



Cpl Jorge M. Benitez evokes vast Quantico training areas in "Communications Jeep."



Reservists gather at Camp Lejeune's "LZ Lark," captured by Sgt Henry C. Casselli.

1984 Olympics in Los Angeles as a Marine Corps artist. Col H. Avery Chenoweth, USMCR, has a studio in Alexandria, Virginia. His two mountain warfare training paintings were just returned from a long-term exhibit at Bridgeport, California. His portraits of Marine Corps Commandants Nicholas, Henderson, Lejeune, and Cates hang in the Marine Corps sector of the Secretary of the Navy's corridor in the Pentagon.

Capt Leonard H. Dermott, USMCR, painted his two "Snowy Beach" works in Maine where he chose to live and work as art gallery owner, fine artist, and farmer. WO Alex Young, USMCR, is a licensed architect who works for the Washington

State Department of Transportation, which selected his painting of a paddle wheel steamer for the annual Washington State Ferries promotional poster. His "0331" is one of a series of paintings of Marines in uniform and equipment of their Military Occupational Specialty. Alex attended the Warrant Officer's Reserve Course at The Basic School, Quantico, this summer.

Col Peter M. Gish, USMCR (Ret), works equally well in watercolor and oil as a portraitist and landscape painter. The sparkling blue sky and sun-bright architecture in his "Liberty in Athens" remind some of the work of Winslow Homer and John Singer

Sargent. He is on the faculty of Fairfield University, Connecticut, and has led annual painting tours to Norway.

Cheslie D'Andrea of Rockport, Massachusetts, was commissioned by the USS *Constitution* Memorial Foundation to execute a painting of the frigate for the State Department to present to the Sultan of Brunei. The 8th Tank Battalion, USMCR, made him an "honorary lieutenant colonel" when he covered their summer training at Twentynine Palms. Two of his paintings from this assignment are in the exhibit. Robert G. Smith, Honorary Naval Aviator No. 10, is associated with McDonnell Douglas Aircraft. A viewer may go into an involuntary crouch as the A-4 in "Takeoff" hurtles toward him. We have no current information on 1stLt Daniel Camp, USMCR, or Robert K. Halladay at this writing.

Three exhibit cases of artifacts from Grenada and Lebanon show Russian- and satellite-made weapons and equipment. ". . . Every Clime and Place . . ." runs through January 1985 at the Marine Corps Historical Center.—JTD.

The Marine Corps art program is usually thought of as covering two areas—combat coverage by artists in the front lines with the troops and historical reconstructions of past Marine Corps activities. Art from Vietnam, Korea and World War II in the collection exemplify the former; LtCol Waterhouse's several historical series the latter. The eye of the artist provides a special insight not just to war and to past events but to current activities of the Corps as well. ". . . Every Clime and Place . . ." subtitled "Marines at Home and Abroad 1874-1984" does just that. The combat art program did not stop with the withdrawal of Marines from Vietnam but Marine artists continue to delineate Marine activities from training and readiness exercises to NATO deployments and interventions from their unique viewpoints.—FBN

Holiday Card Reveals Famous Artist's Sketch Of Celebrated Marine

by John Creigh Hendrickson

“**F**or General and Mrs. Holcomb from the Thomasons. Christmas 1941.” The pen-and-ink sketch with its simple incscription symbolizes a link between two famous Marines: Gen Thomas Holcomb, 17th Commandant of the Marine Corps, and Col John W. Thomason, Jr., the most popular artist and author the Corps had yet produced. The drawing portrays Holcomb as he appeared when Thomason first met him in France in 1918. At that time Holcomb was a major, commanding the 2d Battalion, 6th Marines. Thomason was a newly-commissioned second lieutenant in the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines. The two regiments were elements of the 4th Marine Brigade, 2d U.S. Infantry Division, considered by many the finest unit in the American Expeditionary Force (A.E.F.). Holcomb and Thomason served with the Brigade throughout the toughest battles of World War I: Chateau-Thierry, Soissons, St. Mihiel, Blanc Mont, and the Meuse-Argonne offensive. Both officers received the Navy Cross and the Silver Star, and their friendship lasted more than 25 years.

The portrait came to light recently as the author was searching through the personal correspondence of Gen Holcomb, housed in the Personal Papers Collection at the Marine Corps Historical Center. I was looking for material concerning the organization of the Raider Battalions at the beginning of World War II and was hurrying through the box of papers covering the second half of 1941, hoping to finish it by closing time; suddenly, the sketch appeared, tucked between two Christmas cards. I showed it to J. Michael Miller, curator of personal papers, and a smile spread across his face. “Wait ‘til Jack Dyer sees this!” he exclaimed.

John Creigh Hendrickson is a freelance writer and researcher based in Alexandria, Virginia. He graduated from Rockford College in 1974, and is currently working on a book about BGen Evans F. Carlson.

The next morning we showed the drawing to John T. Dyer, art curator at the Historical Center. He authenticated it and commented on it as an example of the artist's favorite medium. In typical fashion, Thomason used quick, almost sloppy strokes to suggest the folds of Holcomb's greatcoat. The hands, which hold pen and paper, are suggested rather than delineated, but the facial features are drawn with great care. While there is no background in the sketch, much can be inferred. Holcomb sits in a relaxed pose, apparently writing a letter home, but his pistol is nearby. The lighting is strong, coming from the lower left and throwing deep shadows; it suggests a campfire. The expression on his face is one of surprise and pleasure, as if he had just encountered a friend he didn't expect to see again.



