against the Marianas. Despite the unexpectedness of the move, the force was detected by a Jap patrol plane, and on 21 and 22 February the MASSACHUSETTS helped repel repeated and persistent air attacks. This was the longest sustained air attack yet encountered, and all hands spent two days and nights at their battle stations. Some 135 Japanese planes were destroyed by U. S. planes which bombed and strafed Saipan, Ota, and Guam.

In the latter part of March, 1944, the Big Mamie took part in a raid deep in Japanese territory—the strike against the Palau fortress and Yap, Ulithi and Woleai Islands in the Western Carolines during which 160 Jap planes were destroyed and 29 ships sunk.

Captain T. D. Ruddock, who had replaced Captain Glover, was promoted to Rear Admiral and relieved by Captain William W. Warlic, USN.

The following month the Mamie made a journey far to the south to take part in covering the April 22nd invasion of Hollandia—a "leapfrog" amphibious attack which cut off 60,000 Jap troops in New Guinea. On the way back to the base, the force launched new air strikes against Truk, during which Lt. Ainsworth, piloting one of the Mamie's Kingfishers again rescued a downed pilot who was within range of shore batteries. As carriers were recovering aircraft after the second day's strike, a Jap plane sneaked in and dropped a wild bomb which fell in the water 1,000 yards off MASSACHUSETTS' port bow.

On May 1, 1944, Big Mamie's guns spoke loudly in the bombardment of Ponape Island.

Then—after fifteen months of the heat and monotony of Pacific duty, the MASSACHUSETTS at long last "shoved off for home". The celebration at Pearl Harbor of her second birthday was doubly enjoyed because the next port of call would be San Francisco! In Puget Sound, all previous records were smashed in getting rid of ammunition and by the next morning, the first leave parties were over the side.

Within two months later, the MASSACHUSETTS slid out of the Golden Gate and headed west. After a short stopover at Pearl Harbor, she dropped the hook in Eniwetok. Toward the close of the month she headed for the Palau area and en route took time out to cross the Equator and dish out proper punishment for a number of Pollywogs that had come aboard in the States.

This vital matter attended to, she supported air strikes against Palau and as the invasion of Peleliu commenced, the Fleet began launching the first of many air strikes against the Philippines—strikes which not only destroyed many aircraft, ships and ground facilities, but which also uncovered the weakness of Japanese air power in the area and led to a speed-up in the plans for invasion of the Islands.

The first strikes were made against Leyte, Cebu, Negros and Panay Islands. On 13 September, shortly after securing from a dawn alert, a Jap plane, identified as an "Oscar" flew through the formation. The MASSACHUSETTS and several other ships opened fire; the plane was splashed and the MASSY was given credit for the kill.

Then the Big Mamie accompanied the force northward on the 20th of September, and the war came back to Luzon and Manila—after a lapse of two and a half years. In a two day strike, U. S. carrier aircraft sank forty Jap ships and destroyed 375 Jap planes in the air and on the ground, many more being damaged.

Again on 10 October, the Japanese home islands in the Ryukyus archipelago felt the fury of air warfare as our planes swept over Okinawa and other islands of the group. From 12 October to 14 October the Big Mamie operated with the force that made air strikes against Formosa. She shot down two planes and effected another sea rescue during this operation.

Covering the invasion of Leyte, the force made new air strikes against the Philippines. Then, during the period from 22 October to 27 October the MASSACHUSETTS took part in one of the most decisive battles of the Pacific war—the second battle of the Philippine Sea, now officially termed the Battle for Leyte Gulf. The close of the battle found all three of the Japanese forces taking part in the encounter fleeing in defeat, the great majority of their ships having been sunk or seriously damaged.

After a brief period at the new repair base in Ulithi, the MASSACHUSETTS went back to the Philippines as

part of the force making new onslaughts against Japanese airpower. December 14 to 16 found the force making attacks on Manila and covering the invasion of Mindoro. It was during this time that the Big Mamie weathered one of the worst typhoons in Naval history.

At the start of the New Year, the MASSY was in waters off northern Luzon and Formosa while carrier planes made renewed strikes in the area. Then she swung south in the China Sea where air raids were made on shipping and airfields in the Saigon-Kamranh Bay area of Indo China and the Hong Kong, Swatow, and Amoy area of the China Coast. The operation, which had severed the Japs' lifeline with its southern empire, lasted until 23 January 1945 and was concluded with new air strikes against Formosa and Okinawa.

In mid-February, the MASSACHUSETTS took part in the operation that had been the goal of naval planning and strategy for many months—the first raids by carrier based planes on Tokyo. As our planes sowed destruction and ruin over the Japanese homeland, the MASSACHUSETTS was in the van of the supporting force, lying less than 70 miles from the coast of the main Jap island of Honshu and 117 miles from Tokyo.

Big Mamie's next operation was in support of air strikes against Chichi Jima and Iwo Jima. After another raid on Tokyo, the MASSACHUSETTS remained in the Iwo Jima area until 28 February, covering the landing operations.

Oftentimes the MASSY cruised in the forward area off Formosa, the Philippines and even Japan without seeing any signs of the enemy. This did not mean, however, that she relaxed. Then, as in battle, all personnel had to be alert, ready for any emergency. Going to General Quarters at all hours of the day and night. Watches and routine functions competed for the 24 hours in each day and the ship, a home for 2500 men, had to be kept in good repair . . . every gun and piece of equipment *had* to work.

Though operations grew longer and longer as the fleet found it expedient to continue the offensive, there were many times when fueling and replenishing were carried out in port. After thirty or forty days at sea, the ships retired to such Pacific ports as Eniwetok, Saipan, Ulithi and so on. The Big Mamie was in port for a total of only 70 days from the beginning of the Philippine operation, 30 August 1944 until the end of the war—almost a year later. Most of these days were spent in Ulithi Atoll which is a typical Pacific base . . . plenty of water surrounded by a circular formation of sandy, palm-topped islands. One of these dunes was designated as a recreation center where thousands upon thousands of liberty-famished officers and men were landed. Baseball diamonds, horseshoe pits, basketball courts, and swimming areas were provided for their amusement after which a limited amount of beer was available. The long boat trip to and from the recreation center (at times consuming more than two hours of the afternoon liberty period) plus the hot sun and crowded facilities made the excursion a tedious one. Yet those days in port were soon to be prized. Despite the job of replenishing—which kept a goodly portion of the crew busy 24 hours a day—and the poor nature of the recreation, there was less strain than while under way. Movies were held topside and there were less watches to stand.

March opened with a successful rescue by the Mamie's "Gooney Birds". The rescue—made possible through a message picked up by the communications plane—was accomplished despite adverse conditions of the worst kind.

On 17 March U. S. carriers were launching strikes against Kyushu. Early the next morning, a group of Tojo's lamplighters showed up and dropped a large pattern of flares. An enemy plane swooped in, all but taking off a yardarm as it roared by the Mamie at an extremely low altitude. This was the starting gun of a big day, with air attacks following throughout the day, that night and the next day. MASSACHUSETTS' guns splashed a "Nell" fifty yards off the bow of a carrier and then she knocked down two planes near another carrier. Her five-inchers then opened up on a plane which burst into flames 9,000 yards away.

Shortly after midnight, the "lamplighters" were back again with more flares. Later in the morning, a plane diving on a carrier was brought down by MASSY'S gunfire assisted by fighter planes.

Retiring from Kyushu, with speed slowed because of a damaged ship in the formation, a large Jap raid came in which was disposed of by fighter planes. While the Mamie was executing an emergency turn, a huge wave broke over the port catapult, damaging one of the Kingfishers beyond repair. Prior to this, the Kingfishers had made an air-sea rescue off Kyushu, the first mission flown by those planes in these waters.

The task force then turned its scathing attention to Okinawa, launching repeated air and bombardment attacks and shooting down three Jap aircraft.

On 7 April 1945, an enormous formation of some 380 Japanese planes clouded the sky above the task force. The majority of these planes were quickly annihilated by the carrier-dispatched aircraft and the rest were taken care of by the task force guns. After dispensing with the Nipponese planes, the U. S. airborne fighters attacked the big battleship YAMATO and accompanying ships, sinking or damaging the entire force. Until the end of the month, Mamie remained in support of the Okinawa operation, helping to repel the frequent air attacks.

Back in Ulithi, Captain Warlick, who had been promoted to Commodore, was relieved by Captain John R. Redman, USN. Celebrating her third birthday en route

back to the Okinawa area on 12 May, the officers and crew heard some phophetic words from the new skipper when he said: "The forces in the Philippines have about completed the mopping-up of the Jap forces there, and the Tenth Army on Okinawa has only the southern end of that island left to take. These bases will permit further operations which might well bring victory over Japan before the MASSACHUSETTS is four years old."

Striking at Kyushu, the Mamie underwent several air attacks in mid-May. On the fourteenth, her guns splashed two enemy planes.

The Japs were not the only opponent in the Pacific; the "stormy weather" frequently proved to be a difficult adversary. On 5 June, the Big Mamie weathered a typhoon—the third since coming to the Pacific.

A typhoon is the Pacific's version of a hurricane, cyclone, and tornado mixed into one raging, boiling manifestation of the elements. The first of these came as Mamie was riding at anchor in Ulithi in the early morning hours of 3 October, 1944. The entire task force hurriedly got under way and by the time it started through the channel, the visibility had dropped to zero. Radar, the magic eye of the fleet, was used to bring the ships safely out to the ocean where they had sea-room to battle the storm.

The next typhoon the MASSY encountered was one of the worst in Naval history. Its whirling seething mass struck while the task force was refueling off Luzon. Heavy seas and winds in advance of the major part of the storm forced discontinuation of the fueling operation. The next day—the 18th—the storm struck with all its fury. The screaming winds and mountainous seas damaged many ships and fires broke out on some of the carriers. Three destroyers, the SPENCE, HULL and MONOGHAN went down. Big Mamie, except for the loss of a seaplane, suffered only minor damages.

An equally vicious typhoon struck early in the summer of 1945, again interrupting a fueling operation. Many ships ran into difficulties; one cruiser lost her bow and another reported that her bow had been buckled by the mountainous waves. The pinnacle of the storm was reached in the early morning hours of June 5 when the estimated wind was over 100 knots. At 0700 the next morning Mamie passed through the eye of the storm, and though the wind dropped sharply, the waves became even more huge. Again Mamie came through with only minor damage, but with a Kingfisher damaged beyond repair.

On 10 June the MASSACHUSETTS bombarded Minami Daito Shima, firing both main and secondary batteries. Three days later she came to a new anchorage in San Pedro, Leyte Gulf.

On 1 July, Big Mamie proceeded to what was to be the final offensive action of the war—the Third Fleet's month and a half of operation in Japanese waters.

The Japs became aware on 10 July that a new fleet operation was in progress when carrier-based planes swept in, blasting air fields and installations in the Tokyo area. For two days Mamie supported carriers as their planes carried out assigned missions of destruction.

On 14 July, the planes struck again at the island of Honshu, this time farther north. Then, shortly after noon, watchers along the coast near Kamaishi—the Empire's largest iron and steel producing center—saw an imposing and portentous sight. A line of big, fast battleships, escorted by cruisers and destroyers, was moving swiftly in over the sunlit water. The U. S. Navy, after sweeping all opposition from the Pacific, had penetrated to the very shores of Japan. And Mamie was there.

She went in so close that it looked like her men could toss a heaving line over to the shore with no strain, and steamed nonchalantly about until the spotting planes could get into position. Then—Big Mamie and her sister ships opened fire and the war's first bombardment of the Japanese homeland was under way. The big shells crashed into blast furnaces, open hearth works, and factory buildings. Oil storage tanks were hit and billowed into smoke and flame. A railroad bridge suffered the same fate.

For an hour and a half, Mamie continued to pound, tossing projectiles into the target area. No Jap planes were sighted and there was not a single return from the shore batteries. When she withdrew, a huge column of smoke was rising to blend with the clouds over Kamaishi.

For the next two weeks, Mamie was with the carriers as they made continuous strikes, while other ships bombarded.

Then—on 29 July, Mamie went on to participate in the spectacular midnight bombardment of Hamamatsu, an industrial and railroad center. Her particular target was the Japanese Musical Instrument Center. (This attack on the factory should not be construed as an aversion of the MASSACHUSETTS to music, but arose from the fact that the manufacturers had been unwisely turning out aircraft propellers.) Admiral Halsey sent Mamie and her companions a "Well Done" and dubbed them the "Hammer Hamamatsu Club".

On 9 August, Mamie returned to Kamaishi and worked over what had been left after her first visit. There were some rumors that Mamie might be going home for a yard period, but what with the continued assaults by the Third Fleet, and the entry of Russia into the war, daily pasting by the Army B-29s and the horrendous tower of the atomic bomb—all this coupled with the imminent threat of invasion caused the Japs to throw in the sponge.

Peace did not come suddenly; its advent was very hesitant and fighting continued in many areas while messages flashed between the capitals of the warring

nations. Even as Admiral Halsey was broadcasting concerning the Japanese capitulation, carrier based fighter planes shot down four Jap aircraft approaching the formation.

But gradually the fighting died out, the Japs went to Manila to get word from General MacArthur concerning surrender procedures, and Mamie began dispatching landing forces. To most of her crew members, who had been with Mamie through all her struggles, her battles and her successes, the Dove of Peace began to take on a happy semblance to a "ruptured duck".

And so it was that on 1 September 1945, an exuberant crew hoisted a homeward bound pennant and the Big Mamie journeyed home. She arrived in Puget Sound on the morning of 13 September 1945.

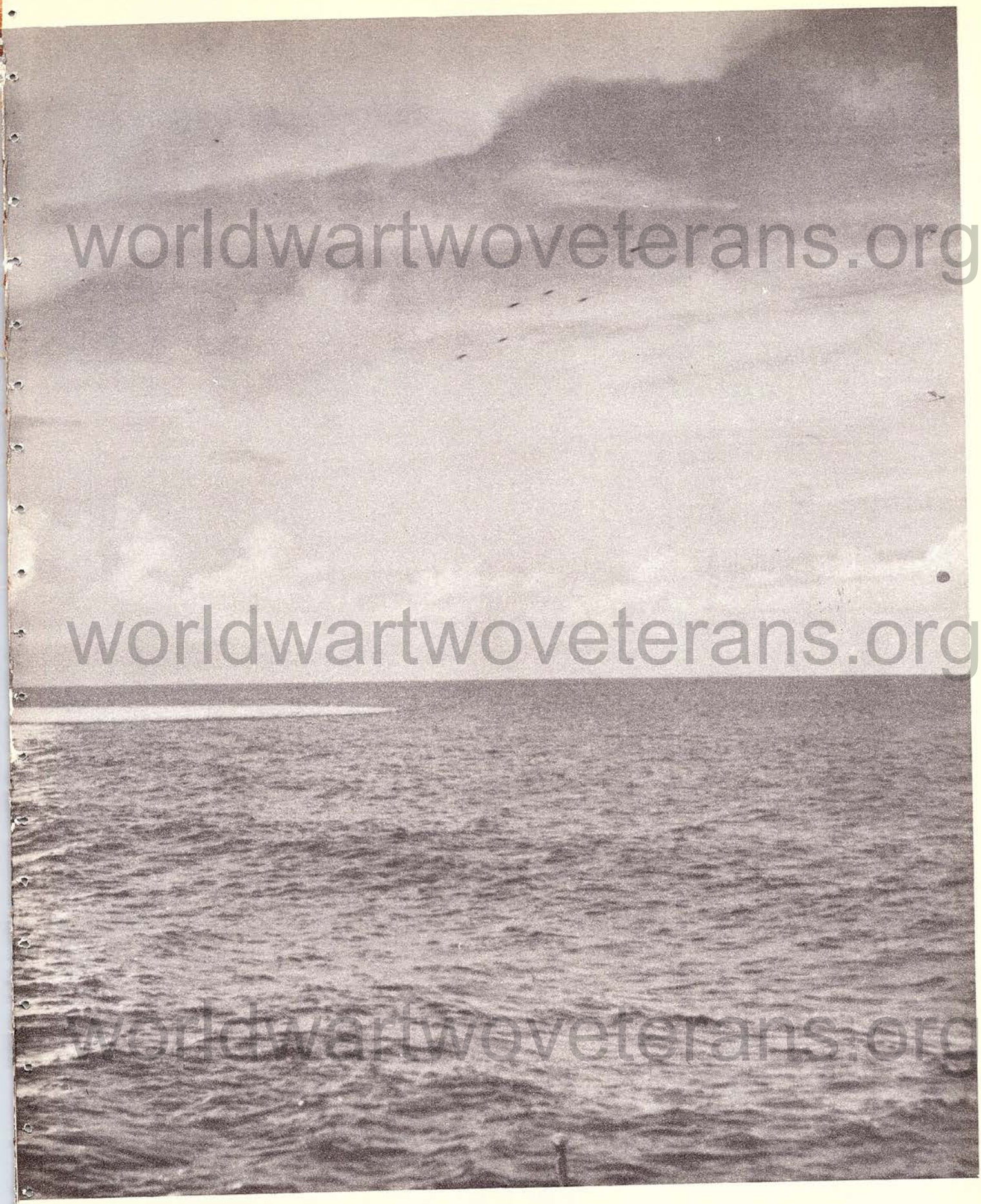
After leaving Puget Sound, MASSACHUSETTS sailed down the west coast and through the Panama Canal to Norfolk, Virginia, where she is at the time of this writing (9 April 1947) in service, in reserve.

Standard Displacement: 35,000 tons.
Length Overall: 680 feet.
Beam: 108 feet 2 inches.
Speed: 27 knots plus.
Complement: 2500 men.
Armament: Nine 16"/50 guns in main battery—Twenty 5"/38 caliber guns in secondary battery plus 20 and 40mm AA guns.

OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

COMPLEX DREADNAUGHT IS GREATEST FIGHTING MACHINE

THE MODERN BATTLESHIP is the most formidable fighting machine ever developed. The team of fast BB and carrier has reached a new peak in striking power. One of our Navy's mighty Iowa-class battleships, the USS MISSOURI, is shown as her 16-inch guns fire salvo from foward turrets. At upper right are six projectiles visible in flight.



U. S. S. NEW ORLEANS (CA 32)

Three ships of the United States Navy have borne the name of the city of New Orleans, Louisiana, although only two have reached commissioned status. The first, a wooden ship of the line of 2,805 tons was never commissioned, work having been suspended upon termination of the War of 1812. The second, a 3,430 ton cruiser, was purchased from the Brazilian Government and placed in commission on 18 March 1898. She served with distinction in the Spanish-American War and in World War I, remaining in commission until 1930.

The present USS NEW ORLEANS was built in the New York Navy Yard, Brooklyn, New York, under the terms of the Armament Limitation Conference of 1928, as a 10,000 ton cruiser. Her keel was laid on 14 March 1931 and she was launched on 12 April 1933. She was commissioned on 15 February at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, 1934.

She commenced an extensive shakedown cruise in May of that year, proceeding first to Stockholm, Sweden, where King Gustav was received with full honors. During her stay, she made a short cruise with King Gustav as her guest. Next ports of call were Copenhagen, Denmark, and Amsterdam, Holland. In the latter port, Queen Wilhelmina was the ship's guest. From Holland, the ship sailed to Portsmouth, England, and then back to the United States.

Arriving in July 1934, the NEW ORLEANS joined the HOUSTON, in which President Roosevelt was embarked, for a trip through the Panama Canal to Hawaii and the west coast of the United States. After this tour, she returned to her home yard for post-shakedown repairs.

The ship made her first trip to the city for which she is named in 1935. She was, of course, received with much ceremony, and the officers and crew feted in grand style. It was at this time that the ship was presented with a magnificent silver service, a piano, and the ship's bell from the previous NEW ORLEANS, into the metal of which are melted thousands of dimes donated by the people of New Orleans. Silent throughout the war, and painted over, the ship's bell nevertheless remained in its place of honor on the quarterdeck when so many other items were landed. It was struck again to announce to the ship the capitulation of the Japanese. With the paint removed, and once more polished, it is again striking the hours according to custom.

After her visit to New Orleans, the ship joined the fleet and operated as a fleet unit in the Pacific, during which time she revisited Hawaii, cruised to Alaska, and crossed the equator to Callao, Peru. For a short while in 1936, she returned to New York, and again joined the fleet in December 1936. Until 1939, nothing of note happened in the routine operations. During the 1939 fleet maneuvers in the Caribbean, however, the NEW ORLEANS was dispatched to chase off a Japanese tanker which was evidencing far too much interest in the maneuvers.

At the end of these exercises, the ship again visited her "home town." The stay in New Orleans was cut short, however, by the receipt of orders to return to the Pacific, where, in October, 1939, Pearl Harbor became her home port. She operated in the vicinity of the Hawaiian Islands until the outbreak of the war which found her alongside a dock in Pearl Harbor undergoing

repairs and upkeep. Since that time she has been active in the Pacific except for the periods of time required for upkeep and repairs to battle damage.

The NEW ORLEANS has participated in seventeen operations for which stars have been authorized:

Pearl Harbor	7 December 1941
Coral Sea	4-8 May 1942
Midway	3-6 June 1942
Guadalcanal-Tulagi Landings	7-9 August 1942
Capture and Defense of Guadalcanal	10-31 August 1942
Eastern Solomons	23-25 August 1942
Tassafaronga	30 November to 1 December 1942
Wake Island Raid	5-6 October 1943
Gilbert Islands Operation	13 November to 2 December 1943
Marshall Islands Operation	4 December 1943 to 8 February 1944
Asiatic-Pacific Raids—1944	
Truk Attack	16-17 February 1944
Marianas Attack	21-22 February 1944
Palau, Yap, Ulithi, Woleai Raids	30 March to 1 April 1944
Truk, Satawan, Ponape Raids	29 April to 1 May 1944
New Guinea Operation (capture and occupation of Hollandia)	21-28 April 1944
Marianas Operation	
Capture and Occupation of Saipan	14 June to 19 July 1944
Battle of the Philippine Sea	19-20 June 1944
Capture and Occupation of Tinian	20-21 July 1944
Capture and Occupation of Guam	22 July to 10 August 1944
Western Caroline Islands Operation	31 August to 8 September 1944
Volcano, Bonin, Yap Raids	
Capture and Occupation of Southern Palau Islands	8-18 September 1944
Leyte Operation	
Okinawa Attack	10 October 1944
Northern Luzon and Formosa Attacks	11-14 October 1944
Luzon Attacks	15 October to 16 December 1944
Battle for Leyte Gulf—Cape Engano	24-26 October 1944
Luzon Operation	12-18 December 1944
Mindoro Landings	23 April to 20 June 1945
Okinawa Operation	

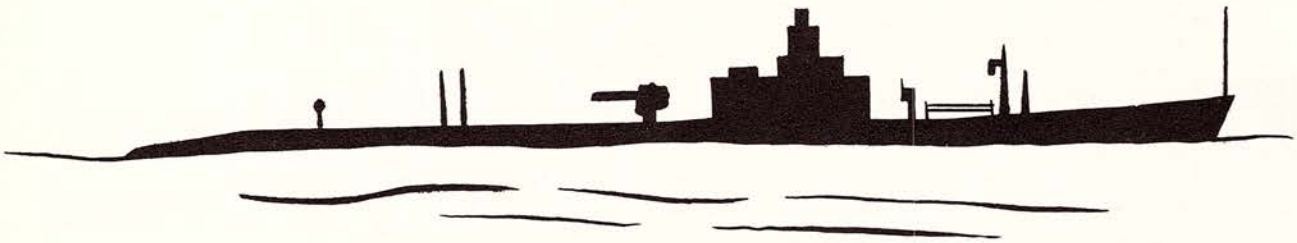
The NEW ORLEANS has been credited with having sunk one destroyer in the Battle of Tassafaronga and one merchant ship at Taroa Island, the latter on 30 January 1944. She has been credited with assisting in the sinking of six other ships—one destroyer and one merchant ship in the Battle of Tassafaronga, one light cruiser and one destroyer off Truk on 17 February 1944, and one converted carrier and one destroyer off Cape Engano on 25 October 1944. She is further credited with shooting down two enemy planes—one each on 4 December 1943 and on 19 June 1944—and with assisting in shooting down seven others—two each in the Kwajalein raid of 4 December 1943 and the Formosa raid of 13 October 1944, and three during the Battle of the Philippine Sea on 19 June 1944.

The NEW ORLEANS participated in the rescue of the survivors of the LEXINGTON, in the Battle of the Coral Sea, saving 43 officers and 537 enlisted men. Her aviators have on two occasions rescued downed carrier pilots.

Fourteen of the NEW ORLEANS' officers and the enlisted men have received medals—4 Navy Crosses, 15 Silver Stars, and 5 Air Medals. Several others have received commendations or Purple Hearts.

The ship has been damaged in combat five times. During the Pearl Harbor engagement, she suffered numerous shrapnel holes from near bomb misses. She was again the victim of near misses in the Coral Sea Battle, sustaining a few shrapnel holes. Damage incurred in the Battle of Tassafaronga from a torpedo hit laid the ship up for eight months. The entire bow was blown off as far back as the forward part of turret two and flooding extended aft to a point under the foremast. Eight officers and 170 enlisted men were killed in this engagement. During the Wake Island bombardment on 5 October 1943, her first engagement after Tassafaronga, the ship was damaged slightly by shrapnel from shellfire which resulted in slight flooding of one compartment and a few holes in the hangar. An enemy plane caused slight damage when it strafed the NEW ORLEANS on the night after the Kwajalein raid of 4 December 1943. Although the enemy made numerous near misses during the remainder of the war with shells and torpedoes, no further damage was sustained.

On 7 December 1941 the NEW ORLEANS was moored port side to, berth 16, Pearl Harbor Navy Yard, undergoing routine overhaul. When the attack came that morning she was without power and had much of her armament disassembled. Nevertheless, she successfully met with 5-inch, 1.1-inch and .50-caliber fire the attacks directed at her and as a result received only minor shrapnel damage from one near bomb miss. Thereafter the NEW ORLEANS spent several days getting ready for sea and then on 23 December, with Captain H. H. Good as Commander TF 13, she departed Pearl to convoy re-



U. S. S. SEADRAGON (SS 194)

RECOMMISSIONING PERIOD

The keel of the USS SEADRAGON was laid at the Electric Boat Company, Groton, Connecticut, on April 18, 1938. She was launched on April 11, 1939, and was christened the "SEADRAGON" by Mrs. J. O. Richardson, wife of Admiral James Otto Richardson, Commander-in-Chief of the United States Fleet.

The launching was highlighted by an unusual accident which prevented the SEADRAGON from sliding completely down the ways. Despite strenuous efforts on the part of the launching crew, it was not until eighteen days later, when a new cradle had been installed under her, that she gracefully completed her slide into the waters of the Thames.

She was commissioned at the United States Submarine Base, New London, Connecticut, on April 23, 1939, with Lieutenant John G. Johns, USN, as her first Commanding Officer. The other officers were: Lieutenant George M. Holley, Executive Officer; Lieutenant (jg) Frances W. Scanland, Engineering Officer; Lieutenant (jg) N. G. Ward, Torpedo Officer, and Lieutenant (jg) Charles S. Manning, Communications Officer.

PRE-WAR PERIOD

After commissioning the SEADRAGON made a shakedown cruise to several east coast ports including Annapolis, New Orleans, Coco Solo, Newport, and Portsmouth, N. H. During this time many wrinkles were ironed out and her officers and men began to function as a unit. Following a short refit period at the Submarine Yard, Portsmouth, she conducted torpedo trials at Newport, then proceeded to the west coast via Panama and joined the Fleet at San Diego, California. Departing there she proceeded to Manila, with a short stop at Pearl Harbor, and conducted extensive training in the Southwest Pacific as a part of Admiral Thomas C. Hart's Fleet. During this period Lieutenant Johns suffered a broken leg in an automobile accident and Lieutenant W. E. Ferrell assumed command. When the Japs made their fateful sneak attack on December 8th (Philippine time) the SEADRAGON was just starting an overhaul period at the Cavite Navy Yard.

During an air attack on the tenth of December a direct hit on the SEALION, which was moored alongside, completely demolished that vessel and seriously damaged the SEADRAGON. The communication officer was killed and several other men were wounded as shrapnel blew through the conning tower. Emergency repairs were effected, and leaving the Manila area just before Christmas, the SEADRAGON headed south for Surabaya,, N.E.I., with about twenty evacuees aboard. At Surabaya additional repairs were made and on the thirtieth of December 1941 the SEADRAGON set out on her first war patrol.

FIRST WAR PATROL: 30 December 1941 to 13 February 1942—46 days. Successful.

Area—South China Sea.

The patrol area was the South China Sea and those were exciting days. As effective as peacetime training may be, there are always many headaches and surprises in learning to fight by actual experience. The ocean was full of Japs and a total of 55 contacts were made. Attacks were made on eleven of these, firing a total of

nineteen torpedoes for only three hits. These three, however, bagged a 7000 and an 8000-ton freighters. One battle surface was made against a medium freighter with much personal satisfaction to all hands but very little damage to the Japs. It was during this patrol that Tokyo Rose described the rusty and red-lead-coated SEADRAGON as a pack of marauding red submarines. The "Red Pirates of the China Coast," as she called this group, was in reality only the SEADRAGON, her Skipper, "Pete" Farrell, roaming the China Sea with torpedoes blasting out of bow and stern tubes at the scurrying Jap merchantmen.

At the end of the patrol a stop was made at beleaguered Corrigedor to evacuate twenty or thirty passengers to the relative safety of Surabaya, and then the SEADRAGON proceeded to Freemantle, W. A.

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SECOND WAR PATROL: 18 March to 26 April 1942—31 days.

Commanding Officer—Lt. Comdr. W. E. Ferrell, USN. Unsuccessful.

Area—South China Sea.

Departed Freemantle, W.A. for patrol in the South China Sea, but before reaching the area were ordered to Cebu to pick up fuel and stores for Corregidor. The isolated stronghold at Corregidor was reached after evading many Jap destroyers only to find that Bataan had fallen and the situation had changed again. Twenty-one passengers, mostly communication personnel, were taken aboard and we headed south for Australia. Numerous contacts were made enroute many of them being Jap destroyers patrolling the various channels. With our evacuees on board the primary mission was not offensive combat and no successful attacks were made. Returned to Freemantle, W.A., for refit.

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THIRD WAR PATROL: 11 June to 2 August 1942—53 days.

Commanding Officer—Lt. Comdr. W. E. Ferrell, USN. Successful.

After being refitted, the SEADRAGON departed Freemantle and returned to her old stamping grounds in the South China Sea. This patrol was short, but sweet, resulting in a bag of two 7,000-ton, and one 4,100-ton Jap marus. Returned to Freemantle after 21 days in the area with another successful patrol under our belt.

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FOURTH WAR PATROL: 26 August to 20 October 1942—54 days.

Commanding Officer—Lt. Comdr. W. E. Ferrell, USN. Successful.

Area—South China Sea.

Departed Freemantle, W.A., for another patrol in the South China Sea. Five attacks were made which resulted in the sinking of two large freighters, one 7000 and one 5500 tons. An unsuccessful attack was made against a cruiser in a task force. It was during this patrol that our pharmacist's mate, W. P. Lipes, performed the now famous appendectomy on seaman first-class D. D. Rector while the boat was riding submerged at 120 feet. This was the first appendectomy ever performed on a submarine while on war patrol in enemy waters, and was conducted on the wardroom table with hurriedly instructed men and officers as assistants. There were a few days of anxious waiting following the operation, but the patient was up and about his duties in remarkably short time, and made several more war patrols.

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FIFTH WAR PATROL: 23 November 1942 to 7 January 1943—43 days.

Commanding Officer—Lt. Comdr. W. E. Ferrell, USN. Successful.

Area—East of New Britain in St. George Channel.

After the fourth patrol, passage was made from Freemantle, around the southern end of Australia, past Tasmania to Brisbane, Australia.

Departed Brisbane on November 23, 1943, and proceeded through the Coral Sea to the east of Rabaul and our patrol area in St. George's Channel, New Britain. During the time in this area there were many contacts, but the SEADRAGON was able to close only six of them for attack.

On these attacks nineteen torpedoes were fired for a total of only four hits. With these four, however, one I-Class submarine and a 6000-ton freighter were sunk, and a 4800-ton freighter was damaged. This damaged freighter was hit and began to settle by the stern, but her escort took her in tow and limped off toward Rabaul. Chase was not possible because the escort and tow would reach port before the SEADRAGON could overtake them.

An amazing total of 57 destroyers were sighted during this patrol, most of them in groups of two, three or four carrying supplies and troops to isolated Jap garrisons. All were making about twenty-five knots and only a few could be closed. A properly marked hospital ship was sighted on two occasions following the same track as the destroyers, presumably, but not assuredly, carrying out evacuation of wounded.

The sinking of the Japanese "I" class submarine as told by chief radioman Raymond Christian, who was aboard the SEADRAGON on all twelve of her war patrols and was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for the part he played in her success:

"On the night of 20 December 1942, while we were patrolling off Rabaul, a Japanese submarine fired two torpedoes at us. We saw them in time and were able to

avoid them, but it made the skipper mad. He figured that the Japs were lying just off the entrance to the harbor at night in hopes of ambushing us, then running into the harbor before dawn to charge their batteries. Well, the Captain decided, two can play that game as well as one, so we headed up the channel to the anti-submarine net. It seemed reasonable that any Japs entering or coming out of the harbor would have to surface to get by that net, we lay there submerged waiting to prove our point. Early on the morning of 22 December a Jap submarine surfaced in front of us just outside the net. It was the chance we had been waiting for. We fired three quick shots at him but they almost proved our downfall rather than our point. The first torpedo exploded prematurely just after leaving the tube. The concussion blew us to the surface, knocking everyone in the forward torpedo room off his feet and causing minor damage throughout the boat. This explosion caused the second torpedo to run wild and at the same time alerted the lookouts on the Jap boat. The Captain could see them through the periscope jabbering wildly and pointing in our direction, but before they could successfully maneuver out of position the third torpedo hit them in the stern with a blinding flash. Since I was acting as unofficial photographer for the SEADRAGON, the Captain called me to the conning tower to get a picture.

"I finished the picture as soon as possible and took a look through the periscope for myself. I don't think that I shall ever forget that sight. About 25 feet of his bow was sticking out of the water. It was pointing almost straight up in the air, and as I watched, it began to slide back slowly, gently, so that as it slid beneath the surface there was scarcely a ripple. It gave me a very strange feeling as I watched that sub sink. I couldn't help but think that it might very well have been us going down like that. There were no survivors."

After spending 28 days in the patrol area and expending all torpedoes, departed area for Pearl Harbor and then proceeded on to Mare Island, California for overhaul.

This patrol ended the first phase of the SEADRAGON's war record. In five patrols she had sunk 9 ships, including an I-class submarine, and had damaged one freighter a total of 58,000 tons sunk and damaged. The C.O. Lt. Comdr. W. E. Ferrell had received a Navy Cross and Silver Star Medal.

During the overhaul at Mare Island Lt. Comdr. R. L. Rutter, USN, assumed command and carried the SEADRAGON through her next four patrols during the time of our Navy's advance through the Marshalls, Carolines and on towards Saipan.

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SIX WAR PATROL: 9 May to 21 June 1943 — 42 days.

Commanding Officer: Lt. Comdr. R. L. Rutter, USN.
Not Successful.
Area: Truk, Ponape, Kwajalein Islands.

Departed Pearl Harbor on May 9, 1943, after returning from a three-month overhaul at Mare Island. Proceeded via Johnston Island to the Truk area. While in vicinity of Truk and other nearby islands three contacts were made. It was possible to attack only one of these. This was a lightly loaded freighter of 6900 tons. Four torpedoes were fired resulting in two hits, and she was last seen well down by the stern. Lacking positive proof of sinking, only credit for damaging was received. On one ocassion the O.O.D. saw a Jap submarine surface astern on parallel course—surprise! Jap dived—SEADRAGON dived. There was no further contact. A properly marked hospital ship was seen entering and leaving Truk.

After spending 28 days in the area, departed for Midway and arrived on 21 June 1943.

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SEVENTH WAR PATROL: 18 July to 3 August 1943 —44 days.

Commanding Officer: Lt. Comdr. R. L. Rutter, USN.
Successful.
Area: Wake and Marshall Islands.

Departed Pearl Harbor for Wake area. Made four attacks on convoys entering or leaving Wake, damaging a freighter each time and two on the last attack for a total of five medium size marus damaged. None were actually seen to sink and credit could not be claimed. (Details of this Patrol were not available.)

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EIGHTH WAR PATROL: 24 September to 5 November 1943—43 days.

Commanding Officer: Lt. Comdr. R. L. Rutter, USN.
Successful.
Area: Marshall Islands.

Departed Pearl Harbor on September 24, 1943, and proceeded to the Marshall Islands area via Johnston Island for fuel. Two ship contacts were made and a successful attack carried out against one of them. It was a large cargo passenger ship of about 8000 tons and after a long chase lasting 24 hours we finally reached firing position and sank her with two hits out of four torpedoes.

Conducted extensive reconnaisance of Kwajalein Islands without any ship contacts and departed for Pearl Harbor after spending 31 days in the area.

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NINTH WAR PATROL: 14 December 1943 to 30 January 1944—46 days.

Commanding Officer: Lt. Comdr. R. L. Rutter, USN.
Successful.
Area: North of Truk.

Departed Pearl Harbor for Truk with a stop at Johnston Island for fuel. In the area there were five contacts and attacks were made against two of them. The first was a night attack against a convoy and four torpedoes bagged a large 7000-ton freighter with three hits. The next episode was with a small fast task force which zigged at the last moment and left the SEADRAGON out in the cold.

On the second attack against a heavily escorted 3-ship convoy, hits were made in two of them. Left station and returned to Pearl Harbor after 30 days in area.

This 9th patrol ended Lt. Comdr. Rutter's tour of duty with the SEAGRAGON. The total for his four patrols was two ships sunk and eight damaged. He received a Silver Star Medal for 23,000 tons sunk and damaged on the 9th war patrol.

Lieutenant Commander J. H. Ashley then assumed command of the SEADRAGON and guided her through the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth patrols as the Navy rolled up the Philippines, the Bonins, and almost to the Empire. The enemy was desperate by this time. His merchant fleet was fast being depleted and Jap destroyers, instead of being terrors of the ocean, had become good targets for our sharp shooting submarine crews. The SEADRAGON patrolled the traffice lanes between Singapore and the Empire and sailed right up to Tokyo Bay. A periscope view of Fujiyama was quite a sight. Wolf packs had come into being and Jap convoys were completely annihilated by packs giving them a two or three-day working over.

TENTH WAR PATROL: 1 April to 25 May 1944—55 days.

Commanding Officer: Lt. Comdr. J. H. Ashley, USN. Successful.

Area: South of Jap mainland.

Departed Pearl Harbor 1 April via Johnston Island for fuel stop-over then on to patrol off the area mainland of southern Japan an attack against an escorted four-ship convoy netted one hit in a 3500-ton freighter. An unsuccessful attack was made against a large naval auxiliary followed several days later by an attack against two large freighters in which a three-torpedo spread got one hit. A small submarine was sighted early one morning but was to far away for an attack. A successful gun attack was made against a 150-ton armed trawler. No prisoners were taken but several souvenirs were salvaged before she sank.

29 days were spent in the area then the SEADRAGON departed for Pearl Harbor via Midway and on to the west coast for overhaul.

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ELEVENTH WAR PATROL: 23 September to 8 November 1944—46 days.

Commanding Officer: Lt. Comdr. J. H. Ashley Jr., USN. Successful.

Area: South of Formosa.

After a three-month overhaul at Mare Island, California, the SEADRAGON went to Pearl Harbor for training, then on to the area between Formosa, Hainan, and Luzon with a stop-over at Saipan for fuel. Between Saipan and the area, a tropical typhoon was encountered which tossed the SEADRAGON around quite a bit. This patrol was made in company with the SHARK and BLACKFISH as a wolf pack, and was the most successful in the SEADRAGON'S war career. In a night attack against a fast Jap task force, three hits were obtained in a carrier and one in a cruiser. Two days later an escorted, three-ship convoy was encountered. Two torpedoes sank the first freighter and she soon had company on the bottom as the next was hit by three and the third by two torpedoes, completely finishing off the convoy and leaving the Jap planes and Chidoris to escort each other. The SHARK was lost during this patrol (presumably by depth-charging).

Torpedoman First Class James Clair Evens, who made ten of the SEADRAGON'S twelve war patrols, describes the attack on a Japanese aircraft carrier on the night of 22 October 1944. Evens has been awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his work on this night and the attack two days later which resulted in the sinking of three Jap freighters.

"On the night of 22 0ctober 1944 we were cruising along north of Manila about half way across the South China Sea. We knew there was a big battle brewing south of us but everything had been quiet in our area for several days and we were afraid we were going to miss the fun. It was almost midnight when the nightly poker game in the crew's mess was interrupted by word coming down from the bridge that an enemy contact had been made. The Captain, Commander James Ashley Jr., called battle stations immediately and we went to our stations knowing by the extreme range at which contact had been made that it was something big. We didn't have long to wait. It was a pitch dark night, hot and muggy and as we sweated to get our tubes ready for firing we knew competition would be running high among the lookouts as they strained to catch the first glimpse of our target. We could hear reports over the speaker system as they first began to distinguish shapes and then gradually identified a carrier, three cruisers and several escorting destroyers. It was a fast task force heading south at a speed which gave us little time for meditation. Singling out the carrier the Captain passed the word to standby, waited for her to get into position and fired. We were heading away from them in the hopes of getting outside their screen of destroyers so that we might stay on the surface and watch the results

OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

TIN FISH FOR THE SHIPS OF NIPPON

A MAJOR PORTION OF LOSSES to Japanese shipping is directly attributable to U.S. submarines, which prowled up to the very shores of Japan itself. The Navy's "silent service" reached a peak of efficiency unequalled by that of any other power. Special qualifications were required of sub crews, to withstand the strain of undersea fighting and the loneliness of long patrols. The enlisted crewmen of a submarine shown above are relaxing in their bunks in the torpedo room.

but shortly after firing one of the lookouts spotted a destroyer bearing down on us about 1700 yards away and we were forced to go down.

Almost before the boat was completely submerged we heard the first explosion, then another and another, and finally a fourth. We surfaced about three quarters of an hour later but the sea was empty. There was no way of telling whether or not the carrier had sunk or what damage we had done, but it was a thrill to have hit them four times with four 'fish.'" (On the basis of technical data the SEADRAGON was given credit for getting three hits in the carrier and one in the cruiser. Naval Intelligence later learned through prisoner of war reports that a carrier had been sunk that night in that area, but no change has been made on the original assessment for the SEADRAGON.)

B-29 strikes on Tokyo were beginning and the SEADRAGON spent much time searching for downed aviators. Many times we watched the superforts roar overhead on the "Terror of Tokyo Raids" and many close ones were experienced when Jap planes came out pursuing the retiring mighty forts.

After spending 20 days in the area and expending all torpedoes we returned to Midway for refitting.

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TWELFTH WAR PATROL: 3 December 1944 to 2 February 1945—62 days.

Commanding Officer: Comdr. J. H. Ashley, USN.
Unsuccessful.

Area: Bonin Islands and Japanese Empire.

Departing from Midway, the SEADRAGON began a long, combination lifeguard and offensive patrol. Only one attack was made and that, against a small freighter, was unsuccessful. Many B-29's were observed passing over head on their way to Tokyo, Nagoya, Nagasaki, and other vital targets. Much time and fuel was expended searching for downed "Zoomies," but none were recovered. A total of 8100 miles were steamed in the area which should be something of a record. On New Year's Day the SEADRAGON made her 1000th dive with the same ease and speed that she made the 999 before and 520 afterwards.

After 39 days in the area, the SEADRAGON returned to Pearl Harbor stopping briefly at Guam on the way to take on much-needed fuel.

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This ended the war patrol life of the SEADRAGON, Comdr. Ashley's score for his three patrols was three ships sunk and four damaged. The damaged included a carrier and cruiser, bringing the total score for twelve patrols to 82,000 tons sunk and 90,000 tons damaged. The "Old Pirate" had really done her part and well deserved retirement to the training fleet.

The following awards were made to officers and men of the SEADRAGON:

Navy Cross

Lt. Comdr.
W. E. Ferrell, USN.

Comdr.
J. H. Ashley Jr., USN.

Silver Star

Lt. Comdr.
W. E. Ferrell, USN.

Lt. Comdr.
J. W. Reed, USN.

Lieut.
E. A. Hemley, USN.

Bronze Star

R. E. Christian, CRM, USN.
M. Donahue, CMoMM, USN.
J. C. Evens, TM 1/c, USNR.
H. Lick, Com, USNR.

LETTERS OF COMMENDATION
WITH RIBBON

Comdr. J. H. Ashley Jr., USNR.
A. J. Meyers, GM 1/c, USNR
L. S. Davis, CRT, USNR.
T. Collins TM 1/c, USNR.
R. E. Engstrom, MoMM 1/c, USNR.

POST-PATROL ACTIVITIES:

After her twelfth war patrol Lt. Comdr. L. L. Davis Jr. relieved Commander J. H. Ashley to pilot the SEADRAGON through the green pastures of a tame submarine's training activities. After a refit in Pearl Harbor two months were spent in Monterey, California, training Alameda aviators. In May we departed via Panama for New London but were delayed for one month at Guantanamo training destroyer and destroyer escort killer groups and Midshipmen. From there we reported to Fleet Sonar School at Key West for the months of August and September and finally to New London. Submarine students clambered over the SEADRAGON for a week, then the Board of Inspection and Survey took up most of our time until we departed for Providence, Rhode Island for Navy Day and Boston for decommissioning.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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Number of Patrol	Number and Type of Ships Sunk	Total Tonnage of Ships Sunk	Number and Type of Ships Damaged		Total Number Aviators Rescued
	1 AK	8000			*
1	1 AK	7000			
2					*
	1 AK	7000			
	1 AK	7000			
3	1 AK	4100			
	1 AK	7000			
4	1 AK	5500			
	1 AK	6000	1 AK	4800	
5	1 SS	1400			
6			1 AK	6860	
			1 AK	5000	
			1 AK	5000	
7			1 AK	5000	
			1 AK	4000	
			1 AK	3000	
8	1 APA	8154			
	1 AK	7379	1 AK	8469	
9			1 AK	7580	
	1 Trawler	150	1 AK	5000	
10			1 AK	3500	
	1 AK	5500	1 CV	28000	
	1 AK	4000	1 CL	4000	
11	1 AK	4000			
12					
Total for War	15	82183	13	90209	

NOTE: Three missions evacuating personnel from the Corregidor area were made during the first two patrols.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

U. S. S. SOUTH DAKOTA (BB 57)

USS SOUTH DAKOTA, known affectionately as "Battleship X" and "Sodak," was the third United States ship to be named in honor of the State of South Dakota. The first was an armed cruiser of 13,680 tons mounting 8-inch guns which was commissioned 1908. After a routine peacetime career in Atlantic and Pacific waters she was assigned to patrol off Brazil upon our entry into World War I. Later she was assigned duty convoying troops to France, and, after the Armistice, returning them to the United States. Designated Flagship of the Pacific Fleet in 1919, she resumed her peacetime duties, visiting many Pacific ports, including those in Japan, where she rendered assistance to the victims of the 1923 earthquake. Her name was changed to USS HURON, in 1920, to honor the South Dakota city of that name, as a new battleship was to be christened SOUTH DAKOTA. She was placed out of commission and sold in 1930.

The second SOUTH DAKOTA was to have been a battleship displacing 43,200 tons. Her keel was laid March 15, 1920, but she was scrapped when 38.5% complete in accordance with the Washington Treaty For Limitation of Naval Armament.

The present battleship was built by the New York Shipbuilding Corporation of Camden, New Jersey, and was launched on June 7, 1941, with Mrs. Harlan J. Bushfield, wife of the Governor of South Dakota, acting as sponsor. Commissioning Day was March 20, 1942, and her Commanding Officer, Captain (now Rear Admiral) Thomas L. Gatch, USN, read his orders to the crew. However it was not until June 4 that the ship was ready for her trial runs, due to the tremendous amount of work required on a battleship, particularly her turrets.

August 16 found her underway for her first war cruise, with the usual green crew, who were to find themselves quickly, and with her shakdown and training period behind her. It was three years to the day before Japan was to surrender.

She reported to Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, for duty on August 21 and was assigned as Flagship, Battleship Division Six, with Rear (now Vice) Admiral W. A. LEE, Jr., USN, flying his flag from the ship.

SOUTH DAKOTA's first fight was the Battle of Santa Cruz Island. At this time the fighting in the Solomons area was still bitter, with our forces moving slowly up the chain against heavy resistance and the Japanese desperately attempting to run reinforcements into their beleaguered and threatened garrisons, in spite of their losses in the battles of Savo Island, the Eastern Solomons and Cape Esperance. Our forces there were disposed in two groups; the one to which SOUTH DAKOTA was assigned remained in the area of Guadalcanal and was reinforced by surviving ships from the Battle of Cape Esperance while the other group steamed to northwest in an effort to engage enemy surface units known to be in the vicinity.

The enemy began a land assault at the mouth of the Natanikau River, on the northeast coast of Guadalcanal the night of October 23-24, 1942, and pressed it home forcibly in the face of heavy losses. On the 24th the assault was supported by naval gunfire and mounted in intensity. At the time the Japanese began to move their heavy fleet units toward Guadalcanal.

SOUTH DAKOTA was escorting the carrier ENTERPRISE, accompanied by two cruisers and a number of destroyers, steaming northwest at flank speed with USS HORNET (CV-8) and her escorting ships within supporting distance. Early on the morning of October 26 one of our patrol planes made contact with three enemy forces which included three carriers. With other patrol planes it attacked and one hit was scored on a carrier.

Our two carriers launched three attack waves, one from ENTERPRISE and two from HORNET. ENTERPRISE's planes ran into Japanese aircraft but managed to score bomb hits on a battleship. HORNET's first wave reported four 1000-pound bomb hits on a carrier while her second group successfully bombed two heavy cruisers and a destroyer.

Shortly after 1100, SOUTH DAKOTA's group was attacked by 24 dive bombers, three of which scored hits on ENTERPRISE. SOUTH DAKOTA opened up with 5-inch, 40-millimeter and 20-millimeter anti-aircraft guns, throwing up a deadly hail of metal, and cut figure eights and circles in evasive maneuvers. The destroyer SMITH was hit as was the light cruiser SAN JUAN, but both brought the resultant fires under control and made port under their own power. Twenty enemy planes went down.

Half an hour later torpedo planes and dive bombers were back, 40 of them, approaching in waves about a minute and a half apart. They were met by a wall of fire which splashed or turned back all but one. This plane, though damaged and nearly out of control, managed to release her torpedo before crashing into the sea. It passed over SOUTH DAKOTA and fell harmlessly into the water.

A third attack materialized shortly, with 24 planes centering their attention on SOUTH DAKOTA. Although the ship's guns were in action without a second's break, one plane pierced the hale of fire and released a bomb which landed squarely atop a main battery turret, damage was inconsequential considering the bomb was estimated to weigh 500 pounds, but Captain Gatch was painfully wounded.

The attacks ceased, but elsewhere HORNET had received her death blow. Although the heavy cruiser NORTHAMPTON attempted to take her in tow, subsequent attacks made it necessary to abandon and sink her. We also lost the destroyer PORTER which was torpedoed while rescuing downed flight personnel. Two enemy carriers were out of action and four air groups cut to pieces. SOUTH DAKOTA's firepower had been a decisive factor in saving the sorely-needed ENTERPRISE and her guns had set an unequalled record in knocking down 32 enemy planes out of the 180 attacking the ENTERPRISE and HORNET groups. For his actions during the engagement Captain Gatch was awarded the Navy Cross.

The situation in the Solomons was still precarious; the Japs were hard hit, but our losses had not been light. Our continuous hammering at Japanese positions and supply lines with planes, submarines and PT boats definitely showed the Japs that their positions were not being improved by sneaking in what supplies they could under cover of darkness. Consequently they began to concentrate surface forces in the Rabaul-Buin area, and, by November 12, were estimated to be ready with a force consisting of two carriers, four battleships, five heavy cruisers, 30 destroyers and sufficient transports for a large-scale invasion attempt. To oppose this force we had two new battleships, WASHINGTON and SOUTH DAKOTA, four heavy cruisers, three anti-aircraft light cruisers, and the light cruiser HELENA. ENTERPRISE, her battle damage yet unrepaired, was called up from Noumea with one elevator inoperative and two operating spasmodically—she was the only carrier available.

The enemy opened the ball on the 11th and 12th of November with bombing attacks on our off-shore shipping which was engaged in unloading sorely-needed supplies and personnel. Our attack transport ZEILIN was damaged and the heavy cruiser SAN FRANCISCO was hit by a suicide plane. During these actions scouts located strong enemy forces approaching Guadalcanal, disposed in three groups. To meet them went five cruisers and eight destroyers while the transports and cargo vessels withdrew escorted by three destroyers. The plan was for the cruiser task group to fight a delaying action to allow WASHINGTON, SOUTH DAKOTA and ENTERPRISE to come up and intercept the enemy landing forces.

Contact was made with the enemy off Lunga Point in the early-morning dark of November 12. In the ensuing fight the light cruiser ATLANTA was badly battered, with Rear Admiral Norman Scott killed aboard, and SAN FRANCISCO received heavy damage, but continued to fight. The heavy cruiser PORTLAND was holed, the light cruiser JUNEAU forced to leave the action, the destroyers LAFFEY and BARTON sunk and the destroyers STERETT, O'BANNON and CUSHING damaged, CUSHING to the extent that she later sank. Against this one enemy ship was seen to blow up under SAN FRANCISCO's fire, three other vessels were seen burning fiercely, and ATLANTA believed she sank a destroyer. An enemy battleship was also damaged; all this in 15 minutes.

Action continued with our three remaining destroyers pressing home gunfire and torpedo attacks. Hits were obtained on cruisers and destroyers and MONSSEN torpedoed the damaged Japanese battleship, but was so damaged herself that she had to be abandoned. At one stage of the engagement Japanese units were firing at each other, such was the darkness and confusion. Later, CUSHING and MONSSEN went down, the destroyer

AARON WARD was damaged and ATLANTA, burning and helpless, had to be sunk. At the close of the action our destroyer FLETCHER torpedoed a cruiser.

Next day JUNEAU was torpedoed and blew up with heavy loss of life. ENTERPRISE came within range and launched a flight which put three torpedoes into the Japanese battleship, probably the KIYEI, known to have been sunk in the action. Army planes from Guadalcanal finished her off that evening.

The morning of the 14th enemy ships began to shell Henderson Field but were attacked by PT boats, shore-based planes and planes from the ENTERPRISE which hit four enemy cruisers. Meanwhile the enemy transports were located and subjected to air attack; six were definitely sunk, two probably sunk, and four were damaged, two of which were beached.

At this point SOUTH DAKOTA, WASHINGTON, and ENTERPRISE came up to conduct a search for the bombardment force and the escaping transports. Contact was made shortly after midnight the night of November 14-15, north of Savo Island; the battleships then headed through "Windy Gulch," the strait between Savo and Guadalcanal Islands. Above the northern tip of Savo the ships turned west, cruising at slow speed. Above Savo surface lookouts spotted three enemy ships, probably cruisers, and SOUTH DAKOTA's 16-inch guns went into action concentrating on the last two ships of the column, while WASHINGTON opened fire on the first. The third and first ships disappeared and were probably sunk. At the same time four of our accompanying destroyers attacked an enemy force, which was also taken under fire by the secondary batteries of the battleships. In the next few minutes PRESTON and WALKE were sunk while GWIN and BENHAM were damaged to the extent that they were out of action, leaving the battleships unescorted.

However, it seems they didn't need escorts. New targets were located and the most powerful guns afloat opened on them. The battleship KIRISHIMA went down and the remaining ships concentrated fire on SOUTH DAKOTA. One of the Japs had turned on searchlights. The illuminating ship disappeared but not before the SOUTH DAKOTA was herself hit, and hit repeatedly. It is estimated that she took 42 major shells before the Japanese broke off the action and retired, with one of their ships blazing fiercely. Aboard SOUTH DAKOTA 30 men were killed and 60 wounded.

In this Battle of Guadalcanal, or Second Battle of Savo Island, our losses were heavy, but so were the enemy's and now they could less afford to take them than we. It remains a decisive victory for us as our positions in the Southern Solomons were never again seriously threatened and control of the sea and air passed to the United States.

SOUTH DAKOTA then returned to the New York Navy Yard for repairs that required 62 days and 108,961 man hours. In February, 1943, Captain Gatch was relieved by Commander A. E. Uehlinger, USN, the ship's Executive Officer, who was in turn relieved in March by Captain L. D. McCormick, USN. Captain Gatch was awarded a gold star in lieu of a second Navy Cross for the manner in which he fought his ship during the Battle of Guadalcanal, although still handicapped by a wound received a month previously in the Battle of Santa Cruz Island.

Throughout June and July of 1943, SOUTH DAKOTA was assigned Atlantic duty and operated in northern waters with the British Home Fleet. This duty took her across the Arctic Circle, into the North Sea, off Norway, Spitsenbergen, Iceland, Greenland and Bear Island.

This tour of duty complete, the ship returned to the Pacific and, in September, Captain McCormick was relieved by Captain Allen E. Smith, USN.

Her next action was connected with our occupation of the Gilbert Islands which were important to us as they lay close to Japanese bases in the Carolines and Marshalls and close enough to islands held by our forces to support action against them. SOUTH DAKOTA was attached to a carrier task force as a support ship, and on November 19, 1943, the force struck and neutralized airfields on the islands of Jaluit and Mille. Although SOUTH DAKOTA's 16-inch guns did not go into action, all aircraft on the islands were destroyed and runways on Mille rendered unserviceable to provide air resistance to our amphibious assaults on Makin and Tarawa. Enemy surface units did not appear.

November 26 found the ship providing support to another carrier group which furnished air cover over Makin while remaining within supporting range of Tarawa. Japanese Torpedo attacks materialized from the air on the nights of November 26, 27, and 28, but without success. Five of their planes were splashed by gunfire from our ships.

On the night of December 8-9 SOUTH DAKOTA was a unit of a task force under Rear Admiral W. A. Lee, Jr., which proceeded southward to Nauru Island, about 400 miles from the Gilbert group, and smashed shore installations, defenses and airfields there.

The Marshall Islands were next. When the carriers launched their air strikes directed at Kwajalein, Roi, Taroa, and Wotje on November 29 SOUTH DAKOTA was again carrying out the duties of support ship, remaining with the carriers in the event enemy surface craft should attempt to interfere with operations and to fight off possible air attacks. Next day her guns hammered Kwajalein where her huge shells pounded the airfields and obliterated shore defenses.

Japan's great naval base at Truk, in the Caroline Islands, was hit on February 17-18, 1944, by a task force under Admiral Raymond A. Spruance. Carriers launched

their strikes first with the battleships following, standing in close and working over the beach. This time SOUTH DAKOTA was a unit of Battleship Division Nine, under Vice Admiral O. M. Hustvedt, who flew his flag in the ship. Damages inflicted were satisfyingly heavy; apart from shore installations wrecked, many planes were shot down or destroyed and ships were sunk or damaged.

SOUTH DAKOTA celebrated George Washington's birthday with Vice Admiral Mitscher's task force enroute to attack Saipan and Tinian in the Marianas Islands. While at sea the Force was detected by scout planes and shortly afterwards was under heavy attack by Japanese bombers and torpedo planes. A number of enemy planes went down in flames against no losses to us and the Force proceeded to the launching area. The ensuing air strikes cost the enemy 115 plants shot down or destroyed on the ground and several ships sunk or damaged. At the same time Guam was hit by other units of the Force.

In March 1944, Captain Smith was relieved by Captain R. A. Riggs, USN.

Attached to a powerful force of the Fifth Fleet, under Admiral Spruance, SOUTH DAKOTA participated in a highly-successful series of strikes on the Western Caroline Islands. On March 30 and 31 carrier-based planes of the Force hit the Palau Group with most of their attention focused on shipping. When the smoke had cleared three destroyers, 17 freighters, five oilers and three small vessels were sunk with 17 other ships damaged. In addition, airfields were bombed and the surrounding waters mined. These strikes were a measure to neutralize enemy surface and air forces for our forthcoming landings at Hollandia and to prevent him from attacking our bases at Emirau and in the Admiralty Islands where invasion forces were being assembled. Part of the Force struck the islands of Yap and Ulithi on the 31st and the island of Woleai April 1. Our forces were under intermittent but persistent air attack on the last two days of March in the Palau area but the attacks were effectively met by air combat patrols. The three days cost the Japanese 114 planes shot down in combat and 46 burned on the ground. Our losses were 25 planes lost in combat.

Again under the command of Admiral Mitscher, SOUTH DAKOTA was a unit of the force supporting our landings at Hollandia, New Guinea, on April 22, 1944. This successful operation isolated 50,000 Japanese and hastened the allied domination of New Guinea. On D-day minus one, carrier strikes were launched against the airfields in the Aitape-Hollandia area and other fields were bombarded by cruisers and destroyers the night of April 21-22. Throughout the landings planes from the Fleet kept nearby enemy airfields out of commission and the assault proceeded without serious opposition.

Truk was revisited on April 29 by the Fast Carrier Force, with SOUTH DAKOTA still participating as a support ship. Airborne opposition was speedily overcome, but our planes encountered vigorous and accurate anti-aircraft fire, although attacks were pressed home successfully. Unusually heavy damage was done to buildings and shore installations, and 103 enemy planes were shot down or destroyed on the ground. Our ships were attacked from the air, but the approaching planes were splashed or turned back before any harm could be done. Next day the Force split into two groups, one striking Satawan Island, where the enemy was developing an air base, while the other, to which SOUTH DAKOTA was attached, conducted a surface bombardment of Ponape Island on May 1. No opposition was encountered except anti-aircraft fire against supporting planes and ground installations were wrecked at will by the 16-inch guns of the battleships.

Our next landings took place in the Marianas Islands, a chain extending 1350 miles southward from Tokyo. This chain was to give us bases from which we could cut the enemy lines of communication, control sea areas in the western Pacific and bomb the Japanese Home Islands. On June 11 SOUTH DAKOTA's task force commenced air strikes on the Islands to obtain control of the air by destroying the planes, ground facilities and shore batteries, and to destroy such shipping as it could locate.

On June 13 SOUTH DAKOTA, with other battleships, pounded gun emplacements and other shore targets for seven hours with their 16-inch main batteries and 5-inch secondary batteries. Under cover of this fire, mines were swept and the beaches cleared by underwater demolition teams. However, on the very day of the landings, Admiral Spruance received word that a powerful force of enemy surface craft was approaching the area to interfere with the landings and attempt to relieve their doomed garrisons. As he could not leave the landing protections unprotected, it was necessary that he retain his covering ships in the vicinity. On June 15, twelve Japanese fighters and torpedo bombers broke through the Combat Air Patrol and four were taken under fire by SOUTH DAKOTA. One was immediately shot down by her guns and the other 11 fell to guns of other ships before they were able to inflict any damage.

The ship then moved to the vicinity of Guam, where she engaged in patrolling on the lookout for any enemy ships which might have attempted to hinder Saipan occupation. The morning of June 19 a large force of enemy planes broke through the Combat Air Patrol again and attacked SOUTH DAKOTA's task group. In the ensuing fight twelve of them were splashed by guns of our surface units alone, but one managed to score a hit on SOUTH DAKOTA with a 500-pound bomb, although

the ship's gunfire sent her spinning into the sea. The bomb detonated on the first super-structure deck, where it blew a large hole, damaged wiring and piping, the Captain's quarters, the Admiral's quarters and the Ward-room, and put a 40-millimeter gun mount out of commission. Twenty-three men were killed instantly and 42 were wounded, four of whom subsequently died.

In spite of damage, SOUTH DAKOTA continued to fight at peak efficiency under constant air attack. She was hit at 1049, and five minutes later her 5-inch guns knocked two more attacking planes from the sky; and, an hour later, her machine guns sent another into the sea in a long, smoking dive. The day's work cost the enemy 402 planes shot down and is known throughout the Fleet as the "Marianas Turkey Shoot."

Consequent lack of air coverage caused the enemy fleet to retire and a force of our carriers, with SOUTH DAKOTA as a support ship, was immediately sent in pursuit. Contact was made on June 20 by planes at long range and two carriers, two destroyers and a tanker went to the bottom, while other units escaped with varying degrees of damage. This "Battle of the Philippine Sea" ended the threat of enemy interference with our operations in the Marianas.

SOUTH DAKOTA ended her part in the occupation of the Marianas when she supported the Carrier Task Force in strikes on Pagen Island and other smaller islands in the northern portion of the group on June 22 and 23. These raids completed, the ship returned to the United States and underwent a period of overhaul and repairs which lasted through July and August.

The ship returned to the Fleet in time for the strikes on Okinawa, which took place October 10, 1944, to destroy enemy air and surface strength which might be directed against our immediately forthcoming landings in the Philippines. Complete surprise was achieved and our carrier-based planes sank many ships and damaged airfields and other air facilities against negligible resistance.

SOUTH DAKOTA then steamed to the Philippine area with the task force, and on October 11 supported a fighter sweep over the northern end of Luzon, where the lightly garrisoned and undeveloped fields were completely disorganized. On October 12 and 13 the nearby island of Formosa was visited as a potential source of resistance against our Philippine operations. The attacks were expected and swarms of enemy planes rose to meet our aircraft. On October 12 and 13 aviation facilities, warehouses, wharves and coastal shipping were hit hard, in spite of the determined opposition. In addition to ground damages, the enemy lost 193 planes shot down and 123 destroyed on the ground. Upon retirement, the task force was under attack by planes from enemy bases on Formosa, Luzon and Okinawa, which resulted in damage to two of our cruisers.

October 20, 1944, our forces made their first landing in the Philippines—on the Island of Leyte. SOUTH DAKOTA operated off Leyte and Samar, protecting the landings, and, except for intermittent air attacks, saw no action on D-Day. However, the Japanese Fleet at last came in force, and between October 23 and 26 occurred the "Battle for Leyte Gulf," or the "Second Battle of the Philippine Sea." Three enemy forces were involved. The southern enemy force approached Leyte through Surigao Strait, between Leyte and Mindanao, to be annihilated by our fleet units under Vice Admiral Jesse B. Oldendorf, who executed what is perfection in naval tactics—the time-honored maneuver of "crossing the 'T.'" As the Japanese ships steamed through the strait in column, our ships, also in column, steamed across the bow of the leading enemy ship, bringing to bear all turrets of our main batteries, while only the forward turrets of the first enemy ships could bear on our force. That day, October 24, the enemy lost two battleships and three destroyers before he could open fire; another ship, a cruiser, was caught next day and sunk by our planes as, damaged, she attempted to limp home. In addition, the southern force had suffered two cruisers sunk and one damaged the 23rd, when our submarines DARTER and DACE first located the force and attacked it.

The enemy central force headed for San Bernardino Strait, between Leyte and Samar. As it proceeded eastward it was met on October 24 by our planes, which sank the battleship MUSASHI, a cruiser and a destroyer, and damaged other units, including the battleship YAMATO. In the face of these losses the enemy pushed through the Strait and attacked our carriers, which made a running fight of it, as they were unsupported. Our forces fought desperately with planes, guns and torpedoes in an attempt to divert the enemy ships from the carriers. Action was finally broken off, but not before we had lost the destroyers HOEL and JOHNSTON, the destroyer escort ROBERTS and the escort carrier GAMBIER BAY to enemy gunfire, while four other carriers were damaged. Next day dive bombers sank the escort carrier SAINT LO. Our planes sank two enemy heavy cruisers and a destroyer, and pursuing planes sank another crippled destroyer and badly damaged others.

Meanwhile, the task group to which the SOUTH DAKOTA was attached had been sent to intercept the enemy northern force, reported off northern Luzon. While searching it was heavily attacked by land-based enemy planes and, although 110 were shot down, our carrier PRINCETON was so badly damaged by bombs that it had to be sunk by our own ships, so close to the SOUTH DAKOTA that photographs were taken of the stricken carrier from SOUTH DAKOTA's deck. On the 25th, contact was made with the enemy by planes off Cape Engano, the northernmost tip of Luzon, which

succeeded in sinking four carriers, a light cruiser and a destroyer, and in damaging others.

Early on the morning of the 25th a group of fast battleships and carriers, including SOUTH DAKOTA, was despatched to aid our carriers off Samar, where they were being attacked by the enemy central force, which had then passed through San Bernardino Strait. SOUTH DAKOTA did not arrive in time for surface action, but carrier planes scored many hits on the retiring enemy ships, including battleships. None could positively be identified as sunk with the exception of a straggling destroyer or cruiser which was sunk by surface units.

In November, 1944, Captain Riggs was detached and the ship's Executive Officer, Commander C. F. Stillman, USN, assumed temporary command. Commander Stillman was relieved the next month, when Captain C. B. Momsen arrived to take command.

On December 7, SOUTH DAKOTA supported the second landing on Leyte, at Ormoc Bay on the west coast of the island. This operation cut off the island from reinforcements from outside and divided the defending garrison. December 15, the ship participated in the landings on the island of Mindoro, which were to pave the way for the final assault on Luzon by providing a base from which we could make Manila extremely unhealthy for the enemy.

Meanwhile, mid-December strikes by planes of the Third Fleet on Manila Bay had led the enemy to believe that our Luzon landings would take place in that area. Taking advantage of this, we landed in the Lingayen Gulf area of northwestern Luzon on January 9, 1945, the same area selected by the Japanese as the site of their initial landings in the Philippines three years before.

In support of the Lingayen Gulf operation, SOUTH DAKOTA was attached to the Fast Carrier Force of the Third Fleet in a thrust into the South China Sea. The primary mission was a search for such major units of the Japanese Fleet as might have been encountered. When none was found the Task Force struck the China Coast between Saigon and Camranh Bay on January 12. Here considerable destruction of shipping was achieved, with one enemy convoy obliterated and two other badly battered. When our carrier planes returned to roost, 41 enemy ships were sunk, 31 were damaged, 112 planes were destroyed, and docks, storage and air facilities were hard hit. Formosa came in for a share of bombing on January 15, with additional fighter sweeps to nearby bases. Due to unfavorable weather conditions, however, destruction of shipping was sharply curtailed. On January 16, Hong Kong, Canton and Hainan, all on the China Coast, were visited, with resultant damage to shipping and shore installations, which included heavy damage to ships and prevented the Japanese from using the bases hit to support their resistance to our Luzon landings. Formosa and the Okinawa area were hit on January 21 and 22, with more heavy damage that contributed materially to the diminishing air resistance encountered by our assault forces on Luzon.

With the Philippines well in hand, our attention turned to the tiny island of Iwo Jima, soon to be marked as the site of what is probably the bloodiest assault in history. The island was being used as a radar station from which the enemy could pick up our Marianas-based bombers en route to Japan and warn Tokyo, and as an airfield from which fighter planes could rise and attack them. We also needed the island as an emergency landing field for planes which had been crippled or were out of fuel.

Now part of the Fifth Fleet Fast Carrier Force, SOUTH DAKOTA participated in the operations against Tokyo which began February 16 and were designed to paralyze shipping and air facilities there and to forcibly demonstrate to the Japanese people that the trend of the war was decidedly unfavorable to them. These attacks were the first against the enemy capital since General James H. Doolittle's raid of April, 1942.

The launching area off the coast of Japan was approached under weather conditions so adverse that complete surprise was achieved and enemy air resistance was severely hampered. Attacks were vigorously carried out for two days which cost the enemy 322 aircraft shot down, with 177 more destroyed on the ground, and attendant shipping losses of an escort carrier, nine coastal vessels, a destroyer, a destroyer escort and a cargo ship, while crushing damages were inflicted on ground installations. February 17 the Task Force returned to Iwo Jima to cover the landings and on February 19 our marines went ashore.

The Task Force returned to Tokyo on February 25 and the following day struck the island of Hachijo. Weather conditions were bad, but 158 enemy planes went down, as did five small coastal vessels. Ground installations, which included the aircraft plants at Ota and Koizumi, again came in for their share of damage.

With the invasion of Okinawa in prospect, the Task Force obtained photographic reconnaissance of the area on March 1. During this operation one of the SOUTH DAKOTA's seaplanes made a landing to rescue a downed fighter pilot near the island.

SOUTH DAKOTA sortied from Ulithi with the Fifth Fleet's Fast Carrier Force on March 14, and on March 18 and 19 supported air strikes against the airfields of Kyushu, the southernmost Japanese home island. These strikes were planned to eliminate resistance from the air to our occupation of Okinawa, and fleet units in the harbors of Kobe and Kure, on southern Honshu, were attacked for much the same reasons. March 19 the carrier FRANKLIN was badly damaged by bomb hits and the Force retired southward, protecting the crippled ship under constant air attack. The

Force made port safely and the cost to the enemy was 528 planes, 16 surface vessels damaged and ground installations wrecked. As a result the enemy was unable to muster effective resistance to the assault until a week after the initial landings.

SOUTH DAKOTA smashed coastal installations on Okinawa with her 16-inch guns on March 24 in a successful diversionary action to conceal the actual location of the beaches selected as the invasion site.

The Task Force proceeded northward and, on April 7, attacked a strong enemy task force which was steaming towards Okinawa without air coverage in an attempt to disrupt our landings there. In spite of heavy weather the Japanese battleship YAMATO, the cruiser YAHAGI and four destroyers were sunk and other units badly damaged.

For another week the Carrier Task Force underwent the full fury of the kamikaze or suicide-plane menace. Then, on April 15, launched a surprise strike at airfields in southern Kyushu in an attempt to end these attacks. Numerous fires were started, 51 planes were destroyed on the ground, and 29 resisting planes were shot down. With a major air attack materializing, Kyushu was attacked again the next day. This time 54 planes were burned on the ground and 17 were shot down.

SOUTH DAKOTA's next action was a bombardment of the southeastern coast of Okinawa, which coincided with the all-out offensive of the Tenth Army ashore. Again a feint landing was made to appear authentic and military installations ashore were smashed. All fighting was then taking place under vicious air attacks, heavily supported by suicide planes, which caused costly damage to our surface units.

Wear and tear of months of ceaseless operation caused SOUTH DAKOTA to retire to Guam for repairs, which lasted until late in June, when the ship returned to take part in the final operation of the war—the attacks on the home islands of July and August, 1945.

Captain Momsen was detached in July and again Commander Stillman assumed command until he was relieved in August by Captain Emmet P. Forrestel, USN.

After a replenishment period in Leyte Gulf with the Fast Carrier Force, now a tremendous mass of sea power, steamed northward to commence the pre-invasion attacks on the Japanese homeland. No attempt was made to conceal the presence of the Force, as it was hoped the Japanese fleet would venture out and complete its destruction. On July 10 heavy damage was inflicted in the Tokyo area and 72 planes were destroyed. Hokkaido and Honshu were hit July 14-15, with emphasis on water transportation between the two islands; on this day the SOUTH DAKOTA's big guns went into action against the city of Kamaishi, damaging steel mills and oil facilities there. This was the first time major-caliber shells were fired on the homeland. July 29 and 30 Hamamatsu, on the east coast of southern Honshu, was bombarded with devastating effect and Kamaishi was smashed again on August 10, after operations had been suspended temporarily by a typhoon. Air strikes continued until the long-awaited "cease fire" came through on August 15. Japan was through.

August 27 found the ship at anchor in Tokyo Bay, awaiting the surrender ceremonies. Admiral Chester W. Nimitz broke his flag on SOUTH DAKOTA August 29 and on September 2 final surrender of all Japanese forces was negotiated aboard the battleship MISSOURI.

SOUTH DAKOTA left Japanese waters on September 20 for Okinawa, the first leg of her journey homeward. Embarking passengers there, she proceeded to Pearl Harbor and from there to San Francisco. October 29 she left for San Pedro, after participating in the Navy Day celebration, where Captain Forrestel was promoted to Rear Admiral and relieved by Captain Carlton R. Todd, USN. January 3, 1946, found the ship under way for the Philadelphia Navy Yard, via the Panama Canal, for overhaul.

In June, 1946, SOUTH DAKOTA was attached to the Atlantic Fleet, 16th Fleet (Inactive) and scheduled to be placed in a preservation status September, 1946, in commission.

Throughout her active war career SOUTH DAKOTA acquired 15 battle stars, shot down 64 planes, participated in nine shore bombardments, and steamed 246,970 miles.

STATISTICS

Length Over All—680 feet.
Beam—108 feet.
Standard Displacement—35,000 tons.
Speed—27 knots.
Complement—Excess of 2,500.
Armament—Nine 16-inch, 45-caliber guns; sixteen 5-inch, 38-caliber, dual-purpose guns; seventeen 40-millimeter AA quad mounts (68 guns) and a large number of 20-millimeter AA guns.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

U. S. S. TENNESSEE (BB43)

PART I

FROM COMMISSIONING TO PEARL HARBOR

(June 3, 1920, to December 7, 1941)

The fifth United States Naval vessel to bear the name, the USS TENNESSEE (BB-43) was commissioned June 3, 1920, at the New York Navy Yard, where she was built. She was sponsored by Mrs. Horace Gayden, daughter of Governor Roberts of Tennessee, and Captain Richard H. Leigh, USN, assumed command.

The first TENNESSEE was a side-wheel steamer, taken from the Confederate States Government at New Orleans in 1862. Recommissioned a United States Ship, she was assigned to the Federal blockade of Confederate ports on the Gulf of Mexico.

A Confederate ram, taken by Union forces at Mobile Bay, was the second TENNESSEE. She likewise was commissioned a United States vessel, and participated in the blockade of the Gulf ports. The third TENNESSEE was a steam sloop and the fourth an armored cruiser which was dispatched to Europe in 1914 to aid American citizens stranded there by the outbreak of hostilities. In 1916 her name was changed to USS MEMPHIS, to permit the present TENNESSEE to be christened.

A unit of the CALIFORNIA class, TENNESSEE had, at the time of commissioning, over-all length of 624 feet, beam of 97 feet 6 inches, and displacement of 32,300 tons. She mounted twelve 14-inch, 50-caliber guns, twelve 5-inch, 51-caliber guns, and two submerged torpedo tubes. Her anti-aircraft armament consisted only of four 3-inch guns; this was to undergo radical change before she engaged the Japanese Fleet off the Philippine Islands in 1944. Turbo-electrically propelled and one of the first warships to use oil as fuel, she was capable of cruising at 21 knots.

To man the TENNESSEE, the Navy carried out a novel recruiting program, procuring nearly all the enlisted personnel from the State of Tennessee. "A gun's crew from each town" was the slogan adopted.

At sea too late for World War I, the TENNESSEE fitted out in New York and made her shakedown cruise off the Atlantic Coast, with a stop at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and departed New York, May 31, 1921, for the West Coast to join the Pacific Fleet.

TENNESSEE, under Captain Luke McNamee, USN, made the Fleet's highest score in gunnery for the years 1923-1924 and won the Efficiency Pennant for the highest combined score in gunnery and engineering in 1924.

In April, 1925, TENNESSEE departed San Francisco for Hawaii, where she took part in the joint Army-Navy maneuvers to test the defense of the Territory. From these she proceeded to Australia and New Zealand, returning to the Pacific Coast in September, 1925, where she was stationed until April, 1927, when she took a three months' cruise in Hawaiian waters.

Passing through the Panama Canal in March, 1930, TENNESSEE sailed through Cuban waters and on to New York, where she remained until May 19, 1930, when she again returned to the West Coast. The following June she left for the Hawaiian area and remained this time for 19 months.

Returning to the West Coast in February, 1932, she was stationed there until October, 1934, then made an-

other transit of the Panama Canal, and after a few months on the Atlantic Coast returned to Hawaii, where she remained until late 1938.

There followed a year spent both in the Atlantic and Pacific home waters, then Hawaii again, where the morning of December 7, 1941, found her tied up in "Battleship Row," off Ford Island, in Pearl Harbor, T. H.

PART II

PEARL HARBOR TO SURRENDER OF JAPAN

(December 7, 1941, to August 14, 1945)

(Note: The following account of the activities of the USS TENNESSEE in the war against the Japanese in the Pacific was prepared aboard the battleship and was submitted by Captain John B. Heffernan, USN, on September 7, 1945, the day he was relieved of command.)

This is the story of Battleship Number 43 of the United States Navy, the USS TENNESSEE, during the war against the Japanese in the Pacific.

The real history of the Tennessee will never be told. It is the history of the officers and men who fought the ship. They were every American—a butcher who studied electricity and kept complicated gunnery control equipment in finest condition, a Chicago lawyer who was commissioned and served as tactical officer in Combat Information Center, and a quartermaster who had edited a small-town newspaper before the war. The history is theirs.

In climates so hot that every shred was wet with perspiration, they wrestled with heavy supplies and loaded ammunition between air attacks. They faced the sleet in the North when the night watches could see the sun of the long summer days of the Aleutians. They slept crowded in uncomfortable compartments, taking baths out of buckets and standing in line for everything from razor blades to chow. They fought their war.

The seamen, the captains, gunner's mates and fire controlmen, old bosun's mates and watertenders, green reserve ensigns—these were the TENNESSEE. Her story is the story of her men.

PEARL HARBOR

On the morning of the seventh of December in 1941, the USS TENNESSEE was in battleship row at Ford Island in the center of Pearl Harbor. The United States was at peace, and the ship was following its Sunday routine. It would have been a quiet day—divine services on the quarterdeck and rest for the crew. Japanese bombs rained instead.

The first word of war was war itself. The battleships were a prime target for the attacking planes, and the TENNESSEE, carrying the flag of Rear Admiral Bagley, USN, Commander of Battleship Division Two, was one of America's finest battleships. Immediately the guns were firing. Without regard for stations, stations were manned. An officer from the main battery was loading a 3-inch gun, while the little 50-caliber machine guns were spouting streams of bullets skyward, manned by men from the "black gang" down below.

The men were defending their ship. Five Japanese planes attacking the TENNESSEE were shot down by her guns; but there were far more than five, and the bombs came. One burst on the left gun of Turret Number Two. Another pierced the top on Number Three. The metal decks were white-hot from the burning oil on the water; and the TENNESSEE, lodged between other vessels, churned the water with her propellers to keep the flames away.

Pearl Harbor was in ruins. The greatest part of the American fleet was disabled. The war with Imperial Japan had begun in a defeat achieved through treachery. The TENNESSEE was holding services for her dead.

The TENNESSEE was, however, far more fortunate than most of the ships at Pearl that day. Able to proceed under her own power, she steamed to Bremerton, Wash., late in December, 1941, for immediate repairs. She became an important unit in Task Force One; and during the Battle of the Coral Sea, the Battle of Midway, and the Invasion of the Solomons, the TENNESSEE interposed and protected the Hawaiian Islands against possible attacks from the Southwest. Captain Charles E. Reordan, USN, who had taken command December 21, 1940, was Commanding Officer during most of this period. After the Battle of Midway, on June 20, 1942, Captain Reordan was relieved of command by Captain Robert S. Haggart, USN.

When the landings had been successfully effected at Guadalcanal, the TENNESSEE returned to the States, and in September, 1942, at Puget Sound Navy Yard, began the major modernization which fitted her for the operations which secured the final surrender of Japan.

CONVERSION

The nine-month period from September, 1942, to May, 1943, was a rebirth for Battleship 43, for almost a new ship emerged. Off with the old cage masts and the double stacks. With amazing speed the workmen fashioned a new foremast, a new mainmast, a new stack. Only a trained eye could distinguish the super-structure from that of the newest battleships.

A battleship's reason for being is to destroy the enemy with her big guns. Then new equipment to control and aim these guns. Rangefinders to follow enemy movements unerringly and make compensations for everything from the speed of the wind to the wear of the guns. New instruments to permit accurate fire, no

matter how badly the ship rolled and pitched. Radar to give the precise location of the enemy under any conditions of visibility. And for the air defense, sixteen 5-inch guns with the finest modern controlling equipment and 40- and 20-millimeter guns on the topside decks in every available spot.

Meanwhile, the officers and men to fight the ship were coming in. Consisting almost entirely of reserves, they plunged into the work. Learning the equipment, evolving the proper procedures, they were ready as the ship was ready when the TENNESSEE put to sea again in May of 1943.

THE NORTH

Over two months of fog, sleet, and bitter cold was ahead for the TENNESSEE when she steamed along the northern route to Adak in the Aleutians, a forsaken chain of barren islands stretching between Siberia and Alaska. When the ship entered Adak in June, 1943, Rear Admiral Howard F. Kingman, USN, broke his flag aboard the TENNESSEE as Commander of Battleship Division Two, and once again the TENNESSEE was the flagship.

Then came the patrols. Seemingly endless days and nights of steaming in unbroken fog and rain, watching for the Japanese, hoping to find them. In August, on the 2nd and 15th, Kiska Island was bombarded and on the 15th was seized by our troops without opposition.

Attu had been won previously, and the mission in the North was now accomplished. Not only had further operations by the enemy's reaching to Alaska been prevented; but our forces had taken Attu and Kiska, and the path was securely blocked. The TENNESSEE turned south, and in September, 1943, the crew swarmed ashore in San Francisco.

A PATH ACROSS THE PACIFIC

The history of the TENNESSEE in the final two years of the war is the story of the Navy's march through the Central Pacific to the doorstep of the home islands of Japan. The path across the Pacific was a series of amphibious operations, each of which seized an important base for future campaigns.

The importance of the job of destroying island defenses can hardly be over-estimated. There were heavy artillery installations, pillboxes, blockhouses, machine-gun concentrations, and every conceivable type of cave and dugout. The destruction of these meant lives—the lives of the soldiers and Marines who would be lost unless the way were paved for them before they began the trip in the small landing craft of the assault waves. Developing new gunnery procedures, training crews to the absolute limit, studying all information on every objective, the TENNESSEE was one of the most outstanding of the ships which made the chain of landings possible.

TARAWA

The initial step was Tarawa Atoll in the Gilbert Islands. On the 20th of November, 1943, the TENNESSEE opened fire on little Betio Island and during the day wiped out a major caliber gun which was firing on our forces. The landings on Tarawa were bloody. The Marines Corps had to take the island. They took it. They always do. But there had been mistakes — too many installations had been left standing; wrecks offshore had not been destroyed. These errors were never repeated.

On the 22nd a submarine was driven to the surface by a depth charge attack, and the TENNESSEE's five-inch guns scored numerous hits before a destroyer finished the job by ramming the crippled sub. When the TENNESSEE left the area, Tarawa was an American Atoll.

THE MARSHALLS

The Marshall Islands came next. With Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal aboard, the TENNESSEE steamed for Kwajalein after intensive rehearsals at San Clemente Island, off the coast of California. On the 31st of January, 1944, the bombardment of the two islands of Roi and Namur began. Fire was more deliberate than previously. Individual targets were carefully selected and destroyed. When the troops landed there was only meager resistance, and it was reported that the Japanese had been so beaten and dazed by the withering preparatory fire that they were unable to marshal the little equipment which remained for their use.

Almost immediately the TENNESSEE was firing again. After a quick reloading of ammunition and supplies, the ship proceeded to Eniwetok, still further west on the road to Tokyo. The entrance employed was a narrow channel between two enemy-held islands; and the TENNESSEE, watching carefully for any activity, led the heavy ships into the lagoon. She proceeded to Engebi in the North of the Atoll, bombarded on the 17th of February, and covered a highly successful landing by the Marines on the following day.

The job at Engebi was finished. The TENNESSEE crossed to Parry Island at the entrance, and under Captain R. S. Haggart, USN, anchored 850 yards offshore to deliver her fire. Using the 14-inch, the 5-inch, and even the 40-millimeter, the TENNESSEE stripped the island of everything from blockhouses and guns to the palm trees. On the 22nd, Parry Island became an American base, and the TENNESSEE steamed south of the Equator to Efate, in the New Hebrides Islands.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

STRADDLED AT NEW IRELAND

General Douglas MacArthur had a landing planned on Emirau in the Admiralty Islands and wanted a bombardment of Kavieng, New Ireland, to divert the enemy from his beach head. The Navy knew the ships for the job. In company with several other battleships, the TENNESSEE pelted Kavieng on the morning of the 20th of March. The ship was straddled twice by an enemy shore battery, but there were no casualties. Admiral Halsey radioed, "Congratulations on your effective plastering of Kavieng," and the TENNESSEE turned eastward to prepare for the largest amphibious operation up to that time.

Captain Andrew D. Mayer, USN, had been aboard during the Kavieng strike, and on March 25, 1944, he relieved Captain Haggart as Commanding Officer. Captain Mayer was to lead the TENNESSEE first in the campaigns in the Marianas Islands.

Steaming from Pearl Harbor, with a brief stop at Kwajalein, the TENNESSEE arrived at Saipan Island in the early morning of the 14th of June. The ship had been assigned an excellent firing mission on the right flank of the landing beaches, where, on Agingan Point, strong gun positions were located. Throughout the morning the TENNESSEE gave its area the famed treatment so effectively that in documents captured later the Japanese attributed a major share of the reason for the failure of their defenses to the immediate destruction of the Agingan Point batteries by Naval gunfire.

That afternoon, remembering the lesson of Tarawa, the TENNESSEE steamed southward along the landing beaches, shelling small craft grounded near the shore. With every battery, even the 20-millimeter this time, the TENNESSEE ravaged the area, destroying the guns, the ammunition and the prepared defenses.

On the 15th the landing was made, and from her special position the TENNESSEE prevented the flank fire which could have enfiladed the landing area with prohibitive loss of life to our forces in the assault waves. That morning, after the landing had been effected, the TENNESSEE was working close ashore in narrow Saipan Channel, between Saipan and Tinian Islands, watching for any indication of enemy activity on Saipan. The main and secondary batteries were firing, when three carefully camouflaged 6-inch guns on Tinian opened on the TENNESSEE. The first salvo was over, the second short; but the third found its target. Alert spotters saw the flashes and before another salvo could be fired the Japanese guns were silenced forever by the ship's 5-inchers. But one shell of the third salvo had pierced a 5-inch mount. Many were seriously injured, and in the darkness that night eight men of the TENNESSEE were committed to the deep somewhere off Saipan.

Before the ship departed for Eniwetok and repairs a week later, fire was delivered for directing units ashore; and in a dawn air attack the TENNESSEE, with the MARYLAND and the CALIFORNIA, shot down a Japanese plane which had commenced its run on the TENNESSEE.

AT GUAM AND TINIAN

When the repairs had been completed at Eniwetok, the schedule called for the ship to proceed to Tinian; but a special request by the forces at Guam, asking that the TENNESSEE fire for them, took her to a position north of that island, from which she prepared the way for the troops on the 20th and 21st of July. On the 22nd the TENNESSEE was firing at installations on the island of Tinian, where landings under the cover of her big guns were made on the 24th. One of the TENNESSEE's spotting planes was lost at Tinian, killing both pilot and gunner, before she returned to Guam for the delivery inland support for the week from the 2nd to the 9th of August.

With the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Guam—the bases from which the army air forces would soon operate—now securely in American hands, the TENNESSEE returned to Eniwetok and turned south again. From Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides Islands she proceeded to the Solomons and on into the Palau group, far west of the once great naval bastion of Truk. There in the Palaus the TENNESSEE and other ships, commanded by Rear Admiral Kingman in the TENNESSEE, bombarded Anguar Island, an important Japanese phosphate center, until defenses were in ruins; and on the 15th of September our troops swarmed across the island with little opposition.

TO THE PHILIPPINES

Admiral Halsey with his fast carriers had conducted a reign of terror from the air throughout the Philippines to prevent interference by the Japs with the seizures of the Palaus, and he informed the high command that the area was ready for General MacArthur's return.

The TENNESSEE hurried to Manus in the Admiralty Islands to prepare for the Philippines. There Rear Admiral T. E. Chandler, USN, who died heroically aboard the LOUISVILLE in Lingayen Gulf off Luzon in December, assumed command of Battleship Division Two, relieving Rear Admiral Kingman; and Captain John B. Heffernan, USN, replaced Captain Mayer as Commanding Officer of the TENNESSEE.

On the 12th of October all preparations had been made and the TENNESSEE stood out of the lagoon at Manus. Steaming through a typhoon and uncharted mine fields, she entered Leyte Gulf, and on the 20th began the bombardment of the eastern shore of Leyte.

where the historic landings were made the next day under cover of naval gunfire.

In the meantime enemy air reaction was violent. Enemy aircraft were able to slip undetected into the land-locked Gulf, and TENNESSEE's job was to provide anti-aircraft cover for the shipping and troops. She shot down one enemy plane, assisted in the destruction of three others, and repulsed many attacks with her concentrated fire.

AMERICA'S GREATEST NAVAL VICTORY

The Battle of Surigao Strait, in the early morning of October 25, 1944, was the only classical naval engagement of the entire war—the only battle in which battleships, cruisers, and destroyers were opposed. It was a great naval engagement in every sense of the word. The stage was perfectly set. The Navy had entered the restricted waters of Leyte Gulf and had put the troops ashore. American ships had penetrated to the heart of the Philippines, and now the Japanese forces were compelled to fight or to give up the Islands.

Within the Gulf were hundreds of transports and cargo vessels to supply the landing force. On a beachhead were thousands of assault troops, defenseless against the large-caliber guns of the major warships of the Japanese Navy. Steaming toward the southern entrance of the Gulf was a strong Japanese fleet. If that entrance, a narrow channel called Surigao Strait, could be penetrated, the enemy could completely destroy our transports with his heavy guns, wipe out the landings which had been effected, and score a major victory for the Rising Sun.

Rear Admiral Jesse B. Oldendorf, USN, commanded the American Fleet which was there to guard the troops against the Japanese Navy. Flying his flag in the cruiser LOUISVILLE, he had prepared the beach for the troops by a systematic bombardment from his ships. Now it was his job to defend the landings. Admiral Oldendorf knew the Japs were coming. With his heavy ships he had waited for them to come through operation after operation. Now they were on their way.

Perhaps Admiral Oldendorf remembered another admiral's victory, when Lord Nelson of the Royal Navy had destroyed a French fleet in the Battle of the Nile by simultaneous attacks from both sides. Perhaps the approaching engagement was studied in terms of multiple concentration and increased superiority of fire power. Probably it was all a part of the plan which developed in Admiral Oldendorf's mind.

But regardless of how he knew, the important fact was that he knew; and with the consummate skill of the natural tactician he arrayed his forces. Cruisers and destroyers on the right of the channel. Cruisers and destroyers on the left of the channel. And then across the Strait, six battleships, in a battleline. One of the two center ships of that battleline was the TENNESSEE.

In the early morning, hours before dawn, the Japanese ships steamed into the Strait. The TENNESSEE detected the ships when they were a little over twenty miles away. At 37,500 yards the TENNESSEE was ready to shoot. The Admiral said, "Wait." The Japs were coming in.

They reached thirty, twenty-five, finally twenty thousand yards. With a perfect setup, the TENNESSEE opened fire soon after Admiral Oldendorf's flagship began firing. In the following thirteen minutes the TENNESSEE fired thirteen salvos—more than any other ship in the battleline. And the shells were hitting! The spotters saw each of the first eleven salvos find their mark, the twelfth was fired after a large turn and missed, but the last, the thirteenth, hit the target again. In 12 minutes and 50 seconds the months and years of drills and training were repaid. The TENNESSEE had met the enemy fleet and employed her big guns with overwhelming success. Not a single material failure had occurred. At the order to cease firing, both men and guns were still ready and eager to continue.

While in the midst of the engagement, when another battleship in the line misinterpreted a turn signal, the skipper handled the TENNESSEE so well that Rear Admiral T. E. Chandler, USN, commander of the battleship division of which the TENNESSEE was flagship, reported that he desired "to commend Captain J. B. Heffernan, USN, for his prompt and cool action in that emergency."

The elapsed time from commence firing to cease firing was 12 minutes and 50 seconds for the TENNESSEE. Actually, however, all her firing was done in a little less than nine minutes, because she was compelled to suspend firing for four minutes in order to avoid firing into a friendly ship. In spite of the four-minute suspension of firing, caused by the error of another ship, the TENNESSEE fired more salvos than any other battleship.

Admiral Oldendorf's plan had been entirely successful. The Japanese ships were taken under fire from the east and the west by cruisers and destroyers, while from the north hurtled the heavy armor-piercing shells from the TENNESSEE and other battleships. The Japanese were overwhelmed by a triple concentration of gunfire.

The battle was over. The great naval victory of Surigao Strait had been won. Two battleships, two cruisers, and four destroyers were lost to Davey Jones's locker by the Japanese, while the only American casualty was damage to the destroyer USS GRANT. The American Navy under Admiral Oldendorf had played its hand. Leyte Gulf was secure.

Shortly after his brilliant victory, Admiral Oldendorf was promoted to the rank of Vice Admiral, awarded

the Navy Cross and ordered to command Battleship Division Two, Three, Four and Five as Commander Battleship Squardron One. The TENNESSEE became Vice Admiral Oldendorf's flagship.

HOME

A few days after the battle the TENNESSEE began her long trip to Puget Sound Navy Yard. Rear Admiral Chandler wrote to the Commander in Chief of the U.S. Fleet: "Shortly after this battle (Surigao Straits) TENNESSEE departed the area for a much needed overhaul. The Battle of Surigao Strait climaxed a long series of successful major operations against the enemy, all of which carried the war nearer to Tokyo:

9 amphibious operations
1 diversionary bombardment
1 naval battle

The conduct of officers and men who fought her through these operations was at all times in accordance with the highest traditions of the naval service."

When the TENNESSEE stopped for one day in Pearl Harbor at Ford Island, where three years before the first Japanese attack had sought to end her career, Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet, boarded the ship and with all hands mustered aft he informed them that he and the entire Navy knew and were proud of the record which the TENNESSEE, her officers and men had established.

Puget Sound was the States, the States was home, and home was wonderful. There was leave for everyone, and in every state of the forty-eight the men of the TENNESSEE were with families, wives, and children for the first time in over eighteen months.

Then in the middle of January a large sign with colored lights and paint still wet appeared on the quarterdeck: "The TENNESSEE must be ready for sea by the 22nd of January. Admiral Nimitz wants this ship on the battleline." The work was rushed ahead with all priority, leave parties were re-called, and on the 27th of January 1945, the TENNESSEE had completed all trials and was sailing west.

The objective was heavily defended Iwo Jima in the Volcano Islands, only a few hundred miles from Tokyo. On the 16th of February, a little over two weeks after the last goodbye had been said at Bremerton, the TENNESSEE opened fire. The most important assignment had gone to the TENNESSEE—preparation of the left flank of the beaches and in particular the destruction of four revetted and camouflaged major caliber defense guns on a ledge on the now famous Mount Suribachi. The job was accomplished. On the 18th the TENNESSEE reported complete destruction of the guns and associated ammunition dumps, and on the 19th of February the Marines landed. Their battle was costly. In hand to hand combat they wrested every foot of the island from a fanatical enemy; but without the bombardment and the destruction of principal defenses, the landing and final victory would have been impossible.

The TENNESSEE remained at Iwo until the 7th of March. Delivering fire for the shore fire control parties, the ship gave every possible aid in the advance across the island. There were starshells to prevent the Jap night infiltration, interdiction fire to deny the use of roads to the enemy, and constant pounding day after day at every installation which could be found.

EASTER AND OKINAWA

It was at Ulithi that the TENNESSEE prepared for the final great operation of the war—Okinawa in the Ryukyus, a chain stretching southwest from the home islands of Japan. On the 23rd of March, the TENNESSEE departed Ulithi carrying the flag of Rear Admiral M. L. Deyo, USN, Acting Commander Battleship Squadron One, Commander Battleship Division Two, and Commander Gunfire and Covering Force.

There were seven days of intensive bombardment before the landings on the morning of Easter Sunday. Then almost daily until the 3rd of May the TENNESSEE was delivering fire for the boys ashore. On the 19th of April the Marines dispatched the following message to the TENNESSEE:

"Today our troops took the high ground prepared by the TENNESSEE yesterday. Seven enemy were killed on the slope and 30 on the top. In the huge craters caused by the 14-inch shells of the TENNESSEE, Control Officer 295 counted 120 enemy dead and numerous demolished anti-aircraft weapons. Commanding Officer Sixth Marines himself saw the TENNESSEE fire yesterday and wishes to express his appreciation for the TENNESSEE's cooperation and delivery of outstanding support. The main and secondary batteries of the TENNESSEE broke and drove the enemy back. Her naval gunfire on the almost impossible did the job. Congratulations to all men of the TENNESSEE. Well Done!"

From the Army's controlling units on the 25th came the word that "TENNESSEE is the best ship we ever worked with," while Rear Admiral Hall informed Vice Admiral Kelly Turner that he would like to see all ships have " . . . their just compensation and reward, especially the TENNESSEE."

Throughout the campaign the Japanese had thrown their airforce against American forces at Okinawa without reserve. The suicidal plunge which had developed

at Leyte and Luzon was the principal enemy tactic. The Combat Air Patrol did a magnificent job in destroying hundreds of planes before they could reach their objective, but all could not be downed by our fighters.

In the middle of the afternoon of the 12th of April the attacks were unusually heavy. Seven planes which had penetrated the Patrol chose the TENNESSEE as their target for a coordinated attack. Six were shot down and fell into the sea, but the seventh, weaving through the smoke, came in though hit repeatedly. The Kamikaze, carrying a bomb, crashed on the starboard side of the ship. Twenty-six men were killed, and 103 injured, 60 so seriously that they had to be transferred to a hospital ship.

The ship's forces went to work on emergency repairs, however, and performing jobs which once could have been done only in major navy yards, the TENNESSEE was firing again. Some of the finest work done by the ship was in the period between the attack of April 12th and the 3rd of May when she left for Ulithi and permanent repairs.

Vice Admiral Oldendorf, who had missed the operation because of previous injuries, relieved Rear Admiral Deyo shortly before the TENNESSEE left Okinawa. Admiral Dayo's parting message to his flagship was, "You may well be proud of your fine record during the Okinawa Assault. Well Done!"

When the TENNESSEE departed for Ulithi on the 3rd of May 1945, she had delivered what was probably the most effective supporting fire of any ship in the entire war, had shot down ten planes without assistance from other ships, had assisted in the destruction of eight other planes, and after a suiciding "Divine Wind" had struck the ship, she stayed in action through repair work by her own crew. It was truly well done.

REPAIR AND RETURN

Three weeks alongside a repair ship in Ulithi and the TENNESSEE was enroute back to Okinawa. She fired for three days in support of the forces which were pinching in the Japs on the southern tip along the escarpment. The last bombardment was on the 14th of June, and in a few days Okinawa was declared secure.

Vice Admiral Oldendorf was soon made commander of all naval forces in the Ryukus, and as his flagship the TENNESSEE played an important part in operations in the East China Sea. During July a task group under his command covered minesweeping operations in the East China Sea, and when the area had been cleared the force sailed north to attack shipping between Shanghai and the home islands of Japan. The route was effectively blockaded, and several enemy planes were destroyed by fighters operating from the carriers of the formation.

THE END

The TENNESSEE was in Okinawa preparing for further operations when the first news of the Japanese offer to surrender arrived. In a few days it was definite that the war was won. In the North, Central, and South Pacific, firing from Pearl Harbor to the final victory at Okinawa, the TENNESSEE had fought her way to a brilliant record.

OCCUPATION

While the TENNESSEE was in Buckner Bay, Okinawa, on August 27, 1946, Captain Harley F. Cope, USN, reported aboard and on September 7 relieved Captain Hefferman of command. The closing assignment of the TENNESSEE was to cover the landings of troops at Wakayama, Japan, in the occupation of the empire.

JOINS MOTHBALL FLEET

The TENNESSEE joined the Philadelphia Group of the Sixteenth Fleet (Inactive) at the Philadelphia Naval Base on December 8, 1945. Captain Cope was relieved of command by Commander Edwin W. Abbot, USN, who remained aboard while the ship was prepared for laying up.

RECEIVES NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION

On April 5, 1946, Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal signed the Navy Unit Commendation for the USS TENNESSEE for outstanding service in action during the battleship's 13 major operations from January 31, 1944, to June 21, 1945.

Text of the citation reads:

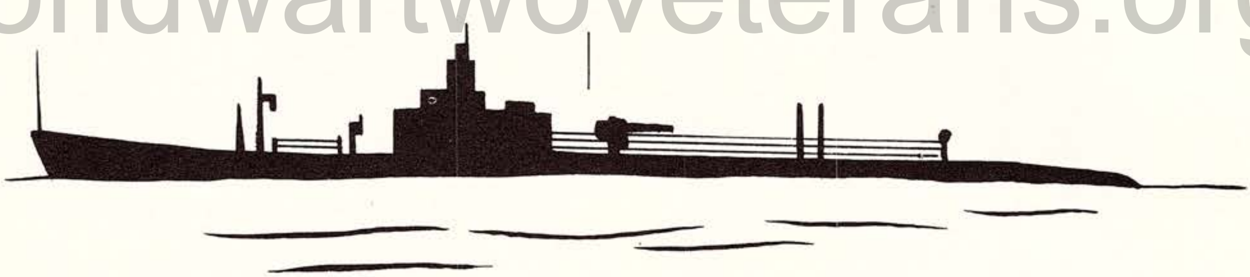
"For outstanding heroism in action against the enemy Japanese forces during the period from January 31, 1944, to June 21, 1945. Conducting extensive bombardments with devastating accuracy throughout thirteen major operations, the USS TENNESSEE methodically reduced enemy defenses prior to the time of landings, provided a tremendous volume of concentrated fire directly covering amphibious assaults, and furnished controlled fire supporting the movement of troops ashore after the invasions, making possible the advance of our forces through the Central Pacific without prohibitive loss of life. Withstanding repeated blows from enemy shore batteries, bombs, torpedoes, and Kamikaze planes, her courageous crew skillfully effected emergency repairs which kept her in action during extended periods of tension, strain and extreme peril. In the historic battle of Surgigao Straits she contributed materially to the destruction of a powerful portion of the Japanese

Fleet, including at least two battleships. The TENNESSEE's splendid record of achievements, from the Aleutians to the Ryukyus, reflects the superb teamwork and gallantry of her valiant officers and men and is in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

Officers and men who served aboard the TENNESSEE at the time of the actions cited were authorized to wear the Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon.

Commanding officers during the period were Captain (Now Commodore) Robert Stevenson Haggart, USN; Captain Andrew DeGraff Mayer, USN; and Captain John B. Heffernan, USN.

Executive officers who served aboard the TENNESSEE during the period for which she was cited were Captain (then Commander) S. Y. Cutler, USN; Captain J. E. M. Wood, USN; Captain Stirling P. Smith, USN, and Captain Daniel Wagner, USN.



U. S. S. TRIGGER (SS 237)

A fantastically colored and dangerous fish is the trigger, and like the fish after which she was named, USS TRIGGER had a fantastically colorful career and a dangerous one for the Japanese. Her brilliant record was not made without danger to herself and her last patrol proved that heroes are often lost but heroic achievements will never die.

The twisted plating of many Japanese vessels went to the bottom of the ocean from the daring attacks of TRIGGER. Battered and pounded time and again by the merciless depth charging of the Japanese, TRIGGER returned time after time from the deep, dark shadows of an ocean grave to fight on. Former TRIGGER men throughout the submarine service fought on with new resolve when they learned of her loss.

From the very beginning TRIGGER had a spirit of go-ahead built into her trim lines. She was completed several months before scheduled at the Navy Yard, Mare Island, and the keel for the next submarine was laid in the same spot four months ahead of schedule. Her keel was laid on 1 February 1941 and by 22 October of the same year, Mrs. Walter Newhall Vernou, wife of Rear Admiral Vernou, senior member of the Board of Inspection and Survey, Pacific Coast Section, served as sponsor for the ship at the launching ceremony.

TRIGGER joined the United States Navy on 30 January 1942, the date of her commissioning with Lieutenant Commander J. H. Lewis as the first commanding officer. It took weeks and months of arduous training before she was ready to meet the enemy. The officers and crew had to learn the multiplicity of complicated mechanisms before they knew their ship well—their ship—their home—their destiny! It was in the early days of rugged training that TRIGGER acquired that last intangible installation called soul.

As TRIGGER nosed into the submarine base at Pearl Harbor before her first war patrol, she was a neophyte, a trifle self-conscious and perhaps apologetic to slip her trim form into the berth of her illustrious sisters. Little was she to know that before long any submarine of the fleet would be proud to tie-up alongside her.

Off to a slow start on her first war patrol, TRIGGER departed Pearl Harbor on 26 June 1942, bound for the area around Alaska and the Aleutian Islands. During her patrol six enemy contacts were made but bad weather and unfavorable approach positions precluded any successful attacks. Considerable time was spent on special tasks in connection with the bombardment of Kiska Harbor and in searching various harbors and bays. Pickings were mighty slim and the patrol terminated with TRIGGER's arrival at Dutch Harbor on 10 August.

A refit period at Pearl Harbor preceded her departure on her second war patrol on 23 September with Commander Roy S. Benson as her new skipper. With a stop at Midway to top off her fuel bunkers, TRIGGER entered enemy-controlled waters and made her first contact west of Japan on 5 October. A dark spot in the grey dawn appeared to be smoke from a small vessel and the doughty sub sped on the surface with her deck guns manned. When the range was closed to 1500 yards, she pulled the trigger on the ship and sprayed her decks with machine gun fire and opened up with her

3-inch gun. Guns from the Jap ship returned the compliment and as the shells and bullets whistled close aboard, TRIGGER submerged for a torpedo shot on the ship which seemed about 4000 tons.

Both vessels ceased firing and the freighter zig-zagged radically on a retiring course. The hot pursuit of TRIGGER came up for quite a jolt when it was discovered that in her radical turns the freighter had turned around in her flight and was now racing straight toward TRIGGER in an obvious attempt to ram her. It was now time for the submarine to maneuver the Jap out of position to avert a collision. The vessels passed each other on opposite and parallel courses as machine gun fire rattled down at the sub. Too close to torpedo in passing, TRIGGER finally sent two torpedoes after the freighter. A rumble and a roar indicated that the second torp struck home. The sound man picked up the rhythmic vibrations of an approaching patrol ship and a dive was ordered. Although TRIGGER was anxious to see the show, the price of admission was too high and the skipper decided to stay below.

Pursuit of the crippled freighter was continued after the atmosphere had cleared. The smoke from the Jap's stack could be seen distinctly as TRIGGER closed the range. Several large puffs of smoke billowed over the ship and then nothing was seen. The Jap freighter was not designed to submerge, but encouraged by torpedoes, she exceeded the designers' expectations on this occasion.

It was off the coast of Bungo Suido that TRIGGER made her next kill in the early morning of 17 October. Sighting the tell-tale smoke of a Jap ship close inshore, a surface approach was made in the darkness and two torpedoes leaped out of the bow tubes after the enemy. Both hit! The ship went down by the bow and her deck gun began to flash in anger.

The sub drew out of the range of the stricken vessel and observed flashlights blinking along the weather decks. The ship was apparently not sinking and several more torpedoes were sent after her by way of persuasion. But no further "persuasion" was necessary for the bow went under, the stern went up and a 5,000-ton freighter was heard to crumble as the dark ocean depths crushed her sides.

That very afternoon, TRIGGER cautiously approached another 5,000-ton freighter, attained a perfect firing position and sent three torpedoes straight and true for the target. Submariners don't like disappointment but they accept the bitter with the sweet and keep on trying. Why three perfectly fired torpedoes should produce nothing is inexplicable and a source of utter chagrin. That is what happened to this Jap ship—nothing! Just nothing! The skipper could be forgiven if he slammed his cap on the deck.

There were better days ahead for the TRIGGER and 20 October 1942 was one of them. The smoke from a 10,000-ton, loaded tanker started another chase in the early evening and finished in the bright moonlight. By figuring out the zag-zag plan and base course of the tanker, TRIGGER closed the range to fire four torpedoes for two hits. The target headed for the sub to ram her, but TRIGGER went to a depth of 100 feet. The tanker churned right overhead, dropping a depth charge as she passed. It was her last pass, for the TRIGGER had already thrown the lucky pair. A violent eruption; silence from the vessel's screws; the crackling noise of a ship breaking up; a clear horizon. That is how a ship is lost. That is how this one went down.

Bungo Suido was a heavy traffic lane for Japanese tankers and the morning of 24 October brought another 10,000-tonner into the periscope sights. A spread of three torpedoes reached out after the huge ship. Three hits! One caught her right in the stern, stopping the screws as she turned away. Heavy white smoke streamed out of her after parts and a deck gun started banging away. A last torpedo was saved for the "Coup de Grace" but no explosion was heard. Two bombing planes were sighted and with the shock of two exploding bombs bidding her farewell from the area, TRIGGER left the tanker down by the stern, her fate in the lap of the gods.

In company with the submarine DRUM, TRIGGER's diesel engines purred into the channel at Pearl Harbor 8 November for a refit period to gird her for further combat. TRIGGER could hold her head higher now. Each patrol increased the respect felt for her among men of the "silent service." The third patrol was no exception.

Quietly slipping out of Pearl Harbor on 3 December, TRIGGER pulled into Midway 7 December. It was a day to be remembered; a day to be avenged. And vengeance was forthcoming. Her first objective was the laying of mine fields near Inubo Saki.

It was after the first mine field had been laid and TRIGGER was laying a second on the night of 20 December. Two dark forms approaching across the water directly toward the sub were identified as an 8,400-ton freighter with escort. A perfect torpedo set-up was passed up out of deference to the important task of completing the minelaying operations.

It was a case of having your cake and eating it too when the freighter apparently nudged one of the mines and a violent explosion ripped skyward taking the midships section of the freighter up like a giant and dropping her back down with a broken back. In seconds the ship was 90 degrees from her former course, lying in the trough of the heavy seas, and rolling in the ground swells. The main deck was seen awash and she was unceremoniously flushed to the bottom of the sea.

Two days later a cloud of smoke attracted the eager eyes of TRIGGER and a 5,000-ton freighter hove into

view zig-zagging on 60 degree legs. Just as she steadied on a new course, TRIGGER cut loose with a spread of three of her best. One hit was made just forward of the bridge and she settled down by the bow, tooted her whistle and turned away. At this time the TRIGGER was only two miles off Nojima Saki and the current was setting her toward the beach, forcing her to turn to seaward.

Approximately six seaplanes were sighted, one of them right over the target. The crippled ship was trying hard to make it back to port but her deck forward was awash and her screws were nearly out of the water, spinning rapidly. As the range was opening, it was decided that one more torpedo would bring a quick end. The last torpedo streamed toward the freighter and struck home. With planes in the air dropping bombs, it was decided to clear the area since there was no more doubt that the ship was sunk.

It was the day after a Christmas spent in the usual patrols, that a convoy of Japanese ships was sighted approaching the mine fields which TRIGGER had recently laid. As the lead ship approached the exact spot of the mine field, profuse smoke billowed up from the ship and the other ships of the convoy scattered like leaves in the wind. It is safe to consider that a 5,000-ton ship was either sunk or damaged by that mine.

The last day of the year was a profitable one for TRIGGER. Mountainous seas spilled over the periscope sight and only a momentary glimpse of a target ship could be seen. That glimpse was enough to reveal a large ship with a cargo of planes on her stern. Despite the raging seas, three torpedoes were fired at the Jap freighter for two hits. The ship took a list to starboard and started down by the bow. Her propeller stopped and a heavy internal explosion was heard.

The ship could not be seen through the periscope and TRIGGER surfaced to see what the score was. About 4,000 yards away the ship's stern was up in the air and with two-thirds of her already submerged, she soon disappeared. The ship appeared to be a seaplane tender and may have been the last blow struck at the enemy in the year 1942.

The new year started out slowly for the contacts seemed to be too close in shore or too small. The tempo was soon to liven, however, for on 10 January a vessel was approaching bows-on and it was not until she started zig-zagging that TRIGGER could identify a Japanese destroyer coming at her. Three torpedoes were fired. One hit just under the well deck and the explosion folded the forecastle up at an angle of 45 degrees. The second hit scored toward the stern. As soon as she fired, TRIGGER executed a high speed turn to bring the stern tubes to bear.

About three dozen fishing vessels approached the sinking destroyer from the shore but they were of little help. With her bow turned up like an old shoe, the destroyer sank on an even keel. This, her last kill for the third war patrol also marked her first victim of the year 1943. The patrol ended as the TRIGGER arrived at Midway for a refit period.

The fourth war patrol was very active with a total of thirteen contacts made. Although TRIGGER performed in her usual determined way, the effectiveness was hampered by rain squalls, darkness and other factors.

On 15 March a convoy of five freighter with two escorts was picked up. The ships were in two columns and TRIGGER boldly worked into a position ahead of the convoy and proceeded to run right down the middle of the group. Three torpedoes were fired at the lead ship in the right hand column. While these torpedoes were on their way, a set-up was just developing on the left hand column when TRIGGER's presence was betrayed by the wake of the torpedoes in the glassy sea.

The second target headed straight for the TRIGGER and she sent three tropedoes down the ship's throat. Two hit were scored and the sub was forced down deep as the escort vessels raced in to give her a working over with depth charges. Breaking up of the ship was indicated from noises coming from the direction of the first target. Later in the day, TRIGGER surfaced and, upon looking around, sighted what appeared to be the second target ship with a smaller ship alongside to provide bouyancy and propulsion. They were creeping along at 2 knots with two small destroyers or corvettes protecting them. Three bow tubes were emptied at 700 yards but no explosions followed although the escorts maneuvered around wildly with the knowledge that torpedoes were being fired at them, but not knowing where to look.

Shortly after noon on 20 March a rain squall suddenly opened, lifting the curtain on a convoy. TRIGGER quickly submerged and commenced an approach which resulted in a spread of three torpedoes racing toward the leader; a 7,000-tonner. One torpedo hit with a low order detonation caused the ship to list to port. She stopped and three other ships circled her as they dropped depth charges and fired their deck guns at the periscope.

The stricken vessel corrected her list, started up again and surprisingly rejoined as third ship in column formation and steamed on. TRIGGER could not give chase for her fuel was low and with only two stern tube torpedoes left she arrived at Pearl Harbor 6 April 1943.

It was the slender snout of a seasoned veteran that pushed the water aside on her way out of Pearl Harbor on 30 April. And it was well that the big opportunities ahead fell to a wary fighter like TRIGGER. She knew she was in the big league when contact was made with an array of destroyers, cruisers, battleships and a carrier during the merry month of May. Our doughty sub-

marine could have been murdered a dozen times over if she had been detected. In her anxiety to torpedo a carrier in a large battle force, she almost lost the initiative to a destroyer.

TRIGGER's first torpedo in the fifth war patrol, however, was destined for a tanker which appeared suddenly from the mist on 28 May. Quick, split-second timing was necessary to get off three torpedoes at the 7,500-ton tanker. One hit was scored aft on the ship and a quick set up was being made on a following tanker. Both ships turned away and TRIGGER was welcomed by a loud explosion nearby which indicated possible air patrols and her wisest move was to dive out of danger.

The first of June started with a bang as a contact developed into two freighters off the coast of Nojima Saki. One torpedo out of the three fired at the first ship caught her toward the after part of the ship and she settled down to the main deck aft and her screws stopped turning; never to turn again. The second ship started radical course changes and spoiled whatever chance there was of tagging her with a torpedo.

TRIGGER was patrolling off Tokyo on 10 June when the alert officer of the deck sighted something that looked like smoke on the horizon. The next observation revealed it to be the island of a huge aircraft carrier. "Bong, Bong, Bong" of the general quarters alarm set all hands racing to their battle stations. The captain made a quick appraisal and announced to the men that the target was the biggest thing that they had yet seen. It was a tense moment! The carrier was coming down on TRIGGER at 21 knots and the sub was ready to let go with everything she had.

Destroyers were streaming through the water on both bows, the whole trio zig-zagged radically. Things began to happen fast! The periscope shot up. Bearing, range and angle on the bow were reported crisply. There was not a superfluous word spoken. It was "rig for depth charge, rig for silent running—right full rudder—new course 060." TRIGGER fortunately lay ahead of the base course. Hearts were beating faster and the minutes ticked on.

A destroyer was bearing down on the submarine, the "Thum, thum, thum, thum" of the whirling screws swept right overhead. A sigh of temporary relief swept through the sub and the sound of the heavier screws was picked up. There was no time left now. The crisp orders to fire were repeated six times and each time a swish responded that sent a deadly torpedo on its way. Four solid detonations echoed back to the sub and the carrier's screws stopped. A quick look showed the huge giant drifting and listing. Little white-clad forms scurried madly about the decks, and it was observed that the carrier was brand new. The periscope spun around and picked up the destroyers furiously racing toward the periscope.

"Take her down!" it was TRIGGER's turn for a beating now, and it was quick in coming. A beautifully coordinated attack by the destroyers scored one bull's-eye after another. Bits of paint, cork and dust filled the air as every plate, bulkhead and pipe vibrated with the explosions. The lights went out and everyone was knocked down and left groping after something to cling to. The heavy sides of the submarine squeezed in with each reverberating shock and the deck plating and gratings clattered around dangerously.

Way down below the surface the unmerciful pounding continued. The temperature soared, the humidity hit the saturation point and the men worked to the point of exhaustion controlling the flooding which resulted from the tortured sea valves and fittings.

It was well after midnight before the TRIGGER surfaced and got away. Fresh cool air never felt so good and the men knew the grateful feeling of returning from the shadow of death. TRIGGER had worn out her welcome in the area and was glad to leave.

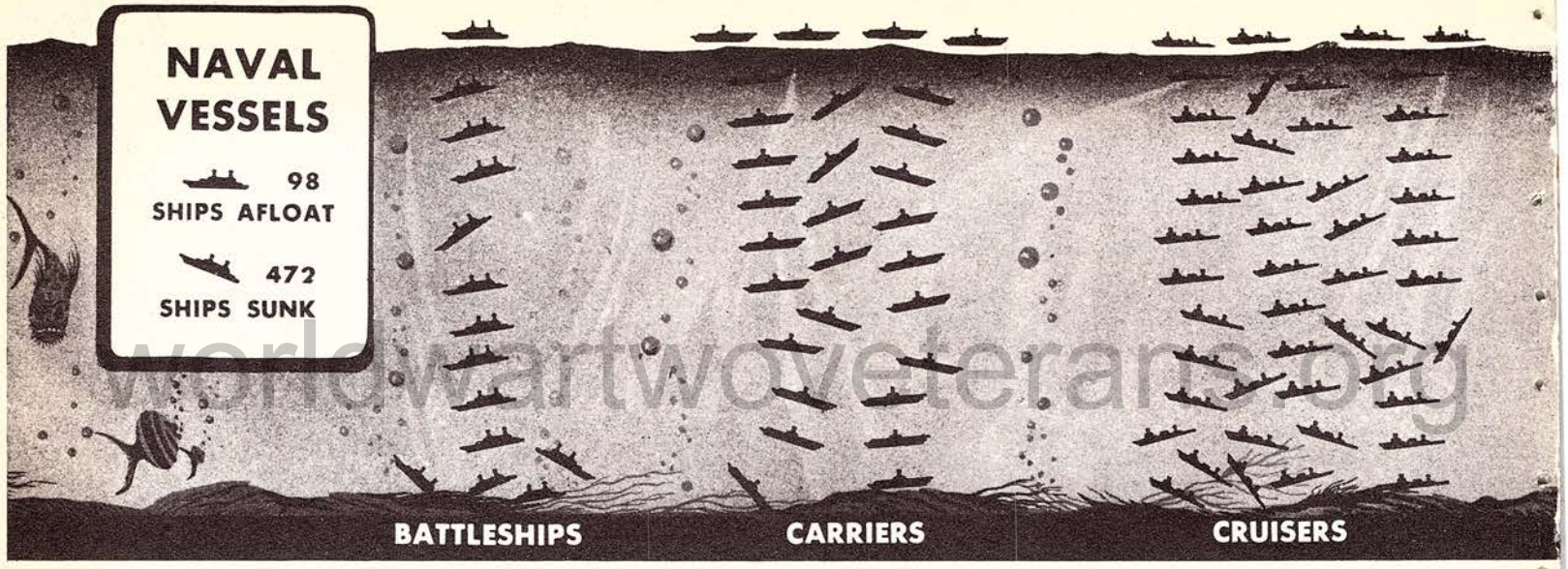
The Japanese aircraft carrier did not sink from the four hits distributed along her length, but the sight of seeing their proud carrier return to port in a few hours at the end of a tow line must have been very depressing to the Japs. It meant months of work, tons of valuable material and the occupation of a badly needed drydock. It was over a year later that one of the reconnaissance planes photographed the hapless carrier. What a setback the TRIGGER had caused!

She arrived at the Submarine Base at Pearl Harbor on 22 June for a much needed refit period. The poor condition of the main engines made a Navy Yard overhaul necessary.

The short but highly successful sixth war patrol commenced with TRIGGER's departure from Pearl Harbor on 1 September. Her patrol area was in the East China Sea. Two unescorted freighters were steaming together at a wide distance apart. The bigger one was selected as the first target and a perfect set-up resulted in two duds thumping the ship's side with nothing more accomplished than putting the Japs on the alert.

By pursuing the contact through the night, TRIGGER fired four torpedoes with one sure hit which had the remarkable effect of sinking the ship in about three minutes. Seconds later, her boilers blew up with a tremendous force.

The afternoon of 21 September brought the masts of a six-ship convoy into the sights of the periscope and TRIGGER trailed them until she was able to conduct a surface attack that night. As she approached the convoy with a carefully planned attack, three torpedoes each were shot after tanker No. 1 and tanker No. 2. One hit on the first tanker sent flames shooting 500 feet into the air, illuminating the entire area. The second torpedo hit her amidships, but, with the furious holocaust al-

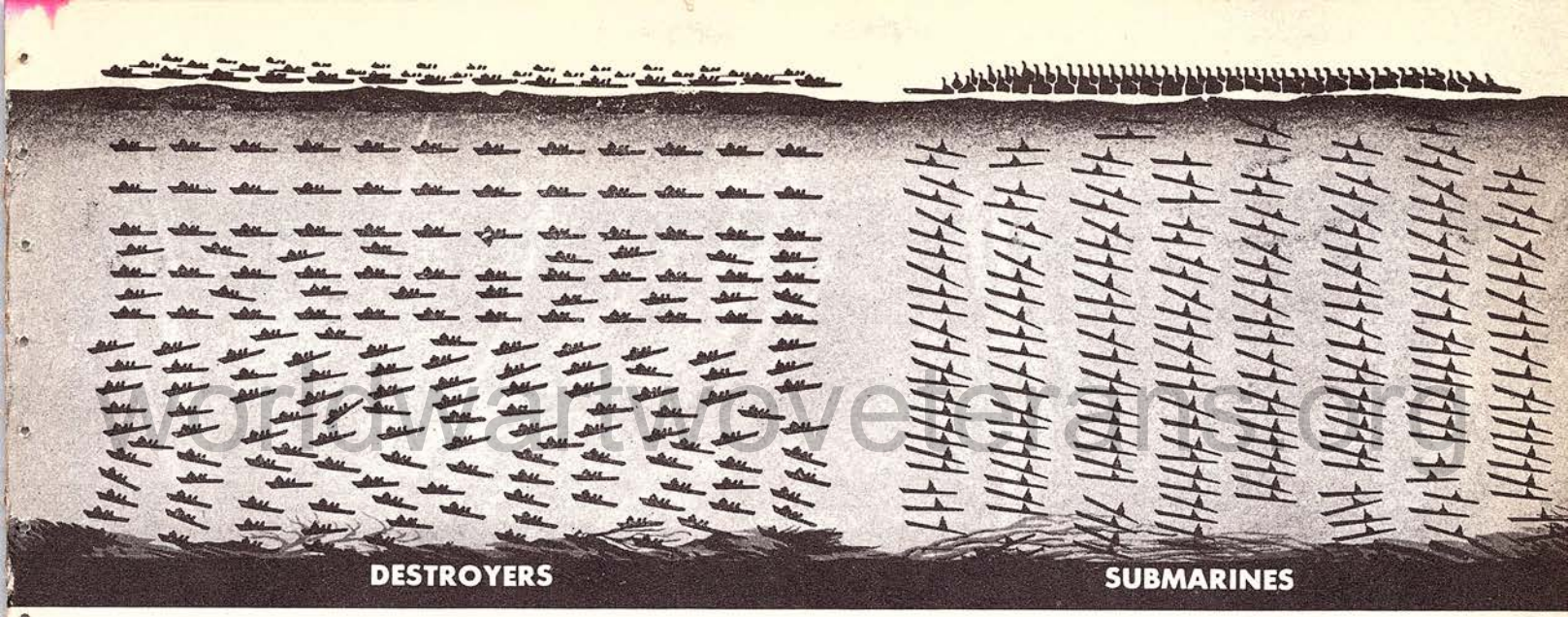


THE END OF JAP SEA POWER

Here are the final results of the most decisive anti-marine effort on record, an effort which virtually erased the world's third largest navy, and so weakened the world's third largest merchant fleet that it was totally inadequate at the end of the war to take care of more than a fraction of the needs of its country's industry and its country's people.

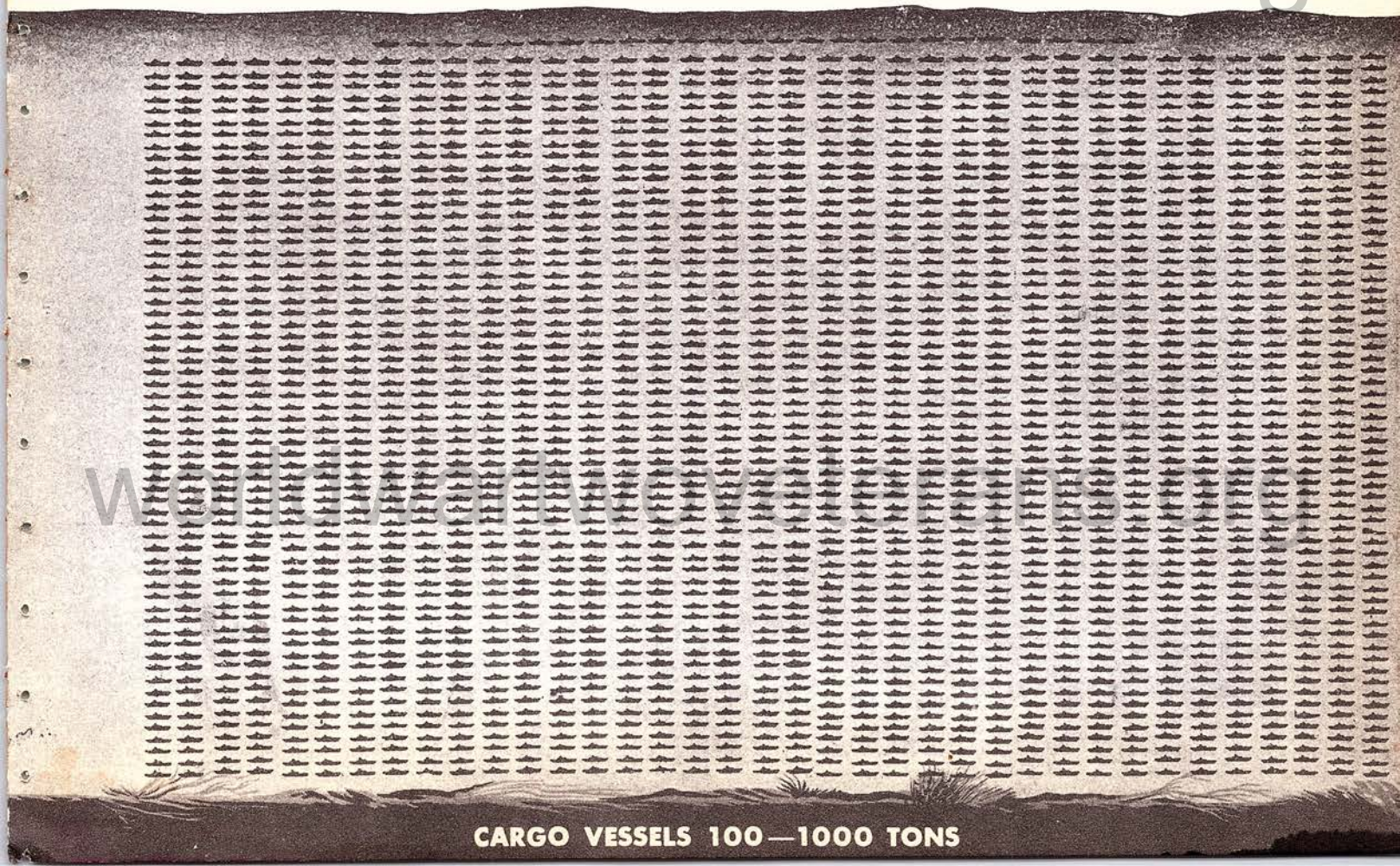
The Jap navy was in an even sorrier condition than the drawing above shows. The one battleship afloat was badly damaged. So were the two of the four carriers. Two cruisers were damaged, the other two decommissioned. Many of the destroyers and submarines were in a similar state.