The 17th Commandant, depicted as a major in France in 1918, was greeted at Christmas, 1941, by his friend of more than 25 years, John W. Thomason, Jr.

Thomas Holcomb was born in New Castle, Delaware, on 5 August 1879, and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps shortly after his twenty-first birthday. In 1905, he went to Peking when the permanent Legation Guard of Marines was established. He was perhaps the first Marine officer to learn Chinese. After a series of assignments ashore and afloat, he was promoted to major in 1916. In August of 1917 he became the first commanding officer of the newly-organized 2d Battalion, 6th Marines at Quantico, and he took the unit to France in early 1918. He

led it through the intense fighting at Chateau-Thierry and Soissons; promoted to temporary lieutenant colonel, he became the executive officer of the 6th Marines and saw more action in the battles of St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne. Returning to the United States in 1919, he was posted to the Marine Barracks at Guantanamo Bay. After completion of the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff School, he commanded the Legation Guard in Peking during the difficult years 1927-30, receiving promotion to colonel in 1928. He was graduated from the Naval War College in 1931 and the Army War College the following year.

Promoted to brigadier general in 1935, he was serving as Commandant of the Marine Corps Schools at Quantico when he was selected—over the heads of several seniors—to become the Commandant of the Marine Corps in 1936. Reappointed Commandant in 1940, he oversaw the expansion of the Corps from 15,000 men to more than 300,000, and it's completed evolution from colonial infantry to the most powerful amphibious assault force in the world. Holcomb was the first Marine to wear three stars; upon his retirement in 1944 he was promoted to general and appointed minister to the Union of South Africa, a post he held until 1948. General Holcomb died in New Castle on 24 May 1965, at the age of 85.

John William Thomason, Jr., was born in Huntsville, Texas, on 28 February 1893. His father was a prominent doctor, and his mother was the daughter of Maj Thomas Goree, who had been Longstreet's aide at Gettysburg. As a boy he heard dozens of stories about the Civil War from his grandfather and the other Confederate veterans in Huntsville. He began drawing at an early age and, much to his father's disgust, attended three colleges without receiving a degree.

At the beginning of World War I he joined the Marines and went to Officers School at Quantico, graduating 14th in a class of 180. Sent to France in April 1918, he was posted to the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, as a rifle platoon leader, and received his baptism of fire at Chateau-Thierry in June. Thomason was in the front lines through all of the bloody battles of the summer and fall of 1918, and sketched what he saw, even

while the fighting went on. At Soissons, he led seven men in an assault on a German machine gun nest and destroyed it. The ugliness of war caught up with the romanticism of his youth; at Blanc Mont his company was almost wiped out. As he later wrote: "We were cut to pieces in the Champagne—I never enjoyed war afterwards."

After serving on occupation duty in Germany, Thomason came home for a brief time and was then sent to Cuba. A captain by this time, he commanded the Marine Detachment of the USS *Rochester* in the Caribbean and went ashore in Nicaragua in 1926.

Before he left France, Thomason had conceived the idea of a book about the 4th Marine Brigade's exploits in the World War. In 1925, his friend and former comrade-in-arms, Laurence Stallings (author of *What Price Glory*), introduced him to one of the editors of *Scribner's Magazine*, who was impressed by Thomason's combat sketches. The editor suggested a possible collaboration, but Thomason showed him some of his own writings. Four of Thomason's stories

were published in *Scribners'*; along with other stories, they were published in 1926 under the title *Fix Bayonets*. The book was an immediate success. Two more books of short stories followed, and, in 1930, Scribners' published his *Jeb Stuart*, which was received with praise from critics and public alike. The book was dedicated to his grandfather, Maj Goree.

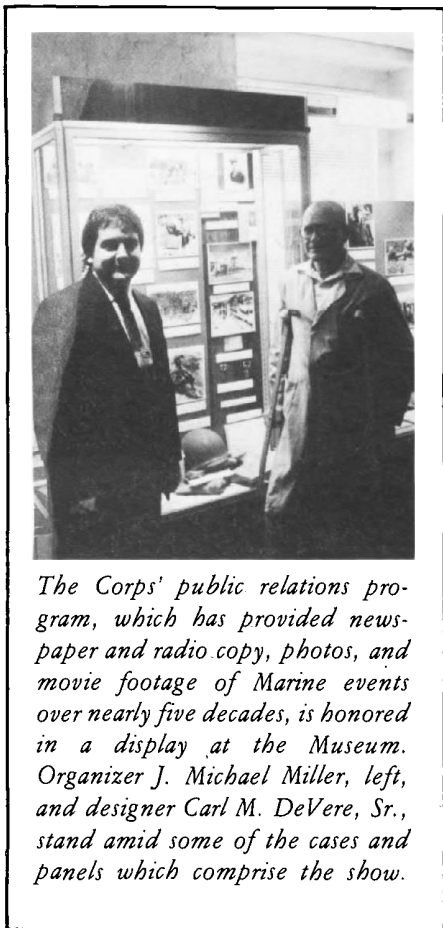
In the fall of 1930 Thomason was assigned to the Legation Guard in Peking, and arrived shortly after Holcomb's departure. China provided him with a wealth of material, much of which was reflected in his next collection of stories, *Salt Wind and Gobi Dust*. After returning to the United States in 1932, Thomason served in a variety of billets. In 1939 he was promoted to lieutenant colonel and given command of the 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, which was Holcomb's old outfit. In 1940 he published his most successful book, *Lone Star Preacher*. It was based on the life of Elder John Stevens, a Methodist minister who had served in John Hood's Texas

Brigade; as a young man, Thomason had known Stevens.