The damage was slow in starting. Save for a few destroyers and one carrier, there were no losses for six months. Then came three resounding defeats: the Battle of Midway in June 1942, where four carriers and a heavy cruiser were scratched in 24 hours; the bitter struggle for the Solomons in October and November 1942, resulting in the loss of two battleships, three cruisers and 12 destroyers; and finally the great sea battle of the Philippines in October 1944, which cost Japan three battleships, four carriers, ten cruisers and eight destroyers, all in four days. Otherwise, Japan hoarded her major fleet units and let the lighter ones do the work. These were consumed at an enormous rate, 32 destroyers going down in the water around New Guinea, the Solomons and the Bismarck archipelago in 1943 alone.



In addition to the principal naval types listed above, the following were sunk up through 1 June 1945: three seaplane carriers, two training cruisers, 93 escort vessels, 80 sub chasers, 21 minelayers, 29 minesweepers, 42 combat transports, 19 coastal patrol craft and 11 miscellaneous vessels. Of 600 naval vessels sunk, submarines got 199, aircraft got 220, surface craft got 114, the rest being sunk by a combination of these or by other agents.

The following figures on the Jap merchant marine refer to vessels of over 1,000 tons only. They represent 1945 official Army and Navy estimates, but were subject to correction. They were the payoff on a campaign that began immediately after Pearl Harbor. However, because of construction, capture and salvage, the Japs finished the year 1942 with the same-sized merchant fleet (5,950,000 tons) that she started with, despite a total loss of 1,060,384 tons during the period. In 1943, she lost 1,871,510 tons; in 1944, 3,990,744; and in the first seven and a half months of 1945, 1,323, 593 tons. She started the war with 5,945,410 tons afloat, adding during the war 3,520,568 tons built, captured or salvaged. At the war's end she had lost 8,236,070 tons, and wound up with only 231 vessels with a tonnage of 860,-936 able to operate. And these were disappearing at the rate of nearly 20 per cent a month. All together, subs got 5,128,425 tons, aircraft got 2,275,197 tons, mines got 296,428 tons (over 60 per cent of this in 1945 alone). The balance was miscellaneous or unknown.



ready taking place, it added little to the complete confusion. Crew members in white uniforms were sprinting forward on her decks ahead of the rapidly spreading flames as the burning funeral pyre forged on. A gun crew tried to man the bow gun but after three or four shots, their efforts were obscured by the yellow-red flame which blazed over her entire length.

A flash amidships on tanker No. 2 sent up a column of smoke and water and she turned away as fire broke out immediately. The freighter No. 2 in the opposite column also took a torpedo amidships. She broke in half beneath the stack and disappeared below the surface almost immediately.

The first freighter in the column was holding course and the third freighter started to turn away. The remaining freighter and tanker were firing their deck guns and with tanker No. 3 bearing down on the sub, she swung around and emptied a stern tube which scored a hit on the starboard bow. The shells from the deck guns were whistling overhead now; too close for comfort and TRIGGER was forced to dive.

The skipper lost his footing while the ship was diving and fell into the periscope well. The quartermaster commenced lowering the periscope but the skipper called out in time to avert disaster. In the meantime, the tanker was expected to rumble overhead and possibly drop depth charges, but nothing was heard from the surface.

Upon surfacing, TRIGGER made a quick appraisal of the situation and found that two tankers were burning, the third one damaged and down by the bow, one freighter sunk. The second one undamaged, and standing by the badly burning tanker and the third freighter was undamaged and making tracks in a northerly direction. TRIGGER took after the latter ship.

As the chase began, the stern of a ship was sighted pointing vertically into the air, probably tanker No. 3 which had taken a hit on her bow. As the stern of the ship sank, the glowing red hull of the burning tanker beyond came into full view. But freighter No. 3 was the next victim and two bow torpedoes streaked out after her. Both of them ripped into the bow of the freighter and she settled by the bow immediately.

A light came on the bridge and signals started blinking as the ship commenced thumping out shells from her deck gun and the guns of the first freighter joined in the chorus. The "music" was quite sour as the ships were apparently firing in the opposite direction of the sub. As TRIGGER closed in boldly to administer the merciful end, the Japs spotted her and turned their guns around in the right direction. Two stern shots at the freighter produced nothing more than the realization that one of them was a dud. By this time the Japs were getting pretty handy with their deck gun and TRIGGER went below.

The last two torpedoes aboard were fired at Freighter No. 3. One hit—the other missed. The one that hit was a dud! It is possible that some strong language was exchanged over this most exasperating dud.

With all torpedoes expended, a quick pow-wow was held to discuss the chances of a surface battle. It was decided against for the deck gun had never in its history fired five consecutive shots without jamming and one apologetic gun was a poor match against three armed vessels and there was still a good chance that the target would eventually sink.

The whole action covered a period of 3½ hours and took place within a circle of 8,000 yards of the brilliantly burning tanker. The light from this fire was intense for the flames leaped for most of the time a hundred feet above the masts. Minor explosions continuously erupted and the breeze carried a plume of smoke twenty miles across the ocean.

TRIGGER set her course toward the edge of the patrol area, her torpedoes having been quickly and well expended. In about 10 minutes a glow flared up beyond the burning tanker. It was tanker No. 2 blowing up. Huge fires billowed into the air and the bow, bridge and stern of the tanker were incandescent. The hull of the first tanker disappeared and the place where she had been was still burning fiercely with flames lashing up 50 to 100 feet high. Crew members came up to the bridge one at a time to view the holocaust the TRIGGER was leaving behind her.

RESULTS OF THE ATTACK

Freighter No. 1 (Kohuku Maru type) escaped undamaged.

Freighter No. 2 (Argun Maru type) Sunk—Broken in half.

Freighter No. 3 (Lima Maru type) Damaged—two hits on bow—Forecastle awash.

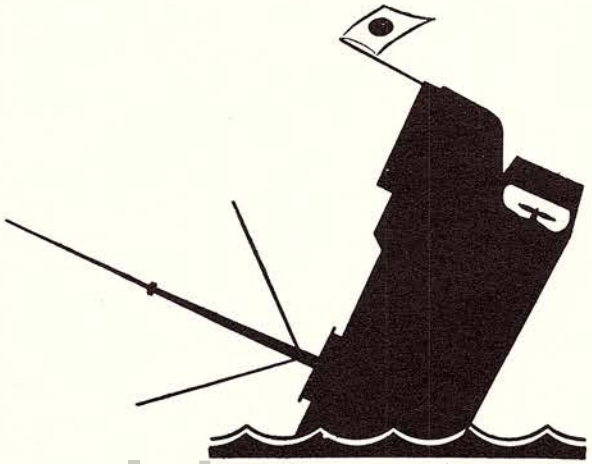
Tanker No. 1—(Nippon Maru type) Sunk—Blew up immediately.

Tanker No. 2—(Syoyo Maru type) Sunk—Blew up after burning several hours.

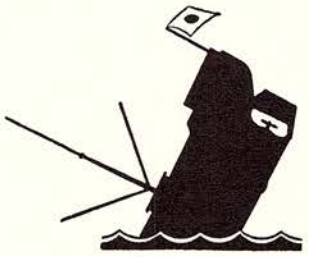
Tanker No. 3 (San Pedro Maru) Sunk.

Arriving at Midway 30 September 1943, TRIGGER completed her refit period and departed on her seventh war patrol 22 October. By the 1st of November TRIGGER was hot on the trail of another convoy which was protected by at least two escort vessels. Several good approaches were spoiled by untimely course changes, but two freighters finally presented overlapping targets. Both were three-island type freighters of about 7,000 tons. Sixty seconds after firing three torpedoes, freighter No. 1 caught one on the bow. A large column of spray and smoke enveloped the forward part of the ship and she went down bow first.

Japanese Merchant Shipping of 1000 or more gross tons Sunk 1941-1945 Inclusive



63%
Sunk by U.S. Submarines alone



37%
Sunk by all other means, Army and Navy combined

Freighter No. 2 was stopped short when a torpedo ripped into her amidships with a terrific explosion. The smoke and debris which completely covered the ship enshrouded her demise and she never came into view again. Two patrol vessels with spray flying from their bows raced in toward TRIGGER and its was time to dive. Twenty depth charges shocked the water around the sub before they lost contact.

The early morning of 2 November brought another 7,000-ton freighter into view and one solid hit brought a cloud of smoke and steam out of the ship's tortured hull. A few mintues observation indicated that the ship was not sinking and the TRIGGER waded in for round two. The freighter's guns started popping in the direction of the sub but the marksmanship was something less than expert. Two more hits proved too many for the ship and she went into a vertical plunge to the ocean floor.

Following up another radar contact brought an 8,000-ton tanker into range for a three-torpedo spread. All three hit! The tanker was torn apart with her bow broken off and her decks awash. The bow sank at once and the after two-thirds of the ship went under in a flat dive to join the rest of the ship at the bottom. In the dark of the night, TRIGGER ran through a large oil slick and heard indescribable screaming and yelling from ahead. A group of life boats and rafts appeared momentarily and upon reversing course to search for survivors, the sub found only a shattered life raft. The entire day passed and just before midnight, yells and moans on the port beam attracted attention to three men on a raft. TRIGGER maneuvered to bring them closer but they made no effort to swim toward the ship. While maneuvering in the darkness, the raft drifted away and all efforts to regain contact were unavailing. The high wind and heavy seas which followed made their survival very doubtful.

An attack on a convoy on 5 November was fouled by aggressive patrols but on 9 November the bright moonlight showed the smoke of several ships. From her position ahead of the convoy, TRIGGER made a periscope approach right for the center of the convoy by passing between the patrolling screen. The convoy made a zig which placed the sub directly between two columns of ships. With no bow torpedoes remaining, TRIGGER lined up a stern shot on the largest ship.

Of the four torpedoes fired, one hit under the stack and the second hit aft as an approaching patrol vessel forced TRIGGER down under. Five excellently placed depth charges jolted the sub before the ship lost contact. Several hours later, when TRIGGER could surface she saw a destroyer and another ship still picking up survivors with a patrol plane circling over the scene of the disaster. The sunken ship was a large, new-type passen-

ger-cargo ship carrying a large deck load and so many troops that it took five hours to pick them up.

It was very dark on the night of 21 November and TRIGGER followed up a radar contact until she was tracking directly ahead of a 5,000-ton freighter. When the range had decreased to 2,000 yards, she pulled off the track, swung her stern around and fired four torpedoes for two resounding hits. The ship started down with her bow pushing into the bottom. The stern slowly sagged and the ship finally sank with a rush. With her torpedoes all expended, TRIGGER arrived at Midway on 3 December, a very successful patrol ended.

On the first day of 1944 TRIGGER departed Pearl Harbor for her Eighth war patrol which was conducted in the Truk-Guam area. A Japanese submarine was contacted on 27 January and a salt water chess game ensued in which both subs tried to slip a torpedo into each other but the game ended in a stalemate as they lost contact.

A radar contact started off an approach on a convoy of three large ships with two escorts on the night of 31 January. It was a clear night with no moon but bright stars and the first three torpedoes served to make one of the destroyers disappear in a cloud of smoke and debris as two hits tore into her. The nearer destroyer turned on TRIGGER and three more torpedoes entered a bid for a similar fate for her. Fate would not cooperate, even when encouraged by four more expensive torpedoes. The destroyer went wild turning to the left and then to the right all the while dropping depth charges and firing guns.

TRIGGER went below and turned in the direction of the convoy. The destroyer raced past the sub trying to get back to the convoy. By the time TRIGGER caught up with the group, the four ships were in column with the destroyer in the lead. All were zigzagging radically. Four torpedoes streaked through the water toward the last ship. Two explosions sent tongues of yellow flame leaping toward masthead and minor explosions with bursts of flame bid a spectacular farewell before the inscrutable ocean closed over the big ship.

The destroyer commenced dropping depth charges from a seemingly inexhaustible supply and headed for the scene of the sinking. She was flashing the numeral "five" repeatedly as she approached a patch of blinking lights in the water where survivors bobbed helplessly.

TRIGGER commenced an approach on the remaining two ships but it was impossible to close the range before dawn and the chase was given up. The patrol ended as the sub arrived at Midway on 19 February and entered Pearl Harbor 23 February for a refit and training period. Commander R. E. Dorin was relieved by Lieutenant Commander F. J. Harlfinger. Several new officers were taken aboard before the Ninth war patrol started with TRIGGER's departure on 23 March 1944.

A radar contact in the dark early hours of 8 April started an approach which revealed a convoy of four columns of large ships accompanied by a terrific escort force. By working her way among the ships, TRIGGER was about to unleash ten torpedoes in a mass killing, when a Jap destroyer suddenly loomed up 50 yards away with a machine gun firing through a window on the bridge. As the destroyer churned the water across her bow in an attempt to ram, TRIGGER cut loose with four torpedoes as soon as a path through the water was open to the target ship.

At this time four of the escorts had the submarine trapped. As one had tried to ram, the second followed him up with depth charges and the other two were lined up on either quarter. Just then, two hits were heard on a huge, heavily loaded tanker and two more hits were heard on a ship elsewhere in the convoy. An appraisal of the damage inflicted was impossible in the face of her dangerous position and TRIGGER plunged to the depths to take the inevitable working over by the Japanese destroyers.

Six very close depth charges shook the sub and left no doubt that TRIGGER was hurt. Six anti-submarine vessels hounded her for 17 hours while she went deep with silent running from 0350 to 1900. The heavy steel sides of the submarine buckled in and out under the terrific pressure. The pipes and bulkheads vibrated like guitar strings and locker doors sprung open scattering the contents over everything. The intense heat and humidity sent rivulets of perspiration rolling down the faces and bodies of the crew until their clothes were drenched and socks and shoes soggy. Lack of oxygen in the air and the nervous strain of the unrelenting depth charges brought some to the verge of collapse.

When TRIGGER finally surfaced at night, the forward torpedo room was flooded to the floor plates and all other compartments were flooded to the lower flats except the battery compartment and the after torpedo room. The bow planes, trim pump, sound gear and both radars were out of commission. Most of the auxiliary machinery was out of alignment and the sub was unable to transmit radio messages because the radio antennae was grounded. The ingenuity and fighting spirit of the TRIGGER men manifested itself again and she recovered from the worst beating she had ever had by mustering spare parts and bailing wire to effect numerous repairs and start out to hunt down the Japanese. She took a terrific beating but she came up with her dauntless, fighting spirit.

Making contact with the submarine TANG, TRIGGER exchanged information and borrowed some spare parts and made plans for a coordinated patrol. On 26 April, radar contact was made with a convoy of ships near Palau. TRIGGER slipped in to 2600 yards and lined up overlapping targets of four ships so that a solid mass of ships stretched about 20 degrees across her bow. Six torpedoes were fired at all four ships and the sub turned around to bring her stern tubes to bear.

Four hits were seen and heard; two hits on the near ships and two others apparently on the two ships on the far side. One of the closer ships blew up from an explosion on her after parts and one of the far ships was seen straight up and down with her course set for the bottom. The remaining ships and escorts began milling around in a state of hopeless confusion that was not unpleasant to see. Four more torpedoes were fired at the group of ships including the destroyers in the foreground. The torpedoes streaked past the destroyer and scored a hit on a freighter.

Of the four freighters in the leading group, only one was able to get under way and she was down by bow steaming at a reduced speed. A fifth freighter joined the cripple and with her reloading complete, TRIGGER noticed that the third freighter was sinking and took out after the remaining two freighters.

The damaged freighter finally stopped and the lead ship hove to close aboard. As TRIGGER prepared to fire at both of them the undamaged freighter got underway and two hits were scored on the damaged ship. With three torpedo hits in her and afire, the ship had no chance of remaining afloat.

By this time the three escorts were formed in a close group with their blinkers signalling back and forth. TRIGGER decided to add a little more confusion to their conference with three more torpedoes. A cloud of smoke shot into the air where the middle destroyer had been and the ship disappeared. The last thing heard from the ship was her load of depth charges erupting in rapid fire order way down below.

Pursuit of the undamaged freighter continued to no avail and TRIGGER, with one more torpedo left decided to return to the burning ship to see if she could use it. An old type destroyer was prowling around and the freighter, down by the bow and listing to the starboard was ablaze from stem to stern. There was no question about the ship's future—it had none. Flames shot hundreds of feet into the air, and frequent explosions blew great masses of glowing debris into the air. As TRIGGER departed from this vale of Japanese tears, the burning ship was still visible from 30 miles away with huge flames skyrocketing upward.

The score for the day — four freighters and one escort vessel sunk, one freighter and two escorts possibly chased aground or back to Palau. The patrol ended as our gallant warrior drew into Midway on 15 May 1944.

After the merciless pounding absorbed by the rugged submarine, it was necessary for TRIGGER to undergo a major overhaul at Hunters Point, San Francisco, California. An excellent and thorough job was performed on TRIGGER and when she finally departed Pearl Harbor on 24 September for her tenth war patrol, she was in good fighting condition.

The tenth war patrol was conducted in two phases. The first phase was a coordinated attack off the east coast of Formosa and the Southern Islands of the Nansei Shoto, in company with the submarines SILVERSIDES and SALMON. During the phase, TRIGGER rescued a pilot from the water and helped in escorting the damaged SALMON back to Saipan. The second phase was conducted off the Bonin Islands as TRIGGER became one of seven submarines in a wolf pack. Although two task forces were contacted, it was impossible to close for an attack.

The tops of ships' masts started an approach by TRIGGER on 30 October, which brought into view a large fleet tanker with four escorts. By smart maneuvering the ships forced a chase for nine hours before TRIGGER scored three hits on a tanker. All hits were near the stern and the after part of the ship was obliterated by smoke and debris. When the smoke had cleared, the tanker appeared with part of her stern missing and her screws stopped forever. A fourth torpedo hit while the periscope sights brought into view a patrol vessel bearing down angrily on TRIGGER and she was forced to dive and take a complete treatment of depth charges lasting an hour, in which 78 depth charges rumbled around her; none of them far from scoring a bull's eye.

Several patrol craft were attacked in the later part of the patrol by guns and torpedoes, but heavy seas and the shallow draft of the ships saved them from the wrath of the TRIGGER. The patrol ended as the sub moored alongside the subtender HOLLAND at Saipan on 3 November 1944.

The eleventh war patrol of TRIGGER commenced on 28 December and ended on 3 February 1945. Conducted in the Bungo-Suido-Kii-Suido Area, the patrol, like her previous ones, was carried on with on agressive spirit and a thoroughness associated with TRIGGER. However, contacts with the enemy were few and the air and radar anti-submarine measures thwarted the submarine's attempts to score with her torpedoes. This was particularly discouraging when contact was made with a large convoy on 29 January. Time and time again aircraft overhead spotted the submarine closing in for a kill and forced her to dive.

Trouble with her main motors on 2 February climaxed a patrol characterized by few ship contacts and many enemy aircraft. TRIGGER moored at Apra Harbor, Guam, as the patrol ended on 3 February 1945.

Perhaps dame fortune ceased to smile on TRIGGER altogether at this point in her brilliant career. She was to join the submarine TIRANTE on her twelfth war patrol. A radio call was sent out from TIRANTE calling TRIGGER. Silence was the only answer—a silence that has never been broken; a silence that told a wordless story. The call for the TRIGGER is still echoing through the ocean depths; echoing in the hearts of those who know her for the gallant ship she was. The spirit of the TRIGGER lives on. It will never die!

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

U. S. S. WICKES (DD 578)

This destroyer was the second ship of the United States Navy to bear the name; the first WICKES was a World War I destroyer.

USS WICKES (DD 578), named in honor of Captain Lambert Wickes, USN, was launched on 13 September 1942 with Miss Catherine Young Wickes, his great grand-niece, acting as sponsor. Upon the vessel's commissioning at Orange, Texas, on 16 June 1943, Lt. Commander W. Y. Allen, USN, assumed command.

There followed the customary shakedown cruise, held in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and a subsequent post-shakedown availability at Charleston, South Carolina.

With the period of testing and readying at an end, the new destroyer sailed for Pearl Harbor, via the Panama Canal and San Diego, in company with USS CABOT (CVL 28) and the destroyer BELL.

Arrival at our most formidable Pacific base was made on 27 November 1943, and the following several weeks were spent in the conducting of anti-submarine and anti-aircraft exercises in that vicinity, with occasional screening duties in connection with task groups returning to Pearl Harbor from the Gilbert Island operations. At length, WICKS received the orders for which her crew had been so eagerly awaiting and she sailed out to the frigid waters of the North Pacific in company with the destroyers BADGER and ISHERWOOD.

The tour of duty in the Aleutians was generally dull and uneventful, the greatest battles being fought against the elements and the dreary monotony of Aleutian duty. The North Pacific, with its blasts that sometimes reach velocities well above 100 knots and which roll up unbelievably gigantic seas of 50 to 70 feet from trough to crest, was the global war's most rugged theater, from the climatic standpoint, and was a proving ground for both ships and men.

WICKES' initial contact with the enemy was made while she was a member of Task Force 94 in a bombardment against Kurabuzaki on the southern tip of Paramushiro Island on 4 February 1944. There was much satisfaction among the crew upon the successful completion of this first combat operation.

With USS RICHMOND as lead ship, WICKES' Task Force 94 was credited with making the first penetration of the Okhotsk Sea during the war by Naval surface units. This incursion into waters which were in Japan's own "back yard" and under the exclusive control of Japanese warships and land-based aircraft was accomplished 4 March 1944. A terrific storm which broke over the small task force immediately after it had entered the Okhotsk Sea resulted in an interruption in Jap shipping and the group found no prey. The water temperature was exactly freezing and large floes of "slush ice" were passed frequently. Another bombardment of Paramushiro in the Kuriles was to have climaxed this search for enemy commercial craft but the unfavorable weather made it, also, impossible.

Further blasting at Matsuwa and Paramushiro at the end of June provided some change in the tiresome routine of North Pacific patrol for WICKES.

On 25 July, Lt. Commander J. B. Cresap, USN, relieved Commander Allen of command of USS WICKES at Massacre Bay, Attu.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

With the month of August and a final raid on Matsuwa, the destroyer's North Pacific duty was terminated and she happily set out for San Francisco, California, arriving completely thawed on 16 August.

After a week and a half of minor repairs and a well earned rest for her officers and men, WICKES set out for Pearl Harbor and arrived 31 August 1944, not the "green" destroyer she was when she had first steamed into that harbor almost a year before, but a veteran "tin can" with an eight months tour of duty in the most miserable sector of the Pacific theater tucked under her bowline.

Her crew knew that she was being prepared for something big due to the installation of new radio gear and the subsequent landing force exercises at Lahaina in the Pearl Harbor area. She sped to Manus Island in the Admiralties on 15 September where she conducted further exercises in gunnery and landing operations and also acquired a fighter director team to man the radio equipment. Thus, WICKES was established as a full-fledged fighter director ship.

She proceeded as escort to Task Group 79.4 to the Leyte invasion on 14 October 1944. The invasion proceeded successfully and WICKES assumed radar picket duties on arrival in Leyte Gulf. She was in a position to observe the Battle of the Surigao Strait in the early morning hours of 25 October but did not participate in the engagement. The vessel was relieved of radar picket duty 3 weeks after her arrival in Leyte Gulf and her assignments throughout the remainder of 1944 consisted, for the most part, of escort screening of vitally required Allied convoys around the islands of New Guinea, Manus and Noemfoor.

With the beginning of the new year, she resumed fighter director duties to help cover the assault on Lingayen Gulf, Luzon Island; the Combat Air Patrol under her guidance destroyed four enemy planes on 8 January 1945. During the next few weeks, WICKES supported landings on San Felipe, Zambales Province, Grande Island in Subic Bay, and the paratroop landings on the historical Corregidor Island in Manila Bay.

WICKES had been in on this tremendous operation of puncturing holes throughout the entire Philippine Archipelago since the first invasion at Leyte, and had watched it grow until it had struck at the very heart of the Jap-held islands, Manila. The ship's gunfire had proved accurate and effective in silencing enemy shore batteries during the invasions in which she took part, and her direction of Combat Air Patrol was such that those on the beaches were often saved from being chewed to pieces by hordes of enemy aircraft. Her crew was proud of having really accomplished a job after the many months of comparative inactivity in the desolate northern Pacific.

After brief refresher exercises in landing operations and fighter director duties in the only recently friendly Leyte Gulf, WICKES sailed on 19 March as a member of Combat Destroyer Division 98 for the invasion of Okinawa Jima.

The destroyer acted as fire support vessel during the initial landing and then took her place as fighter director ship on 28 March. For the next 51 days, she remained on her tour of duty in the Okinawa area where she took enemy aircraft under fire on fourteen different occasions and is credited with destroying five; was the direct object of attack by Kamikaze planes on four different occasions, all of which missed; fired on a Jap plane in the midst of his dive on the hospital ship RELIEF; and rescued six men from the turbulent waters around Okinawa. Combat Air Patrols under her able direction sent 42 Nipponese aircraft spinning to a watery grave and sent four home damaged. The biggest kill was made in the late afternoon of 22 April while on picket station about 70 miles northwest of Okinawa when marine pilots from Yontan Field were sectored to a large raid approaching from the north and succeeded in knocking 26 Japs out of the sky.

The activities of the USS WICKES in this area has since resulted in her being awarded the Navy Unit Commendation, the text of which reads in part as follows:

"For outstanding heroism in action . . . during the Okinawa campaign, March 27 to May 15, 1945 . . . A gallant fighting ship, the WICKES, her officers and her men withstood the stress and the perils of vital Radar Picket duty, achieving a distinctive combat record which attests the teamwork, courage and skill of her entire company and enhances the finest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

WICKES was granted availability at Ulithi Atoll in the Western Caroline Islands, where she arrived on 21 May. She then returned to the Okinawa theater for a few days in June and joined a slow-moving convoy as escort, which convoy was moving from Okinawa to Pearl Harbor via Saipan.

WICKES' war days were over although her crew did not realize that they had seen the Japanese as an enemy for the last time. At Pearl Harbor, she pointed her bow eastward and sailed, together with three other destroyers, for the Golden Gate and home. The end of the war found her undergoing an overhaul at the U. S. Naval Drydocks, Hunter's Point, San Francisco. WICKES is now (November 1946) out of commission in reserve at San Diego, California.

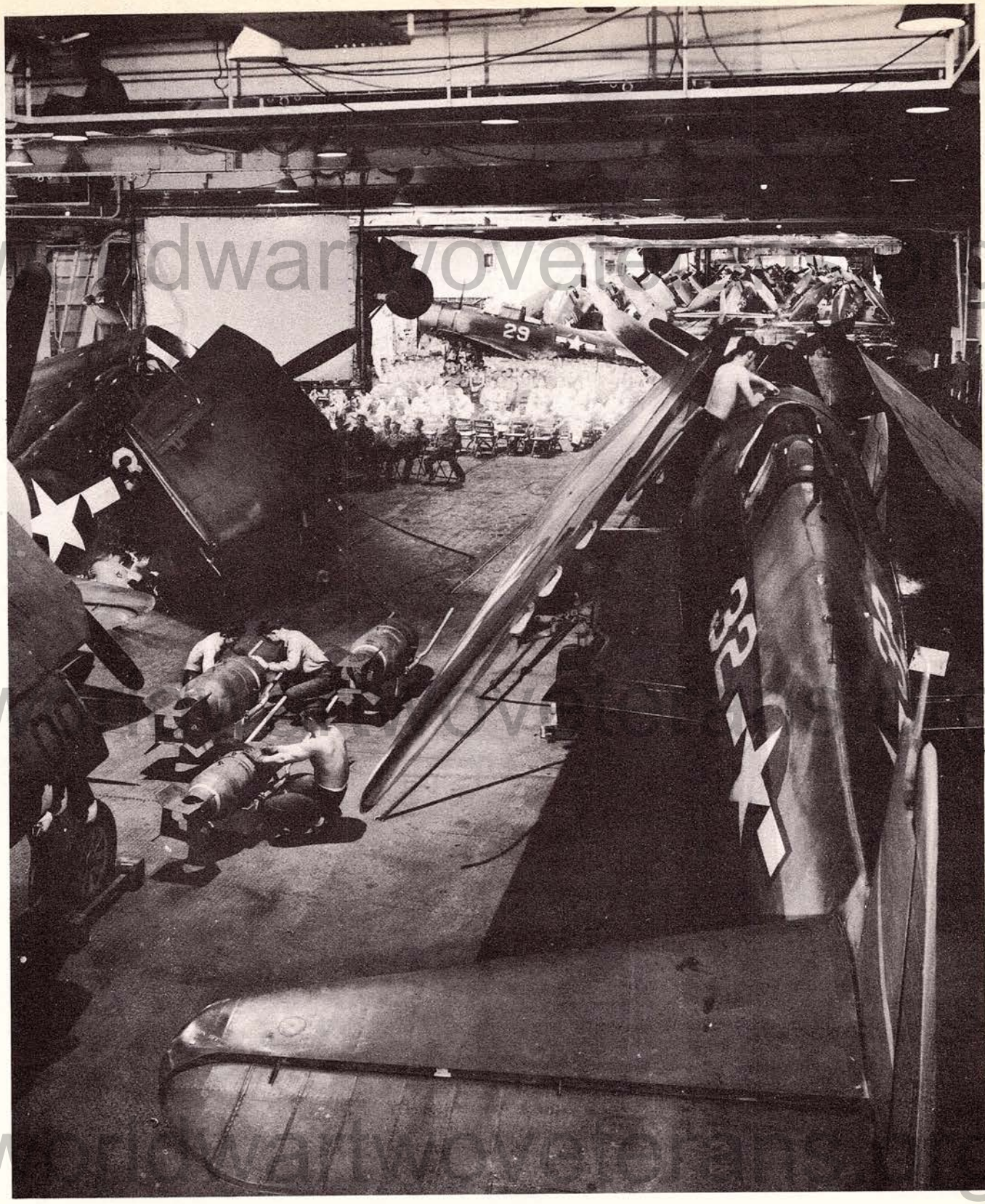
STATISTICS

Standard Displacement—2,050 tons.
Length Overall—376 feet 6 inches.
Beam—39 feet 4 inches.
Speed—35 knots plus
Complement—300 men plus
Armament — Five 5-inch 38 caliber dual purpose guns, ten 21-inch torpedo tubes, plus small AA guns.

OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

THE FIGHTING LADY LANDS HER PLANES

THE USS YORKTOWN, lost in the Battle of Midway, inflicted great damage on the enemy with her planes before going down on 7 June 1942. The three days of epic battle, marked by some of the most heroic sacrifices in American Naval history, gave the Japanese Navy the worst defeat it had suffered in 350 years. Twenty Jap ships were sunk or damaged in the battle including four carriers sent to the bottom, and 275 of their planes destroyed.



OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

HANGAR DECK OF THE USS YORKTOWN

ORDNANCE MEN ARMING PLANES on the hangar deck of the aircraft carrier USS YORKTOWN, while in the background men off duty are watching a movie.

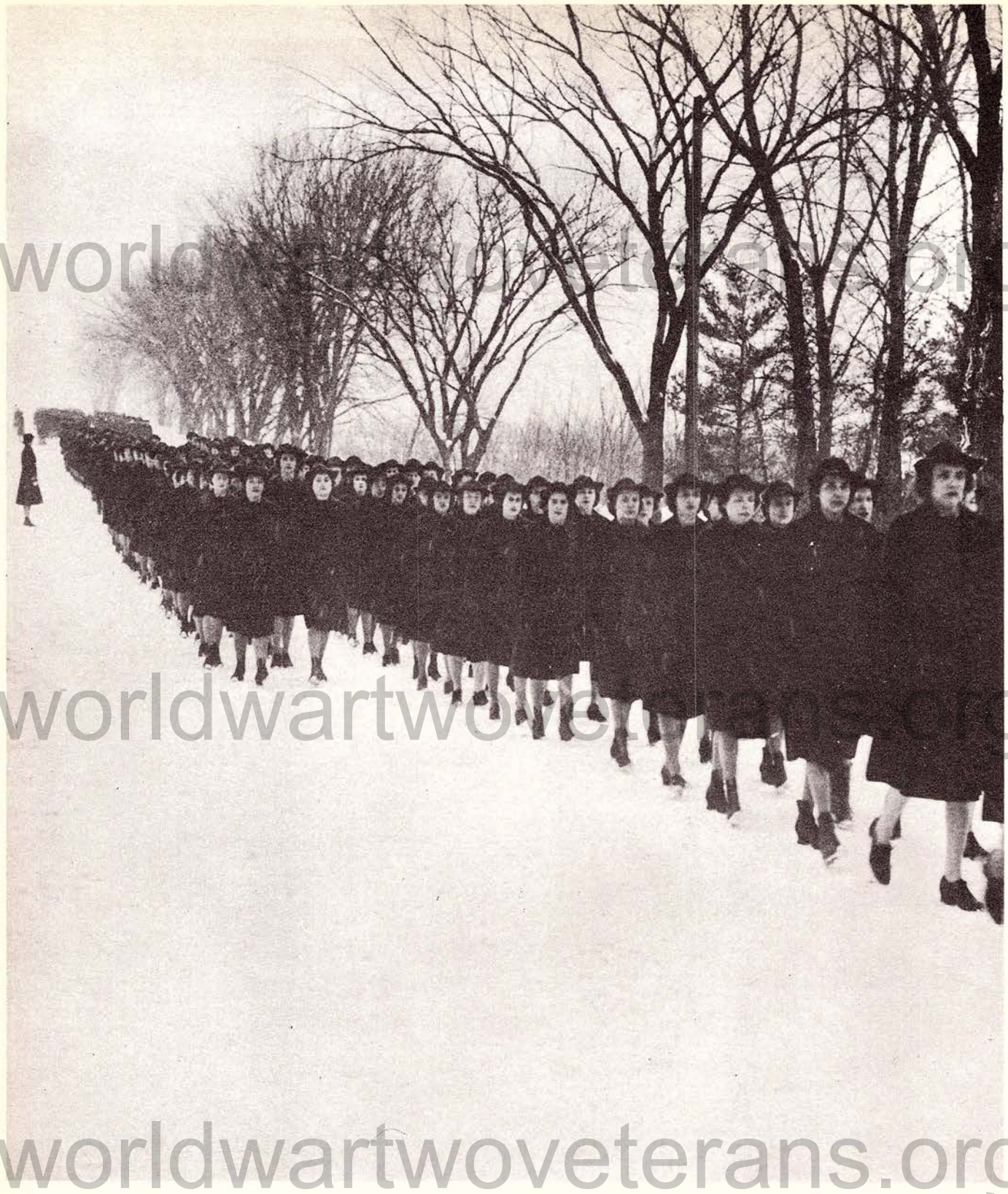
NAVY NURSES IN ALASKA

THE DEADLY COLD AND FOG-RIDDEN CLIMATE of the northwest still presented a major hazard to U.S. forces manning the frontier post even after the Japs had been driven out. This staff of Navy nurses remained on duty in Alaska, prepared to wage their own war against sickness.

OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

EVACUATION BY AIR FOR NAVAL CASUALTIES

FLIGHT NURSE CHECKS HER FIRST AID KIT before taking off on an aerial evacuation flight. Formalized instruction of medical personnel of the U.S. Navy to train them to treat and care for air evacuees en route was established at U.S. NAT Station at Alameda, Calif., in 1944. Flight nurses were carefully selected for both physical and professional qualifications.



OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

MARCHING THROUGH THE SNOW

SEAMEN AT WOMEN'S RESERVE NAVAL TRAINING SCHOOL at Cedar Falls, Iowa, marching back to their quarters after a formal Captain's Inspection on the parade ground. Rain, hail, snow or sleet make no difference when it's time for review at a naval indoctrination school.

OFFICIAL U.S. NAVY PHOTOGRAPH

THIRD-CLASS PETTY OFFICERS

SUCCESSFULLY PASSED THROUGH THE HURDLE of boot camp at Hunter College in New York, and through secondary training schools with flying colors — these members of the Navy Women's Reserve are ready to begin their duties for Uncle Sam. Petty Officer 3/C is equivalent to army sergeant.

OFFICIAL U.S. MARINE CORPS PHOTOGRAPH

GENERAL ALEXANDER A. VANDEGRIFT, Commandant U.S. Marine Corps.

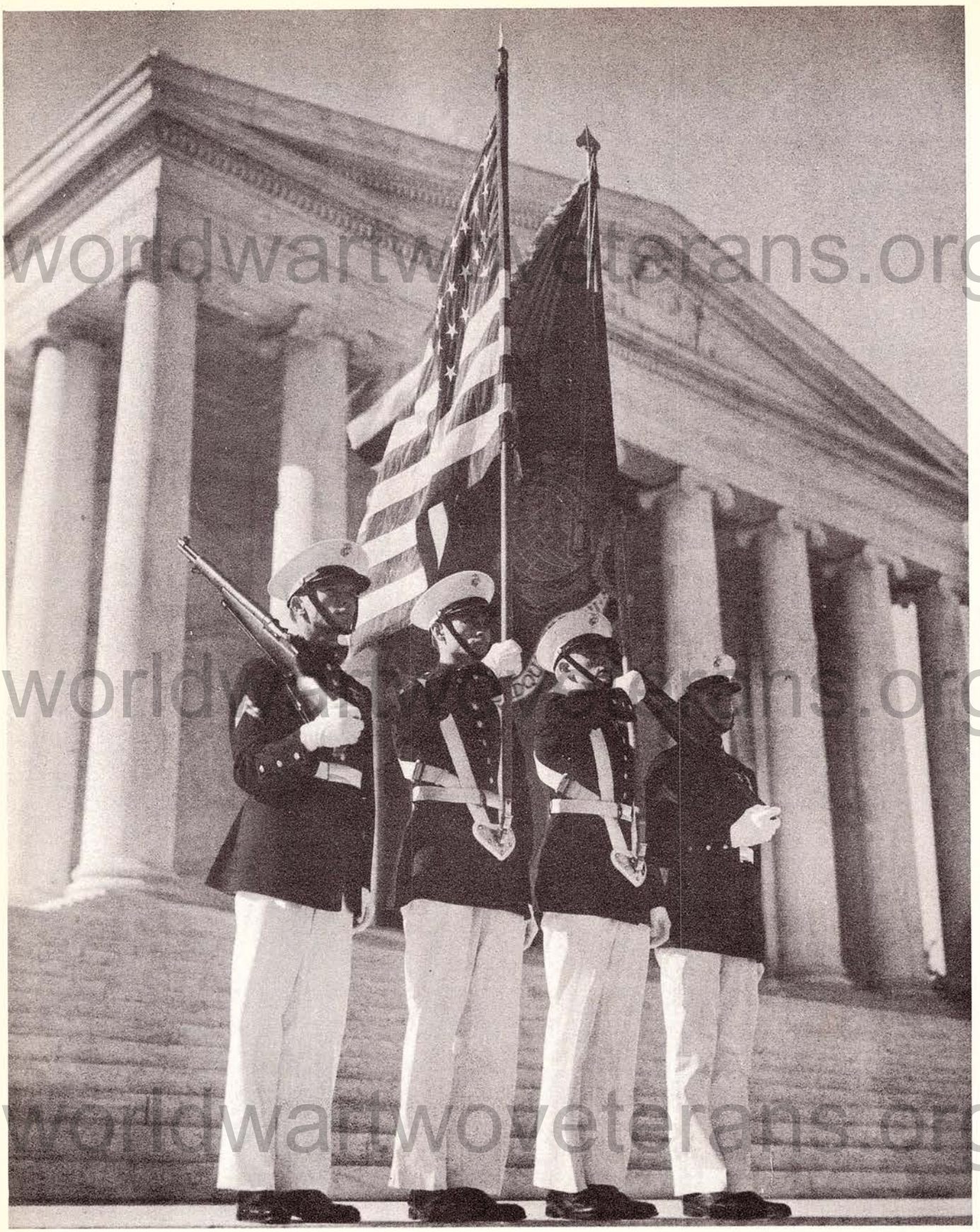
CHAPTER NINE

HISTORIES AND BATTLE LOGS

U. S. MARINE DIVISIONS
and
FIRST MARINE AIR WING

PACIFIC THEATER OF WAR

Courtesy, USMC



OFFICIAL U.S. MARINE CORPS PHOTOGRAPH

UNITED STATES MARINE COLOR GUARD, symbol of the proud heritage of America's most honored fighting men.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

1 MARINE DIVISION HISTORY

An outline of 1st Marine Division activities during the recent war, from a monograph by the Historical Section, HQMC.

THE First Marine Division came into existence February 1, 1941, by change of designation from the First Marine Brigade. The total strength, including the First Marine Aircraft Group (Colonel Field Harris, USMC) was approximately 2,000 officers and men. On the same date, Brigadier General Holland M. Smith, USMC, who had commanded the brigade since September 1939, was promoted to Major General and to command of the First Marine Division.

By March 31, 1941, the strength of the Division had increased to 306 officers and 7,288 enlisted men and included the following units:

Hq Co — 1st Lt. John E. Linch, USMCR

1st Serv Co—Capt. Robert V. Dallahan, USMC

1st Sig Co—Capt. Robert L. Peterson, USMC

3rd Tank Co — Capt. Charles G. Meints, USMC

1st Transport Co—Lt. Col. Martin J. Kelleher, USMC

1st Marines — Lt. Col. James F. Moriarity, USMC

5th Marines — Lt. Col. Alfred H. Noble, USMC

7th Marines—Col. Earl H. Jenkins, USMC

11th Marines—Col. Pedro del Valle, USMC

1st AAMG Btry—Capt. Victor H. Krulak, USMC

1st Chemical Co—Capt. Wallace M. Greene, Jr., USMC

1st Gd Co—1st Lt. Michael J. Davidowitch, USMCR

1st Scout Co—Capt. Henry W. Buse, Jr., USMC

The First Marine Brigade had conducted maneuvers in the Potomac River area and had carried out special landing operations in the vicinity of Culebra during the autumn and winter of 1939, where considerable progress was made in developing the technique of rubber boat landings, of landing heavy combat materiel, and of ship-to-shore supply. It was during these training operations that Brigadier General Smith and his First Marine Brigade carried out experiments to create a fast, sturdy landing boat that would slide over reefs and take men into shallow water. The Marines also experimented with a boat that would carry tanks into water shallow enough for them to roll ashore, and an amphibious tractor ("alligator") which had been built by Mr. Donald Roebling for use as a rescue craft in the Florida Everglades. These experiments were the beginning of a series that developed today's amphibious tanks and tractors and the diversified landing craft which have transported our fighting men ashore from Guadalcanal and Okinawa to Anzio and Normandy.

In the autumn of 1940, Brigadier General Smith took his First Marine Brigade, the single Alligator and the Higgins boats to the Caribbean for seven months' intensive training in beachhead landings. For nearly six months the Marines sweated it out in the jungles. True to the fighting man's tradition, they griped and growled, and cursed the steaming wilderness, the elements and the day they became Marines. And they came out of the jungles the best amphibious fighters in the world.

The First Marine Division participated in joint maneuvers with the United States Army and the Atlantic Fleet commencing in June 1941. On June 13, Major General Holland M. Smith relinquished command of the Division to Brigadier General Philip H. Torrey,

USMC, and assumed command of the First Corps (Provisional), United States Atlantic Fleet.

When the Fleet Marine Force on the East Coast consisted of only the First Marine Brigade, training was accomplished at Quantico, Virginia. Since the newly organized First Marine Division could not be trained in this manner, steps were taken to provide an adequate training center. The Marine Corps acquired approximately 85,000 acres of land in the vicinity of New River, North Carolina, and on April 28, 1941, began the construction of a permanent camp (Lejeune). The First Marine Division began moving to the new training center during the latter part of September, 1941, the Division Headquarters moving from Quantico to New River on September 26.

The Division was gradually built up from a total strength of 518 officers and 6,871 enlisted men on December 7, 1941 to war strength on May 1, 1942, and by July 31, 1942, had attained a strength of 577 officers and 11,753 enlisted men. Meanwhile, Major General Torrey, USMC, (promoted to that rank on November 13, 1941) turned over command of the Division to Major General Alexander A. Vandegrift, USMC, on March 23, 1942.

Expansion from a small pre-war nucleus — a skeletonized brigade — to a war strength division presented a serious problem in training, equipping and quartering, which was further complicated by the early detachment of the Third Brigade for immediate service in the Samoan Area. Formation of this provisional brigade, built around the Seventh Marines (reinforced), withdrew from the division a considerable number of officers, noncommissioned officers and men trained and experienced in amphibious warfare. As immediate replacement of the loss was impossible, the division was reconstituted as a two-infantry regiment division with supporting units, and remained so until the arrival of the Seventh Marines on Guadalcanal on September 18, 1942, returned it to the original triangular form of organization.

All units of the Division (except the First Marines which remained inactive from June 1941 until February 1942) participated in intensive training during the period from December 1941 to April 1942. In addition to this training at New River, N. C., each reinforced combat team of the Fifth Marines and one of the First Marines engaged in a ten-day landing exercise at Solomons Island, Maryland, during March and April, 1942. Although full advantage was taken of every opportunity and facility for training, it was considered that the Division had not yet attained a satisfactory state of readiness for combat when first intelligence of a plan (the "Lone Wolf" Plan) for the establishment of the SoPacAmphFor (South Pacific Amphibious Force) was received in mid-April, which called for the early movement of the Division (less Seventh Marines, reinforced) to New Zealand for the purpose of establishing a training base and conducting intensive amphibious training in preparation for active combat. At that time, it was estimated that no combat mission would be required of the Division prior to January 1, 1943.

In accordance with the Lone Wolf Plan, necessary establishments were obtained in the vicinity of Wellington, New Zealand, and arrangements were completed for the reception of the Division which was scheduled to move overseas in two echelons. The First Echelon, consisting of Division Headquarters, detachments of Division Special Troops, Second Battalion, Eleventh Marines, and the Fifth Marines, (reinforced) embarked on the **Wakefield** (formerly the **SS Manhattan**), the **Electra** and the **Del Brazil** at Norfolk, Virginia, and sailed on May 20, 1942, via the Panama Canal. The **Wakefield** arrived at New Zealand on June 14, and by June 19 the troops were disembarked and were living in seven camps in the Wellington area. The bulk of the remaining troops went from New River to San Francisco by rail and sailed June 22, 1942 on the **Lipscomb Lykes, Alcyone, Libra, Alchiba, Mizar, John Ericson, Barnett** and **Elliott.** By July 11, the remainder of the Division, including the Second Echelon (First Marines, reinforced, First Parachute Battalion and the Eleventh Marines) had arrived at New Zealand.

As the camps assigned to the Division were still under construction, a portion of the troops were living in two to four men huts, the remainder under canvas. All living quarters had wooden decks, raised from one to two feet off the ground, but company streets were unprepared and became a sea of mud after the first few hours of occupation. However, in spite of these conditions, together with recent debarkation from crowded transports after a 25 to 29 day voyage and the cold, wet climate of New Zealand winter, the sick rate was very low.

On June 26, twelve days after the arrival of the First Echelon, the Division Commander, Major General Alexander A. Vandegrift, USMC, was informed of a plan for an offensive operation in the South Pacific involving the employment of the First Marine Division, reinforced by the Second Marines, First Raider Battalion, and the Third Defense Battalion. The proposed theater of operations was to be the Solomon Islands, with the Tulagi-Guadalcanal area as the probable specific objective of a landing attack. The state of readiness of the Division and the complicating logistical factors involved in an operation at so early a date were appreciated by all concerned but were dismissed from consideration in

view of the urgency and high national importance of the projected undertaking.

At that time the Fifth Marines had reached New Zealand, had unloaded, and was in a position to reembark at once. The units of the Second Echelon, however, had not yet arrived, and it was apparent that only a few days would be available for them to unload, classify equipment and supplies and reload for combat on designated ships of the transport force. The difficulties presented by the limited time available were aggravated by the fact that the exact loading of incoming ships could not be ascertained prior to their arrival.

During the period from July 11 to 22, 1942, troops from the Rear Echelon were transferred from their trans-Pacific transports to the combat groups and to their combat transports. The total strength of the Division was 18,134 officers and men, including the Second Marine Regiment (reinforced) and the First Raider Battalion. Two-thirds of this number had continuous billets aboard crowded transports for one month, the remaining one-third had lived aboard ship for seven of the previous nine weeks, without opportunity for any physical conditioning.

At 0900 on July 22, the transport group carrying the Division left Wellington under naval escort for Koro Island in the Fijis to carry out rehearsals for the forthcoming Guadalcanal operation and to rendezvous with the remainder of the task force and the supporting naval air force. The Second Marines (reinforced), under the command of Colonel John M. Arthur, USMC, arrived in the area on July 26 and the following day reported by dispatch to the Commanding General, First Marine Division, for duty. The rendezvous was effected on July 26 and from July 28 to 31 rehearsals for the Solomon Islands operation were carried out at Koro Island. Due to beach conditions and the danger to landing boats, the landing exercises were carried out with only a small portion of the Division ashore.

At sunset on July 31, the entire force left the Koro Island area and began the approach to the Solomon Islands. The Third Defense Battalion joined the Division on August 1 while enroute from Koro Island to the Solomons. During the final two days of the approach, the sky was generally overcast with low ceiling and intermittent rain squalls — weather conditions which were very favorable for the movement of the task force. At 0240, August 7, 1942, the force split into two groups: the Tulagi group passed to the north of Savo Island and the Guadalcanal group passed to the south, between Savo Island and Cape Esperance.

On August 7, 1942, the First Marine Division (reinforced), supported by two naval task forces and other escorting naval units, opened the United States offensive against Japan by initiating ship-to-shore operations off the north coast of Guadalcanal and in the vicinity of Florida, Tulagi, Gavutu, and Tanambogo Islands, which surrounds the important naval anchorage of Tulagi Harbor about twenty miles north of Guadalcanal.

At 0740, Company B, Second Marines (Captain E. J. Crane, USMC), went ashore near Haleta on the west side of Florida Island, meeting no resistance. Shortly after 0800, the First Marine Raider Battalion, under the command of Colonel Merritt A. Edson, USMC, began landing on the southwest slope of the northern ridge of Tulagi, followed at 0916 by the Second Battalion, Fifth Marines, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Harold E. Rosecraus, USMC. The First Parachute Battalion, under the command of Major Robert H. Williams, USMC, landed on Gavutu at about noon. The landing on Guadalcanal Island began at 0910.

When the Second Battalion, Fifth Marines landed on Tulagi at 0916, all units of the First Marine Raider Battalion advanced to the southeast, meeting stiff opposition. After wiping out heavy enemy resistance on Hill 208, the attacking units came up against the principal enemy defenses which were concentrated in the ravine west of Hill 281, and on the steep slopes of the hill itself, located near the southeastern end of the island. The Japanese were strongly entrenched in cleverly constructed dugouts and tunnels, which could only be eliminated by grenades, explosives, and submachine guns. The enemy employed all the tricks for which he has become known, such as letting the points of units go through him and then firing on the main body. Snipers tied into trees, under houses, and behind rocks, continually harassed the attacking troops, with the result that each individual Japanese had to be stalked and killed. During the first night, the Marines on Tulagi engaged in a savage all-night fight with a cunning enemy who counterattacked, infiltrated, and tried every trick in his bag.

No serious breaks were made in the Marine lines during the night, and on the morning of August 8 the Leathernecks resumed the advance. Companies E and F, of the Second Battalion, Fifth Marines, who had mopped up the northwestern end of the island on the first day, pushed southeastward over the top of Hill 281. Company F flanked the enemy positions on the south which gave the assaulting troops mortar and machine gun positions on three sides of the main enemy concentration. At about 1500, Company G of the Fifth Marines and the Raiders advanced through the ravine, blasting the Japanese out of their principal strongpoints. By dusk physical occupation of Tulagi was complete.

The First Parachute Battalion encountered stiff opposition in the Gavutu operation. As they approached the beach, they came under heavy enemy fire from the northern slope of Hill 148, from trenches across the island to the westward, and from the south coast of Tanambogo, some five hundred yards across the water. After landing, their operations against the enemy dug in on the slopes of Hill 148 were hampered by sniper and machine gun fire from the adjacent island of Tanambogo. At about 1400 Major Williams was wounded and Major Charles A. Miller, USMC, assumed command of the Paramarines. After dive bombers had bombed and strafed Tanambogo for ten minutes and two destroyers had shelled it thoroughly, which caused the enemy fire from it against Gavutu to slacken considerably, the paratroops completed the physical occupation of Gavutu, raising the United States flag on Hill 148 at 1800, August 8. However, during the night many of the enemy swam over to Gavutu from Tanambogo and had to be mopped up the following day.

During the evening of August 7, Company B, second Marines, having been withdrawn from Florida Island, joined Major Miller's paratroops on Gavutu and at 1845 attempted a landing on the north coast of Tanambogo. This effort was unsuccessful due to the troops being silhouetted by a huge gasoline fire on the beach, which apparently had been set off by the naval gunfire preceding the attack. At 0615, August 8, the Third Battalion, Second Marines (Lieutenant Colonel Robert G. Hunt, USMC) reinforced the Paramarines on Gavutu. During the afternoon another and successful attack was made on Tanambogo, preceded by air and surface bombardment. Physical occupation of Tanambogo was completed on August 9.

In the fighting to secure Gavutu and Tanambogo, the Marines lost 108 killed, missing, or died of wounds, and 140 wounded; total Japanese casualties were 1,430 killed and 23 captured.

The first unit to land on Guadalcanal was the First Battalion, Fifth Marines, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel W. E. Maxwell, USMC. It was followed by the Third Battalion, Fifth Marines, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Frederick C. Biebush, USMC. After the beachhead had been secured, the First Marines (Colonel Clifton B. Cates, USMC) landed and moved to the westward toward the Matanikau River. By the end of the first day all three battalions of this regiment had reached positions along the east bank of the Ilu River.

Major General Alexander A. Vandegrift, USMC, was in personal command of the forces landing on Guadalcanal while the Assistant Division Commander, Brigadier General William H. Rupertus, USMC, was in general command of the landings on the smaller islands in the vicinity of Tulagi Harbor.

By the end of the first day, beachheads had been established on all these islands, except Tanambogo, and on August 9 a small American flag was hoisted at Kukum on Guadalcanal, the first marker on the long road to Tokyo. The bulk of the Division landed with little resistance on Guadalcanal and soon took possession of the partially completed landing field which became the center of war impact for all ground, sea, and air activities in the South Pacific until the Japanese forces were driven from the island on February 9, 1943.

By August 9, the First Engineer Battalion (Major James G. Fraser, USMC) was busy completing the runway of the airfield so that our own aircraft could use it. In spite of the enemy's efforts to slow up progress by dropping both high explosives and delayed action bombs along the landing strip, 3,778 feet of runway were available for use by August 18, two days before the first Marine Corps planes arrived.

To say that the First Marine Division operated on a shoestring during the early phase of the Guadalcanal campaign is merely to state the obvious. Immediately after the beachheads had been established, it was necessary to withdraw the carrier-borne air support, as well as the transports and supply vessels, because of the grave danger to these vessels operating so close to Japanese-controlled areas, leaving the Marines for the time being without air support (except what little could be provided by long-range patrol and bomber planes) and with only a small part of their supplies. There was no reserve of troops in the Southwest Pacific with which to reinforce the troops ashore; no land-based aviation was available and the night naval battle off Savo Island, (August 9) in which the Allies lost four heavy cruisers and suffered damage to a number of other vessels, had eliminated any support of naval strength that the Allies had in the general vicinity.

Almost immediately the Japanese took advantage of our lack of air and naval support and began bombing the Marine positions on Guadalcanal, making the adjacent waters almost untenable during daylight hours, while their surface forces entering these waters at night, controlled them almost completely and bombarded the airfield at will. At the same time, the Japanese High Command, reacting violently to the reverses ashore, began assembling troops to reinforce their scattered forces which had been driven from the vicinity of the airfield and preparing for counterattacks against the First Marine Division troops defending the airfield perimeter.

The Japanese apparently under-

estimated the strength of the First Marine Division or had little respect for their fighting ability. They landed reinforcements to the east of the airfield about ten days after the Marines had landed, and without waiting for adequate artillery and other supporting elements threw a detachment of approximately 1,200 men against the First Marines near the Ilu River during the early morning of August 21. At that time, the Ilu River was thought to be the Tenaru River and this action was termed the "Battle of the Tenaru." This enemy attack was repulsed by the Second Battalion, First Marines (Lieutenant Colonel Edwin A. Pollock, USMC), and supporting artillery, with heavy losses to the enemy. The First Battalion, First Marines (Lieutenant Colonel Lenard B. Cresswell, USMC), then crossed the river farther upstream and attacked the remaining Japanese on the flank, driving them into the sea and killing or capturing the entire force.

The enemy then concentrated substantial naval reinforcements in the general area with the apparent purpose of cutting off entirely the communication of the Marines to the south. Our naval forces moved in to stop this threat and the Battle of the Eastern Solomons (August 23-25) followed. However, this naval action proved somewhat indecisive, for the enemy retained practically full control of the sea, and the only supplies that reached the Marines on Guadalcanal during the remainder of August were those rushed in at great risk on light vessels.

Although the enemy's naval forces made no serious move for several weeks, he reinforced his forces on the flanks of the Marine positions for another attack to recapture the airfield. Major General Vandegrift knew that the enemy was preparing to attack but was unable definitely to determine its direction or probable force. Following the procedure used during the first attack (the battle of the Tenaru), the Japanese launched an attack at the south side of the Marines' perimeter during the night of September 13-14. This force had been landed from cruisers and destroyers in the vicinity of Koli Point east of the airfield perimeter and had cut trails through the dense jungle from the coast southwest across the Ilu River. The weight of the enemy attack hit a comparatively thin line on the ridge south of the airfield (later called "Bloody Ridge") held by the First Marine Raider Battalion, reinforced by the depleted First Parachute Battalion, under the command of Colonel Merrit A. Edson, USMC. The issue was in doubt for several hours but the battleworn Marines, supported by the 105s of the Fifth Battalion, Eleventh Marines (Lieutenant Colonel E. H. Price, USMC) rallied to the desperate situation and put up one of the most gallant and determined fights in the history of the Corps. About dawn of the following morning, the Second Battalion of the Fifth Marines (Division Reserve) reinforced the Raiders and Paramarines. A subsequent counterattack by the Marines ensued and the Japanese were thrown back with heavy losses and pursued into the jungle. Of the estimated 2,000 Japanese troops used in this attack, over 600 dead were left on the field and many more were killed in the mopping up operations.

During the afternoon of September 14, the Japanese also attacked from the Matanikau River along the beach road against the Fifth Marines, while another force attacked across the Tenaru River in the vicinity of the "Big Bend" against the First Marines. Both attacks were repulsed with heavy losses to the Japanese.

After the battle of Bloody Ridge, there was a brief lull in the fighting, except for extensive patrolling by the Marines. Patrol reports indicated that the Japanese were building up practically an entire division to the west in the vicinity of Kokumbona in preparation for an all-out offensive to recapture the airfield. On September 18, 1942, the Seventh Marines (Reinforced), under the command of Colonel James W. Webb, USMC, and the First Battalion, Eleventh Marines (Lieutenant Colonel Joseph R. Knowlan, USMCR), rejoined the Division from the Samoan area and were assigned positions along the southern part of the airfield perimeter. On September 20, Colonel Amor L. Sims, USMC, relieved Colonel Webb of command of the Seventh.

In the meantime, Major General Vandegrift advanced his lines to the Matanikau River in order to prevent the enemy from moving artillery within effective range of the airfield. When the Japanese naval force moved in for the obvious purpose of laying down a bombardment to cover the landing of additional troops and to knock out Guadalcanal's aviation, one of our naval task forces (Admiral Scott) moved out the night of October 11-12 and engaged the enemy, an action which has been officially termed the Battle of Cape Esperance. Both sides suffered some losses but the bold action on the part of Admiral Scott prevented further critical night bombardment of the Marines' positions.

At sunset of October 13, Japanese long range artillery of heavy caliber opened fire on Henderson Field and vicinity from positions near Kokumbona. During the same night the Lunga Point area was bombarded by ships' gunfire and artillery. The enemy bombardment fleet consisted of three or more battleships, several cruisers and numerous destroyers which pounded the Marines' positions for nearly two hours. Our losses were forty-one killed with considerable damage to aircraft

particularly bombardment types, and nearly complete disruption of communications.

Shortly after the bombardment had ceased the early morning of October 14, Japanese land forces attacked the Marines' lines from the east, from the west and from the south. The assaults were beaten back after heavy fighting. At about the same time a heavily escorted convoy of several large transports was sighted enroute to Guadalcanal. Our few available planes were able to sink one transport and damage another before darkness forced them to return to Henderson Field.

At daylight the following morning (October 15), the remaining five enemy transports were observed unloading troops and supplies in the vicinity of Tassafaronga—Doma Reef, some ten miles west of the Henderson Field perimeter. Our small force of fighters and dive bombers made repeated attacks on the Japanese transports, destroying three and forcing the other two to flee. One of the remaining two transports was destroyed by a formation of Army B-17s. The Japanese managed to land considerable reinforcements, but the amount of supplies and equipment taken ashore was negligible.

During the days following October 15, there were repeated punishing naval bombardments and daily attacks by the Japanese. Enemy artillery fire increased in volume and accuracy. Major General Vandegrift could do very little in the way of ground activity except carry out extensive patrolling and await the enemy's next move. The troops of the initial landing force were exhausted from the constant pounding from land, sea and air, weakened by malaria — which had become critical—and the new arrivals were not yet ready to undertake offensive operations.

On the afternoon of October 21, following an artillery and mortar barrage, the Japanese launched an attack on the Marines' advance position near the mouth of the Matanikau River, using tanks supported by infantry. The attack was broken up, the enemy losing at least one tank and suffering heavy casualties. They put down a heavy artillery and mortar preparation on the same area the afternoon of October 23, and followed up with a strong tank-infantry attack. The Marines' 75mm guns on half-tracks and 37mm anti-tank guns knocked out one enemy tank after another, while the massed infantry following behind the tanks were slaughtered by a terrific barrage from practically all the artillery on Guadalcanal, as well as machine gun, mortar and rifle fire. The battle raged for nearly eight hours, as the enemy made repeated attempts to cross the river. One Japanese tank succeeded in penetrating our position but it was quickly put out of action when a Marine slipped a grenade under the track when the tank passed over his foxhole. A total of thirteen enemy tanks was destroyed and an entire regiment wiped out. This was one of the few decisive actions where the defender's artillery was able to keep the attacker's infantry from closing with that of the defender's.

During the night of October 24-25, a Japanese regiment made an attack on the airfield perimeter from the south through the woods between Bloody Ridge and the Lunga River. Heavy fighting continued until dawn, at which time the enemy withdrew, leaving the open field and woods scattered with dead and dying Japanese. The enemy renewed the attack the following night and although the attack was stronger than the previous night, it was repulsed with heavy loss to the Japanese. At the same time, a strong enemy force which had crossed the Matanikau River the night of October 23-24, attempted to outflank the Marines' Matanikau River position by cutting in behind the left flank. A hastily organized force, composed of personnel from the Headquarters Company and Weapons Company of the Seventh Marines, counter-attacked and after bitter, close-combat fighting in the darkness the Japanese were thrown back with heavy losses.

Meanwhile, the Japanese naval units were moving toward Guadalcanal. On the morning of October 26, our carriers and other naval units moved out to intercept, which resulted in the Battle of Santa Cruz. In this battle of the aircraft carriers, our planes put two enemy carriers out of action and practically wiped out four Japanese air groups, which definitely broke up Japanese attempts to bombard Guadalcanal.

Immediately after their decisive victories over the Japanese in the night actions of October 21, 23, and 25, and the Navy's bold stand in the Battle of Santa Cruz, the Marines of the First Division returned to the offensive. The Second Marines, commanded by Colonel John M. Arthur, USMC, (less the Third Battalion which was already on Guadalcanal) moved from Tulagi to support the Fifth Marines (Colonel Merritt A. Edson, USMC) in the attack to the west; the Third Battalion, Second Marines, which for six weeks had been Mobile Division Reserve, was returned to Tulagi for garrison duty and a well earned rest.

At about daybreak, November 1, 1942, the Fifth Marines followed by the Second Marines, began crossing the Matanikau River on four bridges, which had been constructed by First Division engineers during the night. Meanwhile Colonel William J. Whaling's group of scout-snipers and the Third Battalion, Seventh Marines crossed the Nippon bridge and advanced by inland trails, as protection for the left flank of the main attacking force. The Fifth Marines began the

advance with the First and Second Battalions in the assault wave. The Second Battalion, meeting light opposition, advanced rapidly but the First Battalion on the right was slowed by a strong Japanese force which offered stubborn resistance. The following morning, the Second Battalion wheeled to the right toward the beach and cut off this pocket of resistance in the First Battalion zone near Point Cruz. In mopping up this resistance on November 3, the Fifth Marines gave the enemy "Banzai" warriors a lesson in bayonet technique by making three successful bayonet assaults on the enemy positions during the afternoon.

The Fifth Marines and Colonel Whaling's group were relieved in the forward positions on November 4 by the Second Marines, reinforced by the First Battalion, 164th Infantry. However, the offensive in the west was halted and the Second Marine Regiment was withdrawn to a position about 1,000 yards west of the Matanikau River when it was learned that the enemy was building up large naval and ground forces in the Rabaul-Buin area and were landing fresh troops to the eastward of the airfield perimeter.

On the 167th anniversary of the birth of their Corps the Marines of the First Marine Division, undaunted in the face of potential disaster, grimly prepared to counter another major enemy blow. Almost completely exhausted by three months of continuous fighting, heat, malaria, lack of sleep, and matching wits with the cunning Japanese and the treacherous jungle, they were determined to hold their positions which protected Henderson Field, although there was a feeling in some quarters that the overwhelming power of the enemy's all-out assault would make Guadalcanal another heroic tragedy like Wake Island, Bataan and Corregidor.

While the Japanese were concentrating this striking power in the Rabaul area, the American high command was rushing supplies, additional naval units and ground troops from various South Pacific ports (including some Army troops) to reinforce and strengthen Guadalcanal. Our available combatant surface forces, under the command of Vice Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr., USN, although greatly outnumbered by the Japanese, had the seemingly impossible task of guarding the troops and cargo convoy and simultaneously countering the new enemy offensive.

The first round of the "Battle of Guadalcanal" was fought during the early morning hours of November 13, 1942, when Rear Admiral Daniel J. Callaghan, USN, on the heavy cruiser **San Francisco,** led his cruiser-destroyer force against a Japanese battleship force which was enroute to bombard Guadalcanal. This force, outnumbered and out-gunned, lost two light cruisers and four destroyers and suffered damage to two heavy cruisers, one light cruiser and three destroyers, but it sent to the bottom one Japanese battleship, one light cruiser and four destroyers and inflicted considerable damage to a second battleship, one heavy cruiser and one light cruiser—a crippling blow which prevented the enemy from bombarding Guadalcanal at that time. However, a Japanese force of cruisers and destroyers shelled Henderson Field during the early morning of the following day until the attack was broken up by our PT boats. Later in the day, this bombardment force was attacked by aircraft from Guadalcanal which damaged two heavy and two light cruisers. The planes broke off the attack upon receipt of word that the Japanese main invasion force had been located to the north enroute to Guadalcanal.

This force, which consisted of twelve large transports preceded by a strong force of battleships, cruisers and destroyers and escorted by aircraft, was hammered by every available aircraft in the South Pacific — Marine Corps planes from Henderson Field, Navy carrier aircraft, and Army bombers. Seven of the transports were destroyed and four were damaged. The four damaged vessels were beached on Guadalcanal's northwest shore and most of the troops reached land, but practically all of the gear on board was lost. The next morning the four beached transports were bombed and strafed by aircraft from Henderson Field and shelled by Marine Corps artillery and a Navy destroyer.

During the early hours of November 15, our naval forces, led by the battleships **Washington** and **South Dakota,** rang down the curtain on the Battle of Guadalcanal by winning a decisive victory over a powerful enemy surface force, to the north of Savo Island.

The Japanese made a final attempt to land troops and supplies on Guadalcanal during the night of November 30-December 1, but this effort was frustrated when our naval forces intercepted the enemy destroyer-transport group near Savo Island and turned it back.

On December 9, 1942, after four months of continuous fighting which was highlighted by the battles of the Tenaru and Matanikau Rivers, and the battle of "Bloody Ridge," the First Marine Division was relieved by U. S. Army troops and units of the Second Marine Division, under the command of Major General A. M. Patch, U. S. A.

The First Marine Division suffered a total of 2,225 battle casualties on Guadalcanal (636 killed, 52 died of wounds and 1,537 wounded), which did not include the thousands of men temporarily incapacitated by malaria.

The Presidential Unit Citation was awarded the First Marine Division, reinforced, for outstanding gallantry and determination in suc-

cessfully landing and routing all the enemy forces and holding their important strategic positions despite determined and repeated Japanese naval and land attacks, also for the courage and determination displayed in a series of offensive operations against strong enemy resistance which drove the Japanese from the vicinity of the airfield and inflicted great losses on them by land and air attacks.

From Guadalcanal, the First Marine Division moved first to Brisbane then to the vicinity of Melbourne, Australia, for a period of rehabilitation, rest and reequipping. The long used .03 Springfield rifle had been replaced by the M-1 Garand and all battalions took turns in firing all their small arms at the Williamstown rifle range, particular emphasis being placed on training with the newly acquired Garand rifle. Also included in the nine-month training period was amphibious maneuvers in Port Phillips Bay, landing team exercises, classroom work, conditioning hikes and training in tank-infantry cooperation, as well as the usual training of individuals and of small units. One of the features of the conditioning program was a sixty-five mile march from Camp Seymour to the outskirts of Melbourne. Rations for the trek—which was made in approximately thirty-six hours—consisted of one cup of rice, a small bag of raisins, four strips of bacon, and one tablespoonful of coffee carried and prepared by each officer and enlisted man.

On July 8, 1943, General Vandegrift, who had been assigned to command the First Marine Amphibious Corps, turned over command of the Division to Major General William H. Rupertus, USMC.

During the period from September 19 to October 23, 1943, the Division moved from the various camps near Melbourne, Australia, to staging areas at Oro Bay, Milne Bay, and Goodenough Island, New Guinea. Camps had been established in these areas by the Seventeenth Marines (Engineer) which had left Australia on August 19 and 24, 1943. The first convoy (Forward Echelon of the Seventh Marines, reinforced) arrived at Oro Bay October 2, the second convoy (Fifth Marines, reinforced; the Second Echelon of the Seventh Marines, reinforced; and the Forward Echelon of the Division Headquarters) arrived at Milne Bay and Goodenough Island October 8, the third convoy (First Marines, reinforced) arrived at Goodenough Island October 15, and the fourth and final convoy (Rear Echelon of the First Marines, reinforced, and the Rear Echelon of Division Headquarters) arrived at Goodenough Island on October 23.

On the morning of December 26, 1943, the First Division, under the command of Major General Rupertus, went ashore on Cape Gloucester at the western end of New Britain. The Seventh Marines (Colonel Julian W. Frisbie, USMC) formed the initial wave of the main landing force, which established a beachhead north of Silimati Point. While the Second and Third Battalions of the Seventh Marines (Lieutenant Colonels Odell M. Conoley and William R. Williams, USMC) pushed inland, expanding the beachhead to the westward, the First Battalion, Seventh Marines (Lieutenant Colonel John E. Weber, USMC), advanced to the southeast and secured Target Hill.

The First Marines (less First and Second Battalions), under the command of Colonel William J. Whaling, USMC, landed about thirty minutes behind the Seventh Marines and moved up the coast toward the Cape Gloucester Airfield. Meanwhile, the Second Battalion, First Marines (Lieutenant Colonel James M. Masters, Sr., USMC), had landed on the opposite side of Cape Gloucester to block enemy escape routes on the west coast and to prevent enemy reinforcements from reaching the airfield area.

After repulsing a number of enemy counterattacks during the first night, the advance towards the airfield was resumed the morning of December 27. The First Marines advanced the front line to a point about a mile and a half south of the airfield. Meanwhile the Seventh Marines expanded the beachhead perimeter and improved their positions.

Beginning at 0800, December 29, the Fifth Marines (Colonel John T. Selden, USMC) began landing at Cape Gloucester and at 1500 an all-out attack was launched on the enemy-held airfield. The Fifth Marines moved inland to a grassy ridge southeast of the airfield, then attacked to the northwest in an enveloping maneuver, while the First Marines, supported by tanks, advanced along the coast. By nightfall, the First Marines reached the airfield and set up a perimeter defense covering the southeastern side of the airdrome area, while the Fifth Marines established a line to the west of the airfield from the coast to the right flank of the First Marines. Thus, the airfield was secured.

Shortly after midnight, December 30, an enemy force moved up from the south and attacked positions held by the Second Battalion, First Marines, on the west side of Cape Gloucester. In the ensuing action, called the "Battle of Coffin Corner," nearly 100 Japanese were killed and the remainder forced to flee into the jungle. Our casualties were six killed and seventeen wounded.

Intermittent fighting behind the airdrome area and mopping up operations continued during the morning of December 30. At 1300, Major General Rupertus, USMC, Commanding General, First Marine Division, sent a dispatch to the Commanding General, Sixth Army, in which he said: "First Marine Division presents to you as an early

New Year gift the complete airdrome of Cape Gloucester . . ." At 1200, December 31, the American Flag was raised over Cape Gloucester by Major General Rupertus.

Following the capture of the Cape Gloucester Airdrome, the Seventh Marines, the Third Battalion, Fifth Marines, the First and Fourth Battalions of the Eleventh Marines, the Second Battalion, Seventeenth Marines, and other units of the Division were placed under the command of Brig. Gen. Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., USMC, the Assistant Division Commander, and assigned the mission of driving all enemy forces from the Borgen Bay area.

The initial attack jumped off from the beachhead perimeter at 1000, January 2, 1944, the units advancing toward the rugged hills and ridges to the southeast. The two weeks that followed were a period of bitter fighting against a determined enemy entrenched along the rivers and streams and on the commanding heights, as well as a constant struggle against the swamps and mud, the devilish kunai grass, tropical storms and other obstacles of terrain and nature. The Japanese counterattacked again and again with savage fury, but Marine Corps artillery, tanks, grenades and bayonets inflicted heavy casualties. Hill 150 fell to the Marines on January 6; Aogiri Ridge was seized in a bloody battle on January 9 and held despite a series of savage enemy counterattacks; Hill 660 (called "Manju Yamma" by the Japanese) was assaulted on January 13 and 14 and by January 15, after bitter fighting, was clear of enemy forces.

On January 17, the Seventh Marines was relieved by the Fifth Marines, Colonel John T. Selden, USMC, Commanding Officer of the latter regiment, taking over command of the sector at 1200. With the fall of Hill 660 and relief of the Seventh Marines, the Borgen Bay phase of the New Britain campaign came to an end.

From January 22 to February 15, 1944, extensive patrolling of the western part of New Britain was carried out by First Marine Division units. On January 23, an amphibious force from the Fifth Marines, supported by tanks and a rocket DUKW, landed and captured Natamo Point, then advanced eastward to the Natamo River. On January 30, 1944, the patrols in the area west of the line, Borgen Bay-Itni River, were placed under Colonel Lewis B. Puller, USMC, with headquarters at Agulupella. A strong patrol was sent to Turitei, and on February 6, forward elements of this force reached Nigol, en route to Gilnit (at the fork of the Itni and Potsaken Rivers) to contact an Army patrol from Arawe.

On February 11, Colonel Puller's Marines arrived at Gilnit. After waiting forty-eight hours for the Army patrol, they returned to Turitei, leaving one platoon at Gilnit. The contact was made with the U. S. Army forces on February 17, and the following day Colonel Puller's force left Agulupella and returned to the First Marine Division perimeter at Cape Gloucester.

During the month of February 1944, the Fifth Marines (reinforced), using a few LCMs and jungle trails, had carried out shore-to-shore operations along the north coast of New Britain between Borgen Bay and Iboki, transportating and marching thousands of men and tons of supplies and equipment for more than sixty miles.

Meanwhile, on February 12, 1944, Company B, First Marines (reinforced), landed on Rooke (Umboi) Island, in the Dampier Strait, a short distance west of New Britain, meeting no opposition.

On March 6, 1944, the Fifth Marines (reinforced), under the command of Colonel O. P. Smith, USMC, moved from Iboki Plantation and landed near Volupai Plantation on the western coast of the Willaumez Peninsula. The battalions fanned out across the peninsula and on March 8, a patrol from the Second Battalion occupied the Talasea Airfield. The three Battalions of the Fifth Marines, supported by artillery of the Second Battalion, Eleventh Marines, First Tank Battalion, First Special Weapons Battalion, First Amphibian Tractor Battalion, and other small units, launched a coordinated attack against the Waru Villages on the morning of March 9. By 1300, the entire Talasea area was clear of Japanese.

During the following week, units of the Fifth Marines patrolled the Willaumez Peninsula area, wiping out pockets of resistance and driving enemy forces westward toward Rabaul. The Fifth Marines was relieved on April 25, 1944, by the 185th Infantry Regiment, Fortieth Division.

Meanwhile, the First Battalion, First Marines, had landed March 11, 1944, at Linga Linga Plantation on Eleanora Bay. After covering the area by patrols and killing and capturing more than one hundred Japanese, the battalion returned to Cape Gloucester on March 18.

The First Division was relieved in the Cape Gloucester-Talasea area on April 28, 1944, by the 40th Infantry Division, under the command of Major General Rapp Brush, U. S. Army.

Incomplete casualty figures show that the First Marine Division suffered 291 killed and 1,036 wounded, while capturing 486 Japanese and killing more than 8,000.

During the period, April 24 to May 8, 1944, units of the Division moved from the Cape Gloucester area to Pavuvu Island, Russell Islands, the new Division training area. The First Echelon disembarked on April 27, the Second Echelon on May 3, and the Third Echelon on May 8.

Upon arrival in the Russell's, the

Division began its reorganization in accordance with new Tables of Organization. The First Special Weapons Battalion was disbanded on May 20, 1944, and on June 30, 1944, the Seventeenth Marines (Engineer) was disbanded and its units redesignated as follows: Regimental Headquarters and Service Company as Headquarters and Service Company, First Engineer Battalion; Headquarters Company and Companies A, B, and C of the First Battalion as Companies A, B, and C, First Engineer Battalion; Headquarters Company and Service Companies D, E, and F, Second Battalion as Headquarters and Service Company and Companies A, B, and C, First Pioneer Battalion. On May 19, 1944, Marine Observation Squadron 3 (VMO-3) operating from Banika Island in the Russells was attached to the Eleventh Marines for artillery observation duty.

Meanwhile, on May 9, 1944, Major General William H. Rupertus, USMC, pursuant to orders of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, left for temporary duty in Washington, D. C. and Brigadier General Oliver P. Smith, USMC, Assistant Division Commander, assumed command of the Division. Major General Rupertus returned and assumed command of the Division on June 20, 1944.

During the months of June, July and August, 1944, the Division carried out amphibious training exercises in preparation for its next operation. The training program, however, was conducted under handicaps — limitation of training space and shortage of equipment. Pavuvu was inadequate in area and terrain. Space was so restricted that battalion problems overran the camp area, with troops maneuvering among tents and mess halls. However, despite the limited training areas and other difficulties at Pavuvu, it was not recommended that the Division be staged in another area, as the time required for the construction of camp facilities, would once again cut deeply into the training period. Landings were practiced by the battalions with attention to transshipping reserve waves from LCVPs into amphibian vehicles and the infantry regiments rehearsed landings out of LVTs and DUKWs over fringing coral reefs. In the ground phases of training the infantry regiments concentrated combat firing with all arms, assault of pillboxes with flame throwers and bazookas under cover of small arms fire, infantry-tank and infantry-artillery coordination, and combat conditioning. Regimental schools were conducted in demolition, chemical defense and flamethrowers. A Division individual combat school, attended by 300 instructors from the regiments and separate battalions (in three one-week sessions), was conducted in which subjects such as bayonet (Marine Corps method), knife, club, judo, hip level snap shooting, and combat conditioning were given.

On August 26, 1944, the Division left Pavuvu Island and moved to Cape Esperance, Guadalcanal, for two landing rehearsals (designed to test the Division's Operation Plan for the Peleliu Operation) which were carried out on August 27 and 29. A division Rear Echelon remained at Pavuvu under the command of Lieutenant Colonel John D. Muncie, USMC. Troops in LSTs departed on September 4, 1944, for the Palau Islands and troops in the transports followed on September 8.

After the Marianas campaign, the Allied offensive in the Pacific shifted to the south and west. On September 15, 1944, following a lengthy and effective naval and air bombardment, the First Marine Division, under the command of Major General William H. Rupertus, USMC, stormed ashore on Peleliu, a rugged, wooded island in the southern part of the Palaus, closest important island group to the Philippines. At 0832, the First, Fifth, and Seventh Marines, left to right, hit the beach on the southwest coast of Peleliu immediately adjacent to the airfield. Colonel Lewis B. Puller, USMC, was in command of the First Marines, Colonel Harold D. Harris, USMC, the Fifth Marines and Colonel Herman H. Hannekin, USMC, the Seventh Marines.

Although they had to cross one of the worst coral reefs since Tarawa and face strong opposition from veteran Japanese troops, the Marines of the First Division as usual made a successful landing. The enemy was emplaced in well-prepared defensive positions which took advantage of every feature of the rugged terrain. All pillboxes and casemates were in logical commanding positions and all were linked in a system of mutual cover and support. On the high ground near the airfield and on both flanks of the beach, there were a number of mountain, anti-boat and anti-tank guns arranged in such a manner as to provide a field of fire covering the entire landing beach. While enemy mortar shells walked up and down the beach in bloody regularity and enemy artillery churned the water into a dirty, debris-laden froth, the assault troops crossed over the reef in LVTs and hit the beach, where they immediately came under a withering fire from enemy machine guns concealed in caves and pillboxes and from snipers camouflaged in the crags and trees.

The Japanese made three well organized and determined counter-attacks during the afternoon of the first day—the first attack on the center, the second on the left and the third on the center. All three assaults were broken up and most of the enemy tanks were destroyed by our tanks, bazookas and anti-tank guns. (Counterattacks at 0300 and 0600.)

Beginning at dawn the second

day, the Marines began cleaning out the enemy caves and pillboxes, using bazookas, flamethrowers, mortars, and tanks; however, the intense heat, heavy mortar fire, and stiff resistance from concrete pillboxes and other fortified positions slowed the advance. The second day brought more enemy attacks which were again spearheaded by tanks. During the morning, seven Japanese tanks, attacking a detail of the First Division Commissary Unit, were knocked out by a Sherman tank and three planes. Shortly after noon, in a free-for-all tank battle, Marine Corps tanks destroyed fifteen Japanese tanks while losing one of their own. By nightfall the First Division had captured Peleliu Airfield and were in position to assault the high ground to the front.

The Division resumed its attack on the morning of September 17, under the cover of naval gunfire, artillery and aircraft. The day's operation resulted in the capture of the southern part of the island by the Seventh Marines, including the town of Asias and tiny Ngarmoked Island off the southern tip of Peleliu. During the day, the Eighty-first Infantry Division landed on Angaur Island in order to prevent Japanese artillery from harassing the Marines on Peleliu. This landing was supported by Marine Corps heavy artillery emplaced on Peleliu.

Jumping off at 0700, September 19, the Division attacked northward. On the right, the Fifth Marines advanced rapidly and seized the area of Ngardololok to the northeast while the First Marines continued its difficult operations against the rugged terrain and determined resistance along the west coast. By September 20, the Fifth Marines had a secure hold on the eastern coast and the First Marines was making slow but steady progress in its sector. During the day, the Seventh Marines moved into position on the right of the First Marines.

On September 21, in an all-out attack, the Fifth Marines completed the seizure of the entire eastern coast, but very little progress was made on the left against the four-mile-long ridge, which proved to be a formidable obstacle. This natural fortress was riddled with covered rifle pits and pillboxes large enough to accommodate two or three riflemen. About 1,000 yards north of the airfield at the southern extremity of this ridge was a commanding terrain feature called by the Marines "Bloody Nose Ridge." For six long days, this pillbox-studded height was the scene of bitter, bloody fighting, as the Marines inched forward under the cover of artillery, rocket and naval barrages, and aerial bombing and strafing.

During the afternoon of September 22, advance elements of the 321st Infantry Regiment, 81st Division, moved from Angaur to Peleliu to relieve the First Marines which had suffered heavy casualties in the bitter fighting on Bloody Nose Ridge. The relief of the First Marines was completed by dark, September 23, and this regiment occupied the area held by the Fifth Marines, the latter regiment moving into Division Reserve. During the late afternoon, a battalion of the 321st Infantry, supported by tanks, advanced along the west coast road attacking toward the village of Garekoru.

The attack was resumed the morning of September 24, following an intense air and artillery bombardment. After capturing the village of Garekoru, the 321st Infantry Regiment began an attack to the eastward, but its advance was slowed by enemy resistance from Kamilianlul Mountain.

During the morning of September 25, the 321st Infantry Regiment reached the ridge line east of Garekoru. Shortly after noon the First Marines took over the sector of the Fifth Marines and the latter regiment passed through the 321st Infantry Regiment and attacked to the northeast. The Fifth Marines moved up the west coast of the island and dug in for the night in front of Amiangal Mountain near the northern tip of the island.

By September 26, the Japanese defenses on Peleliu began cracking under the terrific pressure exerted by our troops. Both the Fifth Marines and the 321st Infantry chalked up new gains over the rugged island terrain which the Japanese had defended so desperately. The Fifth Marines captured the hill located about 1,000 yards southwest of Amiangal Mountain and a second height which flanked this mountain on the north.

The American Flag was raised in front of the First Marine Division Command Post at 0800 September 27, officially confirming the fact that the situation on Peleliu was well in hand. By dusk, the Fifth Marines had advanced around the northern point of Peleliu, capturing the remainder of the high ground on the northern part of the island. Although the Japanese put up a stubborn defense from caves and natural barriers, our forces secured the larger portion of Peleliu Island except for a few pockets of resistance.

On the morning of September 28, the Third Battalion, Fifth Marines, supported by armored LVTs and Sherman tanks crossed the coral reef along the northern coast of Peleliu and seized Ngesebus Island. The attack was supported by warships, aircraft, and First Marine Division artillery emplaced on Peleliu. **Corsair** fighter planes of Marine Fighting Squadron 114 covered the landing by strafing the beaches. Shortly after noon, this small amphibious force captured the airfield and before nightfall, had overcome all enemy resistance on Ngesebus except a pocket on the northwestern tip, and also controlled the adjoining island of Kongauru and

a smaller unnamed island nearby. The capture of these islands eliminated Japanese artillery fire on the Peleliu airfield.

All organized enemy resistance on the island of Peleliu, except the pocket on Umurbrogol Moutain, came to an end on September 29. On the same day, the Third Battalion, Fifth Marines, completed the mopping up of Ngesebus Island and was relieved by the 321st Infantry Regiment. Other units of the Fifth Marines continued to blast the Japanese from their last stronghold on the northern part of Peleliu.

On October 6, the Fifth Marines, which had relieved the Seventh Marines, attacked to the north of the enemy pocket of resistance on Umurbrogal Mountain, capturing an important hill which had been holding up the advance for several days. During the following day, the Fifth Marines increased the pressure on the pocket. The Second Battalion carried out a frontal assault up the face of the northern ridge—known as "Baldy Hill," and by nightfall had secured a foothold on the crest. The Third Battalion, aided by heavy artillery and mortar preparation, jumped off at 1230 and pushed into the low ground at the south of the pocket, which was called "The Horseshoe." In spite of stiffening enemy resistance, the advance was continued against the ridge which borders The Horseshoe on the west. By dark, a part of the ridge had been captured, caves closed and the inside of The Horseshoe cleared. Baldy Hill was completely captured on October 11, and the advance continued to the ridge to the southwest.

The assault phase of the Palaus operation ended on October 12, 1944, although the Japanese in the remaining pocket of resistance on Umurbrogal Mountain were still putting up a stubborn fight. This pocket was finally wiped out on November 27 by elements of the Eighty-first Infantry Division which had relieved the First Marine Division the middle of October.

During the period from September 15 to October 14, 1944, the First Marine Division suffered casualties of 842 killed, 4,963 wounded and 128 missing—a total of 5,931 casualties — while killing more than 11,000 Japanese.

The First Battalion, Seventh Marines, was relieved on October 17 and on October 21 the entire Seventh Marines sailed from Peleliu to join the First Marines and the First Tank Battalion which had sailed for the Russell Islands in the early morning of October 2, the first echelon of troops to leave Peleliu. On October 30, the Fifth Marines (reinforced) was detached from control of the Eighty-first Infantry Division and embarked for the Russell Islands. By November 7, 1944, the entire Division, with the exception of detachments from the First and Third Amphibian Tractor Battalions, First Motor Transport Battalion and the Navy Flame-Thrower units, had returned to Pavuvu. Meanwhile, Major General William H. Rupertus, USMC, had been detached on November 2 and Major General Pedro A. del Valle, USMC, had assumed command.

Beginning on March 1, 1945, units of the Division sailed from the Russell Islands bound for the training area off Tassafaronga, Guadalcanal, for rehearsals. A full scale dress reheasal was staged on March 6 when all units, with the exception of the Division Reserve, were landed under real and simulated naval gunfire and air support. By March 7, all units of the Division had returned to the Russells for refueling of ships and replenishment of supplies. At 0600 March 15, the convoy weighed anchor and departed from the Russells bound for Ulithi and Nansei Shoto. The Division arrived at Ulithi the afternoon of March 21 for final staging, remaining at the advanced anchorage until March 27. At 1530, March 27, the convoy left Ulithi for the East China Sea, enroute to the island of Okinawa, prepared to carry out its fourth major landing operation.

At 0830, April 1, 1945, the First and Sixth Marine Divisions, Third Amphibious Corps, and the Twenty-fourth Army Corps, which made up the newly-organized Tenth American Army, began landing on the western coast of Okinawa, largest island of the Ryukyu Group. The invasion of Okinawa, the strongest link in the Ryukyu chain that joins Formosa and the Japanese home islands, marked the end of the "ocean" drive against Japan, a drive that began at Guadalcanal on August 7, 1942. More than 3,300 miles had been covered and many changes had been made since that memorable date. For example: when the First Marine Division hit the beaches at Guadalcanal, less than 250 planes covered the landing; at Okinawa more than 1,500 carrier-based aircraft took part in the assault.

The Third Amphibious Corps encountered negligible opposition in its landing operations and advance inland, although there were strong cave, trench and hill positions along the beach. Within four hours, the Marines captured Yontan Airfield and the Twenty-fourth Army Corps on the right secured the Katena Airfield. The Third Amphibious Corps was under the command of Major General Roy S. Geiger, USMC, while Major Generals Pedro A. del Valle and Lemuel C. Shepherd, USMC, commanded the First and Sixth Marine Divisions. The Second Marine Division, under the command of Major General Thomas E. Watson, USMC, was Corps Reserve.

The First Marine Division continued its advance across the island, reaching the east coast on April 4. The First Marines then wheeled to the right and moved

down Katchin Peninsula. By the end of the day, the Division had occupied the entire peninsula and together with the Sixth Marine Division on the left had established a line across the narrow neck of Okinawa from Yakada on the west coast to Yaka on the east coast. The following day, one company of the First Marines landed on and reconnoitered Yabuchi Island, off the east coast of Okinawa, but found no enemy. The Third Battalion, First Marines took over the defense of Yontan Airfield on April 5, relieving the Twenty-ninth Marines. On April 6, the Seventh Marines assembled in the vicinity of Ishikawa in Corps Reserve and on April 9 took over patrol of the Corps area between the First and Sixth Marine Division boundaries. The Seventh Marines reverted to control of the First Marine Division on April 15.

Meanwhile, on April 14, two companies of the Second Battalion, Seventh Marines continued action against a small enemy group about two miles southwest of the town of Onna-Mura. All efforts to penetrate the enemy position failed and the Marine companies withdrew in the late afternoon. The enemy group was well-concealed in the rugged terrain and had to be approached over ground that exposed our troops. The following day this enemy group was wiped out by small patrols of the Seventh Marines.

The Third Battalion, First Marines was attached to the Sixth Marine Division on April 15 and participated in the fighting on Motobu Peninsula; it reverted to control of the First Marines on April 23.

The First Marine Division continued active patrolling of its entire sector on April 20. A patrol of the Seventh Marines encountered an enemy group in the hills about two miles off the village of Iji, and killed sixteen and captured twenty rifles and one knee mortar. Meanwhile, the Sixth Marine Division, reinforced by elements of the Seventh Marines, reached the west coast of Okinawa, crushing the remaining enemy resistance on Motobu Peninsula.

On April 21, Companies I and K of the Third Battalion, Fifth Marines, reinforced by Company B, First Amphibian Tractor Battalion, one platoon of the Third Provisional Armored Amphibian Battalion, a detachment of the Fourth War Dog Platoon, and two squads of engineers, landed on Taka Banare Island, located about five miles northeast of Katchin Peninsula. No opposition was encountered. Taka Banare was secured on April 22 and on the same day, elements of the Fifth Marines landed without opposition on Ike Island to the north. On April 23, patrols of the Fifth Marines reconnoitered Heanza Island, finding no enemy. This patrol then moved to Hamahika Island, but made no contacts with the enemy.

On April 25, the First Marine Division was placed in Tenth Army Reserve, but remained under operational control of the Third Amphibious Corps, with the First Marine Regiment prepared to assemble on twelve hours notice. At the same time, Company A, Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, was attached to the Fifth Marines to take over the patrolling of the islands off the east coast of Okinawa.

The First Marine Division (reinforced) was relieved from Tenth Army Reserve and attached to the Twenty-fourth Army Corps on April 30 and began movement to the southern front to relieve the Twenty-seventh Infantry Division. In its operations on the northern part of the island, the First Marine Division had killed 681 Japanese and captured 26, while losing 76 killed, 370 wounded and two missing.

Just before daylight on May 2, 1945, Tenth Army troops supported by tanks and flame-throwers, opened a coordinated drive against the heavily fortified enemy positions in southern Okinawa. The Seventh Infantry Division on the east coast bypassed Yonabaru Airfield and drove a deep salient into Japanese positions. The Seventy-seventh Infantry Division in the center and the First Marine Division on the right (west) flank, which had relieved the Ninety-sixth and Twenty-seventh Infantry Divisions, pushed slowly ahead for small gains.

During the period from May 3 to 5, the Japanese made a strong counterattack, using land, sea and air forces. Several heavy attacks were made against our main line in southern Okinawa, while strong raiding parties landed behind our lines on both coasts. Enemy landings made in rear of and on the right flank of the First Marine Division were repulsed with almost one hundred percent loss for the Japanese. Every enemy counterattack and infiltration attempt was broken up by American troops.

At 0600 on May 7, the Third Amphibious Corps took over an assigned zone of action on the right flank of the southern sector, and the First Marine Division reverted to its control. The next day the Sixth Marine Division began moving into the line on the right of the First Marine Division, the Twenty-second Marines relieving the Seventh Marines on the extreme right flank.

In the meanwhile, the First Marine Division was slowly forging ahead against the main belt of fortifications known as the "Shuri Line." Caves and excavations honey-combed the rocky ridges to its front, making the line a small scale Maginot Line. The enemy forces defending the unusually rugged terrain of southern Okinawa were disposed in typical Japanese fashion: defending from a series of strongpoints, using mortars extensively to deny certain corridors as

avenues of approach for attacking troops, and covering the undefended areas with artillery concentrations. Mortars were emplaced on reverse slopes and registered on crests as well as on low ground not covered by flat trajectory weapons.

On May 9, the Sixth Marine Division moved into the line on the right of the First Marine Division, taking over the extreme right flank sector, above the Asa River. The First Division was now able to shorten its lines and to concentrate on the reduction of the Japanese positions in the hills and draws before Dakeshi Village. During the same day, the First Marines captured one of the heights just to the north of this village and the Fifth Marines pushed its right flank forward some 500 yards, thus straightening the Division line. Both regiments suffered severe casualties, caused by heavy fire from the enemy's mutually supporting strongpoints. The First Marines, advancing toward the mouth of a crescent shaped ridge, received fire from the front, both flanks, and the left rear shortly after jumping off at noon. It was estimated that at 2400 May 9, the First Marine Division had killed 1,765 Japanese and captured 14 since moving into the line in south Okinawa, which together with the 681 killed and 26 captured in north Okinawa made a total of 2,446.

At 0200 May 10, 1945, about 150 Japanese staged a counterattack against the Second Battalion, Fifth Marines. This attack, made under a heavy smoke screen, was repulsed after hand to hand combat in which about 50 Japanese were killed. After a 15 minute artillery preparation, the First Marine Division continued the attack at 0800, overrunning strong enemy positions for a gain of about 600 yards.

At 0530 May 11, 1945, following a heavy enemy mortar and artillery concentration, an estimated 200 Japanese were observed forming for an attack in front of the First Marine Division lines. Marine Corps artillery broke up the formation, inflicting heavy casualties on the Japanese. The remaining enemy attempted an assault and were cut down by point blank small arms fire.

At 0700 on May 11, the entire Tenth Army launched a coordinated attack in an attempt to penetrate the heavy defensive belt of the Naha - Shuri - Yonabaru Line. Although substantial advances were made, the Americans were forced to fight for every inch of ground. The First Marine Division continued its assault on the hill mass near the village of Dakeshi. The First Marines quickly overran a height to its immediate front, then advanced along the railroad to the Asa River where it stopped after contact with the Sixth Marine Division on the right. The advance in the center and left of the First Marine Division zone was much slower due to dogged enemy resistance in extremely rugged terrain. The Second Battalion, Seventh Marines, reached the western outskirts of Dakeshi, gaining control of the ridge line running through the village. The Third Battalion, Seventh Marines, put the pincers on Dakeshi by wheeling towards the town from the northeast. The Fifth Marines in Division Reserve mopped up enemy strongpoints along the Corps boundary in the vicinity of Hill 187, which had held out for several days. Prior to nightfall, an enemy group attacked the First Battalion, Seventh Marines, behind a heavy barrage of mortar fire. This attack was repulsed. The advance made during the day, which inflicted heavy damage on enemy personnel and equipment, was a definite threat to the enemy's left flank positions in the Shuri area. The town of Amke, overlooking Naha, was reached, and the village of Dakeshi was under attack from two sides.

The First Marine Division was held to minor gains on May 12, as it inched forward into the rugged hills. The First Marines on the right, holding positions to the northwest of Shuri, failed to advance during the day due to supply difficulties and heavy flanking fire from enemy positions. In front of Shuri elements of the regiment were partially supplied by air drops. The Seventh Marines, after breaking up an enemy attack at 0530, attacked at 0730 against the enemy network of pillbox entrenchments east of Dakeshi, but the advance was held to a few yards. A strong enemy pocket of resistance north of Dakeshi was surrounded and eliminated, and the pincers around the village were tightened. An attack by a Japanese force, estimated as one company, was repulsed at about 2235. After bitter fighting, the enemy lost the Dakeshi Ridge to the First Division but held the village which lies cupped on the south slopes of the ridge.

During the early morning of May 13, two enemy attacks, each in company strength, were repulsed by the First Marine Division, one at midnight, the second at 0200. The Division resumed the attack against the Shuri position at 0730, and at noon was moving into the high ground protecting Shuri. The First Marines on the right were unable to advance its forward units due to heavy enemy artillery and mortar fire, but tank-infantry teams operated throughout the day against the ridge in front of Shuri. On the left flank of the First Marine Division zone, troops were pinned down during the morning by heavy fire from enemy positions north of Shuri. In the afternoon a number of these positions were overrun and small gains made. During the afternoon, the Seventh Marines engaged in consolidating high ground below Dakeshi, were engaged by Japanese groups variously estimated from company to battalion strength. In

a one hour fight which ended at 1334, an estimated 300 enemy were killed by this regiment.

After repulsing a small counter-attack during the early hours of May 14, the First Marine Division continued the yard-by-yard advance into the dominating hills before Shuri.

The Division resumed the attack at 0800 May 15, with the Fifth Marines in line on the right (having relieved the First Marines) and the Seventh Marines on the left. Gains on the left and center were limited, but the Fifth Marines advanced about 600 yards down the Naha railroad, and tank-infantry teams moved into the valley south of Wana, and knocked out several caves and anti-tank guns in that vicinity. The days operations inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy and increased the threat to the left (west) flank of the Shuri position.

Elements of the First Marine Division seized a part of the Wana Ridge northwest of Wana village on May 16, and held it against determined enemy efforts to dislodge them. Units of the Fifth Marines, supported by tanks, blasted numerous enemy caves and gun emplacements in the river valley west of Wana village.

At 0630 on May 17, the First Marine Division continued its drive southward, with the Sixth Marine Division on the right and the Seventh Infantry Division on the left. The Fifth Marines on the Division right pushed eastward from the Naha railroad to a ridge about 500 yards southwest of Wana village, and in the center of the Division zone of action, units of the Fifth and Seventh Marines seized and consolidated additional positions on Wana Ridge. In the desperate fighting for possession of Wana Ridge, the Marines met very heavy machine gun, mortar and rifle fire. During the afternoon, units of the Division captured a Japanese command post on top of a small hill between Dakeshi and Wana, after overcoming intense opposition from caves and other enemy strongpoints.

The Division gained several hundred yards on May 18, as the enemy doggedly gave ground on Wana Ridge, and at the end of the day was operating east of Wana. destroying enemy strongpoints in that area. Enemy in caves on the forward slopes of the ridge were sealed in their underground positions by elements of the Division. The Fifth Marines alone sealed up 35.

Beginning at 0730 May 19, the Seventh Marines attacked Wana Ridge, supported by flanking fire from the north delivered by the Fifth Marines. Stiff enemy resistance held the advance to approximately 150 yards, but the Regiment inflicted very heavy casualties on the enemy. By 1830, the First Marines had relieved the Seventh Marines in the front line, the latter passing into Division reserve.

At 0815, May 20, the Division resumed its drive, making important gains into enemy positions northwest of Shuri in savage hand-to-hand fighting. Elements of the Division cleared the enemy from most of Wana Ridge and from the north leg of the V-shaped ridge lying across the approaches to Shuri town. The First Marines on the Division left flank hammered the Japanese back some 600 yards to the northern tip of Shuri, while the Fifth Marines on the right flank drove ahead an average of 200 yards on a 1,000 yard front. At about 2250 three groups of enemy suicide troops with high explosive charges strapped to their bodies attacked a company of the First Tank Battalion about 500 yards east of Wana village. They were scattered and most of them killed before they could do any damage.

On the morning of May 21, the Division launched an attack on Shuri from both the north and the west, meeting stiff enemy resistance in the ridges just northwest of Shuri town. Left flank elements of the First Marines attacked at 0630, moving abreast of the Seventy-seventh Infantry Division on their left, and by nightfall was in the small village of Taira marking the north boundary of Shuri. The Fifth Marines attacking from the west advanced its lines to a point about 600 yards east of Mawashie Mura and sent patrols to the south and southwest.

At 0315 May 22, the Division killed nearly 200 enemy in bloody hand-to-hand fighting, when a force of several hundred Japanese launched a counterattack against our positions in an attempt to retake Wana Ridge. The Division repulsed another enemy counterattack during the early morning of May 23, killing at least 30 Japanese.

Heavy rains during the next few days, which grounded aircraft and turned Okinawa into a sea of mud, reduced ground operations to a minimum. However, our patrols were actively engaged in probing the enemy's defensive line in an attempt to locate a weak spot.

At 0730 May 29, the First Division jumped off to attack, with the main effort on the right. The operation was in reality a turning movement around the west flank of Shuri by way of the Naha Railroad and the town of Asato. The First Marines on the Wana Ridge approaches to Shuri pinned the enemy down while the Fifth Marines, on the right, made the envelopment. The First Battalion of the Fifth Marines, who had seized "Beehive Hill" (guarding the western approaches to Shuri Ridge) the day before, swung to the left and quickly pushed on to Shuri Ridge itself. Company A continued the advance and at 1015 occupied Shuri Castle, after surprising the relatively small garrison. The First Marines then advanced two battalions to Shuri

Ridge, relieving the Fifth Marines. The seizure of the table-top plateau and Shuri Castle made it possible to attack the Wana Draw position from flank and rear. In the meantime, the Fifth Marines continued to push strong patrols to the South and East. Resistance was encountered from small enemy forces who were, however, defending from well organized positions on the high ground south of Shuri. At the same time, elements of the First Marines holding positions on the Wana Ridge approaches to Shuri, executed a flanking maneuver from the southwest, two companies reaching a point about 500 yards south of Wana Village.

Operations to encircle and reduce the enemy's Shuri positions were completed on May 30, when elements of the First Marine Division met troops of the 96th Division, which had pinched out the 77th Division and had seized Hill 125, a commanding height just southeast of Shuri Castle. During the day, the Commanding General, First Marine Division (Major General Pedro del Valle, USMC) directed that the battle-scarred American flag which the First had raised at Cape Gloucester, New Britain and on Peleliu, Palau Islands be hoisted over Shuri Castle. In the meantime, despite bad weather and muddy terrain, strong patrols of the First Division were moving into Shuri Town from the west. By nightfall of May 31, the strong Japanese positions in the central sector had been outflanked and the entire Shuri position was being pinched out.

The capture of Shuri Town was completed on June 1 and the American forces continued the drive southward against diminishing resistance. In an advance of approximately 2,000 yards, the First Marine Division captured the Shichina Hill Mass, thus gaining a commanding position overlooking the Naha-Yonabaru highway and railroad.

On June 2, the entire Tenth Army made a general advance against moderate resistance. Improved visability brought increased artillery support for the ground troops and a cessation of the rain permitted the use of more armor than had been available for some time. The First Marine Division, after taking over the entire III Amphibious Corps' front, in order to release the Sixth Division for the amphibious assault on Oroku Peninsula, crossed the Naha-Yonabaru highway and registered gains up to 1,000 yards. In the XXIV Corps' sector the 96th Division on the left of the First Marine Division, captured Chan and by nightfall was approaching the village of Tera. On the extreme left flank of the XXIV Corps' zone of action, the 7th Division captured Ogusuku and was approaching Shinzato.

On June 3, the Seventh Infantry Division on the left flank drove across the Chinen Peninsula, and the following day the Fourth Marines (Sixth Marine Division) executed a surprise amphibious landin on Oroku Peninsula and captured half of the big Naha Airfield. Meanwhile, the First Marine Division near the center of the line was driving southward, making substantial gains in the face of heavy machine gun and mortar fire. First Division troops seized a hill near Karara on June 3, and the following day drove ahead up to 1,000 yards to reach the Kochinda-Mura Hill Mass and Tomusu town.

By June 7, the First Marine Division had plunged forward to within 200 yards of the west coast of Okinawa, north of the town of Itoman, trapping the concentration of Japanese forces on Oroku Peninsula, which were being driven down the peninsula from Naha by elements of the Sixth Marine Division.

On June 8, the Seventh Marines, under the command of Colonel Edward W. Snedeker, USMC, stabbed westward to the seacoast on a broad front, cutting the enemy forces in two. At the same time other elements of the First Division captured the villages of Dakiton and Shindawaku and sent strong patrols probing into the enemy positions on the Itoman-Gushichan hills. Units of the First Division then continued to drive southward, outflanking the coastal town of Itoman.

During the next two days, the First and Sixth Marine Divisions increased their pressure on the enemy pocketed in the three-square-mile sector on the west coast of southern Okinawa, the First Division from the south and the Sixth Division from the north. Other units of the First Marine Division continued the drive southward down the west coast.

On June 11, Tenth Army troops drove head-on against the heavily fortified Yaeju-Dake escarpment in the face of heavy Japanese artillery, mortar and machine gun fire. On the western end of this natural fortress which stretched three miles across the island, the First Marine Division, supported by amphibious tractors armed with 75mm guns, moved through the town of Itoman, then wheeled to the east toward Kunishi Ridge, seizing a hill near the town of Yuza. At 1430, the temporary truce for enemy surrender negotiations having expired, Colonel Edward W. Snedeker, USMC, sent his Seventh Marines against Kunishi Ridge.

Opening an attack at 0330 June 12, the Seventh Marines on the Division right (west) flank drove ahead for gains up to 1,000 yards. This surprise assault carried the western half of Kunishi Ridge and then swept on against light resistance until daylight, at which time the enemy launched a strong counterattack. The Seventh Marines hung on, however, until reinforced by additional troops, which were brought forward on

tanks through heavy enemy fire. The fighting was vicious as the Japanese counterattacked again and again in a desperate attempt to regain the strategic height. To the rear, First Marine Division engineers were bridging the Mukue River, which increased the volume and expedited supplies to the forward elements.

On June 13, while the Sixth Marine Division completed the work of mopping up the Japanese pocket on Oroku Peninsula, the First Marine and Seventh Infantry Divisions smashed ahead, pressing back both flanks of the enemy on the precipitous Yaeju escarpment. The First Marine Division captured the village of Ozato, a half-mile northeast of Kunishi Ridge, and took possession of the remainder of Kunishi Ridge. The position on this strategic height was strengthened by reinforcements brought up in Sherman tanks under cover of a smoke screen. The tanks, which crossed 800 yards of open rice paddies under heavy enemy fire, carried out wounded men on the return trip. Because of the difficulty of transporting supplies, airplanes parachuted food, ammunition and water to these forward elements.

On June 14, the First Marine Regiment widened its hold on Kunishi Ridge in a pre-dawn attack, then was forced to repel counterattacks as the Japanese charged their positions after daylight. The Seventh Marines moved up to help consolidate the First Marines' positions. Throughout the day the troops were subjected to heavy enemy fire from the area southeast of Ozato town.

By June 16, the Seventh Infantry Division had captured Hills 115 and 153 and the Ninety-sixth Infantry Division had seized Yuza Hill. The capture of the latter hill relieved some of the pressure on the First Marine Division, which was still enaged in a tough battle a mile and a half westward (on Kunishi Ridge) against one of the strongest Japanese concentrations of automatic weapons encountered on Okinawa. The capture of Kunishi Ridge cost the First Marine Division more than 1,200 casualties.

On June 18, Lieutenant General Simon B. Buckner, Jr., USA, commanding the Tenth Army, was killed by enemy shellfire, and Major General Roy S. Geiger, USMC, succeeded to command of all ground forces on Okinawa. General Buckner was killed while watching the Eighth Marines (reinforced) of the Second Marine Division launch an attack toward the sea. This regiment, under the command of Colonel Clarence R. Wallace, USMC, landing on Okinawa, June 15, was placed under the operational control of the First Marine Division. At 0730 June 18 it executed a passage of lines through the Seventh Marines on the Kunishi-Ozato position. Making a rapid thrust to the south, under cover of the Fifth Marines which attacked successive enemy positions to the eastward, the Eighth reached the sea, thus cutting the enemy forces in two once more. This coordinated drive by the First Marine Division, on a front of some 2,000 yards, was the spearhead of the final breakthrough, the blow that cracked the last organized enemy defense line on Okinawa.

By June 19, the Japanese force on southern Okinawa (estimated at 2,000 troops) was cut into small pockets and each pocket was being destroyed by units of the five American Divisions which made the final drive to the south coast. Although the Japanese were disorganized, they still put up a fierce resistance with automatic weapons, machine guns, and small arms. LCGs (landing craft gunboats) were standing in close to the shore and sending heavy rocket fire into the fleeing Japanese remnants, some of whom were forced into surrender or hopeless leaps over the cliffs. Heavy naval gunfire from battleships, cruisers, destroyers, and smaller craft also supported the ground action. Lieutenant General Roy S. Geiger, USMC (promoted to that rank on June 19, 1945) gave the enemy no chance to reorganize but continued the final assault which Major General Simon B. Buckner, Jr., USA, had launched the day before.

By June 20, the remnants of the enemy force on southern Okinawa had been compressed into three small pockets, and our soldiers and Marines were killing Japanese at the rate of 2,590 per day. The fighting was at such close quarters that heavy artillery was forced to cease fire for fear of hitting our own men. The largest of three remaining pockets of resistance was around Hill 81 north of Makabe. The 184th Regiment of the Seventh Infantry Division advanced westward from the southeast coast and joined with elements of the First Marine Division north of Komesu to close off the central pocket from another small pocket in the southeastern coastal sector around Hill 82. The third Japanese pocket, an area about 1,000 yards square, was in the Mabuni-Mura hills north of Cape Ara, the southernmost point of Okinawa. The Fifth Marines (First Division) advanced into Makabe town, about 300 yards south of Hill 81, where the Japanese were making their stiffest stand. On the south coast, the Sixth Marine Division was closing in on the Mabuni-Mura hills pocket near Cape Ara. On the west coast, the Twenty-second Marines of the Sixth Division continued the mopping up of the area south of Kuwanga Ridge. The Sixth Marine Division reported that organized resistance in its zone of action had ceased at 1027 on June 21, after the hilly area near Cape Ara had been overrun.

At 1300, June 21, Lieutenant General Roy S. Geiger, USMC, announced that organized resistance

on Okinawa had ceased. Meanwhile, soldiers and marines were busy with tanks, flamethrowers, demolition charges and small arms, wiping out the two remaining pockets of resistance. The first pocket was around Mabuni on the southeast coast and the second and largest was a triangle surrounded by the villages of Medeera, Makabe and Aragachi. Many Japanese troops, caught in the latter pocket had attempted to flee southward, but their escape route to the sea had been blocked when the First Marine Division effected a junction with the Seventh Infantry Division north of Komesu. The Fifth Regiment killed 170 enemy troops in mopping up the town of Makabe. To the north of Makabe, the First Marines, assisted by tanks, was meeting heavy machine gun and small arms fire in its attack on Hill 81.

The enemy, aware of the fact that the conquest of Okinawa's 485 square miles would give us a major base from which we could throw the full weight and fury of American military power against his home islands, fought with savage determination, making the Okinawa campaign the bloodiest yet fought on any Pacific island. He had massed heavy concentrations of artillery and mortars and had installed elaborate machine gun nests in pillboxes, concrete blockhouses and reinforced caves — everything necessary for a last-ditch stand. He organized strongpoints covering only key terrain features and avenues of approach, siting these strongpoints in mutually supporting positions. In spite of severe losses, he did not hesitate to launch counterattacks to regain critical terrain. When a position became untenable, his weapons were withdrawn to new positions, being sacrificed only when the situation demanded the ground be held to the very last. As he fell back to Shuri, he carried his defensive power with him, contracting his defensive position around a perimeter which provided him with a greater density of force.

The valiant fighting spirit of the officers and men of the First Marine Division, their heroic fortitude under punishing fire and their relentless perseverance in carrying the fight to the enemy—the same **esprit de corps** which added the names of Guadalcanal, Cape Gloucester and Peleliu to the glorious history of their Corps—was an important contribution to the successful conquest of Okinawa. In this campaign the Division encountered a tough, courageous and formidable foe, an opponent who had the advantages of rugged terrain, excellent observation and many fields of fire. But the men of the First Marine Division were battle-wise, men who had tested themselves against Japan's best troops at the Tenaru, Matanikau and Bloody Ridge, men who had learned the enemy's tricks at Hill 660 and Bloody Nose Ridge, improved on them, and then gone on to beat them.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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DECORATIONS and COMMENDATIONS

(R) following names of all personnel indicates reserve status

Medal of Honor

★ **BUSH, Richard, E., Corp. (R)**
(Glasgow, Ky.)

★ **HARRELL, William G., Sgt.**
(Mercedes, Tex.)

★ **JACKSON, Arthur J., Pfc.**
(Portland, Ore.)

★ **JACOBSON, Douglas T., Pfc. (R)**
(Port Washington, L. I.)

★ **LUCAS, Jacklyn H., Pfc. (R)**
(Belhaven, N. C.)

★ **McCARTHY, Joseph J., Capt. (R)**
(San Diego, Calif.)

★ **SIGLER, Franklin E., Pvt. (R)**
(Little Falls, N. J.)

★ **WATSON, Wilson D., Pvt. (R)**
(Earl, Ark.)

★ **WILLIAMS, Hershel W., Corp. (R)**
(Fairmont, W. Va.)

★ **WILSON, Louis H., Jr., Capt.**
(Brandon, Miss.)

Gold Star

IN LIEU OF SECOND NAVY CROSS

★ **SHOEMAKER, Wm. G., Capt. (R)**
(Lynn, Mass.)

Navy Cross

★ **BOEHM, Harold C., Lt. Col. (R)**
(New Orleans, La.)

★ **BOWMAN, Harry S., Pfc.**
(Minquadale, Del.)

★ **BUH, John C., Pfc. (R)**
(Rock Springs, Wyo.)

★ **CRAMER, Frederick W., Pfc.**
(Sequim, Wash.)

★ **DAIGLE, Alfred J., Corp.**
(Augusta, Maine)

★ **HOWARD, Stanley L., Pfc. (R)**
(Waterloo, Iowa)

★ **KOVAL, John, PlSgt.**
(Pittsburgh, Pa.)

★ **MORRIS, Joshua, Pfc. (R)**
(Komatke, Ariz.)

★ **ROBERTS, Francis E., Pfc. (R)**
(Kelso, Wash.)

Gold Star

IN LIEU OF FOURTH DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

★ **SMITH, Holland M., Lt. Gen.**
(Montgomery, Ala.)

Distinguished Service Medal

★ **DEL VALLE, Pedro A., Maj. Gen.**
(Annapolis, Md.)

Legion of Merit

★ **EDDY, William A., Col.**
(New Rochelle, N. Y.)

★ **MOORE, James T., Maj. Gen.**
(Columbia, S. C.)

Silver Star Medal

★ **BARNHARD, Kenneth W., Pfc. (R)**
(Independence, Mo.)

★ **BEARD, Robert E., Pfc. (R)**
(Marion, Ind.)

★ **BELKO, Max, 1st Lt. (R)**
(Hanford, Calif.)

★ **BIRNBAUM, Francis P., PlSgt.**
(Rapid City, S. D.)

★ **BREEHER, Warren B., Corp. (R)**
(Lemay Station, Mo.)

★ **COLOMBO, Salvatore B., Pfc. (R)**
(Lawrence, Mass.)

★ **COSBY, Edward H., Pfc. (R)**
(Rienzi, Miss.)

★ **DIACETIS, Carlo, Pfc. (R)**
(Troy, N. Y.)

★ **DOCKRAY, Eugene I., Pfc. (R)**
(Kearney, N. J.)

★ **DURFEE, Charles R., Capt.**
(Reeder, N. D.)

★ **FENGER, Charles W., Pfc.**
(Cincinnati, Ohio)

★ **GATTO, Joseph D., PlSgt. (R)**
(Brooklyn, N. Y.)

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ **GOLDING, Joseph T., Capt. (R)**
(San Francisco, Calif.)

★ **GRIGGERS, Calvin E., Pfc. (R)**
(Ben Hill, Ga.)

★ **HUBERT, Luther J., PlSgt. (R)**
(Kaplon, La.)

★ **HOPPING, Herbert E., Sgt.**
(Los Gatos, Calif.)

★ **JENKINS, James B., Pfc. (R)**
(Delano, Calif.)

★ **KRAUS, Raymond C., Capt. (R)**
(Tacoma, Wash.)

★ **LOUGHREY, John J., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Ardmore, Pa.)

★ **McCLAIN, Calvin E., Jr., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Anderson, S. C.)

★ **McDONALD, Franklin W., Pfc. (R)**
(Lucas, Iowa)

★ **MARKULIS, Mack S., Pfc.**
(Detroit, Mich.)

★ **MINNICK, Myron K., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Barstow, Calif.)

★ **NALDER, Lewis M., Pfc. (R)**
(Layton, Utah)

★ **NELSON, William, Pfc. (R)**
(Moline, Ill.)

★ **NYEGAARD, Harry W., Pfc. (R)**
(Bellville, N. J.)

★ **PERGAMO, Paul A., Sgt.**
(Roxbury, Mass.)

★ **QUISENBERRY, R. H., Pfc. (R)**
(Hannibal, Mo.)

★ **RACHITSKY, John, PlSgt.**
(Miami, Fla.)

★ **ROBBINS, Marion G., Corp.**
(Pawnee, Ill.)

★ **SKEENS, William H., Pfc. (R)**
(Bloomingdale,

★ **SOUVEY, Gordon N., Pfc. (R)**
(Chesterland, Ohio)

★ **STEVENS, James V., Corp.**
(Claira, Miss.)

★ **TURNER, Gordon H., Corp. (R)**
(Pardeeville, Wis.)

★ **VALLEE, Frank, Jr., Pfc. (R)**
(Springfield, Mass.)

★ **WADE, James D., Pfc.**
(Harvey, Ill.)

★ **WIDSETH, Joseph H., 1st Lt. (R)**
(McIntosh, Minn.)

★ **WILLIAMS, Van W., Jr., Corp.**
(Forth Worth, Tex.)

★ **WINKLER, Claude C., Corp. (R)**
(Vincennes, Ind.)

Navy and Marine Corps Medal

★ **LEE, Norwood, 1st Sgt.**
(Shreveport, La.)

Bronze Star Medal

★ **BABCOCK, George V., Pfc. (R)**
(West Concord, Minn.)

★ **DAVIS, Karl, Jr., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Middletown, Ohio)

★ **DI CORPO, Philip A., Corp. (R)**
(New York, N. Y.))

★**ERVIN, Arthur B., Sgt.**
(Detroit, Tex.)

★ **FERREIRA, Joseph, Corp.**
(Santa Clara, Calif.)

★ **GEARY, Marvin W., Corp. (R)**
(Farmington, Mich.)

★ **HALL, William F., Capt. (R)**
(Los Angeles, Calif.)

★ **HENDERSON, Randall T., Jr., Corp.**
(Los Angeles, Calif.)

★ **HOLDER, Leland W., Pfc. (R)**
(Miami, Fla)

★ **HURSTON, Charles J., PlSgt.**
(La Grange, Ga.)

★ **LARRANCE, Norman H., Sgt.**
(Ridgeform, Ill.)

★ **McELREATH, Perry D., Sgt.**
(Canadian, Tex.)

★ **MAEGER, Henry G., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Akron, Ohio)

★ **PISTOLE, Charlie L., Pfc.**
(Hopkins, Mo.)

★ **POPE, Douglas A., PlSgt. (R)**
(Los Angeles, Calif.)

★ **RIEDER, Herb R., Sgt.**
(Madison, Wis.)

★ **RIPPLE, Kenneth W., Pfc. (R)**
(San Angelo, Texas)

★ **ROSCOE, Thomas G., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Chicago, Ill.)

★ **ROWE, Samuel G., Pfc. (R)**
(Galesburg, Ill.)

★ **SABATINO, Tony, Corp. (R)**
(Afton, Mo.)

★ **TIMMONS, Glenn W., Pfc.**
(Indianapolis, Ind.)

★ **WILSON, Charles, Corp. (R)**
(McConnelsville, Ohio)

Air Medal

★ **KISTNER, Vernon R., 1st Lt. (R)**
(New Orleans, La.) As pilot of a plane

Letters of Commendation

FROM COMMANDING OFFICER, U. S. S. WASP

BLAKER, Warren T., Sgt., USMC, 332297
CROMEENES, Earl M., Pfc., USMCR, 859761
EMROE, Allan O., Pfc., USMCR, 538980
HARE, Noel E., Pfc., USMCR, 524824
MITCHELL, Arlington D., Pfc., USMCR, 867504
O'DONOGHUE, Timothy P., 1stSgt., USMC, 233045
RYGLISZIN, Peter, PlSgt., USMC, 272242
WHEELER, William A., Corp., USMCR, 506058
WOODS, Edward J., Pfc., USMCR, 503536

FROM COMMANDING GENERAL, III AMPHIBIOUS CORPS

SCHENANDOAH, Ralph, Sgt., USMC, 333088

FROM COMMANDING GENERAL, FIFTH MARINE DIVISION

BEECH, William K., TSgt., USMCR, 511318

FROM COMMANDING GENERAL, FOURTH MARINE AIRCRAFT WING, FMF

LUPINOS, Joseph, 1st Lt., USMCR

FROM COMMANDING OFFICER, EIGHTH FIELD DEPOT, SUPPLY SERVICE, FMF, PAC

GRANT, Thomas E., Sgt., USMC, 849045

FROM COMMANDER, U. S. NAVAL OPERATING BASE, NAVY

STEVENSON, Edward N., Jr., 1st Lt., USMCR

FROM ARMY COMMANDING GENERAL, MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIVISION

KING, J. Porter, Maj., USMC

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

SECOND MARINE DIVISION HISTORY

From Guadalcanal to Okinawa a Record of Fidelity and Gallantry Unsurpassed

The Second Marine Division came into existence on February 1, 1941 by change of designation from the Second Marine Brigade, with Major General Clayton B. Vogel, USMC, as the first Commanding General.

At that time the composition of the division was as follows:

Headquarters Company
Second Antiaircraft Machine Gun Battery
Second Chemical Company
Second Signal Company
Fourth Tank Company
Second Engineer Battalion
Second Medical Battalion
Second Service Battalion
Second Service Company
Second Transport Company
Second Marines
Sixth Marines
Eighth Marines
Tenth Marines

Headquarters and Companies "A" and "B," Second Engineer Battalion, were temporarily detached from the Division to Marine Forces, Fourteenth Naval District, and they participated in the defense of Pearl Harbor during the Japanese attack of December 7th, 1941. Company "C" joined them at that location on December 24th, 1941.

The Sixth Marines, as part of the First Marine Brigade, Provisional, had departed from the United States in June, 1941, and had assumed part of the responsibility for the defense of Iceland, where they arrived early in July. The first unit of that Brigade to return left Iceland on January 31st, 1942, when the Third Battalion sailed from Reykjavik.

Immediately after the outbreak of war with Japan, the Second Marine Division, stationed at Camp Elliott, San Diego, California, was given the mission of defending the California coast in cooperation with the Army from Oceanside to the Mexican border. Reconnaissance and occupation of defensive positions began on December 7 and continued until the threat of immediate invasion had passed. Antiaircraft installations and naval activities in the San Diego Bay area were manned by troops of the Division.

On being relieved from these defensive duties, the Division returned to Camp Elliott and began intensive training. From the outbreak of war until the departure of its last combat elements for foreign service, the Division was a part of the Western Defense Command (U. S. Army) with an assigned defensive sector on the southern California coast.

In the latter part of December, 1941, the Second Marine Brigade was formed with elements of the Second Marine Division (Eighth Marines, First Battalion, Tenth Marines and one Company each from the Second Tank Battalion, Second Engineer Battalion, Second Service Battalion, Second Pioneer Battalion, and Second Amphibian Tractor Battalion, and two Companies from the Second Medical Battalion), and on January 6, 1942 sailed from San Diego for American Samoa.

The Ninth Marines, was activated February 12, 1942 as a part of the Second Division, and on April 1, 1942 the Sixth Marines rejoined the Division from Iceland. The Ninth Marines was detached from the Second Division August 3, 1942 and assigned to the Amphibious Corps, Pacific Fleet.

The Second Marines (reinforced by the Third Battalion, Tenth Marines and one company each from the Second Tank Battalion, Second Engineer Battalion, Second Pioneer Battalion, Second Medical Battalion, Second Service Battalion, Second Amphibian Tractor Battalion, and other small units), was detached from the Division on June 30, 1942 and sailed for the South Pacific. On October 19, 1942, the Sixth Marines, reinforced, sailed for New Zealand followed by the remainder of the Division on October 21 and November 3, 1942.

On December 26, 1942, the Advanced Echelon of Division Headquarters, under the command of the Assistant Division Commander (Brigadier General Alphonse DeCarre, USMC), and the Sixth Marines sailed from Wellington, New Zealand for Guadalcanal.

Meanwhile, the Second Marines, reinforced, one of whose units had made the first landing of the cam-

paign, had nominally constituted the Division Reserve, when the First Division went ashore on Guadalcanal. They participated in the bitterest fighting of the opening days of the campaign on the islands of Gavutu and Tanambogo.

The Eighth Marines, reinforced, arrived on Guadalcanal November 4, 1942, and was kept in First Division Reserve until November 9, except the First Battalion which was operating to the east of the airfield perimeter.

The Second Marines (less the Third Battalion at Tulagi) and one battalion of the 164th Infantry Regiment led the attack westward from the Matanikau River on November 9, on which day the Eighth Marines moved up to carry the attack the following day. Both Marine regiments, as well as the supporting infantry battalion, pushed forward in the early morning of November 10 but due to the stiff enemy resistance and the terrific heat made very little progress.

At about that time the enemy's all-out offensive of November 11-15 (Battle of Guadalcanal) was beginning to take form and air reconnaissance showed that in addition to powerful naval forces, what was estimated to be at least 15,000 enemy reinforcements were headed toward Guadalcanal in a dozen or more large transports. In view of this development Major General Alexander A. Vandegrift withdrew the troops from the exposed advance positions to the old defense positions behind the Matanikau and covered the area to the westward by patrols. The entire outfit fell back and took up a defensive position extending about 4,000 yards inland, with the Eighth Marines in the front line and the Second Marines (less the Third Battalion at Tulagi) in reserve. The Japanese took advantage of the withdrawal and moved their troops closer, taking up strong positions particularly in the southern sector. Their hopes for large reinforcements were largely disposed of on November 13 when Marine Corps and Naval aviation sank or burned eight of the twelve large transports. The remaining four transports, which had been beached near Kokumbona, were destroyed on November 14. In the meantime the American Navy had won a decisive victory in the night naval battles of November 13-14; General Vandegrift then determined to resume the offensive to the west, seeking at first to seize a bridgehead beyond the Matanikau River to cover the crossings of the main attacking forces. On November 18 units of the Eighth Marines and an Army battalion effected a crossing of the river and seized the first ridge to the west. Additional troops reinforced the same general line while preparations for a general attack continued. The Third Battalion, Eighth Marines, enlarged the bridgehead area by vigorous patrolling of the areas to the south and southwest of the sector.

During the early morning of November 21, following an intense bombing and artillery preparation, four battalions of Army infantry launched an attack but gained very little ground. On the morning of November 23, the First and Second Battalions of the Eighth Marines hit the center of the line but ran into strong Japanese positions, and lacking room to maneuver, later recoiled to the line of departure. Our troops then assumed the defensive with the two battalions of the Eighth Marines in the center and an Army battalion on each flank. The remainder of the Eighth Marines remained in reserve behind the Matanikau. Both sides remained on the defensive during the remainder of 1942 with active patrolling and many minor clashes resulting in numerous casualties to both sides. During the early part of December the Second and Eighth Marines were withdrawn from the front line back to the vicinity of the airfield, leaving Army units to hold the sector west of the Matanikau.

The Second and Eighth Marines relieved the two Army regiments west of the Matanikau beginning on December 12, the latter regiment taking over the entire front line. The Second Battalion of the Second Marines took up a position defending the sector from the south. During the following three weeks the sector remained stabilized but with vigorous patrol activities and many small skirmishes.