At the outbreak of World War II, Thomason was on duty with the Fleet Marine Force in San Diego. He was also hard at work on another book of short stories, entitled *-And A Few Marines*, which was published in 1943. Thomason had asked Holcomb for an overseas assignment, and in April, 1943, he went to Hawaii as Adm Nimitz' Fleet Marine Officer. In that capacity he made a tour of the Marine units in the South Pacific, including those on Guadalcanal. As always, he carried his sketchbooks with him.

Thomason's health had been mediocre for several years. He was hospitalized in Australia and returned to Pearl Harbor for further treatment; the doctors there decided to send him home. He went back to his old job in the Amphibious Training Command at Camp Elliott, but fell ill again. On 12 March 1944, he died at San Diego Naval Hospital.

Six months later his widow, Leda, and his son, Marine 2dLt John W. Thomason III, christened a new destroyer, the USS *Thomason*.



The Corps' public relations program, which has provided newspaper and radio copy, photos, and movie footage of Marine events over nearly five decades, is honored in a display at the Museum. Organizer J. Michael Miller, left, and designer Carl M. DeVere, Sr., stand amid some of the cases and panels which comprise the show.

CAP Marines Taped for Collection

Marines and other servicemen who were members of combined action platoons (CAPs) in Vietnam have formed a new organization, Vietnam Combined Action Veterans, and held a first reunion with the blessings of both the President and the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

The Combined Action Convention, held in San Francisco from 11-14 October, brought together Marines who, perhaps more than any of their comrades, fought the village war in Vietnam. The Combined Action concept employed a squad of Marines to advise and reinforce the Popular Forces (local militia) inside a Vietnamese hamlet. The Combined Action Platoon—14 Marines and a Navy Corpsman—was to improve the fighting quality of the Popular Forces, provide protection for the local populace, and obtain intelligence.

When in difficulty, the combined action platoons were to call on

friendly forces for assistance. However, too often this assistance came too late or not at all. It is estimated that the CAPs suffered a 50 percent casualty rate. The 20 men who attended the convention were survivors. Many of them were interviewed for the Oral History Collection by senior Vietnam historian Jack Shulimson.

At the convention, LtCol William F. Corson, commander of the CAP program from January-August 1967, spoke of the aims and mission of the CAPs, and how he selected Marines for the program: He said he wanted men who had seen combat, been bloodied, but still had compassion for the Vietnamese people.

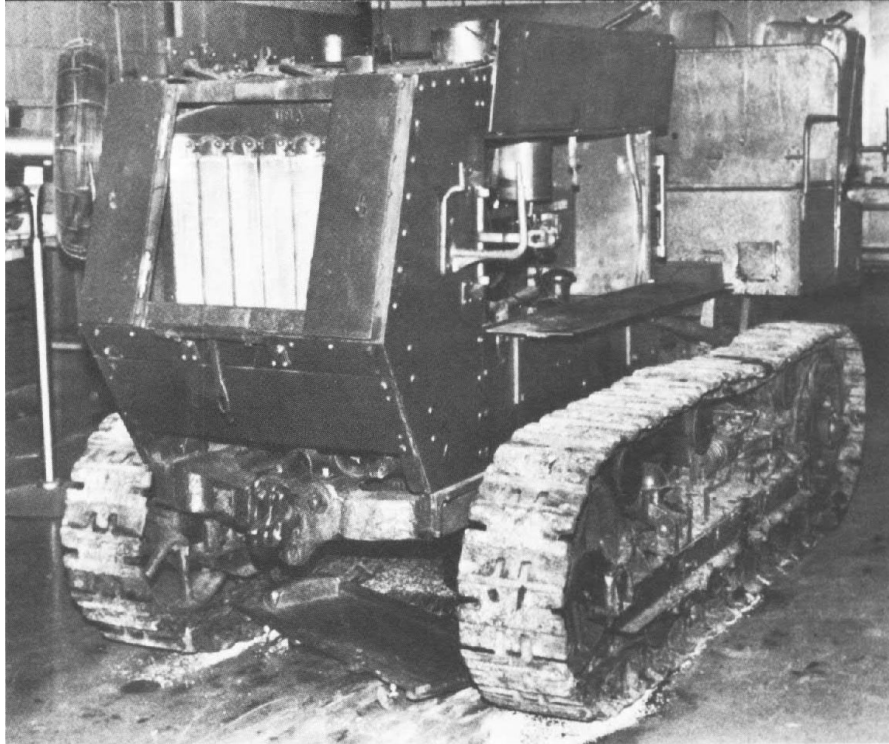
James G. DuGuid's efforts brought the convention about. He called for it through his CAP veterans' newsletter, set up the agenda, and solicited donations from the Army and Navy Chaplains' funds, expressing the view that veterans of the program had been silent for too long.—JS

1917 Artillery Tractor Restoration in Progress By Museum's Curators

by Anthony Wayne Tommell

With the signing of the armistice ending the First World War on 11 November 1918, large amounts of equipment became surplus to the needs of a reduced "peacetime" U.S. Army. Sometime in or about 1919, the 10th Marine Regiment (Field Artillery) received some of these surplus weapons and equipment. They included French 75mm Model of 1897 and 155mm Model of 1918 "G.P.F." field guns which replaced their 3-inch field guns and their huge 7-inch naval guns (mounted on caterpillar tractor mounts). It seems likely that the Marines received their first Model of 1917 5-ton "Holt" artillery tractors at the same time; the exact date is not known.

The Model of 1917 5-ton artillery tractor was designed to provide "motorized draft for mobile artillery" over "very soft and uneven ground which the wheeled type of self-propelled vehicle could negotiate only under the most extreme difficulty, if at all." In modern terms, it was the "prime mover" for the French 75mm field gun and other larger field artillery "not exceeding its own weight." There is even a photograph in the Marine Corps Historical Collection which shows two Model of 1917 5-ton artillery tractors hitched in tandem pulling a 155mm



As yet untouched by restorers, the Model 1917 five-ton artillery tractor rests at the Museum's Quantico facility in late 1983. Even the engine had an armored cover on this prime mover for the French 75mm field gun, by the makers of the Reo motor car.

"G.P.F." field gun during the Culebra maneuvers of 1924.

The Model of 1917 artillery tractor recently donated to the Museum's vehicle collection was manufactured in 1918 by the Reo Motor Car Company, under license from Holt, forerunner of the Caterpillar Tractor Company. It bears a plate designating it U.S. Marine Corps property. It is presently being restored by the Restoration Section of the Museums' Quantico Branch Activity under the direction of LtCol Rudy T. Schwanda, USMC, the new officer-in-charge. The tractor will be exhibited in the renovated and redesigned "Early

Years" exhibits at the Air-Ground Museum at Quantico upon its completion.

The Model of 1917 5-ton artillery tractor was used by the U.S. Marine Corps until the 1930s when it was replaced by more modern tractors and trucks. It also saw service in China with elements of the 10th Marines during the 1920s. At present, little additional information is available about this vehicle. Readers of *Fortitudine* who possess any detailed data are encouraged to contact the Curator of Ordnance and Heavy Equipment, Marine Corps Museums Branch Activities, Quantico, Virginia 22134-5001.

A 5-ton Holt tractor tows a French 75mm gun and crew of the 10th Marines in Tientsin, China in 1927. The tractor is supplied with a .30-caliber Browning heavy machine gun.



FLIGHT LINES

Grumman F4F-4 Wildcat

*A standing feature about
aviation holdings in the
Marine Corps
Historical Program*

THE F4F WILDCAT was a progressive development in the fighter series produced by the Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation of Bethpage, New York, during the 1930s. The basic Wildcat design was an all-metal, single-engine, single-seat, mid-wing monoplane with manual retracting landing gear, and at the time of America's entry into World War II, the F4F-3 Wildcat was the Navy and Marine

Corps' front-line fighter. The F4F-4, the main Wildcat production model, was significantly improved over the F4F-3 because of the incorporation of a folding wing capability, the use of additional fuselage armor, and an increase in firepower with the addition of two more .50-caliber machine guns.

In terms of speed, maneuverability, and rate of climb the Wildcat's performance was inferior to that of the

Japanese Zero fighter it faced, but it held its own in aerial combat against the Zero by exploiting strengths in the areas of superior armament, rugged construction, and well trained pilots. Major Joe Renner may have summed it up best when he said, "A Zero can't take two seconds' fire from a Grumman . . . and a Grumman can sometimes take as high as fifteen minutes fire from a Zero."

The Marines used Wildcats as front-line fighters less than two years, but during that short period of time the F4Fs established a distinguished combat record. VMF-211 flew F4F-3s in the defense of Wake Island, and seven F4F-3s were used by VMF-221 at the Battle of Midway. Marine Wildcats, however, made their most memorable effort at Guadalcanal, where F4F-4s flown by the pilots of VMFs-223, -224, -121, -112, and -122 succeeded in neutralizing a fierce Japanese air threat. The importance of the Wildcat contribution led Under Secretary of the Navy Forrestal to exclaim, "Grumman saved Guadalcanal."

The courage of Marine F4F pilots is attested to by the fact that six Medals of Honor were awarded to Marine Wildcat pilots out of a total of eleven awarded to Marine aviators during the entire course of World War II. Pilots so honored were: LtCol Harold W. Bauer (VMF-212); 1stLt Jefferson J. DeBlanc (VMF-214); Capt Henry T. Elrod (VMF-211); Capt Joseph J. Foss (VMF-121); Major Robert E. Galer (VMF-224); Major John L. Smith (VMF-223); and 1stLt James S. Swett (VMF-221).

In 1942 Eastern Aircraft became a second production source for the F4F. Designated as the FM, over 6,000 Wildcats were produced by Eastern.

The Marine Corps Museum's Wildcat is the only F4F-4 known to exist in the United States. It carries bureau number 12114, and it was acquired from Seattle Community College in 1968. —FMB



The Wildcat's ruggedness and firepower enabled it to compile a distinguished record. This F4F-4 (BuNo: 12114) is the only one known to exist in the United States.

Technical Data

Based on lightest loading condition depicted in airplane characteristics and performance chart.

Manufacturer: Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corporation, Bethpage, New York.

Type: Carrier-based fighter.

Accommodation: Pilot only.

Power Plant: One 1,200-h.p. Pratt & Whitney R-1830-86.

Dimensions: Span, 38 ft.; Length, 28 ft. 11 in.; Height 11 ft. 11 in.

Weights: Empty, 5,766 lbs.; Gross, 7,964 lbs.