The Advance Echelon of Second Division Headquarters and the Sixth Marines, reinforced, landed on Guadalcanal January 4, 1943, and the following day the Assistant Division Commander, Brigadier General Alphonse DeCarre, USMC, assumed command of all Marine Forces in the Guadalcanal-Tulagi area.

While all elements of the Second Division saw action in the first offensive of the United States, only for a very short time did they function as a division. The first landing in the Guadalcanal campaign was accomplished by a small detachment from the Second Marines, and that Regiment had served almost entirely through the campaign under the First Marine Division. The Eighth Marines had arrived early in November from its station in Samoa and was likewise attached to the First Division. Parts of the Tenth Marines, the artillery regiment, had served with those two regiments. It was only when the advance division staff, under Brigadier General DeCarre, and the Sixth Marines arrived from New Zealand that the entire Division was together.

The reunion was temporary for the Second and Eighth Marines had been worn down badly by their several months action on the island. Both units were suffering

from malaria, both were fatigued, and in addition to those infirmities, the Eighth was beginning to suffer from a disease picked up during its sojourn in Samoa—filariasis, known to most of the sufferers by its Polynesian name of mumu. Both units left Guadalcanal about the middle of January, and the only units of the Division remaining were the Sixth, the artillery, the Eighteenth Marines (Engineers) and the special units of the Division.

The remainder of the Division, under General DeCarre, took part in the final drive up the coast from the lines held by the Eighth Marines. These lines ran directly inland from a point just west of the base of Point Cruz, not far from the famous Matanikau River, and the zone of action of the Sixth Marines lay generally along the coast proper. Army troops of the XXIV Corps operated on the left or inland flank.

Peculiarities of joint command with the elements of the Second Division operating under the command of Major General Alexander Patch, U. S. Army, gave rise to the incongruity of the commanding general of a Marine division being forced to stay away from his unit while it was in action. The general who was placed in this anomalous position was Major General John Marston, USMC, who was compelled to remain in Wellington because had he accompanied his troops into the field he would have been senior to the Army general commanding the island forces and the latter therefore would have been forced to relinquish the command to him.

The Second Marines, reinforced, and the First Battalion, Eighth Marines left Guadalcanal on January 31, 1943 for Wellington, New Zealand. The remainder of the Eighth Marines left Guadalcanal on February 9, and by February 19 all remaining Second Division units on Guadalcanal, except the Third Battalion of the Eighteenth Marines, had sailed for New Zealand.

The Division occupied territory adjacent to Wellington for the next eight months. Training and considerable liberty were the order of the day, and the effect of the presence of the Marines upon the local population can best be described by the fact that after the battle of Tarawa, Major General Julian C. Smith, USMC, at the request of the local authorities, submitted a complete list of the Second Division casualties which was published in the Wellington papers. A year later on the anniversary of that battle the columns of the same papers were full of **In Memoriam** items inserted in memory of fallen Marines by their New Zealand friends.

The countryside wherein lay the Marines' training area was ideal for the purpose of conditioning. The encampment lay generally in the vicinity of a small town thirty-five miles north of the city between the beach and the hills. The latter, in addition to providing rugged terrain, contained dense jungle that could be used to advantage in the training of troops for island warfare.

On November 20, 1943 the Division, under the command of Major General Julian C. Smith, USMC, landed on Tarawa Atoll, Gilbert Islands. The first three waves of the Second and Third Battalions, Second Marines, and the Second Battalion of the Eighth Marines crossed the lagoon in amphibian tractors under the cover of naval guns and aircraft and landed abreast on the north side of Betio Island. These initial waves suffered light casualties and encountered only moderate opposition in crossing over the reef and getting on the beach.

The initial waves of the First Battalion, Second Marines, and the Third Battalion, Eighth Marines, landed about noon under intense enemy fire which caused heavy casualties. So heavy was the fire that it was necessary for the subsequent waves of the Third Battalion, Eighth Marines, to withdraw to the partial protection of a concrete pier whence they were taken after dark and landed on Beach Red 2 to the right of the pier.

The end of the day found all landing teams in position on shallow beachheads, but the situation as a whole was precarious and it was decided to release the third of the Division's Regiments, the Sixth Marines, from Corps Reserve to the Division. The First Battalian, Tenth Marines, was landed during the night and was put in position at the center of Beach Red 2.

Early on the morning of the second day the First Battalion, Eighth Marines, was called upon to land on the same beach, and while the first four waves of the team succeeded in landing in spite of heavy fire and many casualties, the remaining waves were forced to lie to because of an unusual and unforeseen combination of wind and tide that made the reef impassable.

By November 22 two battalions of the Sixth were in action when the First Battalion passed through the First Battalion, Second Marines, and attacked to the east followed by the Third Battalion, Sixth Marines. Second Battalion, Sixth Marines, landed on Eita on November 24, supported by the Third Battalion, Tenth Marines. On this day the American and British flags were raised on Tarawa, and the Second and Eighth Regiments went aboard transports for return to Territory of Hawaii.

The entire Sixth Regiment was employed for the next few days in cleaning up the various atolls. The Third Battalion landed at Apamama and assisted the Corps Scouts

in mopping up on that atoll while the Second Battalion of the regiment was engaged in similar duty on the north end of Tarawa. The Division Command Post had moved to Bairiki from Betio and on November 25 had ordered the Sixth Regiment (less Second and Third Battalions) with attached troops to assist the Second Defense Battalion in the defense of Tarawa.

Exactly two weeks after the beginning of the operation, the Command Post of the Division closed on Bairiki and the command passed to the Advanced Base Commander at 2200 on December 4. The commanding general and his staff departed by plane for Pearl Harbor where they arrived the following day. On December 8 the Rear Echelon of the Division, which had been left in Wellington, New Zealand, began preparing to join the parent group. Preparations for that move were completed on December 17 and on that date the Command Post, Rear Echelon closed at Wellington and opened aboard the **Mormachawk** enroute to the new division camp in Hawaii.

The engagement had been the shortest and the bitterest campaign yet fought in the Pacific. The prize was a rich one and many invaluable lessons had been learned, but the cost was the highest yet paid. The Division had lost 783 killed in action, 2,091 wounded, and 206 missing (figures accurate as of December 28, 1943).

Immediately upon its movement to Hawaii, the Division began a program of training in anticipation of its next operation. On December 30, 1943, Division Training Order 33-43 said in part, "It is anticipated that future combat operations by this Division will be directed against defended atolls . . . The training week will be seven (7) days with one (1) day per week as directed . . . for a liberty day."

The entire month of January was passed in routine training. The Division strength had increased slightly by replacements from the V Amphibious Corps, and at the end of the month, the total strength stood at 20,815. There had been some change in organization for a few units—Special Weapons Group of the Second Defense Battalion, the Second Defense Battalion, the Eighth Defense Battalion, and the Second Amphibian Tractor Battalion — had been detached on New Year's Day, and the Casual Company, "H" & "S", "B", "C", and "D" Batteries of the Second Special Weapons Battalion, and "D", "H", and "M" Companies of each of the three regiments had been disbanded. Subsequently the Second Amphibian Tractor unit which passed from Division to the V Amphibious Corps was attached once more to the Division.

Training increased in intensity during February and new weapons, which were destined to play an important part in future operations, began to appear in the training schedules. For a two-week period, forty-three teams were given intensive training in the use of the Bazooka (Launcher, Rocket, AT M1) and a long period was devoted to a course of training in the coordination of tank and infantry. Flame-throwers were demonstrated by an officer of the Canadian Army, and plans were made for amphibious training during March.

During February the composition of the Division was as follows:

Division Special Troops
Division Service Troops
The Second, Sixth, Eighth, Tenth, and Eighteenth Marines.
Second Separate Infantry Battalion* (Activated 1 Feb. 44).

* This battalion was formed under Lieutenant Colonel Guy E. Tannyhill, USMC, from excess personnel in the various regiments, which excess came into being with the recent disbanding of the Weapons Companies. It was committed during the Saipan operation and made a splendid record. Later it became the First Battalion of the Twenty-ninth Marines, a Sixth Division Regiment.

Second Artillery Battery.

VMO-2, the Artillery Air Observation unit, was attached on March 27 and two weeks later the 2nd Joint Assault Signal Company was also attached.

Landing exercises were planned and held during March on the Island of Maui when the Eighth Regiment, designated CT8 went ashore against opposition furnished by the Division Reconnaissance Company. These exercises were held from the 16th to 19th of March.

Training continued during the month of April, and the strength of the Division was increased by the acquisition of 2,784 new men. The Second Separate Infantry Battalion, which had been earmarked for transfer to the Sixth Division as the First Battalion of the Twenty-ninth Marines, was instead retained and attached to the Second Regiment as replacement for one battalion of the latter unit whose detachment for a special mission was under consideration.

On April 10 Major General Julian C. Smith, who had commanded the Division in the Gilbert Islands Campaign, was detached and the command of the Division was given to Brigadier General Thomas E. Watson.

The tempo of training was increasing, and all signs pointed toward action in the near future. The organization of the Division was as follows:

COMPOSITION—
2nd Marines (less 1st Battalion)
6th Marines
8th Marines
10th Marines
18th Marines
Division Troops
Division Headquarters Battalion
2nd Tank Battalion
2nd Service Battalion
2nd Motor Transport Battalion

2nd Medical Battalion

ATTACHED—

(1) For administration and operational control.
  (a) 2nd Joint Assault Signal Company
  (b) 2nd Amphibian Tractor Battalion
  (c) 18th Naval Construction Battalion
  (d) 1st Amphibian Truck Company
  (e) 2nd 155mm Artillery Battalion (How) Corps Artillery
  (f) 1st Battalion, 29th Marines.

(2) For operational control.
  (a) 5th Amphibian Tractor Battalion
  (b) 715th Amphibian Tractor Battalion
  (c) 2nd Armored Amphibian Battalion.
  (d) VMO-2
  (e) 3rd Platoon 604th QM Graves Registration Company, U. S. Army, as of May 14, 1944
  (f) Detachment 7th Field Depot, as of May 1, 1944
  (g) Detachment Air Warning Squadron No. 5, as of May 6, 1944

Early in the month, not only was it clear that a strike impended which would involve the Division but also the objective of the strike was known. By May 2 the Division had been supplied with details of the Marianas Islands, including maps of the Saipan-Tinian area, and plans were made to have an exact and detailed rehearsal of the projected operation carried out on Maui. This in effect was done, and toward the end of the month the entire reinforced Division returned to Pearl Harbor for several days rehabilitation.

Two mishaps involving landing craft occurred during the month, each accident causing loss of life as well as material damage. On May 15, at the beginning of the rehearsal, an LCT was lost overboard from her parent LST with a loss of two killed, fifteen missing (and presumed dead), and twelve wounded. On May 21 two LSTs were destroyed by fire while tied up in West Loch, Pearl Harbor, and considerable material damage resulted for the ships were completely loaded and all personnel was embarked. Two were killed, twenty-seven missing, and fifty-six were wounded in this mishap.

By May 25 some units of the Division were beginning to set out for the staging area, for that date saw Tractor Group A under way. Transport Group A followed five days later.

The impending strike marked the beginning of a new phase in the Pacific War. To date, several important conquests had been made —the Solomons, the Gilberts, the Marshalls — but all of these had been blows struck at the perimeter of the enemy's defenses. The rapidly growing surface and ground forces of the United States had of necessity contented themselves with nibbling away at the more accessible parts of the Japanese conquered territories, since their strength had not yet been built up to a point where a hard deep blow could be struck.

By late spring of 1944, however, it became apparent to everyone that the various task groups and forces that were wandering about the vast western Pacific and hoping against hope that the Japanese fleet could be tormented into a decisive action were to be disappointed. They dominated the surface so completely with the power of their armament that no enemy surface force dared appear; their air force was so overwhelmingly large and complete that the possibility of contact with the enemy air force was contemplated with anticipation rather than apprehension.

The attack on the Marianas was a blow toward the heart of the conquered territories. Bypassing Truk and its neighboring eastern Caroline Islands and in effect ignoring the consequent threat to the left flank, the new blow would carry the forces of the United States to an island group whence the long-range bombers of the Army Air Force could operate with reasonable ease against the homeland itself. The islands to be taken were large enough to provide admirable bases and staging areas for future operations, and the largest of the group, Guam, had been the scene of a hopeless but courageous struggle against the Japanese early in the war. Its return to the protection of the United States would be a source of great satisfaction.

The entire campaign was aimed at taking the Islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Guam, and the mission of the reinforced Second Division was the securing of the first two named in company with the balance of the V Amphibious Corps. Saipan was to receive first attention while Tinian was to be taken as a later phase of the same action. Its companion units were the Fourth Marine Division under Major General Harry Schmidt, USMC, and the 27th Army Division under Major General Ralph Smith, USA. The entire group was known as Northern Troops and Landing Force and was designated Task Group 56.1 commanded by Lieutenant General Holland M. Smith, USMC. The next higher echelon of command was Task Force 56 under the command of Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner, USN.

The specific mission of the Division was to land on the western shore of the island south of Garapan, to seize its immediate objective and then to press on and take Mt. Tapotchau and Mt. Tipopale. In doing so it was to protect the left or north flank of the Northern Landing Force.

By June 9 both the Tractor Group and the Transport Group had arrived at Eniwetok, and with-

in a few hours of the arrival of the latter, the transfer of personnel from the transports to the LSTs of the Tractor Group had been completed and the Tractor Group set out for the target area at 1400. Two days later the faster sailing transports departed from Eniwetok. On the sixth day of the trip the target area was reached and reports of a reconnaissance made on June 14 were received and studied. These reports told of a reef to be crossed and of the disturbing fact that the reef had been well taped by the enemy artillery and mortars, as had the enclosed lagoon. This report reached the Division Headquarters at about 0400. Just over an hour later the transports arrived off the designated beaches. Twenty-five minutes later the commander of TF52 announced that H-hour would be 0830.

An intense preparatory working over had been given the islands for several days before the actual time of the landing, and the latter was made under the cover of a strong naval gunfire barrage. Smoke was used to blanket the beaches, and at 0707 the LSTs were in position immediately behind the line of departure, carrying their loaded LVT's. Eight minutes later the parent ships began discharging the LVT's into a sea that was relatively calm, one-foot waves and a four-knot wind being reported. Control vessels began to get into position, and the Assistant Division Commander left his transport at 0740 to take up his post on one of them.

The beaches selected for the landing lay on the west coast of the island, south of the town of Garapan. Slightly inland from the beach was a concave sweep of low hills which approached the sea at the northern limit of the landing beach and retreated gradually inland to the southward. Well to the south beyond the area of action of the Fourth Division, the right flank force, the hill line once more came near the water's edge. The line of the beach and the crest line of the hill were therefore nearly parallel and each ran roughly north and south. The flat land that was enclosed by the two lines was in the shape of a long flat oval and in almost the center of it was Lake Susupe.

Somewhat to the north and equidistant between the east and the west coasts of the island was the commanding terrain feature of the campaign, Mt. Tapotchau. This rugged hilly mass rose above the surrounding countryside and dominated the entire beach area of the division. It was to be the scene of bitter fighting, and prior to its capture, it served the enemy well as a point of observation and as site for artillery emplacements.

The initial objective line ran from the water's edge at the extreme left flank of the left unit southeastward to the ridge line, thence south along that ridge. It bore gradually to the southwest and touched the beach again well to the south of the right flank units of the Fourth Division. The area to be gained was divided in two roughly equal parts, and the northern half was assigned to the Second Division. The division area again was divided into two parts, and the Sixth and the Eighth Regiments were each assigned a part, the Sixth on the north.

The scheme of maneuver involved the attaining first of the initial objective line along the ridge. Once that was secured the right flank regiment was to continue the drive across the island, while the left flank regiment, the Sixth, was to swing gradually to the north toward Mt. Tapotchau. A comparable move was to be made by the Eighth Marines when the east coast was approached. The final objective line, known as the Landing Force Beachhead Line, extended from coast to coast and enclosed Mt. Tapotchau.

There was a ten minute delay of H-hour, and all vessels by that time had been in position for one-half hour. The first waves of LVT's set out for the smoke-blanketed beach at 0812, and thirty-one minutes later the first assault waves went ashore under cover of a naval barrage. The landing time had been well-planned and well-executed for the waves landed on Red and Green Beaches* within four minutes of each other from 0839 to 0843.

* The beach was divided into six equal parts, and these were designated Red 1, 2, 3, and Green 1, 2, 3, running north to south.

Enemy fire at first was not intense, and the greatest disturbance in landing was caused when almost two hours later, the Second Battalion, Eighth Marines, LT2/8, landed on the wrong beach, and it became necessary to rearrange the plans for utilizing that particular unit. After the landing of the first troops, enemy mortar fire increased in intensity in the beach area, and subsequent waves had difficulty in getting across the reef.

By 1000 hostile fire had increased, and enemy artillery had begun registering on the reef. Troops ashore were being subjected to flanking fire from automatic weapons, and two reserve battalions, 1/8 and 1/6 were ordered committed to continue the attack. Elements of the Sixth Regiment on Beach Red 2 were 150 yards inland, but the Eighth Regiment was suffering heavy casualties in its Second Battalion.

By 1130 still further progress had been made, and at several points the lines had been pushed inland for a distance of 1,000 yards. An enemy counterattack was developing in the neighborhood of Afetna Point, however, and at 1113 a request had been received for the bombing of a hill some 2,000 yards

inland from Beach Red 1, whence enemy fire was giving much trouble.

There was a constant increase in resistance throughout the entire beachhead area save Beach Green 1 on the left flank of the Eighth Marines area where it was reported that the enemy was withdrawing. Tanks began to hold up the advance, and some of them were disposed of by rocket discharger teams. Fire from 75mm, mortars and machine guns continued to be heavy.

By 1850 only a few elements of the Second Regiment remained afloat. Two battalions of the Tenth Regiment had come ashore and had gone into position, and while the primary objective had not been reached, a firm foothold had been gained and adequate defenses had been set up. The day's activities had cost the Division 238 killed, 1,022 wounded, and 315 missing.

The second day of the attack saw the Division extend its beach laterally on both flanks without making much progress inland. Enemy resistance was strong, and during the night several counterattacks were repulsed. Throughout the entire day, artillery fire from Mt. Tapotchau fell on all beaches, and it became apparent that Garapan, the island's principal city, was being used as a jump-off point by enemy troops.

Early in the day the remaining waves of the Second Battalion, Second Marines were instructed to land, and the First Battalion was released to Division Control by the Northern Troops and Landing Force. An attack by enemy tanks was broken up by fire from automatic weapons and by air support, and the Fourth Battalion, Tenth Marines was landed. Contact was established with the Fourth Division, and the area west of Lake Susupe was cleared of enemy.

High ground faced the Division a short distance inland, and an attack was planned for the morning of the third day. Two battalions of 75mm artillery were in support of the Sixth and the Eighth Regiments while heavier guns were firing late in the evening when two battalions of 105's went into position along the beach in general support. Supplies were being brought ashore by amphibian tractors, and the situation in general was favorable. The casualties for the day were 54 killed, 454 wounded, and 177 missing.

The attack planned for the third day developed favorably, and in some areas gains of over a thousand yards were made. The early hours of the day had seen the most spectacular enemy action of the campaign when a force of medium tanks struck at the center of the Division line and fanned out toward the flanks. The enemy tanks cruised back and forth with riflemen riding them on the outside; they were attacked and dispersed by bazooka teams and by individuals with thermite grenades. Twenty-four medium tanks were destroyed in this attack, and no ground was lost by the Marines. The day's activities had cost the Division 55 killed, 218 wounded, and 51 missing, and counter-battery fired by the enemy had succeeded in knocking out all but three pieces of the Second Battalion, Tenth Regiment during the night.

The next two weeks of the campaign were marked by steady advances against varying opposition. In the latter part of the period, the Marines of the Eighth Regiment began to come up against the most stubborn and costly type of fighting that they had as yet met—the well defended caves in the rugged terrain over which their advance was taking them. The usual Japanese tactics of infiltration and sniping behind the lines were also met, and they were made the more difficult to deal with by the fact that the 27th Army Division on the right flank of the Eighth Marines allowed a gap of several hundred yards to remain wide open in spite of the fact that enemy troops were taking advantage of the opening to infiltrate.

By the end of the month, the Division had suffered casualties totalling 4,499 — 233 officers and 4,266 men. These included 761 killed, 3,423 wounded, and 315 missing.

On July 1, 1944 the effective strength of the Division was as follows:

	Officers	Men
Division	824	13,737
Attached	215	3,874
	1,039	17,611
		Total 18,650

(Figures do not include the Rear Echelon whose composition was not known at the time of submitting the Diary for July.)

The early days of July saw the climax of the battle for Saipan, a climax whose most spectacular detail was a determined by inconclusive attack by a strong force of Japanese at daybreak on July 7. The brunt of the attack was borne by the 27th Infantry Division, and so desperate was the effort of the enemy that a deep penetration was accomplished. A part of the Second Division was involved for the firing position of the Third Battalion, Tenth Marines was overrun. The enemy, having made the penetration, seemed undecided as to his next move—indeed, the attack bore all the marks of being the familiar suicidal "banzai" charge, whose apparent objective is to bring death to the attackers as well as momentary confusion to the unwary defenders.

Activity gradually slackened during the next week, and the battle for the island was reaching an end. Organized resistance was almost

non-existent by this time, and attacks were launched, continued, and brought to a successful conclusion without meeting more than scattered resistance from snipers and small patrols. On July 13 a part of the Third Battalion, Sixth Marines, supported by artillery fire from the Tenth Marines landed on and secured Maniagassa Island against negligible opposition and returned immediately to the Sixth Marines area, leaving one rifle platoon as a garrison force. The entire operation executed was in twenty-five LVT(4)'s from the Fifth Amphibious Tractor Battalion and five LVT(A)(4)'s from the Second Armored Amphibious Battalion.

A part of the overall plan for the capture and occupation of Saipan included the taking of the smaller island of Tinian which lay to the south of the main island. Operation Plan 30-44 assigned the task of initial assault to the Fourth Division and directed the Second Division to land subsequently on the same beach, to proceed to a designated assembly area, and to await further orders. The first offensive was to be in the direction of Mt. Lasso.

On July 21 the Second and the Eighth Regiment embarked for the short trip to the new objective on the ships of Transport Divisions 7 and 30. Advance Echelons of the Commanding General and Assistand Division Commander Groups embarked also. The remaining infantry regiment, the Sixth Marines, remained ashore although it had been relieved of its beach defense mission by the Garrison Forces. Two days later the Division Headquarters was set up aboard the **Cavalier.**

The landing of the Fourth Marine Division was made July 24 on a section of the beach labeled Beach White which lay on the northwest coast of the island. The peculiarity of the movement lay in that the actual beaches used for the landing were extremely short, varying from 100 to 200 yards in length. While the landing was in progress, the Second Division was creating a diversion farther to the south on the western coast in the vicinity of Tinian Town. It may be argued that the deception was successful and that the enemy was actually diverted from making a defense of the northern beaches, for the landing met with little opposition although in the later phases the defense was skillful and bitter.

The landing by the Fourth Division had commenced at 0830, and, as has been said, the opposition to that landing was negligible. After the diversionary activities off Tinian Town, the Second Division, less the Sixth Marines, returned to the transport area off Beach White, and at 1930 on the same day, the first unit of that Division went ashore. That unit was the First Battalion, Eighth Marines, which upon landing, was assigned to the operational control of the Fourth Division.

At 0630 the next morning, July 25, the balance of the Eighth Regiment began going ashore, passing also to the control of the Fourth Division. Four hours later the Second Regiment received the word to stand by, and at 1200 it began debarking. Late in the afternoon the Division Headquarters Command Post closed aboard the **Cavalier** and reopened ashore. The Sixth Regiment reported that it had boarded ship and was on the way from Saipan to the transport area. One battalion of that unit — the Second Battalion — completed its trip to the beach late that evening in LVT's, was detached from its parent regiment and designated Division Reserve.

The next day, July 26, saw the balance of the Sixth Regiment come ashore and assemble. The Eighth Regiment returned to the control of the Second Division which left only the Second Battalion detached. The latter, relieving the Twenty-fourth early in the morning, attacked with the Eighth toward the immediate objective. Resistance was light and the lines were moving forward steadily when the Sixth Regiment completed its landing. Tanks came ashore at 1000 and immediately began action in support of the advancing regiments.

The Sixth Regiment was sent into action at once when it was directed to relieve the right flank of the Second Marines in preparation for a general attack to the southward. By 1240 both the Second and the Eighth Marines were on 0-3 line, and twenty minutes later the entire line again moved forward with two regiments abreast, the Sixth and the Second, the Eighth having passed to reserve. Direct support for the advance was furnished by the artillery of the Tenth Marines, and each regiment had one destroyer in deep support. The desired objective for the day was reached, and at 1800 the troops dug in for the night.

During the nights of July 26-27 there was considerable enemy activity in the zone of action of the Second Regiment. The greater part of the activity took the form of attempts at infiltration, and the result of it was that at least 137 enemy were killed. At 0730 the attack was resumed to the southward, and by 1340 the day's objective had been gained.

Very little enemy resistance was met during the following days until the afternoon of July 31 when the advance had brought the troops to the base of a line of vertical cliffs where the enemy had decided to defend. At 0830 the Eighth Marines, on the right of the Division Zone, attacked against moderate resistance from mortars, machine guns, and rifles.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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Early in the morning of August 1 the Second Battalion, Eighth Marines was attacked strongly by a force of about five hundred enemy. The attack was repulsed and the advance continued. At 0815 the Eighth Marines launched an attack with two battalions abreast, First Battalion on the right. Three hours later the regimental front had so narrowed that the left flank unit was pinched out of the line and at the same time the Third Battalion, Sixth Marines, which had been attached to the Eighth Marines, was returned to its parent regiment.

In the meanwhile the Sixth Marines had attacked in its zone and by 1750 had advanced about a thousand yards. At that time the First Battalion of the Eighth Marines had reached the southern coast of the island, and the Second Regiment was holding fast and mopping up enemy survivors which were being driven from the cliffs by the Sixth Marines. Just after nightfall the commanding general of the Northern Troops and Landing Force announced that organized resistance had ceased a few minutes before and that the island was secured. Technically that statement was correct, but it was by no means true that resistance had ceased on the island, for during the next week, continual clashes occurred and each day saw the casualty figures for the operation increase.

At 0830 on August 9 the Second Marine Division Command Post closed on Tinian and reopened immediately on Saipan. The movement of troops from the smaller to the larger island had been going on for several days and continued until August 13 when the entire division less the Eighth Regiment had returned to Saipan.

On August 11 orders were received from the V Amphibious Corps to seize the small island of Aguijan, and on that date a group of officers from the Second Division Headquarters made a surface reconnaissance in preparation for the landing.

On August 16 one unit of the Division went out of existence as such when the engineering regiment of the Division, the Eighteenth Marines was disbanded. The First Battalion was redesignated the Second Engineering Battalion, while the Second Battalion was renamed the Second Pioneer Battalion.

Two days later the task organization for the taking of Aguijan Island was established. The special landing force was composed of a landing group made up of Division Reconnaissance Company and "A" Company of First Battalion, Second Marines, the First Battalion, Second Marines (less Company "A") with Shore Fire Control Party and Air Liaison Team attached and a support group consisting of detachments of engineers, amphibious tractor, pioneers, and medical detachments.

The Command Group was a detachment of H & S Company, Second Marines, while one battalion of the Eighth Regiment of the Eighth Marines served as a Division Reserve.

On August 21 at 2200 a reconnaissance party of two officers and twelve men attempted a ground reconnaissance of the island to investigate the possibility of landing on a section of the beach backed by cliffs. High surf and poor visibility resulted in no success whatever for the mission.

August 22 saw the Second Marine Division take over the mopping up task on Saipan from which mission they relieved the 27th Infantry Division.

A three-day period of neutralization of Aguijan Island began on August 23 when artillery, air strikes, and naval gunfire commenced. At the close of the period a second surface reconnaissance of the small island was conducted by the staff of special landing force, and on the same day twenty-four P-47's of Task Group 59.1 destroyed the town upon the island. Concurrently with this activity, the mopping up of Saipan continued and each day saw civilians and military personnel killed or captured.

On September 8 it was apparently decided that Aguijan would not be worth the trouble of taking, for orders were received from the commander of Task Force 57 to the effect that the island would not be assaulted. The neutralization fires that had been directed against it periodically stopped at this time and the task organization was dissolved. Firing continued sporadically for some days against known targets on the island, and periodic aerial reconnaissance was continued.

At the end of the month the First Battalion, Twenty-ninth Marines, was detached from the Division after having served well during the whole Marianas campaign. At this time the strength of the Division was 17,917 and the personnel was distributed in the following units:

COMPOSITION—
- Headquarters Battalion
- 2nd Tank Battalion
- Service Troops
  - 2nd Service Battalion
  - 2nd Motor Transport Battalion
  - 2nd Medical Battalion
- 2nd Pioneer Battalion
- 2nd Engineer Battalion
- 10th Marines
- 2nd Marines
- 6th Marines
- 8th Marines

ATTACHED—
- 2nd Armored Amphibian Bn.
- 2nd Amphibian Tractor Bn.
- 5th Amphibian Tractor Bn.
- 1st Amphibian Truck Company
- 2nd Amphibian Truck Company
- 2nd Joint Assault Signal Co.
- 2nd Provisional Rocket Det.

VMO-2
2nd Separate Wire Platoon
4th Separate Wire Platoon
2nd Semi-Mobile Laundry Pl.

A considerable turnover in strength occurred during the month with a small detail of men from the first replacement draft reporting for duty and a slightly larger number being transferred from the Division to other activities.

The Second and Sixth Marines continued their mission of cleaning up Saipan throughout the month, and throughout the month also the small island of Aguijan was observed and bombarded. No direct action against it was taken however.

On October 20 the first indication of a new impending action was received when the Division passed out of the control of the V Amphibious Corps and under the command of the III Amphibious Corps; the latter by this time was a part of the newly formed Tenth Army. By this time all but one battalion of Eighth Marines and two wire platoons had been withdrawn from Tinian, and the entire division less those detachments was undergoing training on Saipan.

November saw a still further decline in strength of the Division. Eight hundred fourteen men were transferred from the Division to various other units as against 145 men acquired from FMF, Pacific. At the end of the month the strength of the Division was 16,557.

The mission of the Division at this time was the patrolling and securing of the island. Each day saw further military and civilian personnel captured, killed, and wounded, and casualties were being suffered almost daily by the Division personnel. These conditions led the Division Command to organize and conduct a coordinated sweep of the northern and central portions of the island. Accordingly, from November 15 to 17 all three regiments (reinforced) were engaged clearing out those areas. The enemy suffered casualties of 255 killed, 47 captured, while the Division had 9 killed and 40 wounded. A total of 2,144 new men joined the Division during December but this increase was more than balanced by the transfer of 2,217 men from the Division, most of whom were returned to the United States in rotation of duty. Nothing further of note occurred during the month until another broad hint of impending activity was given when an Island Command Order relieved the Division from all further responsibility for controlling, guarding, and mopping up the enemy on Saipan. This relief was to be effected the 31st of December in order to enable the Division to concentrate on training for further operations.

As a sort of echo to this news and confirming the suspicion that a new strike was in the offing, replacements began to over-balance transfers from the Division, and the strength of the latter began to grow once more. Training of all kinds was stepped up in tempo, and specialized instruction of all kinds was offered daily. New units began to appear in the Division lineup, and in March the composition was as follows:

COMPOSITION—
Headquarters Battalion
2nd Tank Battalion
2nd Engineer Battalion
2nd Pioneer Battalion
Service Troops
2nd Service Battalion
2nd Motor Transport Battalion
2nd Medical Battalion
2nd Marines
6th Marines
8th Marines
10th Marines

ATTACHED—
2nd Amphibian Tractor Battalion
(Includes one (1) E-9 A Unit)
2nd Amphibian Truck Company
2nd Joint Assault Signal Co.
2nd Provisional Rocket Det.
2nd Semi-Mobile Laundry Pl.
2nd War Dog Pl.
VMO-2
41st Replacement Draft
35th Replacement Draft
130th Naval Construction Battalion
Detachment A-2 Military Government
Det. B-2 Military Government.
19th G-10 Dispensary
20th G-10 Dispensary

By this time it was definite that an operation had been planned and that the date for the operation had been set. The Division was now operating under the immediate command of the III Amphibious Corps and ultimately as a part of the Tenth Army. It was quite clear that the impending operation would be a joint affair involving both Marine Corps and Army units under the centralized command of an Army General.

The struggle for Iwo Jima found the Second Division on Saipan preparing for its part in the forthcoming Okinawa Campaign. The Third Division, which had been held as Corps Reserve in the early stages of that fight, was committed on the fourth day of the struggle, with the exception of the Third Marines who remained in reserve. Such a relatively small reserve force was thought to be inadequate, and therefore the Second Division was designated Area Reserve and was placed under the command, for that purpose, of Admiral Nimitz. No change in activity resulted from its being so designated, however, and it was never necessary to commit the division. It was released from reserve on the fifteenth day of the fight.

The month of March was a period of final training and of embarkation for the target area of the strike—Okinawa in the Ryukyu Group. The final touches were put on equipment, sortie was made

from the embarkation area, and April 1 found the Division as part of Task Group 51.2 engaging in diversionary activities along the southeast coast of Okinawa. The actual landing was made by the balance of the Tenth Army somewhat to the north and on the opposite side of the island, and after repeating the feint on the next day, the entire Division remained in floating reserve ready to go ashore should circumstances require.

The unexpected ease with which the remaining two Marine divisions of the Tenth Army succeeded in gaining their immediate objectives made it unnecessary for the commanding general of the Army to call upon the Second Division, and after ten days wait, orders were received by it to put ashore the 130th Naval Construction Battalion and the 2nd Amphibian Truck Company. This was done on the 11th, and the remainder of the Division then returned to Saipan.

In the course of the Ryukyu campaign, it became necessary to take two smaller islands, Iheya and Aguni. For this purpose a task organization was formed around the Eighth Marine Regiment under the command of Brigadier General LeRoy T. Hunt, USMC.

Nothing was known of the garrison of the islands nor of its strength, and all plans were made on the assumption that an amphibious landing against defended positions would be made. In accordance with these plans the task organization was completed and loading began on May 21 at Saipan. Twenty-six LST's were used to transport the troops, supplies, and equipment, and by 0400 May 24, loading was complete.

From Saipan the small convoy called at Okinawa to embark a company of Army combat engineers and a Marine armored amphibious tractor company. At 0135 June 3 the company began the last leg of its journey toward the target area and arrived off the beaches of Iheya at 0700 the same morning. In line with the idea that resistance would be met, a program of naval gunfire of 3½ hours duration was carried out lasting from 2½ hours before H-hour and continuing until H plus sixty minutes. Everything went smoothly; troops and supplies reaching the shore exactly in accordance with plans. Resistance was not met, and the casualties suffered in the operation came from short rounds of naval gunfire and rockets. These casualties consisted of two killed and sixteen wounded.

The Island of Iheya was officially secured at noon on June 4, 1945. Some indication of the tremendous stride made in the handling technique of supplies may be gained by comparing two statements made by Rear Admiral L. F. Reifsnider. The first of these statements is contained in his report of September 23, 1942 and deals with the deplorable condition of the landing beaches on Guadalcanal and with the intransigence of the Marines on those beaches. The second statement was made immediately after the conquest of the two small islands. The Admiral's statements are quoted verbatim:

(1)—September 23, 1942.

"During the mounting congestion and confusion, literally hundreds of marines were idling on the beach and in the immediate vicinity waiting for their units to assemble, but refused to lend a hand in the emergency. Both officers and men of the naval sections worked to the point of exhaustion in trying to cope with the emergency, and to quote from the official report of an assistant beachmaster, ' . . . . the men were so exhausted several were vomiting and many complained of splitting headaches'."

(2)—June 6, 1945.

"I wish to express my admiration and commendation for the efficiency of the shore party organization of the 36.5 and for the zealous manner in which all units thereof have performed their duties. The control of the amphibious vehicles and the energy and efficiency with which they have operated is especially noteworthy."

The middle of June, 1945 saw the First and Sixth Marine Divisions in action in the southern portion of Okinawa. It had been a bitter and a costly campaign for the ground forces, as well as for the supporting naval units. The Second Division had never gone ashore, although plans had called for the use of the entire III Amphibious Corps in the operation. The decision was made some time prior to the 11th of June to employ the same combat team which had taken Iheya and Aguni to reinforce the Marine sector of the Okinawa lines. On the 11th of June CT8 was ordered to reembark and to proceed to Okinawa. The movement was completed by June 15, and the combat team was thereupon placed under the operational control of the First Marine Division for the purpose of relieving the Seventh Marines.

On June 17 the Regimental Command Post moved to the vicinity of Kera Village, and the Second Battalion was ordered to relieve one battalion of the Seventh on Mezado Ridge before June 18. The Third Battalion, Eighth Marines, relieved another battalion of the Seventh Marines at the same time on Kunishi Ridge, somewhat to the north of the Second Battalion's positions. Early in the morning of June 18 the Second Battalion commenced its attack toward the southward and advanced at such a pace that its left flank was left open, and to close this gap, "B" Company of the First Battalion was called in and established its

front toward the eastward. During this day the Tenth Army suffered a tragic loss; Lieutenant General Simon Bolivar Buckner, the commanding officer of the Army, visited the Regimental Observation Post on Mezado Ridge. Early in the afternoon, a cluster of high velocity enemy shells scored directly upon the Observation Post, and the General was killed.

The next day the Third Battalion passed through the lines of the Second Battalion and continued the advance, and later in the day the First Battalion was brought into action on Ibaro Ridge and positions to the north of it.

The balance of the action consisted of mopping up operations, and on June 21 the Island of Okinawa was declared secured. The combat team had secured an area three miles long by one-half mile wide during its two-day drive to the sea. It caused enemy casualties of 1,223 killed and 115 captured. During the same period it suffered a total of 360 casualties of which 36 were killed in action or died of wounds.

The end of the war found the Division beginning to prepare for another operation, after having participated with honor in the first and the last great offensives of the war. It had fought at Guadalcanal in the primitive, frontier-like fighting in 1942 and had helped destroy the Japanese superman myth; it had carried through the great experiment at Tarawa to a bloody and successful conclusion. It had taken part in the great war of maneuver on Saipan, and it had sent one of its units into the last great fight on Japanese soil. It had earned the rest that the launching of the atomic bomb brought to it.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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DECORATIONS and COMMENDATIONS

(R) following names of all personnel indicates reserve status

Medal of Honor

★ **JULIAN, Joseph R., PlSgt. (R)*** (Fiskdale, Mass.)

Navy Cross

★ **BELLAT, Joseph S., PlSgt.*** (Cleveland, Ohio)

★ **CARLTON, Ted J., Pfc.** (Denver, Colo.)

★ **McLEOD, Maynard M., 2nd Lt. (R)*** (Aucilla, Fla.)

★ **SHEEHAN, Joseph D., Sgt.-** (West Concord, Mass.)

Gold Star

IN LIEU OF THIRD DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

★ **GEIGER, Roy S., Maj. Gen.** (Green Cove Springs, Fla.)

★ **SCHMIDT, Harry, Maj. Gen.** (Stapleton, Neb.)

Gold Star

IN LIEU OF SECOND DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

★ **SHEPHERD, L. C., Jr., Maj. Gen.** (Norfolk, Virginia)

Legion of Merit

★ **HEATH, John E., Capt. (R)** (Glassport, Pa.)

Silver Star Medal

★ **ALWARD, Everett V., Maj.** (Morgan Hill, Calif.)

★ **GATES, Mike J., Jr., Pvt. (R)** (Yukon, Pa.)

★ **WHITFORD, William R., Corp. (R)** (Anderson, California)

Bronze Star Medal

★ **RICHARDSON, Arnold R., TSgt.** (Peabody, Mass.)

★ **SANDERS, Jack H., Corp. (R)** (Sacramento, Calif.)

Air Medal

★ **JACOBS, Vincent A., 2nd Lt. (R)** (Huntington Park, Calif.)

★ **ROHRICHT, Edward H., 2nd Lt. (R)** (St. Paul, Minn.)

Letters of Commendation

FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
(Commendation Ribbon Authorized)

★ **STICKNEY, Ivan C., Col. (R)** (Toledo, Ohio)

FROM THE COMMANDING GENERAL, 3D MARINE DIVISION, FMF

CLARK, Billie L., Corp. (R)
DEMARIS, Laverne L., Sgt.
GRIMES, John R., Sgt.
GROENINGER, Edward V., GySgt. (R)
KRIEG, William J., GySgt.

w/COMMENDATION RIBBON FROM THE COMMANDER, AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, U. S. PACIFIC FLEET

JEFFREY, Stanley H., Capt. (R)

WITH COMMENDATION RIBBON FROM COMMANDER, SEVENTH FLEET

COX, Woodrow W., WO

FROM THE COMMANDER, CARRIER DIVISION TWENTY-SEVEN, U. S. PACIFIC FLEET

COOLEY, Albert Dustin, Col.

FROM COMMANDING GENERAL, FIRST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING, FMF

FRISCH, Milton Martin, Capt. (R)

FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE U.S.S. SANTA FE

MEADOWS, William M., Sgt.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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THIRD MARINE DIVISION HISTORY

From Official Monograph by Historical Division HQMC

When the 3rd Marine Division was officially activated on September 16, 1942 the following units were assigned: Headquarters Battalion (organized September 16, 1942), Special and Service Troops (organized September 10, 1942), 9th Marines (organized February 12, 1942), 12th Marines (organized September 1, 1942) 21st Marines (organized July 8, 1942), and the 23rd Marines (organized July 12, 1942).

The 23rd Marines was replaced by the 3rd Marines on February 15, 1943. The 3rd, activated June 16, 1942 at New River, North Carolina, for duty in American Samoa, joined the 2nd Marine Brigade at Tutuila on September 14, 1942, and was assigned to the 3rd Marine Division on March 1, 1943. The regiment remained in Samoa until May 23, 1943, when it left to join the 3rd Marine Division at Auckland, New Zealand.

The Division was activated in two echelons: the Advance Echelon (9th Marines and reinforcing units) at Camp Elliott, San Diego, California, and the Rear Echelon (21st Marines and reinforcing units) at New River, North Carolina. Colonel Lemuel C. Shepherd, Commanding Officer of the 9th Marines and the senior officer present in the Advance Echelon, assumed temporary command of that echelon. Brigadier General Allen H. Turnage, Commanding General of the Fleet Marine Force Training Center, New River, was assigned as Commanding Officer of the Rear Echelon. Major General Charles D. Barrett reported at Camp Elliott October 10, 1942 and assumed command of the Division, with Brigadier General Turnage as Assistant Division Commander.

On January 23, 1943, the Advance Echelon of the Division consisting of Division Headquarters, M. P. and Signal Platoons, 9th Marines, and the 1st Battalion, 19th Marines, went aboard the **Mount Vernon, Matsonia, Wheeler,** and **Crawford,** and began the movement from San Diego to the vicinity of Auckland, New Zealand. Units of this Echelon arrived in New Zealand on February 5 and 7 and moved into camps. Division Headquarters was established at Camp Orfords and Manurewa and the 9th Marines moved into a number of small camps in the vicinity of Pukekohe.

The Rear Echelon consisting of the Rear Echelon of Division Headquarters, the 12th Marines (less two battalions with the 3rd and 9th Marines), the 19th Marines (less 1st Battalion), and the 21st Marines under the command of Brigadier General Turnage, left Camp Elliott on February 14, 1943 and sailed from San Diego between February 15 and 23 on the **Lurline,** the **Bloemfontein, Mormacport,** and the **Robert Stuart,** and arrived at Auckland between February 28 and March 13. By the latter date, all elements of the Division were in New Zealand except the 3rd Marines in Samoa and a small detachment of 10 officers and 34 enlisted men who arrived later in March.

The 21st Marines (Reinforced) moved into a number of camps in the Warkworth area, the 12th Marines into camps in the vicinity of Whangerei, the 19th Marines into Waikaraka Park in Auckland and the Division's special and service troops in Waikaraka Park and Camp Orfords. When the 3rd Marines (Reinforced) arrived from American Samoa on May 29, 1943, it was encamped at Cambria Park, Papatoetoe, New Zealand.

The 3rd Division's program of active training for combat service which began in November 1942 and culminated in ship-to-shore operations from APA's at Camp Pendleton and North Island, California, was continued in New Zealand until June 1943 when the schedule was supplemented by additional special training. A summary of the principal phases of training included the usual individual and unit training; combat team and combat group field exercises; firing of all weapons; jungle warfare; rubber boat and amphibious exercises; and combat group landing exercises on assumed beaches involving movement by special landing craft.

On June 30, 1943, the Advance Echelon of the Division (Headquarters Battalion, 9th Marines, and various detachments of other units), a total of 316 officers and 5,809 enlisted men sailed from Auckland, New Zealand, via the **American Legion, Hunter Liggett, Crescent City, George Clymer** and the **Formalhaut,** for Guadalcanal.

All through July detachments of the Division sailed for Guadalcanal, and on August 1, 1943, the

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Rear Echelon joined the remainder of the Division at Tetere Beach, "Cocoanut Grove" Camp. Small elements of the Division continued to arrive until the middle of August.

On September 27, 1943, Major General Allen H. Turnage, who had succeeded to command of the Division on September 15 when Major General Barrett left the Division to assume command of the I Marine Amphibious Corps, received instructions outlining a proposed mission to "seize and hold Treasury Islands and Empress Augusta Bay Area, Bougainville Island, and construct airfields in the vicinity of Empress Augusta Bay." The tentative task assigned the 3rd Marine Division (Reinforced) was to "land in the vicinity of Cap Torokina, seize, occupy, and defend a beachhead to include Puruata Island and an adjacent island, the Laruma River 3,750 yards west of Cape Torokina, a line approximately 2,250 yards inland from the beach, and the Torokina River 3,600 yards east of Cape Torokina, and be prepared to continue the attack in coordination with the 37th Infantry Division (upon its arrival subsequent to D-day) to extend the beachhead, establish long-range Radar Naval Base facilities, and construct airfields in the Torokina Area."

The sole objective of the Bougainville operation was the capture of a beachhead, which could accommodate a bomber field, a fighter strip, and thus advance our air and naval bases so as to enlarge the field of targets to include Rabaul, New Britain, and other Japanese bases in the Bismarck Archipelago. It was a flanking movement designed to cut the enemy's line of communication, avoid a direct frontal attack, and force the enemy to withdraw eventually from his main positions without a fight.

At 0730, November 1, 1943, elements of the 3rd Marine Division (Reinforced) aboard 8 APA's and 4 AKA's commenced landing in the Cape Torokina area, Bougainville Island. The landing, which was preceded by naval gunfire from destroyers and aerial bombardment, was made on twelve beaches. The initial landing was made by CT-3 and CT-9, the 2nd Raider Regiment (Provisional), and attached Corps Troops and naval units. The landing boats of the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines, were placed under the cross-fire of enemy machine guns emplaced on Puruata and the mainland, and a 75mm gun located near the Cape and suffered some losses in personnel and boats as they moved around Puruata Island. This battalion also encountered heavy enemy resistance from an estimated 300 Japanese after the landing at Cape Torokina on the right flank of the Division beachhead. The 2nd Raider Regiment (less the 3rd Battalion) and the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 3rd Marines, which landed to the left of the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines, encountered light opposition. The 3rd Battalion, 2nd Raider Regiment, met sharp resistance from an estimated 70 Japanese when it landed on Puruata Island. Supported by two 75mm half-tracks from the Weapons Company, 9th Marines, the Raiders crushed this enemy resistance before nightfall. The 9th Marines which landed to the westward of the Koromokina River encountered no opposition. Due to surf conditions on its beaches, however, most of the assault wave boats of the 9th Marines broached on the initial landing which caused the destruction of approximately 32 landing boats and necessitated the abandonment of these beaches as landing points for subsequent waves.

On November 3, the assault forces were reorganized and the perimeter extended in depth. 3 was modified to include its own 1 and 2, and 3 of 9, and was assigned the left sector of the 3rd Division beachhead. 9 made up of its own 1 and 2, 3 of 3, and the 2nd Raider Regiment (Provisional), was assigned the responsibility for the right sector of the Division beachhead, including Puruata and Torokina Islands.

During the night of November 6-7, an enemy force moved down from Rabaul in APD's and whaleboats and during the early morning of November 7 made a counter landing between the Koromokina and the Laruma Rivers just beyond the 3d Division's left flank. The Commanding General, 3rd Marine Division, countered this move by shifting the sector reserve (1st Battalion, 3rd Marines) into the line and bringing the 1st Battalion, 21st Marines (who had landed the morning of November 6) from the right sector into the threatened area. During this shift of forces, groups of the enemy managed to infiltrate through our lines and attacked the Division Hospital and other installations in our rear areas. Before the enemy could do very much damage the hospital personnel, using machine guns taken from wrecked boats along the beach, held the attackers off until reenforced by other troops. In the meanwhile, the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines, supported by three tanks, passed through the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, and launched an attack against the enemy forces; however, approaching darkness put an end to the advance and the Marines withdrew within the beachhead perimeter after setting up an ambush with "B" Company, 3rd Marines. This company withdrew to the beachhead perimeter about midnight after killing approximately 28 enemy. This action initiated the "Battle of the Koro-

mokina Lagoon."

The battle of the Koromokina Lagoon was resumed during the morning of November 8. After a fifteen minute artillery preparation, the 1st Battalion, 21st Marines (less one Company) passed through the front lines, attacked the enemy position and seized the ground in the vicinity of the Lagoon where it established a defensive position. Approximately 277 enemy dead was counted in the area of the advance. It was estimated that about half of this number had been killed during the previous days' fighting while the majority of the remaining enemy dead had been killed by the artillery preparation.

Combat Team 148 which had landed on November 8 moved into bivouac in rear of the Division's left flank where it relieved the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines, and the 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines, on November 9.

In the meanwhile, the enemy increased his activities on the right flank in the vicinity of the Piva Trail. On November 8, three Raider companies supported by an artillery preparation advanced toward a Japanese force estimated to be one battalion of Infantry which had occupied positions along the Piva Trail. After the Raiders had occupied a position facing the enemy force, the Japanese launched three counterattacks which were repulsed, the Japanese losing 200 killed. Four Raider companies supported by artillery launched an attack against this Japanese force at 0800 November 9 over a narrow, muddy causeway between the two swamps. The enemy was dug in with both flanks resting on the swamps which prevented any enveloping movement by the Raiders. Although extremely muddy terrain prevented the use of tanks and half-tracks, the Raiders advanced approximately 500 yards and killed an estimated 100 Japanese.

Following aerial bombing and strafing attacks on the Japanese positions, the 9th Marines (less the 3rd Battalion) passed through the Raiders' lines at about 1000, November 10 and advanced inland. The Japanese had withdrawn from their position between the two swamps and the 9th Marines occupied Piva No. 2 without incident. This marked the end of the "Battle of Piva," a series of sharp clashes which extended through the period November 8-10.

There was very little further action until November 13 when Company "E," 21st Marines, leading the advance of the 2nd Battalion up the Numa Numa Trail, made contact with an enemy force at a cocoanut grove some 3,000 yards north of Piva No. 2. The leading platoon of the Company was pinned down by enemy mortar and machine gun fire and a double envelopment attempted by the other two platoons of the Company was broken up by heavy enemy fire. Artillery soon arrived, however, and silenced the enemy mortar and machine gun fire after which Companies "F" and "G" of the 2nd Battalion, 21st Marines, renewed the attack routing the enemy forces and occupying a small cocoanut grove. This action was known as the "Battle of the Cocoanut Grove."

On November 15, a general advance to the next phase line was made along the entire 3rd Division front. This line included the Koromokina Lagoon on the left, the large swamp directly north of Cape Torokina and the Cocoanut Grove near the village of Piva. The positions occupied were consolidated and active patrolling to the front and along the flanks was maintained. On November 18, patrols from the 3rd Marines contacted enemy patrols along the east-west trail in which one enemy officer and seven enlisted men were killed. On the Japanese lieutenant's body were found papers that revealed his intentions to establish entrenched positions along the east branch of the Piva River. A reinforced platoon from the 2nd Battalion, 21st Marines, was then sent forward to make a reconnaissance and to establish an outpost. En route, the platoon encountered an estimated 100 Japanese entrenched in a position about 750 yards east of the west branch of the Piva River. After finding that the Japanese had numerous machine guns in pillboxes covered by light automatic weapons flanking the trail, the platoon withdrew. On November 19, the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines, advanced without opposition to this area and established a perimeter defense with the right flank on the Piva River. At about the same time, the 2nd Battalion, 21st Marines, established an outpost on the east branch of the Piva River.

Preparatory to a general advance on November 21, a number of tactical movements were made on November 20. The 3rd Raider Battalion relieved the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines, in the front line, and the latter unit then attacked to the north up the Numa Numa Trail making an advance of approximately 800 yards toward the phase line to be occupied on November 21. After repulsing an enemy counterattack, the Battalion then crossed the west branch of the Piva River and seized high ground where a defensive position was organized for the night. At the same time, the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines, passed through the 2nd Battalion, 21st Marines, and advanced to the eastward where it occupied a defensive position on the west bank of the east branch of the Piva River.

At 0730, November 21, all regiments of the 3rd Marine Division jumped off in a general advance.

The 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines, supported by artillery and mortars made a substantial advance in its zone of action against retiring enemy resistance. The 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines, also reached the new lines in its zone of action encountering very little opposition. Following an artillery and mortar preparation, the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines, continued its attack eastward against the east branch of the Piva River. The Battalion quickly seized the first line of the enemy pill-boxes, established a bridgehead on the opposite bank of the stream and organized a defensive position forward of the line occupied by the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines. The 9th and 21st Marines encountered negligible enemy opposition in their advance to the new lines.

Positions on the new line were consolidated and patrols pushed to the front on November 22. There was very little enemy activity on the fronts of the 9th and 21st Marines; however, the 3rd Marines was in contact with the enemy throughout the day. Japanese troops, heavily equipped with automatic weapons, launched four attacks against the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines. The main effort was directed against a 400-foot ridge held by a platoon commanded by Lieutenant Steve Cibik. This small force destroyed or repulsed each attacking force in succession and retained a position which enabled 3rd Division artillery to establish an observation post on the commanding ground. This ridge, located to the east of the East Branch of the Piva River and about 500 yards north of the East-West Trail, thereafter was known as "Cibik's Ridge."

Infantry action on November 23 was confined to feeling out the strength and disposition of the Japanese positions in front of the 3rd Marines where considerable enemy resistance had developed.

At 0900 November 24, following an artillery preparation laid down by seven battalions (including three battalions from the 37th Division) and a close-in preparation fired by mortars and machine guns, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 3rd Marines, advanced abreast along the East-West Trail. As the attack progressed, numerous enemy dead were found in well organized defensive positions. After an advance of some 300 yards severe fighting developed. At 1200, after an advance of approximately 800 yards over very difficult and densely wooded terrain, all units were subjected to heavy Japanese mortar fire. The two battalions then reorganized and supported by mortars and artillery advanced an additional 300 yards, then organized a defensive position for the night.

On November 25 a reorganization of units was effected in the 3rd Division's zone of action: the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines, was withdrawn to an assembly area near the Piva River; the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines, extended its lines to the southeast in order to make contact with the 21st Marines on the right; the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines, established a defensive position on the left flank of the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines; the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, and the 2nd Raider Battalion (plus two companies of the 3rd Raider Battalion) moved into the line in the 3rd Marines' sector; the 1st Battalion, 145th Infantry, was attached to the 9th Marines; and the 2nd Raider Regiment (less 2nd Battalion) reverted to control of the I Marine Amphibious Corps.

After the reorganization had been completed an attack was initiated by the 2nd Raider Battalion and the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines. The Raiders made an advance of 600-700 yards, but the 1st Battalion of the 9th Marines, passing through the lines of the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines, was stopped by heavy machine gun fire after advancing some 300 yards. A sharp fire fight developed and an attempt was made to envelop the Japanese positions. The maneuver was only partly successful, as the enemy was well dug in with complete all-around defense. The Japanese withdrew during the night and the forces in the 3rd Marines' subsector advanced and seized the assigned objective without further incident the next day. The successful occupation of this position and the withdrawal of Japanese forces in the area marked the end of the six-days' fighting known as the "Battle of the Piva Forks." It was estimated that during this six-day action the Japanese lost 1200-1500 men killed—680 killed by the 3rd Marines, 66 by the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, and the remainder by artillery fire — while the Marine dead numbered less than 100.

Active patrolling to all fronts and the organization of temporary defensive positions were carried out until December 6, when an outpost line of resistance was established around the entire Empress Augusta Bay beachhead. In the East Sector the 3rd Marine Division advanced its lines and organized the ground with a view to the defense of its assigned zone of action against any possible counter-offensive. The 1st Parachute Regiment (less 1st and 2nd Battalions) was attached to the 3rd Marine Division on December 5 and was ordered to occupy and defend Hill 1000, located 3700 yards east of Piva No. 4.

On December 9, Company "C," 1st Battalion, 21st Marines, was employed to carry ammunition to the 1st Parachute Regiment on Hill 1000 and was later used to reinforce the Paramarines line. Four patrols from the Parachute Regiment were sent to reconnoiter its front in connection with an ad-

justment of the line. The first patrol was ambushed at a long nose to the east of Hill 1000 (which later became known as "Fry's nose") by Japanese forces using light machine guns. The other three patrols from the Parachute Regiment also made contact with the enemy in the same area.

On December 10, a new main line of resistance (formerly the outpost line of resistance) was occupied except a part of the line of the 3rd Division's right sector (3rd Marines) which was not occupied in force due to almost impassable swamps. This part of the line, however, was posted and patrolled. During the morning, the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, with the 1st Battalion, 21st Marines, advancing on its right, relieved the 1st Parachute Regiment on Hill 1000 later known as "Hellzapoppin" ridge. A patrol from the Parachute Regiment was then sent to check the results of the previous day's patrolling action on Fry's nose. Following an artillery barrage on the enemy positions, Companies "I" and "K" of the Paramarines advanced. The Japanese, however, closed in on our lines during the shelling and the advancing units were held up by heavy resistance. During the day the Cape Torokina airfield became an allied operated airdrome with the arrival of 17 Corsairs of VMF 216 and 6 SRD's of VMF 212.

At 1220, December 12, Company "L" (Reinforced) 3rd Battalion, 21st Marines, attacked the Japanese force on Fry's nose. After two mortar concentrations followed by an attempt to envelop the enemy positions had failed to dislodge the Japanese force, Company "L" was withdrawn within our lines at 1810.

On December 13, the Japanese position on Fry's nose was marked by smoke shells from mortars after which SBD's attacked the Hill with 100 pound bombs. A similar dive bombing attack on December 14 was followed by a mortar concentration and an infantry attack. The enemy, however, was still well dug in and the attack made slow progress. In order to permit artillery to fire on the steep reversed slope of Hill 1000 a battery of 155mm howitzers was moved to the vicinity of the lagoon some 2,000 yards west of the mouth of the Torokina River and plans were formulated to continue the attack the following day.

During the morning of December 15 following a heavy artillery and air bombardment preparation, Company "A" (with a platoon of Company "I" attached) and Company "L," 21st Marines, attacked the enemy positions on Fry's nose. The enemy troops withdrew during the barrage to the reverse slope, but were prevented from returning by dummy dive bomber runs. By nightfall, Company "A" had occupied the western part of the enemy's position and remained there throughout the night while Company "L" was withdrawn within the 21st Marines perimeter.

On December 16 and 17 the pressure was continued against the enemy force on Fry's nose which resulted in driving the Japanese into a pocket on the lower slopes. On December 18, an air attack was made on the enemy's position on Hill 1000 by 12 TBF's using 12 one hundred pound bombs each. At 1234 the 1st Battalion, 21st Marines, using flame throwers attacked the position. The left (north) flank of the Battalion made some advance, but the right flank was pinned down by heavy crossfire. Between 1500 and 1600, 81mm mortars bombarded the enemy positions which was followed by another dive bombing attack. The infantry attack was resumed at 1630 and by 1750 the enemy position had been overrun and all organized resistance ceased. Examination of the captured Japanese positions on Hill 1000 showed the enemy's excellent ability to take advantage of and to organize terrain features. Despite the air artillery and mortar bombardment many Japanese foxholes had been untouched. The foxholes were built deep among the roots of trees and were sheltered. Automatic weapon positions were well covered by riflemen which made it extremely difficult to approach within hand grenade throwing distance.

In the meanwhile, the XIV Army Corps relieved the 1st MAC of command at Empress Augusta Bay at 0800 December 15, 1943. The Commanding General, 3rd Marine Division, was designated Corps representative of all Corps troops, 1st MAC, remaining in the area.

When the command was turned over to the Army, the sector had been developed into a strongly defended beachhead within which had been constructed extensive base facilities, road nets, one completed and two partially completed airfields. For these projects, including normal supplies and organizational equipment, approximately 60,000 tons of construction material and equipment had been unloaded over the beaches. This was accomplished with an aggregate of approximately 25,000 known Japanese dead as opposed to our own losses of approximately 400 killed or missing and 1,060 wounded in action.

The 3rd Marine Division (Reinforced) had successfully carried out the tactical operation on Bougainville using strategy which was simple in outline, but very difficult to execute. It had established a beachhead, pushed its line to end beyond the airport site and had set up strong perimeter defenses. It had maintained continual pressure to prevent the massing of enemy forces at any one point on the perimeter. As the perimeter grew in depth special troops had set up

defenses to protect the airport both from the sea and the air and had maintained an uninterrupted flow of supplies to the edges. At no time was the perimeter of defense seriously attacked by the Japanese. The operation had resolved itself into what was really two phases: (1) the extension of the perimeter which was accomplished by a series of brief skirmishes rather than battles; and (2) the building of two airfields, a problem in construction and supply which was really tougher to solve than that of actual occupation. The swamps, climate, dense jungle and the numerous streams presented almost impossible problems in engineering that were solved only by American ingenuity and a vast amount of machinery. Primarily the operation at Bougainville was a demonstration of American mastery of logistics.

During the period from December 19 to 21, the front line was extended by the 21st Marines to include the nose of Hill 1000. Throughout this period daily patrol contacts were made in the vicinity of Hill 600A and east of the mouth of the Torokina River. During the evening of December 21, Japanese 75mm and 15cm artillery fired on the areas of the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, and the 1st Battalion, 21st Marines, and the 155mm gun battery near the mouth of the Piva River. The enemy artillery positions were located by sound and flash by an artillery forward observer who immediately adjusted our counter-battery fire and silenced the enemy guns.

The 3rd Marines was relieved from the front line on December 21 and 22 by the 2nd Raider Regiment with the 1st Parachute Regiment (less 2nd Battalion) attached, and the 3rd Marines moved to the Corps reserve area preparatory to embarking for Guadalcanal on December 25. In the meanwhile, the 1st contingent of Marine Corps units (3rd Battalion, 19th Marines, Detachment Headquarters, 3rd Marine Division, Corps Headquarters, 1st MAC, and units of 3rd Division Special and Service Troops) had embarked on December 15 for Camp Tetere, Guadalcanal.

By December 22, the 21st Marines had consolidated its positions on Hill 1000 and was advancing on Hill 600A directly east of Hill 1000 to which the Japanese had retreated. The enemy had constructed caves in the reverse slope where it was difficult for our artillery to reach them. Finally, on December 23 the hill was cleared by a heavy artillery bombardment and a concentrated strike by twelve TBF's.

The 3rd Marines was relieved from the line on December 21 and 22 and left Bougainville for Guadalcanal on December 25. The 164th Infantry (Reinforced) arrived December 25 and moved to the Corps Reserve Area preparatory to relieving the 9th Marines. The relief was effected December 27, and the next day the 9th left for Guadalcanal.

The Commanding General, 3rd Marine Division, relinquished command of the eastern sector of the perimeter to the Commanding General, Americal Division, at 1600, December 28, and the 21st Marines (Reinforced) passed to tactical control of the Army Division. The Commanding General, 3rd Marine Division, and his staff left via SCAT plane for Guadalcanal on December 29.

Headquarters for service company and the 1st Battalion, 19th Marines, 3rd Battalion, 12th Marines, 3rd Special Weapons Battalion (less Batteries "A" and "B") and Company "A," 3rd Tank Battalion, left Bougainville on January 1, 1944; the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, and 2nd Battalion, 19th Marines, left on January 5, 1944; the 21st Marines (Reinforced) left on January 9; the 4th Battalion, 12th Marines, 1st Parachute Regiment and the 2nd Marine Raider Regiment (Provisional) left on January 12; and the Experimental Rocket Platoon and the 2nd 155mm Artillery Battalion, 1st MAC (less one battery) left on January 16.

The units of the 3rd Marine Division were concentrated on Guadalcanal in the vicinity of Tetere and began intensive training for the next amphibious operation.

The 1st 155mm Howitzer Battalion was attached to the 3rd Marine Division February 9, 1944; the 4th Marines on February 23 and Company "A," 53rd Construction Battalion, 1st MAC on February 24. Company "C," 3rd Tank Battalion (medium) was detached from the 3rd Marine Division to the 40th Infantry Division on February 28.

Verbal instructions received during February 1944 led to commencement of plans for an operation against Japanese forces on Emirau Island. This plan was subsequently cancelled and verbal instructions were received to start plans for an operation against Japanese forces at Kavieng, New Ireland.

Following the cancellation of the Kavieng operation by the Commanding General, 1st MAC, on March 16, 1944, the next ten days were spent in regimental parades and inspections, camp maintenance, and a relaxation period from training. General tactical training was resumed on March 27.

On April 4, 1944, the Division received verbal instructions and a tentative operation plan from the Commanding General, III Amphibious Corps for an attack against Guam in the Marianas Islands. Throughout the remainder of April, the Division continued its training.

On May 11, 1944, the 3rd Division received instructions from the III Amphibious Corps (designated as the Southern Landing Force), outlining tentative plans for the

Marianas operation. The major organizations of the Southern Landing Force consisted of III Amphibious Corps troops, the 3rd Marine Division, the 77th Infantry Division, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade and the Guam Garrison Force.

The scheme of maneuver was to land the 3rd Marine Division (Reinforced) on the northern beaches of Guam between Adelup Point and the mouth of the Tatqua River and the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade (Reinforced), with one regimental combat team of the 77th Infantry Division attached, on the southern beaches of Guam between Agat Village and Bangi Point. The 77th Infantry Division (less one regimental combat team) was to remain in floating reserve ready to land on Force order. The immediate objective of the assault units was to seize the high ground behind Apra Harbor and establish a defense generally bounded by the line Adelup Point-Alutom Mountain-Mt. Tenjo-Alifan Mountain-Facpi Point.

The 3rd Division (Reinforced), with a total strength of 1,134 officers and 19,190 enlisted, embarked at Guadalcanal on June 2 and 3, and sailed for Kwajalein, Marshall Islands at 0800, June 4. Upon arrival at Kwajalein the morning of June 8, certain transfers of personnel and units between ships was effected in order to embark the four assault battalions (3rd Battalion, 9th Marines; 3rd Battalion, 21st Marines; 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines; and 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines) on LST's. The LST's left the Marshalls at 1400 June 10 for the rendezvous.

At 0800, June 12, the 3rd Division sailed from Kwajalein for the rendezvous with the remainder of the Southern Landing Force. When the Northern Landing Force (2nd and 4th Marine Divisions and the 27th Army Infantry Division) began landing at Saipan at 0830, June 15, the Southern Landing Force remained afloat prepared to land after D-Day on Saipan to support the attack of the Northern Landing Force.

Although the setting of the date for the Guam landing (W-Day) had been withheld pending clarification of the situation on Saipan, it was planned to execute the landing on June 18, if practicable. A dispatch was received the morning of June 16, setting W-Day as June 18, but was superseded very shortly thereafter by a second message postponing W-Day indefinitely. The postponement was caused by the necessary employment of supporting fleet units on or after June 17 in a surface engagement with a sizeable Japanese task force which had been reported en route to the Marianas area from the Philippines.

After suffering heavy loss in aircraft on June 19 and surface craft on June 20, the Japanese Fleet broke contact on June 21. The 3rd Marine Division returned to Eniwetok at 1430, June 28, but all units remained aboard ship except for brief periods of conditioning and training on certain islands of the atoll.

The Division remained at anchor at Eniwetok until July 15, 1944, when the LST Group left for the rendezvous off Guam. The remainder of the Division followed on July 17. The rendezvous was made as planned, and on the morning of July 21, the Division began landing on Guam. Naval gunfire and air preparations were delivered as scheduled, and at 0830, following a rocket barrage laid down by LCI gunboats, the armored amphibians hit the beaches with the first wave of assault troops. The 9th and 21st CT's landed in column of battalions on Beaches Blue and Green respectively, while the 3rd CT landed with two battalions abreast on Beaches Red 1 and Red 2 with the Reserve Battalion following on Beach Red 1.

Opposition on the beaches was light but increased steadily as the troops moved inland to high ground. Resistance became extremely heavy on the approaches to Chonito Cliff to the left of Beach Red 1, and was overcome only after a desperate assault by infantry assisted by flame-throwers and demolition teams and supported by the massed fires of armored amphibian tanks, LCI gunboats and mortars. Shortly after the initial landings the Japanese from positions on the high ground in the interior of the island began intermittent artillery and mortar fire against the reef, the beaches, and the low ground in rear of the beaches.

By nightfall of the first day, the 3rd Division had secured a foothold on the island. Although the enemy still held the high ground on three sides of the beachhead and his artillery, sited on the beach, had excellent observation over the entire beachhead, the Division had, for the most part, accomplished its mission and was on or near its objective.

Early in the morning of the second day the enemy attacked in strength, coming from the east along the shore toward the flank of Globe Wireless Hill. The assault was broken up with the support of 3rd Division artillery, naval gunfire and air support. The immediate effect of the enemy counter-attack was to delay our own. The 21st Marines held up its advance in order not to form a gap between its left and the 3rd Marines, the latter regiment fighting desperately for the ridges south of Chonito Cliff, which area was an anchor exercising drag on the entire line. Toward nightfall of the second day, the 3rd Marines reported "a

pretty secure position for the night," although in the center they had "never quite gained ridge." This ridge was very difficult to approach because of open terrain and the enemy's defiladed positions, both of which precluded extended rushing tactics on our part. The first two assaults on this ridge were stopped cold, with companies pinned down for hours within a grenade's throw of the ridge.

The attack was resumed at daybreak July 23, against heavy resistance, particularly on the left and center. On the left, units of the 3rd Marines fought and clawed their way up the ridge to ground commanding Beaches Red 1 and 2, against heavy opposition from small arms fire. Cabras Island was completely occupied by the 9th Marines during the morning and was then turned over to the 14th Defense Battalion. The 21st Marines also ran into considerable resistance from pillboxes and gun emplacements which blocked their forward progress until each installation in the area had been cleaned out by demolitions squads and flame-throwers.

The 3rd Division's attack was continued the morning of July 24 with the 3rd Marines on the left renewing their assault against enemy and terrain alike, meeting heavy resistance from both. Their reward was a few more yards of the high ground overlooking the Mt. Tenjo Road and its approaches.

On the morning of July 25 infantry, artillery, tanks and mortars of the 3rd Division pushed the attack all along the line. The 3rd Marines on the left (its battered 1st Battalion replaced by the 2nd Battalion of the 9th Marines) crossed crooked Mt. Tenjo road and secured control of traffic on it within the sector. The advance of the 21st Marines met little resistance, except for a gun emplacement which was soon knocked out by a platoon of tanks. The 9th Marines encountered very little resistance on its right flank and quickly reached its objective, the high ground above the Aguanda River.

During the early hours of July 26, the enemy laid down an intense artillery and mortar preparation on the Division's left center and beach installations, then launched a major counterattack. The Japanese 48th Mixed Brigade attacked from the Fonte Mt. area against the 3rd Marines, and the Japanese 18th Infantry (less one battalion) hit the 21st Marines' lines, the assault coming from the vicinity of the Beacon Light at the head of the Fonte River Valley. Small enemy groups which had successfully passed along the Asan and Nidual River bottoms to the 3rd Division rear areas during the hours of darkness and attacked artillery positions and the 3rd Division hospital, were destroyed by a composite battalion of Pioneers, assisted by artillerymen and detachments of the Division Headquarters Battalion, or driven back into the 21st Marines' zone of action where they were destroyed. By nightfall, this major effort of the enemy had been completely defeated by the 3rd Division, a blow which broke the backbone of further major opposition on Guam.

After brushing aside a number of minor Banzai charges against the left and center during the predawn hours of July 28, the 3rd Division launched a coordinated attack which advanced its lines from 1,000 to 2,000 yards on the right and center. On the left, the occupation of Fonte Mt. was completed, the 3rd Marines driving all but small isolated groups of the enemy from their strong battle positions. By the end of the day, 3rd Division troops were firmly established on the Fonte Mt.—Mt. Chachao Ridge line and the Massif to Mt. Tenjo, and groups of the enemy remaining in this battle position were being mopped up. 77th Infantry Division units were on Mt. Tenjo and in contact with the 3rd Division's right flank. Although very important gains were made during the day, 3rd Division casualties were low, the total being only 143. The Japanese, however, suffered heavily; it was estimated that 5,000 Japanese dead lay in the Fonte-Mt. Chachao battle position, including more than 900 dead in the 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines' area on the nose of Fonte.

At 0630, July 31, the Division jumped off, initiating the drive to seize the northern half of Guam. The troops encountered little resistance, and by the end of the day, Agana, capital of Guam, had been occupied by the 3rd Marines and 4,000 yards of the Agana-Pago Bay Road was open to American motor traffic.

The pursuit of the enemy was continued during the next week, against light to moderate resistance, and on August 8 the left flank of the 3rd Division reached the northern coast. On August 9, 3rd Division units reached the cliff-edge overlooking the sea in its zone of action. The last elements of the Division reached the northern shoreline on August 10.

On September 15, Major General Allen H. Turnage relinquished command of the Division to Brigadier General Alfred H. Noble, the Assistant Division Commander. Brigadier General W. A. Worton assumed the duties of Assistant Division Commander on September 22. Brigadier General Noble left the Division on October 12, and Brigadier General Worton was in command until October 17 when Major General Graves B. Erskine arrived and assumed command.

On September 1, 1944, the 3rd Marine Division was assigned the

responsibility for the ground defense of Guam, under operational control of the Island Commander, Major General Henry L. Larsen, USMC, which included the mopping up of all areas formerly assigned the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade and the area of the 77th Infantry Division north of the line Mt. Tenjo-Pago Bay. When the 77th Division was relieved on September 20 the 3rd Division assumed all patrol responsibility on the island of Guam. The 3rd Division continued to operate under the control of the V Amphibious Corps for administrative training and planning purposes, but was assigned to the Island Commander, Guam, as garrison troops and Ground Defense Force. The latter assignment included outpost and patrol duties aimed at the protection of vital installations on the island and the elimination of the remaining Japanese.

During the period from October 24 to November 3, units of the Division were engaged in seeking out, capturing or destroying the remaining enemy in the northern part of Guam. Two hundred and twenty-eight Japanese were killed and thirteen captured, making a total of 9,788 killed and 485 captured since July 21. Total casualties of the 3rd Division for the entire operation (including attached units) was 667 killed, 6 missing, and 3,201 wounded.

During the period from February 8 to 14, the Division embarked at Apra Harbor, Guam, on transports and landing craft of Transport Squadron 11, preparatory to the Iwo Jima operation, in which the 3rd Division had been assigned as Expeditionary Troops Reserve. Transport Division 32, with the 21st Marines and a Detachment of Division Headquarters Groups (including the Assistant Division Commander) embarked, left Guam February 16 and arrived in the Transport Area off Iwo Jima prior to H-hour on February 19. The 3rd Tank Battalion, embarked in two LST's, left Guam February 16, and arrived in the Transport Area off Iwo Jima, February 20. The remainder of Transport Squadron 11 sailed from Guam February 17 and arrived in the Reserve Area approximately 80 miles southeast of Iwo Jima at 2200, February 19. The 21st Marines relieved the 26th Marines as Corps Reserve at 0955, February 19, and two days later began landing, having been released to the 4th Marine Division. On February 22, Transport Division 31, with the 9th Marines and Division Headquarters Group (less Detachment) embarked,moved into the Transport Area, and began landing two days later on Beaches Red 2 and Yellow 1. On February 27, Transport Division 33, with the 3rd Marines and the 3rd and 4th Battalions of the 12th embarked, moved into the Transport Area. The battalions of the 12th landed about February 26.

The Division (less 3rd and 21st Marines) began debarkation at 0800, February 24, and at 1600 the two beaches over which landings were being made were jointly redesignated as Black Beach and assigned to control of the 3rd Division. Although the weather was clear and warm, a brisk wind and sea slowed the unloading of small craft. Considerable congestion prevailed upon the beaches, due in a large measure to the difficulty of moving wheeled vehicles, even when equipped with chains and pushed by manpower, up the steep sandy terraces to firmer ground where the access roads commenced.

Having assumed control of the zone previously allotted to the 21st Marines (which had reverted to 3rd Division control at 0700) the Division attacked on February 25 by passing the 9th Marines (3rd Tank Battalion attached) through the lines of the 21st Marines. With the 1st and 2nd Battalions, 9th Marines. abreast, right to left, the attack jumped off, with artillery support provided by the 1st Battalion, 14th Marines, and the 4th Battalion, 13th Marines. Naval gunfire, both by heavy ships in general support of the Corps and by destroyers in direct support of the assault battalions, had been in progress since dawn and continued on call missions as the attack progressed.

Enemy resistance, especially on the left, was well organized and determined. The nature of the terrain was not only favorable to the defense but thoroughly fortified by pillboxes, caves and covered artillery emplacements. Although rifle fire was light, there was intense fire from machine guns, automatic antiaircraft cannon and some mortars. As the 3rd Division zone of action was completely crossed by the runways of Motoyama Airfield No. 2, the forward progress of troops was necessarily across fire-swept flat stretches of terrain commanded by high ground in enemy hands. Although determined assaults were made up the center of the Division zone, only limited gains were made. Enemy high-velocity antitank weapons caused the loss of nine tanks, which together with tenacious enemy defense, especially on the left from interconnecting caves and galleries in the high ground north and west of the airfield, limited the advance of the 2nd and 3rd Battalions.

After a cold and rainy night, which apparently kept enemy activity to a minimum, the 9th Marines (3rd Tank Battalion attached) and the 3rd Battalion, 21st Marines, continued the attack at 0800, February 26, supported by three battalions of the 12th Marines and the 4th Battalion, 13th Marines.

The attack was continued on February 26, but no appreciable gains were made during the day although there was plenty of action. Enemy defenses to the 3rd Division front consisted principally of a deep band of approximately 50 interlocking bunkers and pillboxes, sited on high ground and reinforced by heavy mortar concentrations. Enemy automatic antiaircraft cannon, not only continued to fire upon American aircraft but added their great striking power and rapid rate of fire to those of weapons primarily employed on ground missions.

On the morning of February 27, the 9th Marines (3rd Battalion, 21st Marines, and 3rd Tank Battalion attached) continued the attack in the 3rd Division zone of action. The 1st Battalion on the right was pinned in the jump-off position by intense flat-trajectory fire, while the left assault battalion was able to advance only about 150 yards before being halted by the heavy artillery and mortar concentrations which swept its zone.

It was now evident that the attack was being carried against one of the enemy's main battle positions which was sited in the central massif of the island, running east and west, just south of Motoyama Village. A second attack was initiated at 1300 behind a heavy rolling barrage of artillery and naval gunfire. Following the barrage closely, the 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines, made a rapid advance of approximately 700 yards across the level ground to its front but at the end of the day, it was still some 500 yards short of the final high ground separating it from the depression in which Airfield No. 3 lay.

On February 28, after an intense artillery and naval gunfire preparation, and behind a rolling barrage, the 21st Marines passed through the lines of the 9th Marines and continued the attack. On the left, the 1st Battalion made an immediate advance of some 500 yards before being halted by heavy mortar and small-arms fire. On the right the 3rd Battalion followed the barrage closely and advanced rapidly. At 1200 the 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines, was attached to the 21st Marines, and preparations were made for another coordinated attack. One hour later, after a heavy artillery and naval gunfire preparation and behind a rolling barrage, a second attack was launched. The left battalion was again pinned down and unable to advance. The 3rd Battalion, however, made substantial gains and by 1400 had crossed the ridge and seized the village of Motoyama, as well as the high ground overlooking Airfield No. 3.

The 3rd Division, with the 4th Division on its right and the 5th Division on its left, continued the attack at 0830 March 1, following a 30-minute naval gunfire and a 15-minute artillery preparation. Initial resistance was somewhat lighter than had previously been encountered, especially on the right where the high ground west of Motoyama Village was securely in our hands. As the attack progressed, however, enemy opposition again stiffened and enemy mortar and artillery fires increased. Revetted enemy tanks were now encountered in the role of pillboxes, and the fields of fire provided by the partially completed Airfield No. 3 enabled the Japanese to take full advantage of their commanding position on the far sides of the natural bowl across which the 3rd Division's attack was to be made. In spite of the heavy enemy opposition which continued to slow the advancing units as they pushed northward and eastward, the Japanese were being slowly pushed into a pocket at the northern end of the island.

The 9th Marines spearheaded the Division's attack the morning of March 2, but heavy mortar and small-arms fire from the high ground to the front and right slowed the advance. The 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines (still attached to the 21st Marines), supported by direct fire from tanks, made excellent progress, although against increasing resistance on the left. The open ground northwest of the incompleted runways of Motoyama Airfield No. 3 was crossed and the nose of Hill 362 was occupied in the face of intense fire from small arms, machine guns, and from two or more 75mm guns which swept the approaches to the hill. At 1530 a strong attack was launched in an attempt to make a break-through to the sea. Although this assault was supported by a heavy artillery and naval gunfire preparation, and was made in the wake of a rolling barrage, the attacking units were pinned down by mortar and flat-trajectory fires. On the left the 21st Marines registered small gains but the day's advance was nullified by the enforced withdrawal of the 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines, and Company G, 2nd Battalion, 21st Marines, from their advance positions, which had become untenable due not only to the heavy enemy fires being received but by the lack of adequate fields of fire for the night defense. However, an average gain of 300 yards had been made and the entire area of Airfield No. 3 was controlled by our troops.

The 3rd Division continued the attack on March 3 with the 21st Marines making the main effort, which was an attempt to turn the formidable center of resistance in front of the 9th Marines. The attack jumped off, following an artillery and naval gunfire preparation and behind a rolling barrage. The 9th Marines, with its battalions weakened from the continu-

ous fighting and in the face of the heavy flat-trajectory fire from all quarters, was unable to advance. Against heavy resistance and harassed by fires from the strongpoint of Hill 357 the 21st Marines was able to advance slowly until the nose of this hill had been captured at 1145. In the meanwhile, arrangements had been made for the relief of the 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines, still clinging precariously to the approaches to Hill 362 on the left. Although the relief of this battalion by the 5th Marine Division was scheduled for 1000, an enemy counterattack at 1030 resulted in a heavy fire fight which continued throughout the remainder of the day. As a result, at nightfall, one company of this battalion, together with some personnel of the 27th Marines, remained on the line. A second coordinated attack was launched at 1500, aimed at securing Hill 362 and the high ground along the right boundary. Although a rapid initial advance was made on the left by the 21st Marines, enemy fire was so intense that only slight gains were made by the 9th Marines in their frontal assault. In spite of the bitter opposition encountered, the 3rd Division had severed the last enemy east-west artery of communication and had occupied positions overlooking the sea.

On March 4, the 9th Marines continued their frontal effort while the 3rd Battalion, 21st Marines, passed through the 1st Battalion, 21st Marines, and attacked southeast in an attempt to carry the seemingly impregnable Hill 362. Slight gains were registered, but enemy resistance from the highly organized position prevented a complete breakthrough.

March 5 was set aside by Corps order for much needed rest, regrouping and re-equipping. Throughout the day the 12th Marines carried out systematic harrassing fires and a destroyer fired continuously on enemy positions in and around Hill 362, which was also hit by a strong air strike. A coordinated effort was made on March 6 behind rolling barrages, supplemented by naval gunfire and air strikes, but only limited gains were made.

It was now apparent that ordinary tactics would not suffice to reduce Hill 362. It was therefore determined to launch a night attack. The 3rd Marine Division jumped off at 0500 March 7 without artillery or air preparation and in a pre-dawn advance bypassed a number of heavy defensive positions. By daylight Hill 331 had fallen and an average advance of 250 yards had been made. After mopping up the by-passed pockets of resistance, which was featured by savage hand-to-hand fighting, the attack was continued. At 1340 Hill 362 was finally carried by the 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines, who had been waging a bitter struggle for its possession ever since daylight.

The attack was continued on March 8 but very little progress was made due to enemy resistance and the extremely rugged terrain. However, the enemy's main defensive position had been definitely breached and his resistance to our advance towards the beaches greatly diminished. During the next two days, units of the 3rd Division fought through to the beaches and by nightfall of March 10, all organized resistance in the center of the Division zone of action had been eliminated, and two battalions were firmly established on the eastern beaches.

The Division continued the attack at 0730, March 11, attempting by simultaneous northward and southward movement of the 1st and 3rd Battalions to pinch out the remaining resistance in the right of the Division zone of action, and the 21st Marines seeking to eliminate all remaining enemy resistance on the high ground on the extreme left of the zone. Enemy resistance continued to be determined and intense, but by this time had begun to lose its coordination. By noon, contact was made between the 3rd and 1st Battalions of the 9th Marines on the high ground southeast of Hill 362, thus pinching out the 3rd Battalion, 21st Marines. The two battalions of the 9th had eliminated the remaining enemy resistance by 1500, contact being established at a point near the coast, south-southeast of Hill 362. Meanwhile, to the north, the 1st Battalion, 21st Marines, had secured its objective (the high ground about 1,000 yards northeast of Hill 357) and had pinched out the 2nd Battalion, 21st Marines. The only remaining unoccupied ground in the 2nd Division zone was the beach-area below the cliffs held by the 1st Battalion, 21st Marines, which was covered by enemy fire from the right of the 5th Division zone of action. This no-man's land was occupied after the advance of the 5th Division had overrun the enemy gun positions.

After having secured all resistance in its zone, except for the no-man's land on the north beaches, the 3rd Division during the period from March 11 to 15 initiated intensive patrolling, and continued mopping-up operations. In addition to stray enemy personnel encountered throughout the zone of action, there were two organized pockets of resistance, each of which required the attention of at least a battalion. The first, in the area approximately 500 yards south of Hill 331, consisted of some 150 Japanese, entrenched in a group of mutually supporting pillboxes and caves, the location of which

not only took every advantage of the broken and rugged terrain, but prevented the effective employment of supporting weapons and tanks. The second pocket of resistance, very nearly contiguous to the first, was in a ravine, one side of which contained a group of cover each other as well as virtually all approaches by heavy fire. The reduction of these two pockets was eventually accomplished by an attack of the 1st and 3rd Battalions, 9th Marines, delivered in a westerly direction, which to a certain extent took the positions in reverse.

On March 16, the 21st Marines (one tank company attached) relieved the 27th Marines, of the 5th Division, and at 0815, with the 1st and 2nd Battalions abreast, right to left, attacked northward toward Kitano Point. The jump-off was preceded by naval gunfire and artillery preparations. Fires were lifted 100 yards at jump-off time, and continued for ten minutes (artillery) and twenty minutes (naval gunfire), respectively. Enemy resistance was light, consisting mainly of small arms fire from behind the boulders and inside the crevices which filled the area. The 21st Marines moved ahead at a rapid pace with the 1st Battalion setting the pace on the right. On the left the 2nd Battalion encountered moderate resistance as it moved down the high ground to its front. By noon the enemy defense was definitely broken and by 1330 all resistance had been eliminated.

During the next ten days the 3rd Division carried out night ambushes and intensive patrolling, killing more than 800 enemy. At 0700, March 26 the 3rd Marine Division with the 147th Infantry attached assumed responsibility for patrolling the entire island of Iwo Jima. On April 4, the 147th Infantry Regiment relieved all elements of the 3rd Marine Division on Iwo. By April 18, all units of the Division were back on Guam and preparing for the next operation.

Total casualties for the 3rd Division (as of 1800, April 10) was 876 killed, 10 missing and 3,211 wounded. Casualties for units attached to the Division were 892 killed, 11 mising and 3,299 wounded. Estimated Japanese dead as of 1800 April 7 was 7,845.

On March 28, CT-21, Company A, 3rd Tank Battalion and the Commanding General and Staff, 3rd Marine Division, left Iwo Jima for Guam. The remainder of the Division followed within the next few weeks.

On April 6, 1945, the 3rd Marines, with the 3rd Battalion, 12th Marines, and VMO-1 attached, began intensive patrolling of that part of Guam south of the line Ylig Bay—Agat Village in order to eliminate Japanese remnants in the area. An estimated 150 to 200 enemy were still wandering over the area in groups of from 5 to 15, and were reported to be armed with rifles, hand grenades and possibly a few automatic weapons. The 3rd Battalion, 12th Marines, was detached and returned to base camp on April 8, VMO-1 on April 12, and the 3rd Marines (less the 2nd Battalion) on April 13. The 2nd Battalion then passed to Division control and continued operations until April 17. During this operation 14 enemy were killed.

The Division completed a thirteen week training program on July 21, 1945, and immediately began an eight week training program which was designed to iron out deficiencies in the previous program and to stress coordination of larger units and supporting arms. This schedule was maintained until August 3, 1945, when the V Amphibious Corps Landing Diagram and Schedule for the "Olympic" Operation, was received. Olympic was to be an amphibious landing by the Sixth U. S. Army on the island of Kyushu, tentatively scheduled for November 1, 1945. The landing was to be made as follows: the I and XI Army Corps on the east and southeast coasts; the V Amphibious Corps (2nd, 3rd, and 5th Marine Divisions) on the south and southwest coasts; and the 40th Army Division on the west coast. The IX Army Corps was to make a feint at the southern peninsula of Honshu, and Shikoku Islands, then remain in floating reserve.

While preparations were going forward for the forthcoming Olympic Operation, an assault that would take the Marines ashore on the homeland of the enemy, Japan, realizing the futility of a further struggle against the overpowering might of the United States, Great Britain, and newly aroused Russia, agreed to cease hostilities in accordance with the terms of the Potsdam Agreement. The signing of the surrender agreement aboard the battleship **MISSOURI** brought respite to all those units which had dealt telling blows against the enemy—among others, to the Third Marine Division, whose efforts at Bougainville, Guam, and Iwo Jima had been in keeping with the highest traditions of the Marine Corps.

At 2400, December 28, 1945, the 3rd Marine Division ceased to exist. The end of this great fighting outfit was announced in the following release of Brigadier General W. E. Riley, the Division Commander:

"I regret to inform you that the Third Marine Division passed out of this world—for the time being at least—at 2400 28 December 45. The Division came into being on 16 September 1942 and Major General Barrett assumed command shortly thereafter. The deeds of valor performed by this Division

and by numerous individuals attached thereto at Bougainville, Guam, and Iwo Jima under the leadership of Generals Turnage and Erskine shall never be forgotten. In spite of the numerous problems resulting from the cessation of hostilities as well as the following prolonged period of inactivity the same high morale that characterized this Division during the Pacific Campaign was fully evident in all units until the final disbandment. As a result the passing of the Division was painless and the esprit for which this Division was justly famous was maintained until the end."

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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DECORATIONS and COMMENDATIONS

(R) following names of all personnel indicates reserve status

Medal of Honor

★ **BERRY, Charles J., Corp.**
(Lorain, Ohio)

★ **DUNLAP, Robert H., Capt. (R)**
(Galesburg, Ill.)

Legion of Merit

★ **SCHULTZ, Eugene K., Lt. Col. (R)**
(New Orleans, La.)

Gold Star

★ **HALDANE, Andrew A., Capt. (R)**
(Methuen, Mass.)

Silver Star Medal

★ **ADAMSKI, Theodore L., Pfc. (R)**
(Toledo, Ohio)

★ **ANDREWS, Peter N., Pfc.**
(Aurora, Ill.)

★ **ARMSON, Edward B., Sgt.**
(Milwaukee, Wis.)

★ **ATHAIDE, Edward, Pfc. (R)**
(New Bedford, Mass.)

★ **AUER, Roy N., Corp.**
(Milford, Ind.)

★ **BAUERSCHMIDT, W., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Pottstown, Pa.)

★ **BOISCLAIR, Joseph C. I., FM1cl**
(Sanford, Maine)

★ **CAMPBELL, Eugene M., Corp.**
(Warren, Pa.)

★ **CLARKE, John F., Pfc. (R)**
(Washington, D. C.)

★ **CROSS, William C., PlSgt.**
(Mason City, Iowa)

★ **DENMAN, W. L., Corp.**
(Charleston, Miss.)

★ **DEVENNEY, Fred, Jr., Pfc.**
(Watertown, Mass.)

★ **ENGLISH, Elmuth D., Pfc.**
(Marshall, Ky.)

★ **GIBBS. Alvin P., Pfc. (R)**
(Buffalo, N. Y.)

★ **GRIFFITH, Ray A., Pfc. (R)**
(Salem, Ohio)

★ **HALL, Mark, 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Wilmette, Ill.)

★ **HARRELL, Billy D., Pfc. (R)**
(Canadian, Texas)

★ **HARRIS, Frederick V., Pfc.**
(Dayton, Ohio)

★ **HAUSER, Henry C., Pfc.**
(Kansas City, Kans.)

★ **HELTZEL, Thomas J., Corp.**
(South Bend, Ind.)

★ **JAQUESS, Joe J., Corp.**
(Gatesville, Texas)

★ **JENSEN, Charles E., Corp. (R)**
(Council Bluffs, Iowa)

★ **JOHN, Lacy, Jr., Corp.**
(Red Springs, N. C.)

★ **JONES, Donald, Pfc. (R)**
(Ambler, Pa.)

★ **KNISLEY, Glen H., Pfc. (R)**
(River Rouge, Mich.)

★ **KULD, Kenneth V., Pfc.**
(Tyler, Minn.)

★ **LAMSON, Howard J., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Lowell, Mass.)

★ **LOPEZ, Manuel R., Corp. (R)**
(Tucson, Ariz.)

★ **MacDONALD, P. C., Jr., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Tuckahoe, N. Y.)

★ **MALONEY, Dallas W., Pfc.**
(Guard, Ohio)

★ **MARTIN, Henry F., Pfc. (R)**
(Clyde, Texas)

★ **MATHESON, Kenneth J., Sgt. (R)**
(Cambridge, Mass.)

★ **MIHALEK, John W., Pfc. (R)**
(Cleveland, Ohio)

★ **MIKOS, John M., Pfc. (R)**
(Harrison, N. J.)

★ **MYERS, Kent L., Pfc. (R)**
(Cleveland, Ohio)

★ **NATIONS, William A., Jr., Pfc. (R)**
(Detroit, Mich.)

★ **NELSON, Loreen A. O., Capt.**
(San Diego, Calif.)

★ **NEWBURY, Robert E., Corp. (R)**
(Fall River, Mass.)

★ **NEWCOMER, Thomas J., Pvt.**
(Philadelphia, Pa.)

★ **NOEL, Joseph, Pfc.**
(Denison, Texas)

★ **PASSONS, James P., 1st Lt. (R)**
(McKinney, Texas)

★ **RAY, John B., Jr., Pfc. (R)**
(Lavaca, Ark.)

★ **REGER, Verol L., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Buffalo, N. Y.)

★ **RICHARDS, Thomas E., Pfc. (R)**
(Massillon, Ohio)

★ **SACKER, August, Jr., 2nd Lt.**
(Paterson, N. J.)

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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★ **SEELEY, Francis B., Pfc.**
(Tucson, Ariz.)

★ **SHEEN, Owen C., Pfc. (R)**
(Paul, Idaho)

★ **SMITS, John, Corp. (R)**
(Paris, Ky.)

★ **SUTTON, Emery C., Pfc.**
(Mebama, Ore.)

★ **THIES, Gilbert I., Pfc. (R)**
(Fredonia, N. Y.)

★ **WRIGHT, Orville E., Pfc. (R)**
(Beaumont, Texas)

Navy and Marine Corps Medal

★ **NERI, Victor L., Pfc.**
(Philadelphia, Pa.)

★ **SWAZEY, Marion D., Pfc. (R)**
(Jena, La.)

Gold Star

IN LIEU OF SECOND BRONZE STAR

★ **BREWER, Joseph C., Pfc.**
(Rogersville, Tenn.)

Bronze Star Medal

★ **BOISCLAIR, Joseph C. I., FM1cl**
(Sanford, Me.)

★ **BOYD, Harry L., Jr., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Chicago, Ill.)

★ **BRIDEA Leo J. H., Pfc.**
(Leominster, Mass.)

★ **BURNS, James T., Pfc. (R)**
(Fredonia, Pa.)

★ **CHANCEY, Leslie E., Pfc.**
(St. Joseph, Mo.)

★ **CLERRICO, Albert J., Corp. (R)**
(Utica, N. Y.)

★ **CLYMER, Robert H., Sgt.**
(Mount Pleasant,

★ **COLE, Darrell S., FM Corp. (R)**
(Esther, Mo.)

★ **CULP, John R., Pfc. (R)**
(Batesville, Miss.)

★ **DAMON, Donald W., Pfc. (R)**
(Des Moines, Iowa)

★ **DAVIS, James, Pvt. (R)**
(Adel, Ga.)

★ **FULTZ, Carl O., Corp. (R)**
(Louisville, Ky.)

★ **GADOMSKI, Walter, Corp. (R)**
(Chicago, Ill.)

★ **GOLDEN, Robert W., Corp.**
(St. Joseph, Mo.)

★ **GORDON, Stanley, 1st Lt. (R)**
(Miami, Fla.)

★ **GROSS, John M., Corp. (R)**
(Racine, Wis.)

★ **HARLOW, Donald D., Pvt. (R)**
(Phillips, Texas)

★ **HOBERG, Glen R., Pfc.**
(Lake Benton, Minn.)

★ **JAY, Gus E., TSgt.**
(Oklahoma City, Okla.)

★ **KETRON, Fred S., Pfc. (R)**
(Fort Scott, Kan.)

★ **KEY, Leroy, Pfc. (R)**
(Macomb, Okla.)

★ **KIRBY, Alfred L., Sgt. (R)**
(Detroit, Mich.)

★ **KIRKPATRICK, Frank L., Pfc.**
(Houston, Texas)

★ **KRAWECKI, Raymond, Pfc. (R)**
(Little Falls, N. Y.)

★ **LAUGHLIN, John R., Pfc.**
(Alton, Ill.)

★ **LEESE, Robert D., Pfc. (R)**
(Newcastle, Pa.)

★ **LEWIS, Edward P., Pfc. (R)**
(Whittier, Calif.)

★ **McCURTAIN, James B., Pfc.**
(Stigler, Okla.)

★ **McELROY, Edward S., Jr., Pfc. (R)**
(Grandview, Texas)

★ **McKIM, Edward D., Jr., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Omaha, Nebr.)

★ **NADEAU, Joseph R., Pfc. (R)**
(Taunton, Mass.)

★ **NEISLER, David O., Pvt.**
(Miami Beach, Fla.)

★ **O'REILLY, Ray C., Pfc.**
(Kansas City, Mo.)

★ **PHILLIPS, Glenn A., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Phoenix, Ariz.)

★ **PIKUR, Thomas, Pfc. (R)**
(Pittsburgl Pa.)

★ **REEDER, Jessie L., Sgt.**
(Ogden, Utah)

★ **SALAZAR, Chester J., Lt. Col. (R)**
(Altadena, Calif.)

★ **SCHULTES, Richard E., Pfc.**
(Berkley, Mich.)

★ **WALKER, Joseph J., Corp. (R)**
(Ringwood, N. J.)

Air Medal

★ **BATTERTON, Boeker C., Col.**
(Tollula, Ill.)

★ **EDMONDS, Richard A., Capt. (R)**
(Brent, Ala.)

Letters of Commendation

FROM COMMANDER, AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET

DOHERTY, John J., 1st Lt., USMCR
FAUGHT, Robert T., 1st Lt., USMCR
KEEGAN, James F., 1st Lt., USMCR
McCORMICK, Ralph G., Capt., USMCR
McCULLOUGH, Orgain E., Jr., 2nd Lt., USMCR

FROM COMMANDING GENERAL, THIRD MARINE DIVISION

NELSON, Benjamin E., Corp., USMCR, 428318
PETERS, Martin J., Corp., USMCR, 323848
ULIANO, Dominick L., Pfc., USMCR, 505866
VAN METER, John T., PlSgt., USMC, 302450
WILSON, Robert C., Sgt., USMCR, 335318

FROM COMMANDING GENERAL, FOURTH MARINE DIVISION

MURATORE, Anthony J., Pfc., USMCR, 473184

FROM COMMANDING GENERAL, FIFTH MARINE DIVISION

LONGERGAN, Vincent J., StfSgt., USMCR, 419527

FROM COMMANDING GENERAL, SIXTH MARINE DIVISION

ZRAWDOWSKI, Theodore J., Corp., USMC, 311387

FOURTH MARINE DIVISION HISTORY

From Official Monograph by Historical Division HQMC

The overwhelming successes of the Japanese in their early campaigns in the Pacific made it obvious that the number of combat divisions of the Marine Corps would have to be greatly increased. The First Marine Division and elements of the Second had been engaged for a month in the grim struggle for Guadalcanal when the Third Division was organized on September 8, 1942. By mid-February, 1943, the Third was en route to the Southwest Pacific.

Now began the formation of the Fourth Marine Division. The 23rd Marines became the nucleus for its rifle units. This regiment had originally been activated on July 20, 1942, and had served as part of the Third Division. However, it was detached from the Third on February 15, 1943 and five days later was designated for the Fourth.

On March 26, the 24th Marines was organized. In order to form the last rifle regiment, the 23rd Marines was split in two. The subdivision supplied the personnel for the 25th Marines which was activated on May 1, 1943.

The formation of the division's artillery regiment was begun as early as February 20 when a battalion of the 12th Marines was redesignated as part of the 14th Marines. On June 1, 1943, the 14th was organized as a complete unit. The engineering regiment of the division also had its start on February 20, when elements of the 19th Marines were redesignated as part of the 20th Marines. This regiment was formally activated on June 15, 1943.

All these units, except the 24th Marines, formed the new division's East Coast echelon, which received its training at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, during the summer of 1943.

The 24th went into training at Camp Pendleton in California. Three separate reinforced battalions from the East Coast formed the nucleus of the 24th Marines, reinforced. It was reinforced there by detachments of engineer, artillery, medical, motor transport and special weapons personnel. The Fourth Tank Battalion was likewise a member of the West Coast echelon at this time.

The 23rd Marines, oldest regiment in the division, was chosen to initiate the East Coast echelon's movement westward to Pendleton. From July 3 to July 12 it was engaged in this transfer. August found the remaining units' period of training at New River nearly over. Veterans of broiling summer heat at Tent Camp, landings at Onslo Beach, artillery problems at Verona, the close combat school at Courthouse Bay, packed up their gear in anticipation.

By August 9, the movement to California had begun. At this time the strength of the East Coast echelon stood at 6220 officers and men. The 25th Marines embarked at Norfolk and sailed through the Panama Canal to San Diego, while the rest of the units traveled overland by train.

On August 16, 1943, the Fourth Division was formally activated at Camp Pendelton with Brigadier General James L. Underhill, USMC, acting as Commanding General. Two days later, Major General Harry Schmidt, USMC, took over command, and General Underhill became Assistant Division Commander.

At the end of August the divisional strength had climbed to 12,687, and the staff and regimental commanders had been assigned as follows:

Colonel William W. Rogers, USMC, Chief of Staff; Colonel Merton J. Batchelder, USMC, D-1; Major Gooderham L. McCormick, USMC, D-2; Colonel Walter W. Wensinger, USMC, D-3; Colonel William F. Brown, USMC, D-4; Colonel Louis G. DeHaven, USMC, 14th Regiment; Colonel Lucian W. Burnham, USMC, 20th Regiment; Colonel Louis R. Jones, USMC, 23rd Regiment; Colonel Franklin A. Hart, USMC, 24th Regiment; Colonel Samuel C. Cumming, USMC, 25th Regiment.

This was the team that was to lead the Fourth Division through its final intensive training and overseas to its first beachhead.

By September 10, the last of the East Coast echelon, the 25th Marines, had arrived at Camp Pendleton, and the division was together as an organic unit for the first time.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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At the turn of the year it was 19,446 strong. Its training culminated in maneuvers at San Clemente Island from January 1 to January 6, 1944. The division was now reinforced by several amphibian tractor battalions and by the First Joint Assault Signal Company. Its naval complement was furnished by Task Force 53.

On January 21 the Fourth arrived in the Hawaiian area, and the following day it departed. Now the great secret was revealed: the division was headed for the Marshalls and its objective there was the assault and capture of Roi and Namur Islands. It constituted, with the 15th Defense Battalion, the Northern Landing Force.

The Seventh Infantry Division of the Army, plus two defense battalions, formed the Southern Landing Force, which was to seize Kwajalein Island.

The plan of attack called for landings on D-Day on the islets adjoining Roi and Namur, and this was done with a minimum of opposition. The same afternoon, on January 31, assault troops proceeded into the lagoon.

The regimental objective of RCT 23 was Roi with its strategic airfield. On the right, RCT 24 assaulted Namur, where the preponderance of warehouses, barracks and pill-boxes was situated. Opposition on Roi was comparatively light and at 0800 on February 2, Roi was declared secure.

Namur proved to be a different story. The men disembarking on the beaches were met by brisk fire from the enemy. Gradually, organized resistance was crushed. Namur was conquered by the afternoon of February 2, in approximately 24 hours.

A recapitulation of the division's losses showed 190 killed in action and 547 wounded for a total of 737 casualties. The Japanese lost 3472 men killed and 264 taken prisoner for a total of 3736.

Departing from Kwajalein atoll at various times, units of the Fourth Division arrived at their advance base on Maui at irregular intervals. The last sections reached there March 10.

After long and arduous training it became obvious that the division was getting ready to shove off again. By May 13 the men were aboard their ships, and the Fourth Division left Maui.

The Fourth was part of a huge expedition bound for the Marianas Islands, with the objective of seizing the Japanese bases of Saipan, Tinian and Guam. The islands were deep within the enemy's defenses. Saipan, for example, lay 3226 miles from Pearl Harbor, but only 1370 miles from Tokyo. The route of approach was flanked by Japanese strongholds in the Carolines. The Japanese fleet was still a powerful threat.

But the assaulting Marines had help on many sides. With ships and planes, the Navy was fighting systematically to prevent enemy reinforcements and supplies from reaching the Fourth Division's target islands. Even to the west, close to Japan, there were American fighting units to support invasion submarines.

Finally—and yet almost suddenly—it was D-Day, June 15. Off the beaches of Tanapag Harbor, RCT 4, division reserve, was conducting a demonstration in conjunction with the reserve regiment of the Second Division that lasted from pre-dawn to H-Hour plus 60. Subsequent intelligence indicated this diversionary maneuver succeeded in detaining at least one enemy regiment in the northern area.

The landing was vigorously opposed. With the Second Division going in abreast for it, to the north, the Fourth's first wave hit the beach at 0843, and was met with intensive fire. The Marines got ashore, but the going was tough and casualties were mounting. Supporting waves were pounded on their way in by heavy Japanese artillery and mortar fire. But they fought ahead.

At 1230 on June 16 the attack began. By this time, elements of all divisional artillery, although subjected to considerable enemy counter-battery fire, were firing in support and the medium and light tanks were operating. The Fourth was also helped by air strikes and naval gun-fire.

During the night of June 16-17, elements of the 27th Army Division began landing to join in the bitter struggle. RCT 165, an Army outfit, was moved up on the right flank of the Fourth Division to assist in the final drive for Aslito Airfield. The entire Fourth Division was ashore by June 17, and its attack that day was launched with four Regimental Combat Teams abreast. From left to right, the RCTS were the 23rd, 24th (minus detachments), 25th and 165th.

Late in the afternoon elements of RCT 25 had penetrated to the barracks area of the airfield, but a withdrawal was necessary to maintain contact on the right with RCT 165, which had advanced more slowly. Thus, as night fell, the Fourth Division stood at the edge of its assigned objective. However, a gap between RCT 23 and the Second Division existed, and from it the 23rd had been receiving very heavy enfilade fire.

The next day's advance was impeded by uncertainty over the boundaries between the Fourth, the Second and the 27th Divisions, and gaps between the divisions left places where strong enemy units offered much resistance.

The end of the day (June 18) found the Fourth holding a line secured within itself, but out of

contact with the units on its right and its left. A drive by RCT 25 resulted in a division of the enemy forces when RCT 25 reached the opposite shore of the island.

Next day, following heavy artillery and rocket preparation, a tank-led attack was launched by the Fourth, resulting in the establishment of a strong line. This venture succeeded in closing the gap between the Fourth and the Second Divisions, though contact was maintained tenuously, by patrols.

June 20 saw RCT 25's capture of Hill 500, a commanding feature of the terrain. Withdrawing from this position, the Japanese troops moved northward along the coast, while the Fourth mopped up its newly taken area.

On June 22, the Fourth continued its attack, driving 2500 yards northeast to the base of Kagman Peninsula. In the following days it received strong new support in the form of additional men, artillery, tanks and planes, through the redisposition of other units.

RCT 23 struggled to clean out the cliff line at Karaherra Pass to establish a suitable line of departure from the base of the sheer cliff onto the coastal plain. The coast was about half a mile from the cliff. Throughout July 7, RCT 23 struck at northward-fleeing Japanese with long-range heavy-weapon fire from the cliff. This artillery fire caused more than 500 casualties among the enemy's ranks.

On the same day the Japanese launched a last, desperate, Banzai attack down the west coast of the island. The left flank of the 27th Army Division was penetrated, and the enemy drove from 2000 to 3000 yards toward Garapan. They were finally checked by elements of the Third Battalion, Tenth Marines.

With four regiments abreast, the Fourth broke through the enemy cliff line and reached the western coast of Saipan during July 8.

The Americans' final assault was made on July 9 (D plus 24). Starting at 0630, three regimental combat teams jumped off to finish the long struggle by seizing Marpi Point and the 0-9 line. All organized resistance ended that afternoon.

The division's casualties for the Saipan campaign totaled 5981, but with its cooperating forces the Fourth helped to wipe out 28,000 Japanese.

With the end of the Saipan operation came several command changes. On July 12 Major General Harry Schmidt, USMC, left the Fourth Division to become Commanding General, Northern Troops and Landing Force, and Commanding General, V Amphibious Corps. Command of the Fourth Division went to Major General Clifton B. Cates, USMC. Lieutenant General Holland M. Smith, USMC, continued as Commanding General, Expeditionary Troops, Task Force 56, and assumed command of Fleet Marine Force, Pacific.

Preparing the division for its coming assault on Tinian was a race against time. The division was not assembled, as a whole until after it had finished its share of the mopping-up on Saipan, on July 16. This left only a week in which to get all equipment and personnel ready for the assault on Tinian. After its heavy losses on Saipan, the division, reinforced, could muster only 16,843 officers and men for the Tinian battle.

As July 24 dawned, a supporting bombardment of Tinian mounted in fury. Eleven battalions of shore-based artillery were joined by the fire of two battleships, a heavy cruiser and two destroyers. Off Tinian Town, where the best landing beaches were, the Second Division conducted a diversionary demonstration.

At 0750 both assault RCTs, guided through the artillery smoke by planes, hit the beach. After the wall of fire that had greeted the division's landing on Saipan, it was a relief to encounter only moderate small arms and mortar fire this time. Tactical surprise had been achieved.

As night fell it was apparent that the division's landing was a success. In spite of the difficulties caused by the bottleneck beaches, the whole division had been landed in nine hours. A beachhead 4000 yards wide and 2000 yards deep had been seized at a cost of 240 casualties.

A threatened counterattack came when, from 0200 on, enemy forces, supported by artillery fire, surged against the Fourth Division's perimeter in wild Banzai charges that piled their dead up in tiers.

The following morning 1241 enemy dead were found in the immediate vicinity of the division's defense perimeter. Victory in the night battle had been complete.

Tinian Town was captured in ruins on July 30, but the Japanese defenses stiffened on the next day. The Marine reaction was quick and strong. At 0830 the attack began. With the Second Division on its left, the Fourth Division jumped off. Caves, antitank guns, mine fields and the cliff line itself, reinforced the enemy defenses. In spite of this the battalion was able to secure the portion of the escarpment in its zone by 1745.

On August 1, the division attacked again and reached the final sheer cliff that overlooked the small southern coastal plain. The Second Division had also driven through to the end of the island that afternoon. At 1855 on the same day Tinian was declared secured.

The capture of the island had

cost the division 1906 casualties. But nearly 9000 Japanese had been wiped out through death or capture. For its part in the campaign the Fourth Division received the Presidential Unit Citation.

There followed the usual vast amount of training and reorganizing, and a little liberty at Hawaii. Then, toward the end of January, the division set off again for combat. The main body sailed January 27 from Oahu.

Eniwetok was the first stop (February 5-7). From there the division sailed to the Saipan-Tinian area, arriving on February 15. On February 16 it left for its next point of attack—Iwo Jima. Iwo is in the Volcano Islands, 660 miles from Tokyo. It is only 625 miles from Saipan, but 3330 from Pearl Harbor. In addition to its strategic location in the innermost ring of the Japanese home defenses, it was the enemy's main base for the interception of American B-29s.

Early on the morning of February 19 the division arrived at Iwo. Lying off the island was the vast array of naval invasion force. From every side the warships were laying down their bombardment, and overhead wave after wave of planes hit the island—rocket-firing, bombers, fighters and dive bombers. H-Hour was set for 0900.

The assault BLTs were boated at an early hour in their LVTs. The reserve battalions and the reserve regiment (RCT 24) were to use LCVPs. The division landing plan provided for RCT 23 to land on the left (Yellow) beaches, while RCT 25 would use the right (Blue) beaches. From left to right, the assault BLTs were 1/23, 2/23, 1/25 and 3/25.

By 0815 the first three waves of assault troops were formed and waiting behind the line of departure. At 0830, they were on their way in. The weather was good and the surf moderate. The naval gunfire, air strikes and rocket and mortar barrages from LCIs were saturating the beaches now, and only moderate enemy fire fell on the leading waves. As they neared the shore the support fire moved inland in a "rolling barrage." At 0902, they hit the beach.

As the naval gunfire lifted, the Japanese opened up. They went to work with every weapon they had. Soon a solid sheet of fire was pouring down on the beaches and incoming waves. It was the heaviest enemy mortar and artillery fire yet seen in any operation. Boats were hit; they broached and clogged the beaches. Personnel casualties mounted rapidly. Vehicles ashore found the sandy volcanic ash and the first terrace (with its 40 per cent grade) nearly impassable. Tanks bogged down. Every move was under direct observation of the Japanese on top of the cliff line to the right and on Mt. Suribachi to the left.

By night of D-Day the division had put ashore all three of its rifle regiments, less some Support Group elements, two battalions of artillery, and some heavy shore party equipment. Despite the withering enemy fire and extremely heavy casualties, the assault units had driven ahead and established a line including the eastern edge of Airfield No. 1 and of sufficient depth inland from Blue Beaches to guarantee successful holding of the beachhead. Full contact with the Fifth Division had been established, and adequate supplies were ashore for a continuation of the attack.

The night of D-Day was spent in trying to get ready for the next day's operations. Some units had suffered terrible casualties. BLT 3/25, for example, had lost 50 per cent of its men. Reserve companies and battalions were sent in to join or to relieve the most battered units. On the beach that night, in spite of all efforts, no appreciable progress was made in clearing away wrecked landing craft. Enemy harassing fire continued to fall all night long throughout the division zone.

At 0830 the assault began with RCT 23 on the left and RCT 25 on the right. Through bitter enemy opposition, the 23rd Marines, reinforced with tanks, fought its way across Airfield No. 1 to complete its capture by 1600. On the other flank, RCT 25 made little progress. Minefields prevented the use of tanks; the terrain was unfavorable; enemy resistance was fanatical, and the 25th's left flank was necessarily anchored to the adjoining unit of the 23rd Marines.

During the day the remainder of the 14th Marines came ashore and went into position. RCT 24 (minus its two detached battalions) remained in the division's reserve.

The Fourth and Fifth Divisions moved ahead. After splitting the island on D-Day, the main part of the Fifth Division wheeled and drove up the west side of Iwo Jima. RCT 28 was detached to capture Mt. Suribachi in the south. Side by side with the Fifth, the Fourth Division also wheeled to the right and advanced to the northeast. LVTs, DUKWs, and a few weasels worked their way through the heavy surf, the clutching sand, and the wall of wreckage to maintain the flow of high-priority supplies.

On February 21 (D plus 2), after repulsing a night counter-attack by the Japs, the Fourth attacked again. RCT 25 moved forward along the right flank by the East Coast Basin. RCT 23 on the left gained little. Its advance against numerous pillboxes and extensive minefields was extremely costly and very slow. The division's combat efficiency was down to 68 per cent.

Although the day's advances

averaged only 100-250 yards, the enemy had been driven from the cliff heights and quarry area on the division's right flank, while the left flank was approaching Airfield No. 2. Reinforcements were becoming available. At 1630, RCT 21 of the Third Division in reserve, was released to the Fourth Division and soon thereafter the whole regiment was ashore. During the night the usual enemy attack was repulsed by the Fourth Division.

Early in the morning of February 22 (D plus 3), RCT 21 began a passage through the lines to relieve RCT 23. This was a long, slow process, as every move had to be made under observed fire from the high ground in front of Airfield No. 2. By 1130, the relief had been effected and now RCT 21 attacked northward. At the end of the day, the southern edge of Airfield No. 2 had been reached. On the other flank of the division, the 25th Marines had made gains along the coastline.

The American flag was raised on Mt. Suribachi at 1037 on February 23 (D plus 4).

After the usual preparatory barrage, the assault troops jumped off for the day's attack.

Due to the rough terrain, tanks were able to furnish little assistance during the day. RCT 24 on the right averaged gains of 300 yards. However, RCT 21 on the left was unable to make any advance except on the extreme right. They were checked by difficult terrain and extremely stubborn enemy resistance from pillboxes, emplaced tanks, 47-mm. guns sighted so as to cover both airstrips of Airfield No. 2, high-velocity flat-trajectory weapons, heavy artillery, mortar and automatic weapons.

Continuous artillery, naval gunfire and air support failed to break the determined and fanatical resistance in this critical area. By now, the division's casualties had mounted to 3163.

It was decided to make the maximum effort of the division on the left flank during the following day (February 24, D plus 5). The plan was to eliminate the enemy salient and seize Airfield No. 2. Strong tank support was given to RCT 21. An intensive naval and artillery barrage was laid down. Although RCT 21 was delayed in beginning its attack by the late arrival of its tanks, it managed to penetrate to the southeastern edge of both strips of the airfield by 1130.

After another artillery preparation at midday, the 21st continued its tank-infantry attack. Considerable gains were made on the right, but its left BLT (2/21) was unable to advance. Meanwhile RCT 24, on the division's right flank, was fighting a slow and bloody battle for "Charlie-Dog Ridge." The hill was finally taken at 1520. The division's combat efficiency had been reduced by now to 60 per cent. More troops had been pouring ashore all day, however, and the Third Division was now ready to take over a section of the lines.

At 0700 on February 25 (D plus 6), the 21st Marines reverted to control of the Third, and that division went into position in the Airfield No. 2 area on the left of the Fourth Division. At the same time, RCT 23 moved up to the front and returned to action on the left of RCT 24. Little progress was made until tanks were sent through the Third Division zone to outflank and attack the pillboxes and anti-tank guns holding up the 23rd. On the right, RCT 24 gained very little.

Starting on February 26 (D plus 7), the division began working its way into the enemy's main defense line of prepared positions. For the next week it moved slowly forward, suffering bloody losses. It was engaged in the most savage type of close combat. The Jap line was based on a series of strong points known as Hill 382, the Amphitheatre, Turkey Knob and the village of Minami.

RCT 23 reached the southwest slopes of the vital Hill 382 on February 26, and was met by a murderous wall of fire there. For days, that hill was the scene of the bitterest kind of fighting, with first RCT 23 and then RCT 24 attempting to capture it and keep it.

After days of bloody battering, the Jap pocket at Turkey Knob was nearly isolated. RCT 25, however, was worn out and on March 3 it was relieved by the 23rd Marines. The blockhouse on the cliff-top was partially reduced that afternoon. In spite of mined approaches covered by Jap fire, it was attacked by demolition teams and flame-thrower tanks. RCT 23 succeeded in cutting off Turkey Knob completely, and then mopping up began in the Minami area.

The division had broken the back of the Jap line, but at a terrible cost. As of March 3, it had lost 6591 men. Despite the additional strength of a draft of replacements, the division had fallen to the 50 per cent mark of combat efficiency.

The division now shifted the direction of its attack to the southeast in order to move parallel to the terrain corridors. With the fall of Hill 382, the Amphitheatre was outflanked and by-passed. March 5 was a day of general reorganization which allowed the troops a momentary breathing spell. The next day, the division went into the attack again. All three rifle regiments were now in the line. Die-hard Jap defenders continued to hold out in the Minami pocket. The advance continued slowly for days. The terrain was extraordinarily rough. Crevices, draws, ravines, cross-compartments and hills were all filled with cave and tunnel systems. Half-tracks and tanks

were unable to move into the area. Advancing troops would be met with fire from one quarter and when they attacked there, they would be hit from a different side by Japs using underground passages.

The enemy had to be routed out by assaulting squads depending on their own weapons. Supporting arms usually could not be brought to bear. Anti-personnel mines were sown in cave mouths, approaches, tunnels, paths; deadly accurate snipers were everywhere. But the Marine lines kept moving forward, compressing the enemy into an ever smaller zone.

Finally, the pressure grew so great that the enemy was forced to come out of his camouflaged, fortified holes and counterattack in force. On the night of March 8-9, the intensity of the Jap fire began to increase around 1800. Rocket mortar, grenade, rifle, and machine-gun fire rained down on the division's lines, reaching a peak about 2000. Enemy infiltration began along the front of all three regiments with the main effort being made against RCT 23. At 2330, the Japs attacked BLT 2/23 in force, attempting to break through to Airfield No. 1. Although this was not an all-out Banzai charge, the attack was apparently well-planned.

First the enemy probed for weak spots in our lines. Next he made good use of the terrain to infiltrate. Some Japanese, well-armed and carrying demolition charges, reached command post areas. The Japs were finally thrown back by the Marine rifle units aided by intense artillery fire.

On March 11, the 20th day after the landing, the division reached the ocean, following the penetration of patrols the previous day. RCT 23 overcame weak enemy resistance and by 1055 its patrols were on the beach. At the end of the day, combat patrols were on the beach and at the end of the day, combat patrols were mopping up in the 23rd's zone. Over at the division's right flank, however, RCT 25 was meeting heavy opposition and considerable fire. Here, in a pocket of indescribably wild terrain, the Japs chose to make their last stand so as to exact as heavy a toll of Marines as they possibly could. Except for this one small pocket, the Fourth Division had crushed the enemy in its zone of action on Iwo in 20 days.

Mopping up and the elimination of the final Jap pocket (by RCT 25) occupied the troops for several days. The area of resistance was studded with caves and emplacements and was absolutely impenetrable to tanks or other support weapons. The Jap defenders, as usual, fought until they were individually routed out and killed by riflemen, demolition and grenade teams, and flame-throwers.

During the night of March 15-16, a party of nearly 60 Japs tried to break out of the hopeless corner into which they had been driven. The attempt failed, for they were forced back into their caves. This was the last gasp of the enemy. By 1030 on the morning of March 16, the final pocket was wiped out, and at 1100, the entire zone of the Fourth Division was reported secured.

The Fourth Division had paid a heavy price. It had suffered a total of 9090 casualties, of which 1731 were killed in action. Iwo had been defended by an estimated 22,000 Japanese who had been completely wiped out. An actual count of the number of enemy dead in the Fourth Division zone came to 8982. Probably another thousand were sealed in caves or buried by the enemy.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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DECORATIONS and COMMENDATIONS

(R) Reserve.
* Spot Promotion.

Navy Cross

★ **WILLIAMS, Harry B., 1st Sgt. (R)***
(Minneapolis, Minn.)

★ **RADOMSKI, Bernard S., Corp.***
(Reading, Pa.)

★ **TICCONI, Leo A., Pfc. (R)***
(Niagara Falls, N. Y.)

★ **HELPINGSTINE, H., Corp (R)***
(St. Louis, Mo.)

★ **FUFIDIO, Walter J., Ack.***
(New York, N. Y.)

★ **RINGGOLD, Charles F., Pfc. (R)***
(West Columbia, Texas)

★ **ANDERSON, Arthur J., Corp. (R)***
(Independence, Iowa)

Distinguished Service Medal

ARMY

★ **MITCHELL, Ralph J., Maj. Gen.**
(New Britain, Conn.)

Gold Star

IN LIEU OF FOURTH LEGION OF MERIT

★ **HARRIS, Field, Maj. Gen.**
(Lexington, Ky.)

Gold Star

IN LIEU OF SECOND LEGION OF MERIT

★ **MITCHELL, Ralph J., Maj. Gen.**
(New Britain, Conn.)

Legion of Merit

★ **PFEIFFER, Omar T., Brig. Gen.**
(Toledo, Ohio)

Legion of Merit

ARMY

★ **DUGGAN, William E., 1st Lt.**
(Arlington, Va.)

★ **HOLCOMB, Franklin P., Maj. (R)**
(Washington, D. C.)

Silver Star Medal

★ **FINCO, Aurellio M., PlSgt.**
(Roundup, Mont.)

★ **FOSS, Howard A., Corp. (R)**
(Chicago, Ill.)

★ **HAGGARD, Claude S., Corp.**
(Charlottesville, Va.)

★ **JOHNSON, Eric H., Pfc. (R)**
(San Francisco, Calif.)

★ **MILLER, Channing B., Corp. (R)**
(Aurora, Ill.)

★ **RESSER, Stephen P., Corp. (R)**
(Allentown, Pa.)

★ **RICKLES, Ray, Pfc. (R)**
(Seattle, Wash.)

★ **SHELTON, Harold L., Pfc.**
(Pontiac, Mich.)

★ **SIRKS, Clifford D., Pfc.**
(Lawrence, Mass.)

★ **TESSIER, Leon A., Sgt.**
(Toppenich, Wash.)

★ **ZSERDIN, Frank N., Sgt. (R)**
(Allentown, Pa.)

Distinguished Flying Cross

★ **MOTLEY, James C., Capt. (R)**
(Abingdon, Va.)

Navy and Marine Corps Medal

★ **DEVINE, John R., Pvt. (R)**
(Chicago, Ill.)

Bronze Star Medal

★ **CLEMENTS, Russell D., Pfc. (R)**
(Berrien Springs, Mich.)

★ **DURANDETTO, C. G., Pfc. (R)**
(Renovo, Pa.)

★ **HOLLOWAY, John A., Corp.**
(Centralia, Ill.)

★ **JONAS, Gaylen T., Pfc. (R)**
(Salt Lake City, Utah)

★ **KERR, William M., Corp.**
(Warren, Ohio)

★ **REINHARDT, John W., GySgt.**
(Conrad, Mont.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ **SOUDER, William H., Jr., Maj.**
(Washington, D. C.)

★ **STANEK, Chester J., Pfc. (R)**
(Cleveland, Ohio)

★ **TRIGG, Kenneth D., Pfc.**
(Woodstock, Minn.)

★ **ZERNECHEL, Donald F., Pfc.**
(Mancato, Minn.)

Bronze Star Medal

ARMY

★ **TAYLOR, W. W., Jr., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Sante Fe, New Mexico)

Air Medal

★ **SCULLIN, Harry V., Maj. (R)**
(St. Louis, Mo.)

LETTER OF COMMENDATION FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

★ **HELMICK, Albert E., Capt.**

LETTER OF COMMENDATION FROM THE COMMANDER, AMPHIBIOUS FORCES, U. S. PACIFIC FLEET

MEACHUM, Russell A., Sgt. (R) 489403

LETTER OF COMMENDATION FROM THE COMMANDING GENERAL, THIRD MARINE DIVISION

SMITH, Clifford A., Corp., 371578

LETTER OF COMMENDATION FROM THE COMMANDING GENERAL, FIFTH MARINE DIVISION

McMANUS, Ernest N., MTSgt. (R) 243375

FIFTH MARINE DIVISION HISTORY

From Official Monograph by Historical Division HQMC

On Armistice Day 1943 the Commandant of the Marine Corps signed a letter to the Commanding General, Camp Lejeune, N. C. and the Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, San Diego Area, directing that "the Fifth Marine Division consisting of the 22d Marines (Infantry), 26th Marines (Infantry), 27th Marines (Infantry), 13th Marines (Artillery), 16th Marines (Engineer), and Headquarters and Service Troops, will be organized during the months of December 1943, and January and February 1944." This plan of organization was modified by a second letter from the Commandant of the Marine Corps, dated January 20, 1944, directing that the 28th Marines be formed to replace the 22nd Marines.

The elements of the Division were activated as follows:

Headquarters Battalion at Camp Pendleton, December 1, 1943

16th Marines at Camp Lejeune, December 15, 1943

13th, 26th and 27th Marines at Camp Pendleton, January 10, 1944

Service Troops at Camp Pendleton, February 8, 1944

28th Marines at Camp Pendleton, February 8, 1944

The Division was officially activated on January 21, 1944, with Brigadier General Thomas A. Bourke, USMC, as Acting Division Commander. Major General Keller E. Rockey, USMC, assumed command on February 4, 1944, and General Bourke became Assistant Division Commander. General Bourke was assigned duty with V Amphibious on April 11, 1944, and Brigadier General Leo D. Hermle, USMC, became Assistant Division Commander on April 24, 1944.

By the end of the first week in February, the medical, artillery, and engineer units that had formed and trained at Camp Lejeune were at Camp Pendleton, and intensive training of all Division units was begun. The training schedule carried the troops through progressive steps which included: Basic individual training, individual and small unit training, company tactical training, battalion tactical training, regimental tactical training, and amphibious training. The early phases of individual and unit training in the basic essentials of combat were filled by practice in the technique of amphibious operations. Schools were conducted for naval gunfire, medical, communication, transport quartermaster, and staff personnel.

On July 7, 1944, CT-26 embarked at San Diego for landing exercises at San Clemente Island, to be followed by a landing from off the California coast with the mission of seizing "Pendleton Island". This was the first in a series of landings by regimental teams, under the supervision of the Amphibious Training Command, Pacific Fleet. The schedule called for a continuation of the exercise ashore with a three-day problem lasting until July 14. On July 12, however, the maneuvers were called off and CT-26 was ordered to return to camp, where it began preparations to embark for overseas duty. On July 22, the 26th Marines, Reinforced, was detached from the 5th Marine Division and sailed from San Diego to report to the Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas, to be available for use with the First Provisional Marine Brigade in the Guam operation. A few days out of San Diego, the 26th received orders to proceed to Hilo, Island of Hawaii, as the Guam operation was progressing favorably and additional forces would not be required.

Back at Camp Pendleton the remainder of the 5th Division continued its training for combat. During the latter half of July 1944, CT-27 and CT-28 carried out landing exercises at San Clemente Island and at Aliso Beach, with a three-day continuation of the problem ashore.

An August 12, 1944, the 27th Marines (Reinforced), the Rear Echelon of the 26th Marines, and the Division Control Echelon under General Rockey embarked at San Diego and sailed for Hawaii. The convoy arrived at Hilo on August 18, and General Rockey reported to the Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, for duty.