Performance: Max speed, 318 m.p.h. $\frac{1}{2}$ 19,400 ft.; Service ceiling, 33,700 ft.; Range, 955 mi.; Climb, 1,612 ft. per min.

Armaments: Six .50-cal. machine guns; Two 1,000-lb. bombs.

World War II Chronology: *September-December 1944*

Palaus

10 September. Task Group 38.4 (fast carriers), having bombarded targets in the Volcano-Bonins and Yap and Ulithi Islands, arrived off the Palaus and began a two-day strike against the anti-aircraft positions and the beach defenses on Peleliu and Angaur in preparation for the invasion.

12 September. The Western Fire Support Group of Western Attack Force (Task Force 32) arrived off the Palau islands and began naval bombardment in preparation for the projected landings. The group was covered by Task Group 38.4 and escort carrier forces making aerial attacks.

15 September. Preceded by carrier-based air and heavy bomber support, the 1st Marine Division (Rein) [III Amphibious Corps] landed on Peleliu Beaches White and Orange against heavy opposition. The 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, drove eastward prior to turning north and deploying across the southern edge of the airfield. Company L reached the eastern shore, cutting the island into two parts. A Japanese tank-infantry counterattack against the airfield aborted, and Company L, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, drove north in the wake of the repulsed Japanese, nearly reaching the center of the field. The 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, advanced south to capture the Japanese isolated there.

16 September. The 5th Marines, supported by the 1st Marines, swept the north portion of the airfield. Company I, 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, reached the east shore and consolidated the beach position there. Company K attacked southward to the southeast promontory followed by the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines.

16 September. The 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, landed on Beach Orange 3 in 1st Marine Division reserve and was attached to the 1st Marines. The 1st Marines launched an attack northward against the ridge system following the axis of Peleliu's northwest peninsula which harbored the core of Japanese resistance.

17 September. The 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, seized Hill 200, and Company L, 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, secured the southern promontory.

17-20 September. Regimental Combat Teams 321 and 322, 81st U.S. Infantry Division, secured Angaur Island, although a

The Peleliu beach is darkened by the debris thrown up by a combined naval and aerial bombardment in September 1944, as landing craft with Marine assault troops roar shoreward.

sizeable pocket of Japanese resistance remained in the northwest corner of the island.

18 September. In the 1st Marines' zone the 2d Battalions, 1st and 7th Marines, captured Hill 210, and Company B, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, seized Hill 205. The 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, secured the southern portion of the island with the capture of the southeast promontory.

19 September. Elements of the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, reached the Five Sisters, the southern face of the final pocket of Japanese resistance; Company C crossed Horseshoe Valley and gained the summit of Hill 100. A patrol from Company K, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, reached the east coast below Purple Beach; and Company G occupied the southern end of the beach and patrolled toward the northeast. Two artillery observation planes from Marine Observation Squadron 3 flew onto the island.

20 September. The 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, advanced east and Company F succeeded in gaining the crest of Hill 260 facing the Five Sisters. Company G, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, secured the northern tip of the northeast peninsula and sent a patrol to the off-lying Island A. Marine Observation Squadron 3 began operations from the airfield.

21 September. The 1st Marines, owing to heavy casualties, ceased temporarily to exist as an assault unit on the regimental level and retired to the eastern defense zone to recuperate. Company B of the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, seized Island A off the northeast coast of Peleliu, and Company F secured the adjacent island of Ngabad without opposition.

23 September. Company G, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, concluded the regiment's mission in its northeast zone with the seizure of a small island due north of Ngabad, thereby isolating Japanese resistance on the northwest peninsula.

Regimental Combat Team 321, 81st U.S. Infantry Division, landed on Beach Orange and was ordered to isolate enemy resistance in "Umurbrogol Pocket" with the cooperation of the 7th Marines; the 2d and 3d Battalions of the Army regiment relieved the 1st Marines on the western shore.

24 September. Company E of the 321st Infantry Regiment seized Hill 100, the northern extremity of the "Umurbrogol Pocket" in which the main center of Japanese resistance was located. The first Marine fighter planes, an advance echelon from Marine Night Fighting Squadron 541, flew in to base on the airfield. The Japanese garrison was reinforced from the islands to the north.





Dispersed over the explosives-ravaged terrain of Peleliu in the Palau Islands, men and artillery of the 1st Marine Division advance from dug-in positions in the battle of September 1944.

25 September. An Army task force, seized Hill B, south of Hill 100, isolating the Japanese pocket of resistance on the northwest peninsula, and the 5th Marines attacked toward the tip of the peninsula and established a perimeter there.

26 September. The 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, attacked toward the Amiangal "Mountain," the island's northernmost hill system. Company B secured Hill 2, and the 2d Battalion by-passed Hill 1 and advanced north. The 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, secured Hill 80 and reached the northwest peninsula's eastern shore, sealing off the northern tip of the island. Marine Fighting Squadron 114 arrived on the airfield.

27 September. Army Regimental Combat Team 321 advanced to compress the Umurbrogol Pocket and sweep north through the central ridge system which had been by-passed by the 5th Marines. The 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, secured Hill 1.

The U.S. flag was raised at the 1st Marine Division command post to symbolize that the island was secured.

28-29 September. The 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, secured Ngesebus Island off Peleliu's northern shore, and Company G, 2d Battalion, captured the northern tip of the northwest peninsula.

29 September. The 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, relieved

those elements of Regimental Combat Team 321 facing the northern perimeter of Umurbrogol Pocket.