The Rear Echelon began movement to Hawaii during the latter part of August, the first unit (VMO-5) leaving on August 23. The remaining units of the 13th Marines and the 28th Marines followed in September and the first part of October. By October 11, the final elements of the 28th Marines

had left San Diego, and the Command Post of the Rear Echelon was closed at Camp Pendleton on that date.

On October 18, the Division Staff received information that the 5th Marine Division would participate in an assault on Iwo Jima as part of the V Amphibious Corps. The formulation of the Division's operation plan was begun, and by November 1 the preferred plan had been completed and flown to V Amphibious Corps Headquarters at Pearl Harbor.

In the meanwhile, the assault troops were training in the projected scheme of maneuver, all units practicing for the specific role they were to play in the attack on Iwo Jima, referred to as "Island X". Combat Team 28, for example, practiced combat maneuvers in terrain similar to that it would encounter in its assault on Mount Suribachi.

On December 16, 1944, VMO-5 left for Pearl Harbor, and four days later the movement of equipment and supplies to the piers at Hilo and to the LST beach began. During the two weeks after Christmas the supplies and personnel of the Division left Kamuela in a steady stream and moved to Hilo for embarkation. By January 9, 1945, the last unit (CT-28) had sailed for Pearl Harbor, and only the Base Echelon of the Division remained at Camp Tarawa.

Upon arrival at Pearl Harbor, 25% of the men of each unit was given liberty ashore each day. On January 12, the Division left Pearl Harbor for maneuvers at Maalaea Bay (Maui) and at Kahoolawe. These exercises included rehearsals of the ship-to-shore movement as well as a full-scale landing and an overnight problem. On January 18, all units returned to Pearl Harbor for a final period of rehabilitation.

On January 22, the LST and LSM flotilla, carrying the 13th Marines, 11th Amphibian Tractor Battalion, 5th Tank Battalion, and the 5th Shore Party Regiment, left Pearl Harbor for Eniwetok, and was followed five days later by the main part of the Division.

The V Amphibious Corps, designated as Task Group 56.1, made up the greater part of the landing force. It was under the command of Major General Harry Schmidt, USMC. The two assault divisions were the 5th Marine Division (Major General Keller E. Rockey, USMC) and the 4th Marine Division (Major General Clifton B. Cates, USMC), while the 3d Marine Division (Major General Graves B. Erskine, USMC) formed the Expeditionary Troops Reserve. The Expeditionary Troops, designated as Task Force 56, was under the command of Lieutenant General Holland M. Smith, USMC, Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific. The operation plan called for the 4th and 5th Marine Divisions to land abreast right to left on February 19, 1945, on the southeast beaches of Iwo Jima. Total strength of the 5th Division (Reinforced) was 24,797 officers and enlisted men.

En route to Iwo Jima, the men of the 5th Division studied maps, aerial photographs, and relief models of the objective. Classes in various subjects were held daily and the plan of attack was explained in detail to everyone. The 5th Division was to land on the three southernmost beaches with the assault battalions in their LVTs preceded by a wave of armored LVTs. Combat Teams 27 and 28, each reinforced with engineers, were to land abreast with the 27th Marines on the right advancing inland as rapidly as possible. These two regiments would attempt to drive across the island to the western beaches then wheel to the right and left, the 27th moving northward while the 28th attacked to the south against Mount Suribachi. After the infantry units would come the regimental weapons and tanks. The Division Reserve consisting of LTs 3/28 and 1/26 and the Division Artillery (13th Marines) were to land on call. Combat Team 26 (minus LT 1/26) was to be Corps Reserve.

On February 5, the Division arrived at Eniwetok where a staff conference was held. The convoy left the Marshall Islands on February 7, and arrived at Saipan four days later. On February 13, a final rehearsal was carried out with simulated landing on the west coast of Tinian. After one last conference at which the latest data was distributed, the Division left the Marianas on February 16.

Early in the morning of February 19, 1945, the convoy arrived in the transport area off the island of Iwo Jima. At about 0744, the first LVTs began disembarking preparatory to the landing at H-hour (0900). On every side the supporting ships of the Navy were shelling the island and planes were making continuous runs, hitting enemy targets with bombs, bullets, and rockets. At 0825, the first assault wave crossed the Line of Departure. LCIs firing mortars and LCS' using rockets were in direct support. The first wave hit the beaches between 0859 and 0903. Apparently the enemy was still stunned by the heavy preparatory barrage as only moderate fire was received. It also was apparent that the Japanese were not attempting to defend the landing beaches. Taking advantage of these factors, the attack was pushed rapidly across the Island to the cliff lines controlling the west coast of the island. In the advance inland, the assault battalions from left to right were 1/27, 2/27, and 1/28. As LT 1/28 moved westward, 2/28 landed and deployed facing Mount Suribachi to cover the open left flank. Enemy artillery and

mortar fire increased steadily in its intensity. Its pin-point accuracy never varied, however, for the high ground on both sides of the V Corps zone was dotted with Japanese observation posts.

While the infantry was fighting its way ahead, the supporting arms were having trouble back on the beach. The loose, black, volcanic sand was bogging down the wheeled vehicles. The surf. was causing a considerable number of landing craft to broach. The steep terraces were blocking egress from the beaches, Japanese artillery and mortar fire was blanketing the beach area, and extensive minefields were taking a heavy toll. In spite of all these difficulties, reserves continued to pour ashore. Tanks were coming in by 0930, LT 3/28 was on the beach by 1215, and LT 1/26 was ashore by 1445. The remainder of CT 26 was soon released to the 5th Division by Corps and was ashore 1732. During the afternoon, the artillery of the 13th Marines, the remainder of the 5th Tank Battalion, the Shore and Beach Parties, and the Division Advance Command Post all came ashore and began operations.

Thus, by the end of the first day all the main elements of the 5th Marine Division were ashore. The assault regiments after cutting the island in two were driving north and south in the face of bitter opposition. The Japanese defenders were hidden deep and countless emplacement caves and pillboxes, all of which were mutually supporting. Every foot of the advance was made into the teeth of this defense-in-depth with its bands of interlocking fire. The fierceness of the enemy defense is indicated by the fact that the 5th Division suffered 904 casualties during the first day.

After a night featured by numerous infiltration attempts, a counterattack in strength, and heavy shelling of our lines and rear areas, the 5th Division's two-pronged attack was resumed the morning of February 20. Combat Team 28 continued its drive southward against the Suribachi defenses while CT 27 pushed northward along the west coast of the island. Combat Team 26 remained in Division Reserve. Combat Team 28's attack against Suribachi was made with LT 2/28 on the left and LT 3/28 on the right. Landing Team 1/28 was in reserve. The battalions encountered heavy fire from pillboxes and emplacements at the base of the mountain and from caves dug into the cliffs. Every move the Marines made was under direct observation of the enemy on top of Suribachi. It was a yard by yard advance with all supporting weapons brought into play whenever and wherever possible. When they could not be used, squads and platoons, using flame throwers and demolitions, did the job alone. Progress was slow and costly, and at the end of the day only minor gains had been made by the 28th Marines.

On the 5th Division's northern front, CT-27 (with LT 1/26 attached) was able to make better progress. Spearheaded by tanks, the advance of CT-27 carried through heavy enemy opposition, making an advance of approximately 800 yards and seizing that portion of Airfield No. 1 that lay in the 5th Division's zone.

On February 21, CT-28 resumed its drive on Mount Suribachi, and again, progress was slow in the face of fanatical resistance. Concealed Japanese positions had to be taken in hand to hand combat; but by nightfall, the 28th had reached the base of the mountain and was digging in.

In the meanwhile, CT-27 was also encountering heavy enemy resistance. Casualties were heavy, especially in LT 1/26. However, with the help of tanks, an advance of 900-1000 yards was achieved during the morning (February 21). After making this advance, the 27th was stopped by intense fire from enemy mortars and artillery. Moreover, a large gap had developed between the 5th Division's right flank and the 4th Division. Landing Team 1/27 was then committed to fill the breach.

By this time, conditions in the beach areas were improving; matting and bulldozers were helping to speed up the movement of supplies inland, and enemy fire had diminished.

During the night of February 21-22, the northern front of the 5th Marine Division was hit by a series of enemy counterattacks that lasted from 2100 until daybreak. The units of CT 27 repulsed all attempts at a breakthrough and maintained their lines intact.

During the early morning of February 22, CT-26 passed through the 27th Marines and continued the attack with its three battalions abreast. Enemy fire from a strongpoint on the right flank slowed the advance to such extent that permission was obtained for CT-26 to direct its assault into the 4th Marine Division's zone in order to silence the enemy weapons. After an advance of several hundred yards, CT-26 was again subjected to enfilade fire from the right flank and was forced to withdraw to its original position.

In the meanwhile, CT-28 was continuing its assault on Mount Suribachi. As the nature of the terrain prevented the use of support fires to any great extent, the fighting developed into a direct assault on enemy fortifications by small units of riflemen. At the same time, patrols were reconnoitering for a route up to the top of the mountain. At the end of the day, Suribachi had been surrounded except for a 400 yard gap on the

west coast.

The morning of February 23, a patrol from Company "E," 2d Battalion, 28th Marines, located a rough path up the mountain and at 1037 the American flag was hoisted on top of Suribachi. The remainder of the mountain was soon surrounded and mopping up began.

In the northern sector, CT-26 (with LT 2/27 still attached) continued its efforts to break through the strong enemy resistance. Little progress was made, however, and by the end of the day, the Division's total casualties was 2,926 officers and men. A total of 1,628 enemy dead had been counted and four prisoners had been taken.

To give additional support to CT-26, a very heavy preparation was laid down the morning of February 24 by artillery, naval gunfire, and aircraft. The tanks of all three Marine Divisions were concentrated for a coordinated drive on the enemy positions beyond Airfield No. 1 that had been holding up the advance. With the assistance of this spearhead, CT-21 in the left of the 4th Division's zone was able to come up abreast of CT-26 by noon. Immediately following this advance, all available Marine Corps artillery was massed on the same targets in which aircraft rockets and naval gunfire joined. Under cover of this barrage, CT-26 drove slowly forward still under heavy fire from Japanese deeply entrenched in cave positions on the right flank. The failure of this heavy preparation to weaken the Japanese resistance to any great extent was a clear indication of the skill with which the enemy's defenses had been prepared. His pillboxes were dug deep into the ground, often with several levels and interconnecting tunnels. When the Marine Corps artillery laid down a barrage on a Japanese position, the defenders merely retired to the depths of their emplacement and waited out the storm. Then they remanned their weapons, and when the Marines advanced opened up with heavy fire. If one position was assaulted, the enemy would move to another position on the flank and open up a deadly surprise fire from there.

In spite of this stubborn enemy resistance, CT-26 managed to make a gain of some 500 yards on February 24. By this time, the massed artillery fires were proving their value and their accuracy had been greatly increased by observation posts that had been set up on newly won Mt. Suribachi. This area on and around Suribachi was still being mopped up by CT-28. Over 1,000 enemy fortifications and 600 Japanese dead had been counted in the area, with another 200-300 of the enemy still active.

Combat Team 26 remained in position of February 25 waiting for 4th Division units on its right flank to draw abreast. The attack was resumed the following day after the usual preparatory barrage. The terrain was generally unsuitable for tanks although some flame thrower tanks were used with good effect against a number of Japanese cave positions. Throughout the day, (February 26), heavy artillery and mortar fire was received from enemy emplacements on the high ground to the north. Counter-battery fire was successful in knocking out several of the enemy guns. By nightfall, the center unit of CT-26 had advanced 500 yards ahead of the flank elements, so that the regimental line was echeloned to the rear on both sides. By this time, the 5th Division's casualties had mounted to 3,518, while the Japanese losses to the Division totaled 2,663 dead and five prisoners.

At 0630, February 27, CT-27 (with LT 1/26 attached) relieved the 26th Marines in the line and resumed the attack with three battalions abreast. Although the advance met only moderate small arms, mortar, and artillery fire, progress was slow due to necessity for maintaining contact with the units on the right.

In the meanwhile, the situation in the rear areas had been improved. Beaches and roads were now able to handle wheeled traffic and supplies were moving up steadily. The reconstruction of Airfield No. 1 was underway and during the afternoon of February 27, the first plane of VMO-5 landed on this field.

The assault of CT-27 on February 28 was spearheaded by tanks although LT 1/27 was somewhat delayed due to tanks being unable to arrive at the jump off line on time. Progress during the morning was good, but it was soon apparent that the attack was up against the backbone of the western flank of the enemy cross-island defensive position. This position consisted of caves, reenforced concrete pillboxes, and blockhouses emplaced in vertical cliffs around the base of jagged rocky outcrops where excellent fields of fire commanded the all around approaches. The Japanese put up a last-ditch defense making no withdrawal but leaving each man to be exterminated in his position or to be by-passed and converted into a sniper. In this area, a much greater use was made of small arms than in any other position previously encountered. Firing from close ranges, enemy sniper fire was extremely effective and the Division's casualties among leaders of companies, platoons, and squads were heavy.

In order to complete the reduction of Hill 362, the keystone in this defense line, CT-28 which had been mopping up the Suribachi Area while in Corps Reserve was brought up the morning of March 1

to relieve the tired 27th Marines. The attack moved slowly ahead under severe mortar and small arms fire. By 1030, LTs 1/28 and 2/28 had reached to top of Hill 362 and the ridgeline running east and west from it, but were unable to negotiate the steep cliff on the north side because of heavy machine gun and mortar fire. At 1330, LT 1/28 committed its reserve company along the right side of the hill, but was unable to contact LT 2/28, so the lines were consolidated for the night on the hill and ridgeline.

With Hill 362 taken, the 5th Division was immediately faced with another natural obstacle: Nishi Ridge that loomed just ahead. Another difficulty was the increasing width of the Division's front. The 3d Marine Division on the right had shifted the direction of its attack to the east and as a result it became necessary for the 5th Division to put additional battalions in the line. Accordingly, LT's 1/26 and 2/26 were moved into the gap on the right flank on March 2. Thus, all three landing teams of CT-26 were now in action on the right of the 28th Marines.

With CTs 26 and 28 abreast, the 5th Division continued its steady advance against the enemy's defenses. On March 2, the ruins of the village of Nishi were overrun and a Japanese counterattack on the right flank was thrown back. The next objective was the second Hill 362, which commanded all the immediate area. The terrain in this area was extremely rough and the enemy was defending the high ground with very heavy and accurate fire. All the approaches to the Hill were mined and armored bulldozers were used to clear routes and make new roads so that tanks could be brought up in close support. Combat Team 26 then moved in and after savage hand-to-hand fighting finally secured the hill on March 3.

During the night of March 3-4, the Japanese made a determined attempt to infiltrate the lines of CT-26, but failed. The division made no material gains on March 4, and by this time, its losses totaled 5,511. Japanese losses, however, totaled 4,790 dead and 19 prisoners in the 5th Division zone alone. After the long, grueling days of steady fighting and sudden death, with little sleep and hasty meals, the men of the assault battalions were nearing complete exhaustion. A day for rest and reorganization was ordered, therefore, on March 5. Preparations were also made for the continuation of the attack the next day. During the day, artillery and naval gunfire was used to soften up enemy defenses across the entire front.

An intensive preparatory barrage was laid down the following morning by all supporting arms with the 13th Marines alone firing 6200 rounds. At 0800, the Division jumped off with all three regiments abreast. The attack was bitterly contested by the Japanese from prepared bunkers, pillboxes, and caves. Heavy rifle, machine gun, and mortar fire and white phosphorous shells poured into our troops attempting to advance from Hill 362 to the north. The jagged rocks and broken terrain made close tank support impossible and greatly reduced the effectiveness of our artillery. It was once again a battle of Marine against Japanese, with the latter having all the advantages of cover, concealment, and fields of fire. Although only slight gains were made along the fronts of CTs 26 and 27, numerous enemy installations were destroyed or neutralized.

The unrelenting pressure on the Japanese began to bring results. On March 6, the 28th Marines advanced 500 yards. By-passing many cave positions, it advanced some 500 yards and seized Hill 215. On the right flank, CT-27 made only limited progress, although LT 2/27, after a number of grenade duels and sharp hand-to-hand fighting, did reach a position within sight of the shore line on the northeast coast of Iwo.

The 5th Division resumed its attack the morning of March 7, with the main effort being made on the right by CT 27. The objective was a concentration of interconnecting caves and tunnels. The entire area was heavily mined, and the reverse sides of the rocky ledges were as strongly fortified as the forward slopes. In terrain of this kind, advances were painfully slow. It was the old familiar problem of assault on each cave and pillbox individually, while being hit by flanking fire from foe that was always unseen. One regiment estimated that it by-passed as many Japanese as it killed. Supporting arms were severely handicapped by the rough ground, and the Division moved ahead only after each close-in fight had been won by small groups of riflemen using grenades and flamethrowers. Finally, on March 9, the strongpoint was taken and mopping up of the area began.

When the attack was continued on March 10, two new terrain features rapidly came to the attention of the Division. Across its front for 700 yards ran a deep gorge, and beyond that lay a high ridge that extended southeast from Kitano Point. Heavy enemy fire was being received from both these areas. On March 11, therefore, an intense preparation was fired with 12 battalions of artillery laying down 10,000 rounds in front of the 5th Division. Behind this barrage, CT 27 and CT 28 began their attack. The fighting was at such close ranges that it was impossible to use further artillery or air support. All entrances to the gorge were thoroughly covered by enemy fire from concealed emplacements and

at point blank range. Nevertheless, CT 28 fought its way nearly up to the rim of what soon became known to the men of the Fifth Division as "Bloody Gorge." On the right, CT 27 advanced 200 yards, storming cave after cave as it went.

By this time, the Japanese defenders were being steadily compressed into a smaller and smaller portion of the northern tip of the island. As a result, their nightly efforts to break through the Division's lines grew stronger and more frequent. On the night of March 11-12 a concentration of enemy forming up for a counterattack was smashed by Marine Corps artillery fire, and numerous attempts at infiltration were also dealt with quickly and effectively. Another outcome of this shrinking of the territory held by the enemy had become apparent by March 12. The Japanese defending this remaining area were crowding our lines and maintaining close contact at all points in order to minimize or escape our air and artillery fire.

It was clear that the Division was now up against the enemy's final defensive line. CT 28 on the left flank had reached the edge of the gorge. Any attempt to move forward here ran into a stonewall defense and brought deadly fire from every side. It was decided, therefore, to make the main effort of the Division on the right flank where the terrain corridors could be utilized to envelop the southern (left) flank of the enemy in the gorge and to surround his remaining forces. To this end, CT 27 on the right began a tank-led assault on March 12. Progress was slow, as the Marines were forced to fight for every inch of ground. It was the same the next day. In an effort to knock out some of the stubborn Japanese positions, 7.2 inch rockets on launchers were pulled up to the front lines by armored tractors and fired. Then flamethrower tanks worked over the enemy emplacements, burning them out one by one.

The final drive to break the enemy's line was launched on March 14. CT 26 was committed in the center of the Division's zone. An air strike was used to burn out one strongpoint. The terrific pressure on the Japanese began to tell now. The daily pounding they had taken was too much to bear; their line had to give, and it did. CT 27 broke through on the right for a gain of 600 yards. However, CT 27 reported that its "men were exhausted and badly in need of rest." Moreover, the Division's casualties had jumped to 7792.

In spite of their reduced strength and overwhelming weariness, the three infantry regiments of the Division repulsed the usual nightly infiltration attempts and moved out in the attack again the next morning (March 15). The enemy had no heavy caliber artillery left to him now, but the terrain was ideal for his defensive tactics, and every position was fanatically defended with intense small arms fire delivered at point blank range. CT 26 and CT 27 made only small gains during the day, but the encirclement of the enemy was now well under way.

CT 27 was completely worn out by this time, and on March 16 it reverted to Division Reserve. Simultaneously, the boundary line between the Third and Fifth Divisions was changed, and the 27th Marines' zone of action was taken over by units of the Third Division. CT 26 (with LT 3/28 attached) continued the Fifth Division's drive to squeeze the Japanese into one small pocket. From its positions along the southern rim of the gorge, CT 28 supported the advance of CT 26 by fire. At the end of the day the Third Division on the right had reached the northern tip of the island, and the Fifth Division was nearly there. The last die-hard Japanese were surrounded. At 1800 that day (March 16), the Commanding General, V Amphibious Corps, declared that organized resistance had ceased. After 26 days and nights of the bitterest kind of fighting, Iwo Jima was pronounced "secure", except for one minor area holding out at the north end.

This exception loomed rather large in the eyes of the men of the Fifth Division. The pocket was little, but it was also deadly. On March 16 when the announcement was made that organized resistance had ended, the Fifth Division's combat efficiency had fallen to 30%. It had lost 8162 officers and men, and it had accounted for 9512 Japanese dead and taken 42 prisoners.

The reduction of the enemy's final position was begun on March 17 by CT 26 and CT 28. An unsuccessful effort was made to persuade Colonel Ikeda to surrender his troops in the pocket, and then CT 26 started its attack. By 1232 LT 1/26 had reached the ocean at Kitano Point, so the 26th swung around to continue its advance in a southwesterly direction, closing in on the rear of the Japanese in the gorge who had been holding up CT 28. By the end of the day, the two regiments were facing each other across the gorge, and the remainder of the Japanese were trapped between them. With the fighting reduced to such a small area, it was no longer possible to use any artillery fire in support, so the 13th Marines was secured and given its reembarkation orders.

The Japanese were now cornered in a packet of resistance approximately 200-500 yards wide and 700 yards long. Scattered through the gorge was a series of jagged, rocky outcrops which were in effect minor gorges and constituted major obstacles to all types of movement

and were ideally suited to the enemy type of defense. All suitable routes into the main gorge were swept by heavy and accurate fire from machine guns and rifles coming from cave positions in the cliffs and in the outcrops. The Japanese chose to defend to the last in this area without making any last futile attacks. Their defenses were built around strongly manned cave positions, many of which were interconnected by subterranean passages.

Although the Fifth Division troops had been in the thick of the fight since D-day and were very tired, they were determined to carry through to a final victory, to finish the job in typical Marine Corps style. The plan for the final assault on "Bloody Gorge" called for one CT to hold the southern rim along the steep cliff while another CT worked in from the north and east. It was a battle of attrition against enemy positions, and progress was slow against resistance consisting of rough terrain, small arms fire, and mines. The advance, paced by engineers and tanks, was measured in yards, as each cave had to be sealed off before the troops could move into the gorge.

By March 19, Japanese resistance had become centered around a huge concrete blockhouse dug into the side of a knoll in the gorge. This structure was covered by fire from every direction, and when 5th Division troops finally did work their way up to it, they found that 40-pound shaped charges and tank fire had practically no effect. It was then decided to knock out the surrounding cave positions that guarded the approaches to the blockhouse. In the broken and rough terrain of "Bloody Gorge", it was necessary to attack caves such as these one by one. First an armored bulldozer would cut a route of approach, then a flamethrower tank would saturate the cave entrance with fire, and finally an assault squad would blow the mouth shut with demolition charges.

The bitter battle of attrition continued, and by 1800 on March 23 CT 28, with LT 3/26 attached, had reduced the pocket to an area about 50 yards by 50 yards. On the following morning the remaining resistance was mopped up and the entire line reached the cliff line overlooking the sea.

Since it was obvious that the fighting was nearly over at last, most of CT 26 was withdrawn from action and moved to the beaches on March 24 to begin reembarkation. The 27th Marines had finished loading the day before. At the northern tip of Iwo CT 28 (LT 2/26 attached) was hammering the final pocket in a drive to wipe out the remaining Japanese. At 1045 on March 27 LT 3/28 and LT 2/28 reached the beach, eliminating the pocket and bringing to a successful conclusion the final drive of the battle for Iwo Jima.

However, one last flare-up of resistance occurred early the next morning (March 26), when approximately 250 Japanese suddenly launched an attack in the area west of Airfield No. 2. Although a number of Army and Navy units were engaged, the focal point of the counterattack was the area occupied by the 5th Pioneer Battalion, and on that unit developed the main burden of repelling it. By 0830, the enemy force had been annihilated, with 196 dead counted in the Pioneer's zone.

At 0800 on March 26, after 36 days of continuous combat, the 5th Division turned over its zone to the 3rd Division, and then CT 28 and LT 3/26 proceeded aboard ship. The following day (March 27) the Division completed its reembarkation and departed from Iwo Jima.

The bitter struggle for Iwo had cost the 5th Division 8719 officers and men, including 2482 killed in action or died of wounds. But the Division had done an outstanding job in its first and last battle of World War II. It had captured over half of Iwo Jima, including the vital objective of Mt. Suribachi. It had killed 11,314 enemy and had taken only 62 prisoners. The small number of prisoners was a good indication of the fierceness of the fighting and the stubborness of the enemy's defense.

The price was high, but the island was worth it. By April 1945, Iwo Jima that had been won by the heroism and sacrifices of the men of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th Marine Divisions, was one of the busiest air bases in the world. One of its principal roles was that of a forward fighter base. A second, and perhaps more important, function of the Iwo airfields was to serve as a rescue station for damaged B-29's returning from Japan. On June 24, 1945 the 21st Bomber Command announced that in the three months from March 4, when the first B-29 made an emergency landing on Iwo, a total of 852 Superforts worth some $510,000,000 and carrying 9,361 men made emergency landings on Iwo. The 5th Marine Division had done much to make this possible.

Upon arrival at Hawaii on April 12, 1945, the 5th Division began a training and rehabilitation program to again prepare it for combat. After a proposed landing on Miyako Jima in the northern Ryukyus—as an extension phase of the Okinawa operation—and an assault against the China coast had been called off, the Division began preparations for operations in southern Kyushu against the Japanese Empire. The final plan for this latter assault, in which the 5th Division was to land in the Kushikino area of the Kagoshima peninsula, was issued on August 9.

The next day, however, the Japanese Government sued for peace.

The Division, together with other units of the V Amphibious Corps, left Hawaii on September 1, 1945, for occupation duty in Japan. The Division arrived at Sasebo, Kyushu, on September 22, where it was assigned the mission of occupying that city and approaches thereto.

On October 19 the 26th Marines, Reinforced (less 2nd Battalion, subsequently disbanded) was detached from the Division for garrison duty in the Palau Islands. Elements of the 27th Marines sailed for the United States on December 5, followed by the 13th Marines on December 7. The 5th Division turned over control of its zone to the 2nd Marine Division on December 8, and the remaining units began embarking for the United States. The last elements of the Division left Sasebo December 19.

All units of the 5th Division were disbanded between January 10 and 28, 1946, except the Division Headquarters Battalion. When that unit was disbanded February 6, the 5th Marine Division went out of existence.

The following units of the 5th Division have been awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for their outstanding accomplishments on Iwo Jima: 27th Marines (5th Tank Battalion less Company C, 1st Battalion, 26th Marines, Company B 5th Engineer Battalion, Company B 5th Medical Battalion, 2nd Platoon 5th Military Police Company, detachments of 5th JASCO, detachment 3rd Provisional Rocket Platoon, Forward observers and Liaison Parties of the 13th Marines, and 1st Section 6th War Dog Platoon attached) for the period February 19 through 21, 1945; 28th Marines (Company C 5th Medical Battalion, 3rd Platoon 5th Military Police Company, detachment 5th JASCO, Forward Observers and Liaison Parties of the 13th Marines, Detachment 3rd Provisional Rocket Platoon, and Detachment D-2 Section 5th Marine Division, attached) for the period February 19 to 23, 1945.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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DECORATIONS and COMMENDATIONS

(R) following names of all personnel indicates reserve status

Navy Cross

★ **ANDERSON, Elman A., Sgt.**
(Brownwood, Texas)

★ **BRISTOL, Wilson T., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Los Angeles, Calif.)

★ **BRUGGER, William E., Corp. (R)**
(Pontiac, Mich.)

★ **CHAMBERS, Justice M., Lt. Col. (R)**
(Washington, D. C.)

★ **COLE, Darrell S., Sgt. (R)**
(Esther, Mo.)

★ **DENTON, Hugh V., Pfc. (R)**
(Olathe, Colo.)

★ **FAULKINGHAM, J. A., Corp. (R)**
(Bangor, Me.)

★ **GABRIEL, Willard F., Pfc. (R)**
(Chicago, Ill.)

★ **GRIFFIN, William A., Pfc. (R)**
(Brooklyn, N. Y.)

★ **KELTON, C. J., Pfc. (R)**
(Truscott, Texas)

★ **McDERMOTT, James S., Capt.**
(Topeka, Kans.)

★ **MUSTAIN, Hollis U., Lt. Col.**
(El Paso, Texas)

★ **QUEENEY, Martin J., Sgt. (R)**
(Philadelphia, Pa.)

★ **SHAFFNER, Walter F., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Dillon, Mont.)

★ **SHOOTMAN, Charles R., Pvt. (R)**
(Lafayette, Colo.)

★ **SIZEMORE, James L., 1st Lt.**
(Hazard, Ky.)

★ **WILLIS, Jasper, Pfc. (R)**
(Ft. Thomas, Ariz.)

Gold Star

IN LIEU OF SECOND DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

★ **CATES, Clifton B., Maj. Gen.**
(Tiptonville, Tenn.)

Gold Star

IN LIEU OF SECOND LEGION OF MERIT

★ **WOODS, Louis E., Brig. Gen.**
(Fredonia, N. Y.)

Legion of Merit

★ **CHAMBERS, Justice M., Lt. Col. (R)**
(Washington, D. C.)

★ **DENIG, Robert L., Brig. Gen., Ret'd**
(Sandusky, Ohio)

★ **PURYEAR, Bennet, Jr., Brig. Gen.**
(Orange, Va.)

★ **SANDERSON, C. R., Brig. Gen.**
(Washington, D. C.)

★ **STREETER, R. C., Col., USMCWR**
(Morristown, N. J.)

★ **WRIGHT, Raymond R., Maj. Gen.**
(Mountain View, Calif.)

Legion of Merit

ARMY

Oak Leaf Cluster—Army

★ **GALLY, Benjamin W., Col.**
(Nordhoff, Calif.)

★ **JONES, Louis R., Brig. Gen.**
(Pomonkey, Md)

★ **LARKIN, Claude A., Maj. Gen.**
(Arlington, Ore.)

★ **PECK, DeWitt, Maj. Gen.**
(Clayton, N. Y.)

★ **PIPER, Earl S., Col.**
(New London, Mo.)

★ **BARE, Robert O., Col.**
(Winterset, Iowa)

★ **BELTON, Frederick, Lt. Col.**
(Washington, D. C.)

★ **BJORNSRUD, Orin C., Lt. Col.**
(Toronto, S. D.)

★ **BROWN, Charles C., Col.**
(Denver, Colo.)

★ **BROWN, Wilburt S., Col.**
(Holliston, Mass.)

★ **CLEMENT, William T., Brig. Gen.**
(Richmond, Va.)

★ **CURRY, Manly L., Col.**
(Macon, Ga.)

★ **DUNKELBERGER, Harry S., Col.**
(Kulpmont, Pa.)

★ **FRISBIE, Julian N., Col.**
(Springfield, Illinois)

★ **GORMLEY, John J., Lt. Col.**
(Chevy Chase, Md.)

★ **HARRIS, Elmer, Capt. (R)**
(Seattle, Wash.)

★ **KALUF, John, Col.**
(Antioch, Ill.)

★ **KILLEN, George W., Lt. Col.**
(Los Angeles, Calif.)

★ **KING, Ralph M., Lt. Col.**
(Morgantown, W. Va.)

★ **MANSFIELD, Walter R., Capt. (R)**
(Vienna, Va.)

★ **MASON, Arthur T., Col.**
(Santa Monica, Calif.)

★ **PARTRIDGE, Edwin D., Lt. Col.**
(Spokane, Wash.)

★ **ROISE, Harold S., Lt. Col.**
(Moscow, Idaho)

★ **ROSECRANS, Harold E., Col.**
(Cohoes, N. Y.)

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ **ROSS, Richard P., Jr., Col.**
(Frederick, Md.)

★ **SABOL, Stepher V., Lt. Col.**
(Campbell, Ohio)

★ **SHEPARD, L. C., Jr., Maj. Gen.**
(Norfolk, Va.)

★ **SHERMAN, Paul D., Lt. Col.**
(Melrose, Mass.)

★ **WORTON, William A., Brig. Gen.**
(Mattapan, Mass.)

Silver Star Medal

★ **ALKIRE, Abraham R., Jr., 1st Lt.**
(Sterling, Ohio)

★ **SEALS, Melvin D., Sgt.**
(Kings Mills, Texas)

Silver Star Medal
ARMY

★ **CURTIS, Thomas L., WO**
(Auburndale, Mass.)

★ **MOWINCKEL, John W., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Charlottesville, Va.)

Distinguished Flying Cross

★ **ROGERS, Ford O., Col.**
(Waco, Texas)

Bronze Star Medal

★ **CAMP, Martin J., Pfc. (R)**
(Silver Creek, Ga.)

★ **CHAMBLISS, James A., Sgt. (R)**
(Mobile, Ala.)

★ **COCKRELL, Charles L., Sgt. (R)**
(Alexandria, Va.)

★ **DRISCOLL, Francis E., Pfc. (R)**
(Brooklyn, N. Y.)

★ **FARTHING, Edward L., Pfc. (R)**
(Merced City, Calif.)

★ **FIEDOR, John A., Pvt. (R)**
(Detroit, Mich.)

★ **OGNIAN, David L., Pfc.**
(Detroit, Mich.)

★ **PARDEE, Charles R., Corp.**
(Akron, Ohio)

★ **RUMFORD, John J., Corp.**
(Clementon, N. J.)

★ **TILGHMAN, Thomas G., Corp.**
(Kenton, Tenn.)

★ **WHITEFIELD, William, Jr., Corp.**
(Buffalo, N. Y.)

Oak Leaf Cluster
FOR BRONZE STAR MEDAL

★ **HEARN, George M., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Salisbury, N. C.)

★ **BAZE, Grant, Sheridan, Maj.**
(Melvin, Texas)

★ **BENNER, Kenneth W., Col.**
(Richmond, Ind.)

★ **BRENNAN, William B., Pfc.**
(Schenectady, N. Y.)

★ **CORREA, Mathias F., Maj. (R)**
(Washington, D. C.)

SIXTH MARINE DIVISION HISTORY

From Official Monograph by Historical Division HQMC

Last of the famous Marine divisions of World War II, the Sixth was activated on 7 September 1944 on Guadalcanal, the same island that the First Marine Division had landed on exactly twenty-five months before. Although the Sixth Marine Division was new in name, the elements that composed it were, for the most part, as old as the war itself. From the First Provisional Brigade that had fought so notably on Guam came two regiments: the Fourth Marines and the Twenty Second Marines. The other regiment of the new division came from Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, where it was organized, with the exception of its First Battalion, by Colonel Victor F. Bleasdale from handpicked officers and men.

In command of the new division was Major General Lemuel C. Shepherd, USMC, already a well known figure in the war. His long experience in the Marine Corps included action in World War I; in the more recent war he had trained the Ninth Marines, one of the regiments that became a part of the Third Marine Division, and as a Brigadier had led the First Provisional Brigade through the Guam Operation where it had won a Navy Unit Citation.

Assistant to General Shepherd was Brigadier General William T. Clement, who had been taken off Corregidor, before its fall, by a submarine and returned to the United States. In the Philippines, General Clement had served on the staff of Admiral Thomas Hart at the start of the war. After subsequent duty in London, he had returned to serve as Commandant of the Marine Corps Schools at Quantico and then was ordered to the new division being formed on Guadalcanal.

Of the three regiments, the Twenty Second Marines was the oldest. It was formed at San Diego in June, 1942, and the following month left for Samoa where it remained until the fall of 1943. After an extensive training period, the regiment left Samoa and sailed to the island of Hawaii to prepare for the Marshalls Campaign. During the Kwajalein phase it acted as a reserve, and after the rapid capture of Roi and Namur by the Fourth Marine Division, the Twenty Second Marines, in accordance with the resulting speed-up in the Central Pacific timetable, went on to assault Eniwetok in the Western Marshalls. After a brief but bloody fight for Eniwetok, the regiment seized and occupied numerous adjoining islands. From Eniwetok the Twenty Second Marines went to Guadalcanal and trained there for the Guam Campaign. On 21 July 1944, the regiment landed on Guam on W-Day as a part of the First Provisional Brigade. It drove inland against heavy resistance and then turned to seal off Orote Peninsula. In conjunction with the Fourth Marines, the Twenty Second drove the length of the peninsula and destroyed the enemy emplaced there.

Activated on 8 January 1944, the Fourth Marines was formed from veteran units—the four Marine Raider Battalions. It took its name from the famous Marine regiment that had been lost on Bataan. Its officers and men had seen action at Tulagi, Guadalcanal, Makin, New Georgia, Bougainville. Later at Guam, and abreast of the Twenty Second Marines, the new regiment received, as such, its baptism of fire, when it landed on 21 July 1944. After fighting its way inland and seizing Mt. Alifan, the regiment joined the Twenty Second to reduce heavily defended Orote Peninsula. The Fourth Marines had been on one operation previous to Guam; it had seized the island of Emirau in the St. Matthias Group, and although the operation was bloodless, it was a triumph in planning and execution.

In the spring of 1944 the major part of the Twenty Ninth Marines was activated at Camp Lejeune, New River, North Carolina. Two battalions were formed from the pick of officers and men in the eastern part of the United States at that time. These battalions were composed of some veterans, but the greater part had no previous combat experience. With reinforcing elements, the regiment (less its First Battalion) crossed the United States by rail and sailed to Guadalcanal in August. The First Battalion joined the regiment on Guadalcanal in early October. It had been activated from Second Marine Division troops on Hawaii in Febru-

ary, 1944. First called the Second Separate Infantry Battalion, it trained for a brief time on Hawaii and then went to Saipan for that operation with the Second Division. Landing on D-Day the battalion, now called the First Battalion, Twenty Ninth Marines, was attached to the Eighth Marines and to it fell the task of capturing Mt. Tapotchau, the commanding terrain on Saipan. Its losses were heavy—over 60%—and the battalion was not used on Tinian.

When the Sixth Marine Division began its training program for its first—and only—operation it had several initial advantages: Over two thirds of its officers and men were veterans, well schooled in the ways of the wily Japanese; it started off with the experience gained from nearly four years of war; the structure of the entire division was organized to benefit from this experience. Through October, 1944, and on into February 1945 the division trained vigorously. Special emphasis was placed on individual marksmanship, combat firing exercises employing all weapons and arms, night problems, flamethrower - demolition teams, tank-infantry problems, and air-ground problems. Training was concluded with an eight-day division problem illustrating tactical principles for large unit employment. All through the training period General Shepherd strove to indoctrinate his division with the spirit of attack; that it was cheaper to drive ahead in unrelenting assault than to hesitate or try to find easier ways of achieving the objective. This indoctrination was to pay dividends on Okinawa when forward progress seemed impossible.

During the period 1-6 March 1945, the Sixth Marine Division was aboard ship engaged in amphibious landing rehearsals for the Okinawa operation. On the first day troops practiced debarkation and deployment of landing craft; on the next two days the two assault regiments, the Fourth and Twenty Second, landed on the beaches of Guadalcanal and practiced limited maneuvers ashore. Then followed a critique and on the next day there was a full-scale dress rehearsal. Although limited in their extent, the rehearsals were quite satisfactory.

After breaking camp ashore, the division re-embarked to sail for the staging area, Ulithi, on 15 March. At Ulithi, a little atoll in the Caroline Islands, the division joined the enormous task force assembling there for the invasion of Okinawa. Training was carried out aboard ship and final preparations were made for the target. By now the troops were aware of their destination and the force designated to land there. They were told that the Sixth Marine Division would land simultaneously with, and on the left of, the First Marine Division, as a part of the III Amphibious Corps. South of the Marines a corps of Army, the XXIV, would land. Both of the corps were components of a larger force— the new Tenth Army.

On the way to Ulithi, while there, and on the way to the target, the men were given a thorough briefing. General Shepherd made it plain that every man should know not only his assigned task, but that of his own unit, and of adjacent units, as well as the general scheme of maneuver. In the briefing aboard ship the men learned that Okinawa had a population of some 450,000 civilians; that there were roughly 70,000 Japanese soldiers on the island. They also learned something about its geography, its towns, roads, rivers and terrain.

While at Ulithi the troops were taken ashore on the little island of Mog Mog for rest and rehabilitation. During the staging period assault troops were transferred to LST's for the last part of the journey. On 27 March the Sixth Marine Division left Ulithi, loaded in 13 APA's, 24 LST's and one LSD, and encountered heavy rains and cooler weather as the convoy moved north.

Easter Sunday, 1 April 1945, was Love-Day for the Okinawa operation. With the bright clear dawn came enemy planes but the invading armada—over 1400 ships—drove off or destroyed the attacking planes. From the transports the troops could only see small portions of the island; the preliminary bombardment from the naval task force and the bombs from our planes, diving through the clouds, raised a haze of smoke and dust that covered most of the area behind the landing beaches.

Forming into long waves, the Fourth and Twenty Second Marines, loaded in amphibious tractors, churned toward the beaches, over the coral reef, and landed at 0837. Every man went in with the expectation that this beachhead, like Tarawa, Saipan and Iwo, would be a bloody one; they were surprised but not entirely relieved to find virtually no enemy opposition to the landing. Rapidly, units organized and moved inland and up across the terraced fields that led to Yontan Airfield. By noon the Fourth Marines had seized Yontan and the Twenty Second Marines were advancing as rapidly on the left. By late afternoon the two regiments had reached a line tentatively set to be reached on the second day and had as yet not found the enemy. To the left of the Twenty Second Marines lay a little peninsula jutting out to the northwest, named Zampa Misaki. There was a chance

that an enemy force might be there and General Shephard requested III Amphibious Corps to release from its reserve one battalion of the Twenty Ninth Marines. The First Battalion was released to division and placed to protect the division's left flank. Troops dug in for the night with mixed emotions. Everyone was extremely grateful that the landing had not been a bloody one. Still there was a certain apprehension felt: Where was the enemy? When would he attack?

Love-Day had been successful beyond the wildest hopes; the division was ashore safely, in a good position, and had already secured its first objective. Yontan Airfield was firmly in our hands and had not been badly damaged. The enemy defensive positions constructed to guard the field were strangely empty. Casualties were negligible; the landing had been easy.

Now the Sixth Marine Division moved rapidly to cut the island in two. In conjunction with the First Marine Division which was making the main effort, the Fourth and Twenty Second Marines drove rapidly to the east and, despite some opposition from small isolated enemy pockets, reached the east coast on 4 April. Turning to the north, the division began to seize the Ishikawa Isthmus. Averaging nearly 7000 yards each day the troops pushed up the isthmus and by 7 April had reached Nago at the base of Motobu Peninsula.

It was General Shepherd's plan to have the Twenty Second and Fourth continue the drive up the mainland of Okinawa until Hedo Misaki was seized. To destroy the enemy known to be on Motobu, the General committed the Twenty Ninth Marines, which had been in Corps reserve during the first four days of the operation.

Many captured enemy soldiers and civilians had stated that the main Japanese defensive force was in southern Okinawa but that a force of about 3000 men, commanded by a Colonel Udo, was somewhere up north, probably on Motobu. Aerial observation and photo terrain studies confirmed indications that there was a sizeable enemy force on the peninsula. On 8 April the Twenty Ninth Marines moved out in three columns, one along the south coast, one along the north coast and one up the center toward the town of Itomi. At first, progress was rapid and there were few contacts made; it was noted, however, that all inland trails were mined or blocked. The coast roads had numerous roadblocks and tank traps. By 10 April the Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth, was at Toguchi and had been hit by enemy artillery fire near Awa. Near Toguchi, on the Manna road, it had contacted Udo's force. West of Itomi the First Battalion was also in contact with what was apparently the same force. Meanwhile the Second Battalion had captured the enemy midget submarine base at Unten Ko but had found no appreciable resistance.

During the next three days the battalions were in almost constant contact with Udo's forces. Ambushes were frequent but the enemy could not be engaged in any decisive action. It was clear that he was engaged in guerrilla-type warfare and wanted to harass our troops, but was trying to avoid a meeting engagement. By 13 April the enemy position was definitely fixed as being in the Mt. Yaetake area; it was known that he had considerable artillery, mortars, and a few naval guns emplaced in hidden positions in the wild and rugged mountain mass.

Mt. Yaetake provided Colonel Udo with ideal ground for defensive positions. Here he had unlimited observation in every direction; it was impossible to attack him without warning. The rugged character of the terrain prohibited the use of mechanized support in the reduction of his positions.

While the Twenty Ninth Marines were fixing the enemy position and determining its character and strength, General Shepherd saw that he would need additional troops to destroy Udo's force. His tactical decision was to move the Fourth Marines, less the Third Battalion, to Sakimotobu on the western side of the peninsula and attach to it the Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth Marines which was near by. Then he ordered a coordinated attack for 14 April with the Fourth Marines driving into Yaetake in an easterly direction while the Twenty Ninth Marines, with two battalions, near Itomi, attacked to the west and southwest. Udo would be hit from front and rear.

On 14 April the Fourth Marines, commanded by Colonel Alan Shapley, with the Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth, attached, moved rapidly inland to seize the first high ground from which to launch the attack on Mt. Yaetake. The Twenty Ninth Marines found enemy dispositions to its front in such strength and on such unfavorable ground, that it was virtually impossible to attack in a southwesterly direction.

Resuming the attack on 15 April the Fourth Marines drove up the approaches to Mt. Yaetake; fighting was bitter with one battalion commander killed and several company commanders casualties. The First Battalion, Fourth Marines, seized a key hill mass southwest of the Yaetake peak against heavy resistance. Over rugged terrain the Twenty Ninth Marines continued to advance into the rear of Udo's position against intermittent resistance.

Next day, 16 April, the Sixth Ma-

rine Division prepared to attack the enemy from three sides. The First Battalion, Twenty Second Marines, which had been in immediate reserve near Awa, was ordered to advance to the north to close the gap between the two attacking regiments. After a day of extremely hard fighting the Fourth Marines seized Mt. Yaetake and held it despite an all-out Banzai charge. Meanwhile, the Twenty Ninth Marines, now under Colonel William J. Whaling, USMC, had swung its front to the west and north, destroying fixed emplacements and enemy groups as it moved.

With Udo's force caught in the jaws of a giant nutcracker, and driven from the commanding ground in its position, the Fourth Marines changed its tactics. Colonel Shapley ordered his two left battalions, facing east, to initiate a holding attack on 17 April, while the two right battalions drove down from Mt. Yaetake to the north with the mission of seizing the Manna Road. The situation on this day then, was for the two battalions to sweep down a corridor formed by the First and Second Battalions, Twenty Ninth, on the east and the Second Battalion, Fourth Marines, and Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth, on the west. Down from Yaetake and through the corridor swept the First and Third Battalions, Fourth Marines, mopping up enemy remnants as they went. Nightfall saw both regiments on the first hills south of the Toguchi-Itomi road, the road that ran through Manna.

On 19 April the Sixth Marine Division began a coordinated drive to secure the high ground remaining between the Toguchi-Itomi road and the north coast of the peninsula. On the left was the Fourth Marines; next to it, the First and Second Battalions, Twenty Ninth Marines. From Toguchi, the Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth moved by truck to Itomi and struck out through the hills toward the highest hill mass in the northern part of Motobu and seized it next morning. On 20 April, the drive continued and both regiments reached the north coast. Little opposition had been found in this last sweep but it was known that several hundred enemy troops had escaped from Motobu and were somewhere in northern Okinawa.

The battle for Motobu had challenged the Sixth Division with mountain warfare of the most rugged sort. It was costly: the Sixth Marine Division lost 207 men killed, 757 wounded and 6 missing in action. In contrast, the enemy lost 2,014 men killed. Captured enemy materiel included 11 field pieces of 75 and 150-mm. calibre, two six-inch naval cannon and large numbers of mortars, machine guns and 20-mm. dual purpose guns.

While the other two regiments were fighting on Motobu, the Twenty Second Marines, commanded by Colonel Merlin F. Schneider, USMC, continued its march up the northern part of the mainland. On 13 April the Second Battalion moved by forced march to seize Hedo Misaki, the northern tip of the island. Scattered resistance was encountered during the march. Upon occupying Hedo Misaki, the regiment sent patrols down the east coast and, on 19 April, patrols from the north and south met on the east coast of Aha. By 20 April all of Okinawa north of the original landing beaches had been secured by the Sixth Marine Division; it was known, however, that several small enemy groups remained at large.

The first of these isolated enemy groups to be located was one consisting of about 200 men. It was contacted by the First Battalion, Twenty Second Marines, near Taniyo-take, a hill mass southeast of Motobu Peninsula. After two days of heavy fighting most of the enemy band was destroyed although a few escaped to join another remnant of the Motobu action. By 27 April this group had been located, and from Hentona two battalions of the Twenty Second Marines advanced toward the suspected area in a forced night march. Meanwhile from Kawada the Third Battalion, Fourth Marines hurried inland and made contact by noon. After considerable maneuvering, the battalion outflanked the enemy and forced him to fight on unfavorable ground. Most of the group was destroyed; a handful escaped.

During the latter part of April the Tenth Army had found its XXIV Corps heavily engaged in southern Okinawa. It was decided that the III Amphibious Corps would be assigned the western half of the southern line on about 7 May. It was further decided that on 1 May the First Marine Division would be attached to the XXIV Corps and committed in the vicinity of Machinato Airfield. Its mission was to clear out the Jichaku plateau area and then strike toward Shuri, the core of the Japanese defensive position. The Sixth Marine Division would then be committed on the right of the First Division.

All through the last week in April, the Sixth Division patrolled and garrisoned northern Okinawa. Preparations were made for the move to the south. The regiments rested, re-equipped themselves and received replacements. During the month of April the division had traveled over 84 miles, seized 436 square miles of enemy territory, captured 46 prisoners and killed nearly 2500 of the enemy. In the same period the division had lost 236 men killed and 1061 wounded in action.

On 2 May the division began to move southward to assembly areas

near Chibana, east of the original landing beaches. The responsibility for the defense of northern Okinawa passed from the Sixth Marine Division to the Twenty Seventh Infantry Division on 4 May.

According to Tenth Army order, the III Amphibious Corps was to assume responsibility for the western portion of the southern front on 7 May. The First Marine Division was already committed and was fighting to secure the high ground north and northeast of the Asa River. The Sixth Marine Division was ordered to commit one regimental combat team on the right of the First Division on 8 May. General Shepherd chose the Twenty Second Marines to be committed first. Its mission was to cross the Asa and seize the first high ground to the south. From here, the division could attack to carry out its mission, which was: To seize Naha and the line of the Kokuba River in its zone of action, to assist the First Marine Division by fire and maneuver, and to protect the Corps' right (west) flank.

The men of the Sixth Marine Division had kept abreast of the situation in the south and had a general idea about what they were going up against. They knew that the Tenth Army had uncovered the main Japanese defensive positions; that the enemy had chosen to defend the rough hilly ground across a narrow part of the island. The enemy was well dug in on a high and broken hill mass which took its name from its geographical center—Shuri. The line, or series of lines really, ran from north of Naha through Shuri to Yonabaru on the east coast.

The men knew that the enemy, over sixty thousand strong, was offering fierce resistance from concealed positions; that he was using his mortars, automatic arms, and artillery on an unprecedented scale; that the enemy troops in southern Okinawa were first line troops, well disciplined, and with plenty of food and ammunition; that the enemy, by virtue of his excellent choice of ground, could fight pretty much on his own terms.

In the new zone of action, the Sixth Marine Division launched its first attack when it sent the Twenty Second Marines across the Asa river in the early morning hours of 10 May. Patrols had crossed the river on the previous day and reconnoitered the ground to its immediate south. The only bridge across the river in this sector had been totally destroyed. Through the night of 9-10 May, the Sixth Engineer Battalion worked to construct a footbridge. Although the little bridge was finally completed in time for the pre-dawn attack, a group of the enemy carrying demolitions packs succeeded in destroying themselves and a section of the bridge before many of the Marines got across.

At 0330, 10 May, the First and Third Battalions of the Twenty Second Marines crossed the Asa; the First waded across upstream on the regiment's left, while the Third started to use the footbridge. When it was destroyed, the battalion was forced to go upstream and wade across. At first enemy resistance was light, but as the Japanese became aware of this threat to their left flank, opposition became fierce. Despite heavy artillery, mortar, and small arms fire, the troops moved on up the first ridges. By nightfall, and after a day of heavy casualties, a bridgehead 1400 yards wide and about 400 yards deep had been established.

Next morning the reserve battalion of the Twenty Second Marines, the Second, was committed to cover the left flank of the First which was fighting to reduce an enemy stronghold on a formidable coral hill southeast of Asa village. When flanking action failed to secure the hill, the troops withdrew so that naval gunfire from the USS Indianapolis could be utilized. In the meantime the engineers labored under sporadic enemy fire to construct a Bailey Bridge across the Asa, where the footbridge had been. About noon the structure was completed and tanks roared across to support the troops. With the added fire power of the tanks, the First Battalion attacked the hill again, this time successfully. Over on the right, the Third Battalion fought for three hours before capturing the precipitious cliff area in its zone of action.

On 12 May the Twenty Second Marines, with all three battalions in the line, continued to advance despite increasing enemy resistance. Not only was the regiment receiving fire from its front, but also from the left flank, where the enemy in his positions on Wana Ridge and the Shuri heights could observe troop movements and bring fire to bear at an instant's notice. As it became apparent that the division's left was becoming open, General Shepherd ordered that the Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth Marines into the line to protect the east flank. It was quite plain that another regiment would have to be committed if the momentum of advance were to be maintained.

Next day, the Sixth Marine Division continued the attack with the Second Battalion, Twenty Second Marines and the Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth, in assault. About three hundred yards was all that could be gained due to heavy enemy resistance. In the late afternoon the other two battalions of the Twenty Ninth Marines moved up behind the Third, and prepared to go into the assault on 14 May.

By this time General Shepherd had discovered the following: (1)

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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In attempting to outflank the Shuri line, the Sixth Marine Division had uncovered the western anchor of the enemy's main defensive position; (2) Three terrain features, heavily fortified and manned, and mutually supporting formed this anchor; (3) Affording no cover, heavily guarded corridors led into each of these terrain features; (4) There was no ground offering covered routes of approach from which these terrain features could be assaulted; (5) The three terrain features (later called Horseshoe Ridge, Sugar Loaf Hill, and Half Moon Hill) would be held by the enemy at all costs; if they were lost, the enemy's main position at Shuri would be outflanked; (6) The battle efficiency of the Twenty Second Marines was seriously impaired; it had lost over 800 men killed or wounded since crossing the Asa; (7) Naha, the capital city of Okinawa, lay open in front of the Twenty Second Marines, but it could not be seized until the Sugar Loaf defensive position, Horseshoe Ridge, and the Half Moon were reduced and cleared of enemy.

Commanding the surrounding country side, Sugar Loaf Hill was the apex of a triangle. All three elements of the triangle were mutually supporting: Horseshoe Ridge and the Half Moon covered Sugar Loaf; from Sugar Loaf the enemy could cover the other two with fire; all three terrain features were, in turn, under observation and fire from Shuri. Troops attacking any one of the three hills would be subjected immediately to fire from the other two. There was no room for extended maneuver; on the right of the division was the sea; on the left the zone of the First Marine Division, which offered no protection or cover.

Late in the afternoon of 14 May the Second Battalion, Twenty Second, attempted a tank-infantry assault, and despite heavy 47-mm. fire that drove the tanks back, succeeded in getting a few men from "G" Company up on the top of Sugar Loaf. The attack caught the Japanese by surprise, but only momentarily; during the night, they reorganized to launch an attack next morning that drove the Second Battalion back from the ground immediately to the north of Sugar Loaf, and finally spread over into the zone of the Twenty Ninth Marines. This counterattack, in approximately battalion strength, started a day of the bitterest fighting yet seen by the Twenty Second Marines. The desperate character that the fight now assumed was indicative of the enemy's resolve to hold the Sugar Loaf system regardless of the cost. Two battalions of the Twenty Ninth, the First and Third, encountered the same bitter fighting that was experienced by the First and Second Battalions, Twenty Second. In the corridor leading to the Half Moon, the Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth, finally reduced an enemy pocket that had been bypassed but had become so troublesome as to prevent further advance. To the left, the First Battalion was fighting in the low ground north of the Half Moon. During the afternoon of this day, 15 May, the Third Battalion, Twenty Second Marines, moved up to relieve the Second Battalion which had lost over 400 men in the last three days. Over on the division's right, the First Battalion of the Twenty Second drove down the long ridge overlooking the Asato, but could advance no further due to heavy fire from the Horseshoe and Sugar Loaf.

All during the night of 15-16 May the enemy used his mortars and artillery to interdict the front lines, causing light casualties. Early next morning the Sixth Marine Division, with the Twenty Second and Twenty Ninth regiments in assault, again attacked to seize the Sugar Loaf—Half Moon positions. Heavy enemy fire greeted the attack; from near the town of Takamotoji the enemy commenced to fire, although that area had been quiet previously. It was apparent that the enemy was moving in replacements and additional troops to bolster the Sugar Loaf system. Working its way into position on the left of the regimental front, the Third Battalion, Twenty Second Marines prepared to assault Sugar Loaf Hill. Behind tanks, and after an intense artillery barrage, the battalion advanced rapidly up the pitted north slope of the hill in the face of extremely heavy fire from enemy mortars, grenades, and automatic weapons. Several times the battalion reached the top of the hill and closed with the enemy in hand-to-hand fighting only to be driven back. Finally, with losses steadily mounting, the battalion was forced to withdraw.

Hope was held for a while on this day that the Twenty Ninth Marines might seize Half Moon Hill. Closely supported by tanks, troops moved forward slowly and reached the edge of the ridge by late afternoon. Before they could organize defensive positions, or dig in, the enemy poured so much fire in from Shuri, Sugar Loaf, and the reverse slopes of the Half Moon, that the troops had to withdraw under the cover of smoke. Casualties were extremely heavy.

This day, 16 May, was perhaps the bitterest day of the entire Okinawa Campaign for the Sixth Marine Division. With all the strength at their command, two regiments had attacked without apparent success. A week of steady fighting had reduced the offensive capabilities of the Twenty Second Marines so General Shepherd now shifted the burden of attack to the Twenty Ninth, leaving the Twenty Sec-

ond to hold where it was.

Before the Twenty Ninth Marines began the attack of 17 May, the enemy in the Sugar Loaf area was subjected to a terrific bombardment which included 16-inch shells from the main batteries of battleships, 8-inch howitzer shells, and 1000-pound aerial bombs. With tanks in close support and immediately behind a heavy and continuing artillery barrage, the First and Third Battalions, Twenty Ninth Marines edged their way to the northern edge of Half Moon Hill. Finally the Third Battalion seized a slim foothold on the northwestern edge of the hill but intense enemy fire made the position untenable and the troops were forced to withdraw. Meanwhile "E" Company of the Second Battalion was attempting a flanking attack around the east side of Sugar Loaf Hill. Despite heavy enemy mortar barrages and grenade fire, the company drove to the top of the hill three times; each time the enemy counterattacked and drove the men off. Finally at 1830, in the last vestige of light, the company mustered strength enough to assault the hill again. This time when it reached the top it beat off an enemy counterattack, but had so few men left, and so many wounded to be vacuated, that it had to pull back to better ground for the night.

At dusk, but while there was still enough light to be seen, the enemy attempted to reinforce Sugar Loaf and began to move his troops in the open. Almost immediately twelve battalions of our artillery took the enemy troops under time-on-target fire and inflicted such heavy losses that the reinforcement threat was broken up. While the Half Moon and Sugar Loaf still remained in enemy hands, the division had made gains that were not yet perceptible. There was no way of knowing as yet the extent of the enemy's losses. So far, he had been able to move in enough reinforcements to counter our attacks, but his losses had reached the point where he could no longer readily replace them. Meanwhile, the Twenty Ninth Marines had got into position for the final attack, which was to be launched next day.

At 0830, 18 May, the First and Third Battalions, Twenty Ninth again assaulted the enemy on the Half Moon. After a foothold was established the fighting resolved itself into a slugging match, and this enabled the Second Battalion to make its move. It first attempted to encircle Sugar Loaf with tanks but enemy mines, 47-mm. fire, and artillery fire disabled six tanks and drove the rest back.

Next, the Second Battalion launched a combined tank-infantry assault on Sugar Loaf, working the tanks, closely supported by troops, around each flank of the hill simultaneously. One tank, accompanied by troops, edged its way around the west side of the hill and commenced firing into the enemy's reverse slope defenses. Then, as the enemy moved to repel this threat, another tank worked its way around the east side of the hill and emptied its machine guns into the backs of the defenders of Sugar Loaf. In the ensuing pandemonium troops swarmed all over the hill and, after an hour of heavy fighting, the hill was firmly held by Marines. "F" Company was sent to seize the Horseshoe and reduce the mortar positions there that were firing on Sugar Loaf. The company moved rapidly across the intervening ground, climbed up on the Horseshoe, and engaged the enemy in a hand grenade battle. During the night the enemy counterattacked and drove "F" Company back to Sugar Loaf but could not regain the lost hill. Over on the left of the zone of action of the Twenty Ninth Marines, the First and Third Battalions held their positions at the base of the Half Moon, despite heavy enemy fire. For the action during the period 14-19 May, the Twenty Ninth Marines, and attached units, were awarded the Presidential Unit Citation.

In order to exploit the recently won gains General Shepherd ordered the Fourth Marines, fresh after a two-weeks' rest, to relieve the Twenty Ninth on 19 May. On the right of the division's front, the Twenty Second Marines remained in position, but were in no condition to continue the attack. After relieving the Twenty Ninth Marines, the Fourth prepared to attack next day to seize the upper reaches of the Asato River. The night of 19 May saw the enemy making full use of his mortars and artillery but casualties were light. Next morning the Fourth Marines attacked Horseshoe Ridge and managed to seize a part of it. While the fighting raged, the enemy on the Shuri Hill mass turned his weapons and hit the flank of the Fourth with heavy fire. At 2130, following a terrific 90-mm. mortar barrage, the enemy commenced to counterattack with Sugar Loaf as the objective. Centering on the Third Battalion, Fourth Marines, the counterattack continued until midnight. During this time naval star shells kept the critical area illuminated and six battalions of artillery fired to break up the counterattack. Before the enemy was driven back, it was necessary to commit part of the regimental reserve. In this unsuccessful counterattack, the enemy lost nearly 300 killed while the Fourth Marines only lost one man killed and 19 wounded.

On 21 May the Fourth Marines made slight gains in the interior

of Horseshoe Ridge but the foothold on the Half Moon could not be expanded. Until Shuri fell it would be virtually impossible to take the Half Moon in its entirety. It was futile to attack on the left. Now the emphasis was shifted to the regiment's right and on the morning of 22 May the front lines advanced slowly to the Asato.

Employing a holding attack on the extreme left of the division front, General Shepherd was ready to exploit his gains. After a thorough reconnaissance of the ground just across the Asato, The Fourth Marines moved two battalions across the river during the afternoon of 23 May and ran into determined enemy resistance. The position of the Fourth Marines, while not precarious, was extremely difficult. Two attempts to bridge the Asato had failed; all food, water and ammunition had to be carried across by hand. The past three days had brought unusually heavy rains and the entire division zone of action was a sea of mud. Wading through mud ankle deep, stretcher bearers had a hard time getting the wounded back to evacuation points north of the river. Few vehicles could negotiate the morass of mud that characterized the area. These rains were to continue until the last of May.

On 25 May the Fourth Marines resumed the attack and seized most of the north-south ridge line west of Machishi. About a company of the enemy counterattacked during the night and spent its force in the sector of the Third Battalion. While the Fourth Marines were moving into the eastern outskirts of Naha, the Division Reconnaissance Company crossed the Asato near its mouth and penetrated the urban portion of Naha west of the north-south canal. Enemy resistance was very light; only a few snipers harassed the company. Next day, with the heavy rains still falling, the Fourth Marines confined its efforts to vigorous patrolling. The reconnaissance company moved 300 yards further into Naha.

Unmistakable signs on 26 May pointed toward a Japanese withdrawal from the Shuri position. In order to determine the extent of the withdrawal to the front of the Sixth Marine Division, all units commenced patrolling. Part of the Second Battalion, Twenty Second Marines, crossed the Asato and passed through the Reconnaissance Company while pushing further into Naha. The city was almost a total wreck. Only a few buildings around the outskirts remained standing and these were badly damaged. During the day the Fourth Marines sent patrols over 300 yards forward of the lines and found only light opposition.

Again General Shepherd reoriented his attack; he ordered the Twenty Second Marines to complete the capture of Naha and be prepared to advance through the hills that overlook the Kokuba River from the north. At the same time, he ordered the Twenty Ninth Marines to relieve the Fourth, and to be prepared to continue the attack to the southeast toward the Shichina hills. On 28 May the Twenty Ninth Marines commenced to relieve the Fourth Marines; at the same time, the Twenty Second Marines completed the capture of urban Naha, the part that lies to the west of the north-south canal.

Initially, the Twenty Ninth Marines was to carry out a holding attack while supporting the Twenty Second Marines by fire. On 29 May, with the Twenty Ninth Marines holding on its left, the Twenty Second Marines crossed the north-south canal and commenced to fight through the low hills that lead to Shichina, and parallel the Kokuba River. The attack moved rapidly at first on the right but the enemy rear guard, stationed in the hills to the front of the two regiments, began to resist more fiercely, and it wasn't until 1 June that the two regiments were able to clean out the enemy in the Shichina area. Now the division could look down from its position above the Kokuba and see the Naha-Yonabaru cross-island highway. Across the river, troops could see destroyed materiel abandoned by the enemy in his hasty withdrawal to the south.

The Twenty Second Marines rested now for the first time since crossing the Asa River on 10 May. For this period the regiment, with its attached units, was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation. In the drive from the Asa to the Kokuba, casualties had been heavy.