30 September. Northern Peleliu was secured and organized resistance declared ended; final mopping-up was assigned to Regimental Combat Team 321.

1 October. The remainder of Marine Fighting Squadron 122 and Marine Night Fighting Squadron 541 arrived on the airfield filling the complement of Marine Aircraft Group 11 assigned to the island.

2 October. Elements of Regimental Combat Team 321, supported by Company G, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, seized Radar Hill, thereby completing the mop-up of the northern peninsula.

The 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, secured Walt Ridge, and Company K, 3d Battalion, reached the summit of Boyd Ridge, the two tactically important ridges which bounded the Umurbrogol Pocket on the east.

9 October. Elements of Regimental Combat Team 321 secured Garakayo, the largest island lying off Peleliu's northern approaches.

10 October. Companies E and G, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, attacking the Umurbrogol Pocket, secured Baldy Ridge.

11 October. Hill 140, a position of tactical importance situated north of the Five Brothers, was secured by elements of the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines. It provided a site from which fire could be directed on the Horseshoe and the draw between Walt and Boyd Ridges.

12 October. The "Assault Phase" of the operation was declared ended, signifying a transfer of command functions from the assault forces to the Central Pacific administrative echelons which comprised the Forward Area (VAdm John H. Hoover, USN) and the Western Carolines Sub Area (RAdm John W. Reeves, Jr., USN).

14 October. The Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, designated MajGen Harry Schmidt (Commanding General, V Amphibious Corps) as Landing Force Commander for the Iwo Jima operation and directed him to prepare plans.

15 October. The permanent relief of the 1st Marine Division by the 81st U.S. Infantry Division began when the 2d Battalion, 321st Infantry, took over the area held by the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, across the northern end of the Umurbrogol Pocket.

16 October. Command of operations in the Umurbrogol Pocket passed officially to the Commanding Officer, 321st Infantry, thus completing the relief of the 5th Marines which remained on the island in general reserve. The 7th Marines began movement to Purple Beach for embarkation to the Russells.

17-18 October. The 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, engaged Japanese infiltrators who had reoccupied caves a short distance south of Umurbrogol Pocket; this was the last combat action of the 1st Marine Division on the island.

20 October. The 81st Infantry Division established its command post on the island, and the III Amphibious Corps and the 1st Marine Division staffs departed.

30 October. The final 1st Marine Division units—the 5th Marines (Rein)—departed the island.

11 November. The 81st U.S. Cavalry Reconnaissance Troops seized Gorokoltan Island, in the Palaus.

15 November. The 81st U.S. Cavalry Reconnaissance Troops seized Ngeregong Island, in the Palaus.

27 November. Regimental Combat Team 323 secured the Umurbrogol Pocket, and its commander reported officially that the Peleliu operation was ended.

Philippines

7-12 September. The Third Fleet began a probing operation in the Western Carolines and the Philippines with strikes against Yap and the Palau Islands (7 and 8 September), Mindanao, Philippines (9 and 10 September), and the central Philippines (12 September), revealing weak Japanese resistance there.

8 September. The JCS issued a directive to Commander in Chief, Southwest Pacific Area, and Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Area, for the invasion of the Philippines.

15 September. The JCS decided to by-pass Mindanao, Philippines, in favor of Leyte and moved up the landing date from 20 December to 20 October. Forces belonged to the Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Area, assigned to preliminary operations against Leyte, were released to Commander in Chief, Southwest Pacific Area for use in the campaign. The only Marine Corps ground troops (two artillery battalions from the V Amphibious Corps) to see action in the Philippines were part of this group.

20 September. Headquarters, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, received word that its seven dive-bomber squadron, would be employed in the Luzon campaign.

1 October. To provide the most effective combat control during the operation, Marine Aircraft Group 24 became an all-SBD outfit (comprising VMSB-133, -236, and -341), and a new headquarters, Marine Aircraft Group 32, was sent from Hawaii to command the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing's remaining SBD squadrons (VMSB-142, -224, and -243).

17 October. The Commander, Army Air Forces Southwest Pacific Area, issued detailed instructions concerning air facilities for the Luzon campaign and named actual units to participate, including the seven dive-bomber squadrons of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing.

The 6th U.S. Ranger Infantry Battalion captured Dinagat, Suluan, and Homonhon Islands in the Leyte Gulf, completing Phase One of the Leyte Campaign.

20 October. The main invasion of Leyte began when the X and XXIV Corps, Sixth U.S. Army, went ashore on the east coast of the island.

23-26 October. In the Battle of Leyte Gulf. The Third and Seventh U.S. Fleets destroyed the power of the Japanese Navy in the last serious threat to the U.S. capture of the islands. The Japanese lost 4 carriers, 3 battleships, 10 cruisers, 9 destroyers, and a submarine. The U.S. also sustained heavy losses.

27 October. The Army Air Forces assumed control of air activities in Leyte from U.S. Navy carriers when the first P-38s landed at Tacloban field.

2 November. The U.S. Sixth Army had gained control of Leyte Valley and its airfields.

Commander, Aircraft Northern Solomons, issued Operation Instructions No. 24-44 assigning dive-bomber squadrons of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing and Headquarters and Service Squadrons of Marine Aircraft Groups 24 and 32 to the Fifth Air Force (308th Bombardment Wing) (H) for operational control during the Lingayen Gulf, Luzon, occupation. VMSB-133, -142, -236, -241, -243, -244, and -341, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, were directed to provide close air support for ground operations in the Lingayen area and Central Luzon while Headquarters and Service Squadrons, Marine Aircraft Groups 24 and 32 were to establish base and servicing facilities for the Marine scout-bomber squadrons.

26-30 November. Commander in Chief, Southwest Pacific Area, requested that Marine Fighting Squadron 541 at Palau be transferred to Leyte in exchange for P-61s there, and on the recommendation of Adm Halsey, he ordered Marine Aircraft Group 12 in the Solomons forward to Tacloban.

3 December. Marine Night Fighting Squadron 541 of the 2d Marine Aircraft Wing on Peleliu and Marine Aircraft Group 12 (VMF-115, -211, -218, and -313) from the Solomons arrived at Tacloban under the operational control of the 308th Bombardment Wing, Fifth Air Force.

5 December. Marine Night Fighting Squadron 541 and Marine Aircraft Group 12 made their first aerial contact with the Japanese, while covering naval forces.

7 December. Marine aircraft attacked a Japanese convoy carrying reinforcements to Ormoc Bay. Pilots of Marine Fighting Squadron 211 critically damaged a Japanese destroyer



A buddy provides a drink of water from his canteen and comforting words to a wounded 1st Division Marine awaiting stretcher bearers amid the shattered underbrush of Peleliu Island.

withdrawing from Leyte. Later, with planes from Marine Fighting Squadrons 218 and 313 and Army P-40s, they sunk a troop transport and damaged two destroyers of the convoy.

10-25 December. Pilots of Marine Aircraft Group 12 flew striking missions in support of ground troops on Leyte.

11 December. Twelve F4Us from Marine Aircraft Group 12 with Army P-40s twice intercepted a Japanese reinforcement convoy off the northeast tip of Panay Island. The aircraft later sunk four of the 10 Japanese ships in the convoy, five miles from Palompon.

12 December. Marine Aircraft Group 12 supported by P-40s sank one Japanese destroyer of a reinforcement convoy and set fire to a tank landing ship off the northeast tip of Panay. This was the last large-scale Japanese attempt to reinforce the Leyte garrison.

15 December. Elements of the U.S. Sixth Army landed at San Jose Bay, Mindoro, covered by units of the Fifth Air Force including Marine Aircraft Group 12 and Marine Night Fighting Squadron 541. Marine flyers continued to support the landing force until 18 December.

26 December. Leyte was declared secured, and the U.S. Eighth Army relieved the Sixth Army the following day.

December-January 1945. Marine Aircraft Group 12 conducted fighter sweeps in support of the projected Luzon landing.

Operational Planning

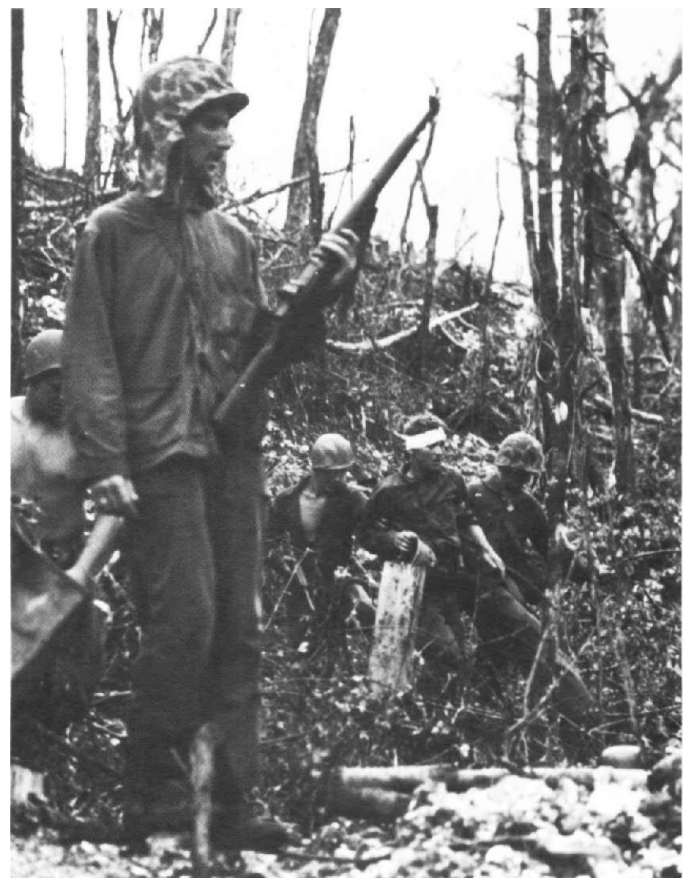
2 October. The Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Area, and Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, meeting at San Francisco, decided to substitute the Okinawa landing for the projected Formosan one.

3 October. The JCS issued a new directive to guide the Pacific War to a conclusion. The Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Area, was ordered to provide fleet cover and support for

the occupation of Luzon by Southwest Pacific Area forces, 20 December 1944, and to occupy one or more positions in the Nanpo Shoto, 20 January 1945, and in the Nansei Shoto; 1 March 1945.

7 October. The Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Area, published a joint staff study and issued it to his major subor-

A 1st Division Marine stands watch as a demolitions man is taken for aid after being hit by Japanese sniper fire while attempting to blast pillboxes northwest of the Peleliu airport.



dinate commanders for use in the preliminary planning of the Iwo Jima invasion.