After the seizure of Naha and the area to its east, the Sixth Marine Division prepared to continue its drive to the south by making an amphibious landing on Oroku. General Shepherd ordered his Division Reconnaissance Company, a flexible group that worked under G-2 or G-3 as the situation demanded, to cross the estuary during the night of 1-2 June and reconnoiter possible landing beaches as well as explore the area inland where the beachhead would be established. Using plastic boats, the company made its reconnaissance and returned to Naha at 0300, 2 June, to report that the northern part of Oroku Peninsula was occupied by the enemy but not in great strength.

The plan for the reduction of enemy forces on Oroku was simple and complete; it left the Japanese no alternative except to surrender or die. The Fourth Marines were to make a dawn landing on 4 June and as the beachhead expanded, the Twenty Ninth Marines were to go in on the left of the Fourth. With two regiments attacking

abreast, the plan called for the other regiment, the Twenty Second Marines, to throw a cordon-like line across the base of the peninsula in conjunction with the First Marine Division as it crossed both forks of the Kokuba river and drove south. Then with the Twenty Second facing northwest and preventing the enemy from escaping, the two assault regiments would drive east and southeast to exterminate the enemy defenders of Oroku.

After the rainy weather of the last week in May and the first few days in June, the Sixth Marine Division faced a tremendous logistical problem. Initially the assault regiments would have to be supplied by amphibious craft over the same route used for the landing. As the attack moved to the southeast, there was a chance that the Naha estuary could be bridged by using little Ona Yama island, which lay in the center of the estuary, almost equidistant from Naha and Oroku. There were a few of the enemy on Ona Yama; these would have to be killed before the engineers could commence their bridging efforts. Simultaneously then, with the landing of the Fourth Marines on Oroku, the Sixth Reconnaissance Company was ordered to land on, and secure, Ono Yama. All through 2-3 June amphibious trucks (DUKWs) and tractors carried supplies and equipment over impassable roads to the beach at Naha where the landing was to be launched.

Before dawn, 4 June, the preliminary bombardment commenced on Oroku and Ono Yama. At 0551, the Fourth Marines landed two battalions without any great difficulty. Early enemy resistance was light and the troops moved rapidly inland. At 1000 the Twenty Ninth Marines commenced to load a battalion to send across to join the Fourth. In the meantime, the Division Reconnaissance Company had landed on Ono Yama and killed a handful of Japanese.

Defending Oroku were mixed troops. There were some regular units, some Okinawa Home Guardsmen, and some were naval and air personnel from units stationed at Naha port, and Naha airfield. The rough character of the terrain on Oroku, with the exception of the flat ground around the airfield, lent itself to the defenders. From carefully prepared cave positions they could use the machine guns, 40 and 20-mm. antiaircraft guns, that had been stripped from the defenses of the airfield. This enemy group on Oroku, some 5000 strong, had resigned themselves to making a last ditch stand on the peninsula. Initially, however, the amphibious landing of the Fourth Marines caught them by surprise. With the advance of the First Division across the Kokuba toward Itoman, the enemy apparently decided that Oroku would be attacked from its base, not its northwest tip, and was originally deployed to fight off any thrust from the base.

It was indeed unfortunate then, that because of two factors beyond its control, the Sixth Marine Division was not afforded the opportunity of really capitalizing on its tactical surprise to the enemy. The rainy weather through the latter part of May and early June had made Oroku extremely muddy. What few roads there were that led inland from the landing beaches were either mined or had sections blown out so that our tanks could not use them. The rice paddies, fields and hills, ankle to knee deep with mud, were heavily mined, precluding the possibility of tank movement and causing the infantry to move with utmost caution. At a time when speed could have meant rapid gains, the division found itself forced to let the rifle companies fight as best they could and without many of their supporting arms. The brief respite gained by the enemy allowed him to redeploy his forces to resist the attack of the Fourth and Twenty Ninth Marines.

It wasn't until 13 June that the enemy forces on Oroku were destroyed. The Fourth Marines, after landing on 4 June, had seized the first hills inland and then as the Twenty Ninth came in on the left, the Fourth secured Naha Airfield and drove to the southeast in an encircling maneuver. Facing the enemy from the east, the Twenty Second Marines kept him bottled up and harassed his rear. On the left, driving down the long ridge that parallels the estuary, the Twenty Ninth moved slowly. In the extremely broken terrain that characterized Oroku, the enemy resisted fiercely, using all the weapons at his command to prevent the advancing Marines from crossing the numerous compartments, and denying them the use of the corridors.

The advance was slow and the action costly. In addition to his automatic weapons, small arms, grenade dischargers and mortars, the enemy had 320-mm. spigot mortars and artillery. Cut off, surrounded, and assaulted from all sides, the enemy was exacting a final price for the peninsula. It was not until 12 June that the first real break in his carefully coordinated defense became apparent. On this day, converging forces of the Fourth Marines and the Twenty Ninth had the enemy completely encircled. From his positions, the enemy could look to the northwest and see the Twenty Ninth; turning to the south, he could see the Fourth Marines driving in on his flank; behind him was the Twenty Second Marines, moving in slowly to complete his doom.

During the afternoon of 12 June,

some enemy groups came out waving white surrender flags. Others refused to surrender and pressed grenades to their stomachs. Still others allowed themselves to be killed while offering only feeble resistance. In most, the will to live was gone; they were resigned to their fate. Next day, 861 Japanese were killed and 73 taken prisoner.

Before the capture of Oroku could be called complete, there remained to be taken the small island of Senaga Shima. After a heavy preliminary bombardment, the Sixth Division's Reconnaissance Company, with a company from the Twenty Ninth Marines attached, landed on the island and quickly seized it. Only two of the enemy were found and killed but many fine coastal guns were captured. Now the battle for Oroku was over. The enemy had resisted bitterly; 1608 Marines were killed or wounded in the capture of the peninsula, and thirty of our tanks were lost. During the ten days of fighting the Sixth Marine Division had killed almost 5000 Japanese and had captured nearly 200. For its excellent work in landing on the peninsula, seizing the airdrome and then driving around the enemy's position to overwhelm him from the flank, the Fourth Marines were awarded the Presidential Unit Citation.

On 15 June the III Amphibious Corps instructed the Sixth Marine Division to be prepared to pass through the right of the First Marine Division on Mezado Ridge on 17 June. The mission assigned the Sixth Marine Division was to seize Kuwanga Ridge, part of Ibaru Ridge, and the Kiyamu Gusuku hill mass. Although their plight was hopeless, the enemy still held out in the southernmost part of Okinawa evidently intent upon exacting as stiff a price, in terms of lives, as possible before being destroyed. Like a trapped animal, the Japanese were resisting bitterly and, from their positions on the hills and ridges, were delaying the attackers as long as possible.

With its zone of action limited in width, the Sixth Division committed the Twenty Second Marines at 0300, 17 June. To reach Mezado Ridge, the regiment had to advance past Kunishi through open ground swept by enemy fire. During the hours of daylight, the First Division, fighting on Kunishi and Mezado Ridge, was forced to use tanks to supply the front lines and evacuate the wounded. By moving before daylight the Twenty Second Marines had little difficulty in reaching positions from which to launch an attack to secure Mezado Ridge. After an intense preliminary artillery, naval gunfire, and aerial bombardment on Mezado Ridge, Hill 69 and Kuwanga Ridge, the First and Third Battalions attacked at 0730. The advance was slow and difficult due to increasing enemy resistance. With every weapon at his command the enemy brought fire to bear on the assault battalions. By late afternoon the attack had moved up on the western part of Mezado Ridge; the Third Battalion had captured the key high ground around Hill 69, and could see Kuwanga Ridge to the south.

Next morning, 18 June, the Twenty Second Marines continued the attack, passing the Second Battalion through the Third, which was left to mop up in its immediate area. Against heavy resistance the Second Battalion advanced to Kuwanga Ridge and by late afternoon had a firm hold on the ridge. While moving through the Mezado Area to inspect his regiment's attack, Colonel H. C. Roberts, USMC, the Commanding Officer of the Twenty Second Marines, was shot through the heart by a sniper.

Although the Second Battalion had a foothold on Kuwanga Ridge, it could not hold the entire length of the ridge, some 1800 yards, and General Shepherd decided to move up a battalion of the Fourth Marines on the left in order to hold the ridge through the night. On the next day he could continue the attack to the south with a fresh regiment.

Early in the morning of 19 June, the Fourth Marines, with the First and Third Battalions abreast, assaulted Ibaru Ridge and after a brisk fight, had seized the ridge by noon. After a hasty reorganization on the ridge, the regiment attacked again, this time to capture the Kiyamu-Gusuku hill mass. Immediately upon leaving Ibaru, the Fourth Marines ran into heavy enemy fire from mortars emplaced behind the hill mass and machine guns firing from concealed positions on it. Just before dark the regiment succeeded in gaining a small foothold on the high plateau of the hill mass. During the afternoon the little island just offshore from Nagasuku was seized by a quickly assembled task force consisting of three amphibious tractors, two 37-mm. platoons and a War Dog platoon. In the brief action 20 Japanese soldiers were killed and 8 taken prisoner.

On 19 June the Sixth Marine Division committed two battalions of the Twenty Ninth Marines on the right of the Fourth Marines in preparation for a final assault to seize the 5000 square yards of ground remaining. Next day at 0700 both regiments attacked, the Twenty Ninth to drive to the coast, and the Fourth to complete the seizure of the Kiyamu-Gusuku Ridge. Against light opposition, the Twenty Ninth Marines advanced rapidly and reached the southern coast. Harassing long range fire from the regiment's left caused few casual-

ties. The enemy in this sector now began to surrender. An LCI, equipped with a loudspeaker, moved along the coast calling to the remaining Japanese to give themselves up. Over 700 Japanese officers and men surrendered during the day.

Meanwhile over on the division's left, the Fourth Marines were engaged in a bloody fight to secure Kiyamu-Gusuku Ridge. From their positions in the hill mass the Japanese resisted desperately with intense mortar and small arms fire. After a day of bitter fighting the Second Battalion captured Hill 80, the peak of the hill mass, but the remainder of the ground was still held by the enemy.

Resuming its attack on 21 June, the Fourth Marines turned from frontal assaults and flanking attacks to a double envelopment from the rear. Early in the morning the two flank battalions sent companies around either extremity of the ridge and at 0800 struck the enemy's rear in a coordinated attack. For two hours the enemy fought back bitterly but could not halt the assaulting Marines. With the fall of the Kiyamu-Gusuku Ridge all organized resistance in the Sixth Marine Division's zone of action ceased.

During all but 13 of the 82 days that the Okinawa Campaign lasted, the Sixth Marine Division was committed and actively engaged. Credited to the division were 23,000 Japanese killed and over 3,500 captured. The division had captured over two-thirds of Okinawa and had repeatedly fought the enemy on his own terms, and his own ground. During this operation the Sixth Marine Division had taken heavy losses; 400 officers and 7,822 enlisted men were either killed or wounded. In the drive from the Asa River to the Kokuba, the division had lost the equivalent of a regiment of men. Of the 8,222 men lost during the campaign, the nine infantry battalions had lost 6,159, or an average loss per battalion on a percentage basis of 75%. In simple terms this meant that three out of every four men of the Sixth Marine Division who landed on Love-Day were either killed or wounded. Not included in the above figures are men lost due to non-battle casualties: sickness, or combat fatigue.

After reaching the southern coast the Sixth Division turned to retrace its steps back to the Kokuba in mopping up enemy remnants. Then followed a period in bivouac, when the troops rested before going aboard ship to go to the base camp recently constructed at Guam. In August, while the division was on Guam and preparing for its next operation, the war ended. Many of the high-point men were sent back to the United States; the rest prepared for occupation duty in China and Japan.

On 30 August the Fourth Marines (Reinforced) went ashore in Tokyo Bay to occupy the Yokosuku Naval Base. A cycle had been completed; the new Fourth Marines now finished the task so hopelessly begun by the old Fourth before it was lost on Bataan.

With the mission of effecting the surrender of 42,850 Japanese on Shantung Peninsula, the Sixth Marine Division journeyed to Tsingtao, China and arrived there on 11 October 1945. Two weeks later formal surrender ceremonies were held at the race track at Tsingtao. There the men of the Twenty Second Marines, the Twenty Ninth Marines, the Sixth Tank Battalion, the Sixth Engineers, the Headquarters Battalion, and other units, watched from precise formation their Division Commander, Major General Lemuel C. Shepherd, receive the sword of Major Eiji Naguno, commanding officer of the Japanese Fifth Independent Mixed Brigade.

From October until 1 April 1946, the Sixth Division remained at Tsingtao and continued its duties of occupation and repatriation. The division, as such, ceased to exist on 1 April 1946, when, from its elements, the Third Marine Brigade was formed.

The career of the Sixth Marine Division had been relatively brief, a few days less than nineteen months, but in that short time the division had won a respected position among the fighting divisions of this war. For its excellent work on Okinawa the division was warmly commended by both Lt. General Roy S. Geiger, Commanding General, III Amphibious Corps, and the late Lt. General Simon B. Buckner, Commanding General, Tenth Army. To each of the three infantry regiments of the Sixth Marine Division, the Twenty Second Marines, the Twenty Ninth Marines and the Fourth Marines, went the highly coveted Presidential Unit Citation. While it lived, the division not only upheld all the proud traditions of the Marine Corps, but added to the impressive record of brave deeds long associated with the Corps.

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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DECORATIONS and COMMENDATIONS

(R) following names of all personnel indicates reserve status

Medal of Honor

★ **STEIN, Tony, Corp. (R)**
(Dayton, Ohio)

★ **WALSH, William G., GSgt. (R)**
(Dorchester, Mass.)

Silver Star Medal

★ **AMAR, Michael E., Corp.**
(Chattanooga, Tenn.)

★ **BACHMAN, Carl O., Capt. (R)**
(Minneapolis, Minn.)

★ **BARNES, Jimmie F., Pvt.**
(Amarillo, Texas)

★ **BRADFORD, Francis E., PlSgt.**
(Lebanon, Mo.)

★ **BROWN, Walter E., Pfc. (R)**
(Philadelphia, Pa.)

★ **BURKHARDT, Robert F., Sgt. (R)**
(Glendale, Calif.)

★ **BURTON, Lowell L., Corp.**
(Kansas City, Mo.)

★ **CARSON, Hayward L., Pfc. (R)**
(Clarksburg, W. Va.)

★ **CAYTON, Leon D., Pfc. (R)**
(Denver, Colo.)

★ **CARTER, Alden A., Corp.**
(Detroit, Mich.)

★ **CRANDALL, Rex F., Pfc. (R)**
(Litchfield Park, Ariz.)

★ **DE MANGE, Ewing A., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Bloomington, Ill.)

★ **DOBIE, Kenneth R., Pfc.**
(Highland Park, Mich.)

★ **DUNN, James E., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(West De Pere, Wis.)

★ **EMICH, Henry W., Pfc. (R)**
(Bogota, N. J.)

★ **ERICSON, Herbert E., Jr., Pvt. (R)**
(Bayshore, Mich.)

★ **ERLICK, Joseph Z., Pfc. (R)**
(Middletown, Conn.)

★ **EVANS, Carl R., Pfc. (R)**
(Troup, Texas)

★ **FLEMING, William R., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Newcastle, Pa.)

★ **FREEMAN, David, Corp.**
(Los Angeles, Calif.)

★ **FRYER, Edward E., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Columbus, Ohio)

★ **GRAY, Harold R., Pfc. (R)**
(Winchester, Ky.)

★ **GORBALL, George W., Sgt.**
(Saratoga, Wyo.)

★ **HAGEN, Clarence L., Pfc. (R)**
(Chicago, Ill.)

★ **HARVEY, Donald E., Pfc. (R)**
(Merrimar, Mass.)

★ **HELLRUNG, Louis J., Pfc. (R)**
(Alton, Ill.)

★ **HEPBURN, Rolfe H., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(S. Minneapolis, Minn.)

★ **HOFFMAN, Wilfred D., Pfc. (R)**
(St. Cloud, Minn.)

★ **HOOPER, Wallace E., Pfc.**
(Ulcona, Wyo.)

★ **HOVEY, James F., Capt.**
(St. Paul, Minn.)

★ **HUNDLEY, Harry L., Jr., WO (R)**
(Goldsboro, N. C.)

★ **IADANZA, Moses A., Pfc. (R)**
(Summit, N. J.)

★ **JONES, Henry W., Capt. (R)**
(Lakeland, Ga.)

★ **KAY, William T., Pfc. (R)**
(Grand Junction, Colo.)

★ **KEATING, James J., Pfc. (R)**
(Somerville, Mass.)

★ **KIJEWSKI, Norman J., Pfc. (R)**
(Buffalo, N. Y.)

★ **KONKOLOSKI, Thomas F., Pfc.**
(Elmira, N. Y.)

★ **LITTLE, James R., Sgt.**
(Chandler, Okla.)

★ **McDONALD, John T., Sgt.**
(Rockville, Conn.)

★ **MANSKE, Leo W., Corp. (R)**
(McLeod, N. D.)

★ **MILAM, Berle, Pfc. (R)**
(Lovington, Ill.)

★ **MILAN, Robert C., Corp. (R)**
(Detroit, Mich.)

★ **NEUMANN, Oscar E., GySgt.**
(Poplar, Mont.)

★ **NIESE, Robert S., Pfc. (R)**
(Ottawa, Ohio)

★ **MILLS, Julian B., Pfc. (R)**
(Jacksonville, Fla.)

★ **MOHACSI, Otto G., Sgt.**
(Detroit, Mich.)

★ **NEFF, Mack C., Corp.**
(Pageton, W. Va.)

★ **NEUNDORFER, O. D., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Droesbeck, Texas)

★ **O'BRIEN, William D., Capt. (R)**
(Cohoes, N. Y.)

★ **PAREIGIS, Charles E., Pfc.**
(Rices Landing, Pa.)

★ **PARR, Horace W., Corp. (R)**
(Arlington, Texas)

★ **QUEEN, Edward J., PlSgt.**
(Hudson, Mass.)

★ **RODENBUSH, Gene, Pfc. (R)**
(Christopher, Ill.)

★ **RITSEMA, Peter M., Corp.**
(Kalamazoo, Mich.)

★ **STAR, Roy, Corp. (R)**
(Oakland, Calif.)

★ **STARKIE, Raymond, Pfc. (R)**
(Springfield, Mass.)

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ **SMITH, Arlo D., Pfc. (R)**
(Vermont, Ill.)

★ **SPATZ, John W., Pfc. (R)**
(Saginaw, Mich.)

★ **STROMQUIST, H. L., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(El Paso, Texas)

★ **TISDALE, Frank P., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Crestview, Fla.)

★ **WALKLEY, Edwin, Pfc. (R)**
(St. Louis, Mo.)

★ **WEABER, George S., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Enid, Okla.)

★ **WHIFFEN, John M., Pvt. (R)**
(San Francisco, Calif.)

★ **WILLIAMS, Bill J., Pfc. (R)**
(Texarkana, Texas)

★ **WILSON, Jerome V., Pfc.**
(Elmer, Okla.)

Silver Star Medal
ARMY

★ **ALKIRE, Abraham R., Jr., 1st Lt.**
(Storling, Ohio)

★ **HOBBS, Ralph E., Pvt.**
(Bakersfield, Calif.)

★ **SMITH, William A., Sgt.**
(Carmel, Calif.)

★ **FORSYTH, Ralph E., Lt. Col**
(Sayre, Pa.)

Legion of Merit
ARMY

★ **BARE, Robert O., Col.**
(Winterset, Iowa)

★ **LARSEN, Henry L., Maj. Gen.**
(Denver, Colo.)

★ **LOUTHER, Karl K., Col.**
(Fort Benton, Mont.)

★ **MANSFIELD, Walter R., Capt.**
(Vienna, Va.)

★ **O'NEIL, Ernest Patrick, Capt. (R)**
(Richmond, Va.)

Oak Leaf Cluster
FOR LEGION OF MERIT

★ **LARKIN, Claude A., Maj. Gen.**
(Arlington, Ore.)

Gold Star
IN LIEU OF SECOND SILVER STAR

★ **GREENE, Ellis N., PlSgt.**
(Dorsey, Miss.)

Gold Star
IN LIEU OF SECOND LEGION OF MERIT

★ **PARKER, C. G., Jr., Col. (R)**
(Washington, D. C.)

Distinguished Flying Cross

★ **CRADDOCK, W. C., Jr., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Vicksburg, Miss.)

★ **O'BOYLE, Thomas R., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Pittsfield, Mass.)

Navy and Marine Corps Medal

★ **ALLEN, Frank B., GySgt.**
(San Francisco, Calif.)

★ **CLARK, Robert L., Pvt. (R)**
(Tacoma, Wash.)

★ **PAOLOZZI, Alfonso, Pfc. (R)**
(Providence, R. I.)

★ **WEINBERG, Martin H., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Houston, Texas)

Soldiers Medal
ARMY

★ **GUEST, Winston, F. C., Capt. (R)**
(New York City, N. Y.)

Bronze Star Medal

★ **ACKERMAN, Warren R., Pfc.**
(New York, N. Y.)

★ **ALIFF, Melvin P., Sgt. (R)**
(Bluefield, W. Va.)

★ **ALMOND, Robert E., Pfc. (R)**
(Palmer, Mass.)

★ **BARTON, Lee E., Jr., Corp. (R)**
(Comerville, Texas)

★ **BERGER, Alvin O., Pfc. (R)**
(Detroit, Mich.)

★ **BLAESE, George, Sgt. (R)**
(Berlin, N. J.)

★ **BONOVITCH, Otto, Corp. (R)**
(Michaux, Va.)

★ **BOST, John W., Corp.**
(Toledo, Ohio)

★ **BRUCE, William H., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Clinton, Miss.)

★ **BRUZELIUS, James A., Corp.**
(Fort Worth, Texas)

★ **BUCKNER, Kenneth E., PlSgt. (R)**
(Weaverville, N. C.)

★ **BURNSIDE, Marshall, Corp.**
(Taylor, Pa.)

★ **BURTON, Charles F., Pfc.**
(Keysville, Va.)

★ **BURTON, Charles F., Pfc. (R)**
(Greenbelt, Md.)

★ **CASEY, Jack A., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Lufkin, Texas)

★ **COHEN, Gordon, Pfc. (R)**
(St. Louis, Mo.)

★ **COLLIN, John A., Corp. (R)**
(New York, N. Y.)

★ **COOLEY, Jack C., FM (R)**
(Oklahoma City, Okla.)

★ **COVINGTON, Dale G., Pfc. (R)**
(St. George, Utah)

★ **DAILEY, Virgil E., Corp. (R)**
(Goosecreek, Texas)

★ **DAVICH, Steven T., Sgt. (R)**
(Hammond, Ind.)

★ **DAVIS, Robert W., Corp.**
(Rochester, N. H.)

★ **DE MARCO, Dominic J., Pfc. (R)**
(Richmond, N. Y.)

★ **DOVIAT, Joseph V., Corp. (R)**
(Leechburg, Pa.)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ **DUFFEY, James E., Pfc. (R)**
(Forsyth, Ga.)

★ **GAFFNEY, Francis J., ACk.**
(Danbury, Conn.)

★ **DELAND, Rawle, 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Scarsdale, N. Y.)

★ **FOWLER, Oscar M., Pfc.**
(Dallas, Texas)

★ **GAUGHAN, John M., Pfc. (R)**
(Ashley, Pa.)

★ **GRANIER, James A., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Arlington, Va.)

★ **GRIFFETH, Raymond W., Pfc. (R)**
(Griggsville, Ill.)

★ **HAAS, Ralph, Lt. Col.**
(Gadsden, Ala.)

★ **HALL, John E., Corp.**
(Tieton, Wash.)

★ **HARRY, Clinton C., Pfc.**
(Mt. Holly Springs, Pa.)

★ **HENKEL, George A., Pfc.**
(Brooklawn, N. J.)

★ **HENRIKSON, Henry H., Corp. (R)**
(Stamford, Conn.)

★ **HOMEWOOD, Thomas V., PlSgt.**
(Salt Lake City, Utah)

Bronze Star Medal

ARMY

★ **COUNCIL, H. A., Jr., StfSgt. (R)**
(Canton, Ohio)

★ **DICKINSON, E. T., Jr., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Garden City, N. Y.)

★ **FARRELL, Francis T., Capt.**
(New York, N. Y.)

★ **HOLMIN, William A., Capt. (R)**
(Washington, D. C.)

★ **JACKSON, Ralph W., StfSgt. (R)**
(Buffalo, N. Y.)

★ **LUCKINS, Charles E., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Oil City, Pa.)

★ **MOWINCKEL, John W., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Charlottesville, Va.)

★ **WEISMILLER, E. R., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Cambridge, Mass.)

Air Medal

ARMY

★ **BRADLEY, William E., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Tallahassee, Fla.)

★ **GARROTTO, Alfred E., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Omaha, Nebr.)

★ **HAMITY, Lewis B., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Chicago, Ill.)

★ **LINDSEY, Duane A., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Merrill, Iowa)

Letters of Commendation

WITH COMMENDATION RIBBON

★ **DESSEZ, Lester A., Col.**
(Washington, D. C.)

FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

★ **HELNICK, Albert E., Capt.**
(Norwich, Conn.)

★ **KENT, D. L., 1st Lt. USMCWR**
(Suffield, Conn.)

★ **MALONE, Frank R., Capt.**
(Glendale, Calif.)

★ **SEILER, Charles, Capt.**
(San Diego, Calif.)

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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FIRST MARINE AIR WING HISTORY

From Official Monograph by Historical Division HQMC

THE early history of the First Marine Aircraft Wing is actually the story of the grim struggle for Guadalcanal and the beginning of that inexorable climb of the Allies up the Solomons which ended in Tokyo. It is the story of too few men with inadequate and insufficient tools against implacable and relentless foes: primeval jungle, mire, muck, interminably foul weather, dysentery, malaria, short rations and ruthless, inhuman men.

Lieutenant Colonel Louis E. Woods, USMC, was directed to organize the First Marine Aircraft Wing on or about 1 July 1941, at Quantico. It was to comprise a Headquarters Squadron and the First Marine Aircraft Group which, till that time, was the highest Marine aviation echelon on the East Coast. Although the First Wing as it is currently known was not activated until 7 July 1941, it actually sprang from roots that are deep in the history of Marine Corps aviation.

From remnants of the First Marine Aviation Force which was organized for duty in France in the First World War, the First Aviation Group was formed at Quantico in August 1922. In September 1926 the First Aviation Group was designated Aircraft Squadrons, East Coast Expeditionary Force, but after the Fleet Marine Force was created on 8 December 1933, the designation of Aircraft Squadrons, ECEF, was changed to Aircraft One, FMF. On 1 May 1939, Aircraft Squadrons, FMF, was designated First Marine Aircraft Group (later redesignated MAG-11) and with Headquarters Squadron, First Marine Aircraft Wing, evolved into the First Wing. General Roy S. Geiger relieved Colonel Woods as Commanding Officer of the First Wing on 20 August 1941.

Exactly five months after the First Wing was activated, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. The next day the Chief of Naval Operations ordered the First Wing to San Diego. From December 1941 until the Forward Echelon of the First Wing landed on Henderson Field, on 20 August 1942, to furnish air support to the beleaguered First Marine Division, Reinforced, the history of the Wing is a story of demoralizing, heartbreaking, unequal struggle against a dearth of material and personnel to build up and train the Wing to combat strength.

On 1 March 1942, the Wing was reorganized and comprised MAG's-11, 12, 13, 14 and 15. MAG-13, commissioned the first of March, left San Diego a week later to participate with Navy patrol squadrons in the aerial defense of the Samoas, then a forward area.

The departure of MAG-13 left ten operating squadrons with only half their authorized allowance of planes even a few weeks before going into the combat area.

At the Battle of the Coral Sea in May 1942, the Japanese had tasted the bitter gall of defeat for the first time since their attack on Pearl Harbor. Having followed up that advantage with another staggering blow to Japanese sea and air power at Midway a month later, the Allies had to strike again and soon, before the enemy could recover from the enervating wounds received in the carrier battles of May and June. Despite their losses at both the Coral Sea and Midway, the Japanese were entrenching themselves in the Solomons-Bismarck area so deeply that each day our life line between Australia and the West Coast was more menaced. Therefore, notwithstanding the lack of planes, equipment and personnel, events in the Pacific had necessitated a change from defensive to offensive warfare. Thus MAG-23 which had been transferred from the Second Wing to become the Forward Echelon of the First Wing, arrived at Henderson Field thirteen days after the initial landings to participate in the defense of Guadalcanal, faced with appalling shortages in men and materiel.

From sunset of 9 August 1942, when the carriers and transports so precipitately departed, forty-eight hours after the First Division was landed, until darkness of the 18th, no friendly vessel had been seen by the Marines at Guadalcanal, although there had been no dearth of round-the-clock, destructive visits from enemy planes and surface craft. But, during the night of 18 August, an American vessel put in at Kukum to discharge some aviation ground personnel, a small cargo of bombs, and some aviation gas, under cover of night. Except for a B-17 which flew low over Henderson Field each

day to inspect progress on the partially completed field started by the enemy, the ground troops had not seen a friendly plane. But, on 20 August, two Marine squadrons flew in. One was Marine Fighting Squadron 223, commanded by Major John L. Smith, the other was Marine Dive-bombing Squadron 232 whose skipper was Lieutenant Colonel Richard C. Mangrum, both names destined to be emblazoned on aviation rosters. The 19 WILDCATS of VMF-223 and the 12 DAUNTLESSES of VMSB-232 had been catapulted from the USS LONG ISLAND about 200 miles southeast of Guadalcanal. The flight was led by Lieutenant Colonel Charles L. Fike, USMC, executive officer of MAG-23.

The split-second timing of their arrival was almost melodramatic, for the next day the weary, desperate, ground troops, during the misnamed Battle of the Tenaru, were given much-needed air support. That marked the first time since Nicaragua that Marine air had supported its own infantry. Two days later five Army P-40's (early export model of the Aircobra) arrived at Henderson to augment the meager air strength while, on the 24th, eleven SBD's from the ENTERPRISE landed when darkness overtook them.

Until 27 September the ENTERPRISE group participated more than credibly with the Army and Marine pilots in the aerial defense of Guadalcanal. The rear echelon of MAG-23 arrived at Guadalcanal on 30 August, led by Colonel William J. Wallace, who relieved Colonel Fike.

The First Marine transport plane landed on Henderson Field on 3 September 1942, bringing General Roy S. Geiger, Colonel Louis E. Woods, Chief of Staff, and Lieutenant Colonel John C. Munn. General Geiger remained at Guadalcanal until 7 November 1942 when he returned to Espiritu Santo, New Hebrides, where Wing Headquarters had been set up on 14 September, leaving General Woods, who had been appointed Brigadier on 25 September 1942, in command of the Forward Echelon of the First Wing and of all aviation operating at Guadalcanal.

The struggle for Guadalcanal lasted for exactly six months. The Japanese tried desperately to retake the island and on several occasions our tenuous hold was gravely threatened. There were times when the Guadalcanal campaign threatened to end as disastrously as the struggles to hold Wake, Bataan and Corregidor. In addition to the fierce battles that raged ashore between ground forces, the deadly aerial struggles that took place almost daily, the frequent shelling from enemy surface ships that killed personnel, wrecked the field and, on one occasion, destroyed or immobilized virtually every plane on Henderson Field, four decisive naval battles were also fought before the Japanese evacuation of the much-embattled island. First Wing pilots participated in each and accounted for atrophying damage to shipping and the destruction of many planes.

In the Battle of the Eastern Solomons which took place near Malaita on 23-25 August 1942, out of the 90 Japanese planes destroyed, Marine pilots accounted for 21. On 11-12 October 1942, a task force commanded by Admiral Norman Scott, USN, surprised the TOKYO EXPRESS between Cape Esperance and Savo Island and in a 30-minute naval engagement known as the Battle of Cape Esperance, sank a heavy cruiser, four destroyers and a transport. Marine pilots shared in the destruction of seven bombers and four fighters and participated in the rescue of survivors of the DUNCAN which was the only friendly ship lost in the engagement.

The Battle of Santa Cruz was a naval air battle similar to those at Coral Sea and Midway. It was fought on the morning of 26 October 1942 and, although very costly to us, it so weakened enemy air strength that at the Battle of Guadalcanal (three weeks later), the Japanese Navy was so badly crippled because of insufficient air coverage, that it forever lost naval supremacy in the Guadalcanal area. The Battle of Guadalcanal was a furious four-day engagement in three phases: a cruiser night action, on 12-13 November, an aviation phase which began on 13 November, and a battleship night action on 14-15 November. First Wing pilots played a vital part in that classic struggle, and Lieutenant Colonel Harold Bauer, one of the nine Marine aviators who received the Congressional Medal in World War II, was lost during the Battle of Guadalcanal.

Just before that classic naval struggle for the island, air strength at Henderson had been appreciably augmented. On 16 October tactical command passed from MAG-23 to MAG-14. Although many of the veteran pilots of Guadalcanal were withdrawn and returned to the States, First Wing units which had remained on the West Coast had finished training and were ready for combat duty, while additional Army and Navy pilots reported daily to Henderson. MAG-25, which is synonymous with SCAT, had been transferred to the First Wing and was operating from Tontouta, New Caladonia, transporting vital supplies and personnel, and evacuating wounded. On 9 December 1942 General Vandegrift had turned over command to General A. M. Patch of the Americal Division and on 26 December Brigadier General F. P. Mulcahy, in command of the

Second Wing, arrived with his staff and relieved General Woods as Senior Naval Aviator at Guadalcanal. However, personnel of the forward echelon of the First Wing served on General Mulcahy's staff, squadrons of the First Wing operated at Guadalcanal, and MAG-25 continued to furnish logistical support.

With the expansion of the scope of operations in the Solomons and the all-out offensive now burgeoning in the area, Commander, Aircraft, Solomons was activated 15 February 1943 and Rear Admiral C. P. Mason relieved General Mulcahy and became the first ComAirSols. The new command comprised all the elements of the greatly strengthened Allied air forces in the Solomons which included First and Second Wing units, land-based Navy squadrons, Army Air, Royal New Zealand Air and carrier squadrons which operated from Henderson. But the amalgamation of the many into one did not by any means vitiate the tactical importance of the First Wing and there were still many missions to be accomplished by the Wing that had been first on Guadalcanal.

On 9 February 1943 Guadalcanal was officially secured. On the 20th the Third Marine Raider Battalion and the 43rd Army Infantry Division occupied the Russells unopposed. ComAirSols land-based planes supported the landings, among them two Marine squadrons attached to the First Wing. MAG-21, which had been detached from the Second Wing, was transferred to the First Wing, and arrived at Banika on 13 March to build and operate the airstrip. On 21 April Major General Ralph J. Mitchell, USMC, relieved General Geiger as Commanding General of the First Wing. VMF-121 started operations on 16 June 1943, the first unit to be in the Russells.

A new offensive in the Solomons was being planned, and aerial battles were fierce and frequent. The Allies had discovered an almost completed airfield at Munda on New Georgia and in daily raids had been dropping tons of bombs on the field for months. The Japanese were also constructing an air base at the mouth of the Vila on Kolombangara and had about 40,000 troops in the Solomons. There were fields at Buka, Kahili, Ballale and Kieta, seaplane bases in the Shortlands, Rekata Bay and Soranken, as well as five fields in the Rabaul area. The enemy had 400 planes concentrated in the area and could easily be reinforced from New Guinea bases. Before we could advance up the Solomons, it was necessary to neutralize the northern Solomons bases. The operations plan for the invasion of New Georgia was issued on 3 June with D-day set for the 30th. Munda Field was the objective and landings were to be made simultaneously on Rendova Island, Viru Harbor, Segi Point, Wickham Anchorage and at Onaivisi.

Before D-day, however, we learned that the Japanese were fortifying their outposts on the east and west banks of Viru Harbor, one of the main landing points selected for the New Georgia operations. Companies "O" and "P" of the 4th Raider Battalion, consequently, were landed on Segi Point to march overland to Viru and annihilate the garrisons lest they hinder the Viru landings on 30 June. Hence, the first landing in the New Georgia operation was made nine days ahead of D-day.

It was from Rendova that the Allies' main thrust against Munda was to come. At daylight on 30 June disembarkation commenced at Rendova, screened by two groups of destroyers covered by Army, Navy and Marine planes from Guadalcanal and the Russells. Their work will gleam brilliantly throughout aviation history. A total of 101 Japanese planes out of 130 engaged were shot down over Rendova during the landings on 30 June 1943. Of that total, Marine fighter pilots, many attached to First Wing units, accounted for 58. Second Wing units as well as Army, Navy and New Zealand pilots participated in support of the amphibious landings at Rendova and other beaches that day.

On 1 July landings were made at Viru, one day behind schedule because the troops landed at Segi on 21 June had been delayed a day by the strong resistance encountered en route to Viru. A Navy bombing squadron and VMSB-132 of the 1st MAW supported the Raiders by bombing Tetemara village for the advancing Marines.

On 5 July, to facilitate the advance on the Bairoko-Enogai area in order to circumvent reinforcement of the Munda garrison, the 1st Marine Raider Battalion and units of the 37th Army Division landed at Rice Anchorage on the north coast of New Georgia. First Wing dive-bombers and torpedo planes supported the ground troops in their advance and the Commander of the Northern Landing Group (Col. Harry B. Liversedge) in his report on the operation said "dive-bombing in general support was very effective, particularly so in covering the withdrawal of our forces from Bairoko on 21 July." MAG-25 dropped parapaks of rations and medical supplies to our forces besieging Bairoko who had been without rations for forty-eight hours because of delay caused by fierce enemy resistance.

Up until 12 July, Kolombangara, after the capture of Munda field, had been the potential major objective in our ascent up the Solomons. Later it was conceived that with Munda as a base to extend the range of our fighter cover, Ko-

lombangara, despite its airfield and installations, could be by-passed and a less formidably fortified island invaded and expanded. The same strategy has been successful in the Aleutians campaign—Kiska by-passed and Attu occupied.

Vella Lavella which was negligibly fortified was selected because it would provide possible bases for cogent patrol of Vella Gulf and Blackett Strait, favorite supply routes to Vila. Munda field fell to the Allies on 5 August and ten days later the 4th Defense Battalion of the Fleet Marine Force, and the 35th Regimental Combat Team made the initial landings on Vella Lavella; 4600 troops, including 700 Navy personnel were landed on D-day, supported by VMF's 215, 124, 123 and 214, three of them First Wing units, as well as by Army P-40's and P-39's while Navy PBY's covered the Task Force.

Up until the fall of Bairoko on 25 August 1943, eight weeks after the New Georgia landings, First Wing squadrons supported ground troops in that area. Two squadrons, VMF's 123 and 124 shot down nine planes in the Vella Lavella area on 24 August, only the day before organized resistance ceased at Bairoko.

Arundel Island was occupied on 27 August 1943. VMF-222 supported the operation by providing cover on 10 and 15 September. Barakoma Field on Vella Lavella was operable on 27 September, and with Munda on the southeast and Barakoma to the northwest, the 10,000 Japanese on Kolombangara were in an untenable position. All during September the major mission of ComAirSols, which included First Wing units, was the bombing of barge hideouts, airfields, troop concentrations and installations on Kolombangara. Ultimately evacuation was the only choice left the enemy and although our PT boats and destroyers sank sixty troop-carrying barges during the height of the withdrawal, between 28 September and 4 October, thousands of Japanese escaped, 3,000 to Choiseul alone. Early in October, Fiji troops occupied Kolombangara, and with that once-menacing base secured, the Allies were ready to invade Bougainville.

Air Command, Northern Solomons, commanded by Brigadier General Field Harris, USMC, was activated 1 September 1943. It was composed largely of personnel of the Forward Echelon of the First Wing and was assigned the mission of furnishing air support, air defense and air warning service for the Bougainville operation. The main body of ComAirNorSols arrived at Espiritu from Auckland, New Zealand on 20 September. On 5 October the first group arrived at Tetere and set up camp; the remainder arrived the 15th.

The echelon was divided into two detachments, one under General Harris for the Bougainville landings, the other under Major B. V. Leary, USMC, for the Treasury operation. The Treasury unit embarked with the 8th New Zealand Brigade to set up a radar station and establish a Fighter Command. Landings were made on Mono and Stirling Islands on 27 October 1943. VMF(N)-531, a First Wing unit and the first naval night-fighting squadron to go into combat in the Pacific, covered the Treasury landings, directed from a destroyer.

On the night of the Treasury invasion, landings were made on Choiseul by the 2nd Marine Parachute Battalion in order to divert the enemy's attention from the main objective — Bougainville. VMF(N)-531 of the First Wing covered the landing and during the six-day diversionary operation VMTB-232, covered by VF-17 and Army fighters, supported the Marines on Choiseul.

On 26 October, 24 officers and 100 men of the Bougainville echelon boarded transports to rehearse amphibious landings on Tetere Beach, Guadalcanal. On 30 October the first echelon of Detachment 1 joined the convoy and set out for Bougainville, disembarking on 1 November with the second wave, part to land on Yellow 1 to set up the Fighter Command, the balance at Yellow 2 where headquarters was established.

On D-day First Wing squadrons flew close-support missions, marking beach positions with smoke bombs, striking targets on Torokina with 2000-pound bombs, and strafing the area until our first landing boats hit the beach. By 1600 D-day, both Air Command and Support Bomber Control circuits were operating. On 3 November air-spotting planes reported to direct artillery fire. By 6 November the second echelon of the Torokina detachment arrived by LST's from Guadalcanal with much-needed gear.

It was not until 9 November that support bombing missions were requested again by Army and Third Division troops, but on that day and again the following day, TBF's of the First Wing flew close support missions. The third ground support mission of the Torokina campaign was flown on 14 November. By the 15th the inland strip area was "almost 70% secured from the enemy. ****Search and spotter planes were busy aiding ground forces by locating trails, positions and installations***and spotting for artillery. Ground troops were within 100 yards of the bombed enemy and were unhurt by the bombing."

Bougainville was the proving ground for close air support as it was later perfected at Iwo Jima, Okinawa and in the Philippines where First Wing Groups were

later to be recognized for the remarkable close-support missions flown for the Army throughout the Philippines campaign.

By 2 November the assault phase of the Bougainville campaign had ended and, on the 8th, Army troops were landed on our beachhead at Empress Augusta Bay without casualty. Although enemy airfields had been neutralized before the landings and for several weeks thereafter, the enemy flew planes in from Rabaul fields to harass our naval units, installations and beach positions. Ground fighting was close and bitter but after six weeks the command of the ground forces passed from Major General Roy S. Geiger to Lieutenant General Millar F. Harmon, USA. Meanwhile a Marine General, Ralph J. Mitchell, had relieved Major General Nathan T. Twining, USAAF, as Commander, Aircraft, Solomons.

The airstrip at Torokina was ready for operation on 10 December, with 4200 feet of runway. The flight echelon of a First Wing squadron, VMF-216, with seventeen F4U's arrived to operate from Torokina the same day. Headquarters, MAG-24 was moved from the Russels to Torokina and Colonel William L. McKittrick, USMC (now Brigadier General) assumed command of Air Operations at Bougainville on 23 December.

Now that Rabaul had been brought within range of Bougainville, that erstwhile impregnable enemy stronghold was to experience aerial assaults that were destined to nullify it completely as a fortress. By the middle of February 1944, only two months after the first fighter sweep for Rabaul took off from Torokina strip on 17 December, Japanese air power had completely collapsed in the Bismarck-North Solomons area. In the last two weeks of December following the opening of the Torokina strip, the Japanese had lost 109 planes to Army, Navy, Marine and New Zealand pilots. The score had almost quadrupled by the end of January and by 19 February when our planes intercepted a flight of 50 enemy fighters and shot down 24 of them en route to Rabaul, enemy fighter opposition was completely annihilated. Henceforth, Allied bombers executed their lethal missions against installations and shipping unescorted by fighters because they were never intercepted after the encounter of the 19th. Rabaul as an enemy stronghold by then had become only a symbol of what the entire Empire would signify in another year and a half,—an over-rated, empty threat.

The invasion of Bougainville was to achieve a stranglehold on the Bismarck area and to make another step forward toward Tokyo. That step was the invasion of the Green or Nissan Islands, which lie between Bougainville and New Ireland.

Marines and New Zealand troops landed on Green Island on 15 February 1944. The landings were covered by Munda-based Navy planes, cruiser-based aircraft, Army, New Zealand and Second Wing planes at Torokina and by VMF-222, VMF-212, VMF(N)-531, VMTB's-143 and 233 of the First Wing. Landing with the assault troops on D-day were 19 officers and 91 enlisted men of the Forward Echelon of the First Wing, most of whom were veterans of Treasury or Bougainville. They were under the command of General Harris and well experienced in directing air operations.

Camp was established at Pokonian Plantation near the headquarters camp of General Barrowclough, GOC, 3d New Zealand Division, while Fighter Command camp was set up on the east shore near Tangalon Plantation. On the 22nd however, headquarters of the Wing Detachment was moved to East Point. By 6 March, a 5,000-foot fighter strip was officially opened for operations, despite bad weather during most of the seventeen days it required to build it. On the first day it was operable there were 113 landings and 102 take-offs by 61 fighters, SCAT planes, a PV and an SBD. The next day twelve fighters were available for local defense and on 13 March the first planes of Marine Fighting Squadrons 222 and 223 arrived to operate from Green. The first strike by land-based bombers against Kavieng was staged through Green on 16 March and by the 20th VMSB-243 was based there. During the period of 21-31 March 1944, Forward Echelon of the First Wing directed from 15 to 24 fighter missions daily against installations and shipping in the Kavieng-Rabaul area, 323 light-bomber sorties and 62 transient landings.

The "aerial strangulation" of bypassed, once-powerful Japanese strongholds proceeded apace. Nighthecklers based at Treasury helped the round-the-clock bedevilment of the Japanese in the Rabaul area, appearing for the first time on 17 March when VMB-413 started operations. The seizure of Green, to quote General MacArthur, "for all strategic purposes closed the Solomons campaign." The curtain had already risen on the Central Pacific stage when Marine and Army troops invaded Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshalls on the night of 31 January 1944.

Except for the Emirau landings on 20 March 1944 by the 4th Marines, Reinforced, offensive operations had ceased in the South Pacific and First Wing units would for the next year be occupied with the neutralization of what remained of enemy activities in the Northern Solomons-Bismarck area while carrier-based air continued

the offensive in the Central Pacific.

Before the Green invasion, some administrative changes had been made within the Wing. On 1 February 1944, Headquarters Squadron, Marine Aircraft, South Pacific, was created, thus terminating the joint administrative organization between Marine Aircraft, South Pacific and the First Marine Aircraft Wing. Brigadier General James T. Moore, USMC, took command of the First Wing, relieving General Mitchell who was transferred to the newly organized staff of Marine Aircraft, South Pacific. General Moore was promoted to Major General on 25 February to rank from 5 February 1944. By 10 March First Wing Headquarters, which had operated at Espiritu since September 1942, formally closed there and opened at Guadalcanal.

When the Fourth Marines and Navy units landed at Emirau in the St. Matthias Group, 15 officers and 70 enlisted men of the Advance Echelon of the First Wing accompanied the landing force and functioned as Air Command, Emirau, under Colonel William L. McKittrick, but when MAG-12 arrived on 5 April Colonel Vernon M. Guymon commanding that Group relieved Colonel McKittrick. Two days later General Moore arrived at Emirau from Green and not only relieved General Houston Noble, USMC, as Commanding General Emirau but the same date was also designated Commander Air Emirau, with Colonel Guymon as Deputy Air Commander. Army troops relieved the Fourth Marines on 11 April and the following day General Moore assumed command of all ground forces on Emirau.

By 14 April, 3000 feet of the 5700-foot strip that had been cleared was graded and an FM-2 on patrol from the USS NATOMA BAY made the first, an emergency, landing on Emirau. Six days later the main body of Headquarters, First Wing, arrived at Emirau by LST from Guadalcanal. On the 29th the first SCAT planes arrived, for by now 7000 feet of the airstrip had been cleared, 6000 feet fine-graded. Also an additional 5000 feet had been cleared and 2200 feet rough-graded for a second strip. The field was ready by 1 May to accommodate a fighting squadron and flight echelons of VMF-115 arrived the next day.

Meanwhile, although General Moore was relieved as Commander Air Emirau on 30 April by a Navy captain designated Commander Air Center, Emirau, he was still Commanding General Emirau while Colonel Guymon retained the title of Deputy Air Commander with additional duty as Air Operations Emirau.

During May 1944 two Marine fighting squadrons, two dive-bombing squadrons , a torpedo squadron and three Navy bombing squadrons were operating at Emirau. On the 24th General Moore was relieved by Colonel William B. Tuttle, AUS, of the 147th Infantry and on the 20th he relieved General Harris as ComAirSols but retained command of the First Wing. On 15 June, General Mitchell who had relieved Read Admiral A. W. Fitch, USN, as ComAirSoPac on 15 April relieved General Moore as Command General of the First Wing and also became ComAirNorSols. The new ComAirNorSols, however, was actually ComAirSols redesignated and not in any way related to the temporary command with the same designation which was activated in September 1943 to direct air operations in the Bougainville invasion.

While the First Wing was operating in the North Solomons-Bismarck area, the Gilberts had been invaded on 21 November 1943 and Tarawa taken, New Britain had been occupied by the First Marine and the Sixth Army Divisions in December 1943, and the door of the Marshalls had been forced with the invasion of Kwajalein and Majuro Atolls the night of 30-31 January 1944. While the First Wing was strangling the Bismarck area in the South Pacific, the Fourth Wing, transferred to Majuro in February 1944, was neutralizing the Marshalls bases so vital to the enemy.

The Marianas were entered via Saipan on 15 June 1944; Guam was invaded five weeks later on 21 July. The Navy had irrevocably damaged the Japanese Fleet at the Battle of the Philippines Sea on 19-20 June and the Marines had landed on Tinian 24 July. Meanwhile, Army, Australian and New Zealand troops were picking dry the skeleton of Japanese resistance left in the Australian-New Guinea area.

The operations in the South, Central and Southwest Pacific were the three-pronged road to the invasion of the Philippines, the first phase of which was the occupation of Leyte on 20 October 1944. Soon the monotony of "aerial strangulation" would be over for most of the First Wing and the roar of Marine planes over the Philippines would burst into the awful crescendo of doom for the Japanese.

Early in November 1944, General Mitchell had been apprised that operations in the Southwest Pacific would necessitate the transfer of tactical squadrons from the Northern Solomons-Bismarck area to the Philippines and that First Wing Headquarters would ultimately be relieved of combat responsibility in the Northern Solomons by a British Air Force. Consequently, it was no surprise to receive a directive on 30 November from Commander, Allied Forces, through Commander, Far Eastern

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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Air Forces, to transfer four Marine fighting squadrons from the First Wing to 5th Army Air Forces stationed at Tacloban, Leyte. Thus MAG-12 at Emirau was ordered to send Marine Fighting Squadrons 115, 211, 313 and 218 to Leyte.

First Wing, in addition, was to furnish seven SBD squadrons with Headquarters and Service Squadrons of MAG's-32 and 24 for maintenance and service as soon as the Lingayen operation commenced. In his Christmas Day address to all hands, General Mitchell raised morale no little by disclosing the welcome fact that they would soon be in a new combat zone, after seven months at Bougainville. Everyone enthusiastically prepared for the impending move.

Literally tons (8000 pounds) of maps, intelligence data, jungle-warfare information and equipment were flown from 7th Fleet Headquarters at Brisbane and from Hollandia. Intensive training and great interest in jungle fighting, air-sea rescue and close-air support doctrines were revived. A new-type emergency kit and jungle knives were issued to aviation personnel against the imminent move.

The flight echelon of MAG-12 arrived at Leyte on 3 December 1944 in time to participate in the Ormoc and Mindoro landings on 7 and 15 December respectively. By the end of the month elements of MAG's-32 and 24 were en route to the Philippines to support the Lingayen operation on Luzon. On 30 December, the flight echelon of VMO-251 (redesignated VMF-251 on 31 January 1945) departed Bougainville for Samar Island in the Philippines, heralding the imminent arrival of MAG-14.

The Lingayen landings were made by the U. S. 6th Army at four beachheads on Lingayen Gulf on 9 January 1945. An armada of 800 vessels bombarded Luzon for three days while 900 amphibious tanks, tractors, DUKW's and 2500 LCVP's and other landing craft carried troops and supplies to the beaches. By the end of January MAG-24 and MAG-32 were operating from Mangaldan Field, the ground echelons having landed 21 January, the flight echelons six days later. Colonel Clayton C. Jerome, commanding MAG-32, was given command of Marine Air Groups upon his arrival 27 January 1945. At the end of January MAG-61 was the only First Wing unit engaged in combat operations in the Northern Solomons-Bismarck area. MAG-25, although still operating from Bougainville and Los Negros (Admiralties), was sortying far beyond the home bases, carrying personnel, supplies and equipment to Luzon.

Although Wing Headquarters was carrying on ComAirNorSols duties and still had cognizance over all Army, Navy, Marine and New Zealand planes in the area, everyone was concerned more with the far-off battle lines. The forward Groups were winning glory for themselves and Marine aviation in close and direct air support of the Army in the definitive fight down Luzon over the great central plain. MAG's-32 and 24 covered the spectacular "100-mile dash of the 1st Cavalry Division from Guimba to Manila." On 3 February the Army entered Manila and Marine SBD's bombed strategic targets in that city in support of the ground troops. Numerous commendations from the Army for the "magnificent" air support were bestowed upon MAG's-32 and 24 for that and later operations with the Army.

Between the Lingayen operations and the invasion of Mindanao on 10 March, Marine squadrons in the Philippines participated in amphibious landings by Army troops at Nasugubu, Capul, Biri, Masbate and Burias, all in the Philippines.

Since the departure of the Philippines units, the status of First Wing Headquarters at Bougainville had changed very little except that on 9 March, Brigadier General Claude A. Larkin, USMC, who had been General Mitchell's assistant since Marine Aircraft, South Pacific was dissolved 31 July 1944 and who had relieved General Moore, was himself relieved to return to the States to become Commanding General, Marine Fleet Air, West Coast. However, in the Philippines things were anything but static.

MAG-12, after winning honors in the Visayans, left Leyte to participate in the Mindanao campaign and landed at Zamboanga with the 41st Army Division on D-day as did MAG-32. MAG-14, based at Samar, participated in convoy coverage and ground support missions in the Visayans and Mindanao. During March, Marine units in the Philippines helped support four important amphibious operations: Basilan in the Sulu Archipelago on the 17th, Panay on the 18th, Cebu on the 26th and Negros in the Visayans on the 29th.

The fighting squadrons attached to MAG-14 "won major credit for breaking the main enemy defenses north of Cebu City and all during April continued their very effective close support missions on Cebu and Negros." During that month, Army troops landing at Sanga Sanga, Bongao and Jolo in the Sulu Archipelago, at Malabang, Parang, Cotabato and Dumaguete in the Philippines, were covered by First Wing units in the area. VMB-611 had by now joined MAG-32 at Zamboanga and a new offensive was afoot.

The Borneo operations commenced when Australian troops landed in the Sadau-Tarakan area on 30 April. Marine planes operat-

ing with the 13th AAF provided daylight cover for the convoys. In the Bougainville area MAG-61 continued its strikes on New Britain and New Ireland airfields while VMB-423 at Green spent most of April striking targets in support of the Australian Army operating in southwest Bougainville.

Iwo Jima was long since secured, the Second Wing was directing air operations at Okinawa and doom was galloping toward the Japanese who were, nonetheless, still fiercely resisting on all fronts, especially in the Philippines. Davao was the main objective after the Malabang-Parang-Cotobato landings and Marine squadrons participated in close support missions for the Army in that area. MAG-24 continued to operate from Malabang under the 13th AAF while MAG's-12 and 32 were operating at Zamboanga from Moret Field (once San Roque, but renamed for Lieutenant Colonel Paul Moret, USMC, who was killed in an airplane crash at New Caledonia in 1943). They carried out intensive bombing and support missions for the Army in the Mindanao campaign. On 10 May, VMSB's-241 and 236 helped support Army landings at Macajalar Bay in the Philippines. MAG-14 was transferred to the Second Wing and the forward echelon began its departure from Samar for the Okinawa campaign on 22 May 1945.

After 26 months' service in the Pacific, General Mitchell announced 3 June 1945, that he was being relieved as Commanding General, First Marine Aircraft Wing and as Commander, Aircraft, Northern Solomons. Two days later he left Bougainville and Major General Louis E. Woods, the first commander of the now veteran Wing, relieved General Mitchell. However, General Woods was relieved the next day by Colonel Harold Major, USMC, until Brigadier General Lewie G. Merritt arrived on 10 June to assume command.

The last important amphibious operation supported by First Wing units in the Philippines was that at Sarangani Bay on 12 July 1945. Tons of bombs were dropped in all enemy-held sections of Mindanao by Marine squadrons and close support of ground operations provided. On 15 July 1945 ComAirNorSols was dissolved and tactical command of the Northern Solomons area was assumed by the Royal Australian Air Force, thus relieving General Merritt of future responsibility as ComAirNorSols. That command was replaced by Islands Area, a command which assumed tactical control of all United States and New Zealand aircraft in the area. Air Commodore G. N. Roberts assumed the title of Air Officer Commanding Islands Area.

During July MAG-32 received a glowing commendation from the Commanding General, 24th Infantry Division for "exceptionally fine air support given the 24th Division during the Mindanao operations." MAG-24 received a letter of commendation from the Commanding General, 6th Army, endorsed by General McArthur, Admiral Nimitz and General Merritt, for its support in the Luzon campaign which stated that his command "would be pleased to have MAG-24 serve with them again ***as they approach the last ramparts of Japan."

Major General Claude A. Larkin, USMC, once Assistant Commander of the First Wing reported to Wing Headquarters on 3 August 1945 to assume command of the Wing. But time was running out, not only for the Japanese but also for First Wing as a fighting outfit! Combat missions ceased 11 August 1945 and after the capitulation of the Japanese, MAG's-Zamboanga as a task group was dissolved on 30 August 1945 and control of Moret Field came under the Army's 13th Fighter Command.

On 14 September 1945 surface personnel of First Wing Headquarters started for Tientsin, via Okinawa; eight days later Command Post of First Wing was shifted to Okinawa but not for long. On 6 October the First Wing was in Tientsin. On 1 November, Major General Louis E. Woods who had not only organized the Wing and been its first commander but had also commanded the Forward Echelon through some of the most tenebrous days at Guadalcanal assumed command once again. It was an appropriate and historic finale to complete that diversified cycle of the First Marine Aircraft Wing from 7 July 1941 to 1 November 1945.

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DECORATIONS and COMMENDATIONS

(R) following names of all personnel indicates reserve status

Medal of Honor

★ **GRAY, Ross F., Sgt. (R)**
(West Blocton, Ala

Navy Cross

★ **ALBAUGH, Daniel S., Pfc. (R)**
(Glendale, Calif.)

★ **EDGAR, Charles R., Corp. (R)**
(Warren, Minn.)

★ **LILJA, George, Pfc.**
(Natick, Mass.)

★ **MAHONEY, Thomas G., 1st Lt. (R)**
(San Francisco, Calif.)

★ **SHAKER, Conrad F., Corp. (R)**
(Elroy, Wis.)

★ **WHALEN, Joseph J., GySgt.**
(Philadelphia, Pa.)

Distinguished Service Medal

ARMY

★ **MITCHELL, Ralph J., Maj. Gen.**
(New Britain, Conn.)

Gold Star

IN LIEU OF FOURTH LEGION OF MERIT

★ **HARRIS, Field, Maj. Gen.**
(Lexington, Ky.)

Gold Star

IN LIEU OF SECOND LEGION OF MERIT

★ **MITCHELL, Ralph J., Maj. Gen.**
(New Britain, Conn.)

Legion of Merit

★ **BLANCHARD, John D., Lt. Col.**
(New York, N. Y.)

★ **DENIG, Robert L., Brig. Gen. Rtd.**
(Sandusky, Ohio)

★ **EDSON, Merritt A., Col.**
(Washington, D. C.)

★ **GEPHART, Valentine, Col. (R)**
(Seattle, Wash.)

★ **LARSON, Emery E., Col.**
(Minneapolis, Minn.)

★ **MUND, Edwin J., Col. (Rtd.)**
(Washington, D. C.)

★ **PFEIFFER, Omar T., Brig. Gen.**
(Toledo, Ohio)

★ **REA, Leonard E., Brig. Gen.**
(Auburn, N. Y.)

★ **ROBILLARD, Fred S., Col.**
(Miami, Fla.)

★ **STROTHER, James H., Col.**
(Dadeville, Ala.)

★ **THACHER, Miles R., Col.**
(Philadelphia, Pa.)

★ **WRIGHT, Raymond R., Maj. Gen.**
(Mountain View, Calif.)

Oak Leaf Cluster

FOR LEGION OF MERIT
(ARMY)

★ **SMITH, Oliver P., Brig. Gen.**
(Berkeley, Calif.)

Legion of Merit

ARMY

★ **HARRIS, Elmer, Capt. (R)**
(Seattle, Wash.)

★ **SHEPHERD, L. C., Jr., Maj. Gen.**
(Norfolk, Va.)

★ **SHERMAN, Paul D., Lt. Col.**
(Melrose, Mass.)

★ **WILLIS, Frederic A., Maj. (R)**
(New York City, N. Y.)

Silver Star Medal

★ **BARTKIEWICZ, Stanley F., Sgt. (R)**
(Cleveland, Ohio)

★ **BURCHAM, Jim T., Pfc. (R)**
(Carlsbad, N. M.)

★ **CARDIFF, William L., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Stockton, Calif.)

★ **CLARK, Raphael D., Pfc. (R)**
(Oakland, Calif.)

★ **CLARK, Timothy C., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Malad City, Idaho)

★ **COFFEY, Tom R., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Portland, Oregon)

★ **DAWSON, J. D., Sgt.**
(Phoenix, Ariz.)

The FIGHTING MEN of COLORADO

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★ **EDSON, Merritt A., Brig. Gen.**
(Washington, D. C.)

★ **ENSMAN, James F., Pfc. (R)**
(Toledo, Ohio)

★ **FINCKE, Reginald, Jr., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Long Island, N.Y.)

★ **GABODA, Frank, Pfc. (R)**
(Linden, N. J.)

★ **GOFORTH, James W., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Louisville, Ky.)

★ **HEDDERLY, Loren F., 1st Lt.**
(San Diego, Calif.)

★ **HENNESSY, Lawrence K., Capt. (R)**
(Schenectady, N. Y.)

★ **HOFFMAN, Orville H., Sgt.**
(Murphysboro, Ill.)

★ **JOLLY, Louis F. G., Pfc. (R)**
(Holden, Mass.)

★ **JONES, Robert F., Jr., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Savannah, Ga.)

★ **KELLEHER, David A., Jr., Capt. (R)**
(Lawrence, Mass.)

★ **KELLY, Henry J., Jr., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Waltham, Mass.)

★ **KOCH, Henry F., Sgt. (R)**
(Perry, Kan.)

★ **LAVEZZO, John W., Corp. (R)**
(Boston, Mass.)

★ **LEWIS, Thad Q., Sgt.**
(Canetoe, N. C.)

★ **McGINNISS, William W., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Cincinnati, Ohio)

★ **MAULTSBY, J. W., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Durham, N. C.)

★ **MINNICHBACH, Leslie T., Pfc. (R)**
(Zerbe, Pa.)

★ **NICHOLS, Jerry, PlSgt.**
(Denver, Colo.)

★ **NILSEN, Owen D., Corp. (R)**
(Springfield, N. Y.)

★ **O'CONNOR, James J., Pfc. (R)**
(Stayton, Ore.)

★ **PARSE, Frank A., Pfc. (R)**
(Chicago, Ill.)

★ **RENTZ, James H., Pfc.**
(Wilmington, Del.)

★ **ROBIE, Tracy L., Jr., FldCk. (R)**
(Woodsville, N. H.)

★ **ROBITAILLE, Phillip E., Pfc.**
(Hartford, Conn.)

★ **SAYER, Burton C., Pfc. (R)**
(Brier Hill, N. Y.)

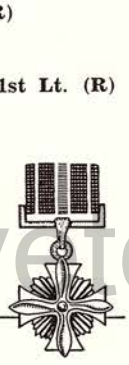
★ **SHEMAS, Louis J., Pfc. (R)**
(Peoria, Ill.)

★ **STONE, Odis, Corp. (R)**
(Stephenville, Texas)

★ **UHL, Robert V., Sgt. (R)**
(Dallas, Texas)

★ **WALKER, William S., 1st Lt. (R)**
(Clearwater, Fla.)

Distinguished Flying Cross



★ **BLACKSHIRE, James P., Capt. (R)**
(Betteforte, Ark.)

★ **DEAL, Harry J., Capt. (R)**
(Lake Providence, La.)

★ **MANTHEY, Arthur G., Capt. (R)**
(St. Bernard, Ohio)

★ **MISLEY, James R., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Mt. Shasta, Calif.)

★ **TIMMER, David A., 2nd Lt. (R)**
(Muskegon, Mich.)

Navy and Marine Corps Medal

★ **FITZPATRICK, Hubert L., Pvt. (R)**
(Scottsville, Ky.)

★ **SONZINI, Mario R., Pfc. (R)**
(Coatesville, Pa.)

Bronze Star Medal

★ **ACKER, Vincent W., Jr., Pfc. (R)**
(Birdsboro, Pa.)

★ **AVERY, Edward B., Pfc. (R)**
(Parrish, Ala.)

★ **BARKLEY, Thomas L., Pvt. (R)**
(Des Moines, Iowa)

★ **BLAINE, Harrison T., 1st Lt. (R)**
(New York, N. Y.)

★ **DAVIS, Joseph E., Pvt. (R)**
(Bakersfield, Calif.)

★ **DAY, Veronon E., Corp. (R)**
(Ogdensburg, N.Y.)

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MARINE AVIATION, Marine Corsair fighter-bomber squadrons have scored better than 90% accuracy on small targets and contributed to the spectacular Japanese setbacks in the Pacific.

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