9 October. LtGen Holland M. Smith received a directive from Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Ocean Area, ordering the seizure of Iwo Jima and naming the following commanders to the operations: Adm Raymond A. Spruance, USN, Operation Commander; VAdm Richmond K. Turner, USN, Joint Expeditionary Force Commander; LtGen Holland M. Smith, Commanding General, Expeditionary Troops; and RAdm Harry W. Hill, USN, Second in Command, Joint Expeditionary Force.

13 October. The V Amphibious Corps headquarters moved to Pearl Harbor to facilitate planning for the Iwo Jima operations.

18 October. The Joint War Plans Committee issued "Operations for the Defeat of Japan" in which Iwo Jima was listed as a contributing operation to the overall objective of the war, the ultimate invasion of the industrial centers of Japan.

19 October. MajGen Harry Schmidt, commanding the Iwo Jima Landing Force, issued the first tentative operational blueprint to his troops.

20 October. The Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, issued a directive to the Commanding General, Iwo Jima Landing Force, in which troop assignments for training, planning, and operations were designated. The V Amphibious Corps was to be ready for combat by 15 December.

During the fighting on Peleliu in September 1944, a Marine amphibian tank pours fire into a pillbox on the island stronghold, part of the Japanese bastion flanking the Philippines.

21 October. The JCS ordered Commander in Chief, Southwest Pacific Area, to assault Luzon on 20 December and Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Area, to land Marines on Iwo Jima on 20 January 1945. The invasion of the Ryukyus was to follow on 1 March 1945.

25 November. The Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Area, issued Operation Plan 11-44 for the invasion of Iwo Jima. The Fifth Fleet commander was directed to seize the island and develop air bases there. The invasion date was tentatively set for 3 February.

30 November. Allied Air Forces directed that four of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing's F4U squadrons be transferred to the Fifth Air Force on Leyte, Philippines, to free the Third Fleet's carriers for the attack on Japan.

15 December. Adm Nimitz, Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Area, recommended to the JCS that the Iwo Jima and Okinawa operations be postponed until 19 February and 1 April 1945, respectively.

23 December. The Commanding General, V Amphibious Corps Landing Force, issued the preferred plan for the invasion of Iwo Jima calling for a landing by the 4th and 5th Marine Divisions on the southeast coast of the island, scheduled tentatively for 19 February 1945. The 3d Marine Division would be held in floating reserve until released to the corps.

31 December. The Commander, Fifth Fleet, issued Operation Plan 13-44 directing the Joint Expeditionary Force to secure Iwo Jima and begin base development there, establish a military government, and withdraw the assault forces at the conclusion of the capture and occupation phase. D-Day was confirmed as 19 February. —RVA



Foundation Volunteer's Find Aids New Zealanders

Remember the notice in *Fortitudine* (Spring 1983) asking 2d Division Marines whether they had any knowledge of where ammunition might have been buried at the division's camp at McKays Crossing just north of Paekakariki on North Island, New Zealand? It seems odds and ends of ordnance were disconcertingly turning up in the sand hills of Queen Elizabeth Park, now on the site of the camp. Our request for information to Marine veterans' organizations essentially drew a blank. But a possibly useful aid was recently discovered in the map files of the Center by a MCHF volunteer.

Mr. George C. MacGillivray, a charter and sustaining member, who has been working to regularize and collate the map holdings since his retirement as CIA's map librarian, came across a set of hand-drawn maps of Marine installations in New Zealand, which no one in the Center was aware existed. One of these maps showed McKays Crossing *and* the location of two ammunition storage sites. The map has been copied and provided to the New Zealand Embassy Defense Staff for guidance to ordnance disposal teams.

George's volunteer work and that of others from the Foundation, as well as that of the volunteers who man the Foundation's Museum Shop and run the shop's mail order service, are deeply appreciated by regular members of the Historical Center's staff. A goodly number of those "regulars" are members of the Foundation in large part because they know the value of its support of the official historical program, and also because they associate every day with people who donate their valuable time to increase the knowledge of the Corps' history and traditions.

As of 1 October, the MCHF has 822 members, including 92 individuals and organizations who are sustain-

ing members. Those who have joined since the listing in the summer issue of *Fortitudine* include:

LtGen Frederick L. Wieseman, USMC (Ret)
MGySgt Ethel L. Barker, USMC (Ret)
Mr. James R. Nilo
Col William F. Strobridge, USA (Ret)
Mrs. Dorothy G. Abel
MGySgt Nancy J. Stuart, USMC (Ret)
Mr. Otto G. Isler
MSgt Tom Bartlett, USMC (Ret)
LtCol Mary C. MacDonald, USMC (Ret)
Mrs. Marilyn N. Strock
Mr. Louis M. Golden, Jr.
Ms. Elsie F. Dowling
Mr. Michael E. Cunningham
CWO4 Ruth L. Wood, USMC (Ret)
CWO4 Gloria A. Krug, USMCR
Mr. Andrew B. Jones
LtGen John H. Miller, USMC (Ret)
GySgt James W. Zollickoffer, USMCR (Ret)
Dr. Edward Brooks, Jr.
Gen Paul X. Kelley, USMC
Mr. John H. Bowler
Mr. Elwood C. Myers

Members are reminded that the annual meeting was held at the Historical Center on 5 November. Notices of this meeting, ballots for new directors, a membership list as of 15 August, 1984, and another issue of a projected quarterly newsletter should all have been received in advance. Members' inquiries about the Foundation's activities may be sent to the office at the Center or calls can be made to (202) 433-3914.—The Secretary, MCHF.