

Museum Gets Nihart Body Armor Collection for Study

by *Kenneth L. Smith-Christmas*
Curator of Material History

COL F. BROOKE NIHART, USMC (Ret), the retired long-time Deputy Director for Marine Corps Museums, has donated his collection of personal body armor for use as a study collection at the Air-Ground Museum at Quantico. Among his many pursuits, Col Nihart had two particular collecting interests: the small arms produced by the Virginia Manufactory of Arms in Richmond, and the development of body armor through the ages. He built his armor collection over a period of years prior to becoming the head of all Marine Corps Museums in 1973, mainly by purchasing items from well-known dealers.

The earliest pieces in the gift are two sets of rare Civil War body armor, which represent a period in which very little personal armor was produced. Both of these were made in Connecticut about 1862. The use of body armor by European and American armies in the field had sharply decreased after the mid-1600s and, with few exceptions such as these two sets, had ceased altogether by the outbreak of World War I in 1914. However, by 1915 it became apparent that body armor could effectively stop many of the wounds inflicted in static trench warfare. By America's entry into the war in 1917, all of the major powers had adopted steel protective helmets and the Germans had issued several versions of heavy breast armor for snipers and machine gunners. Many of the pieces in Col Nihart's donation date from the World War I period.

Experimental body armor designed by Maj Dean was manufactured by the Hale & Kilburn Co. of Philadelphia, with sponge rubber padding made by the Miller Rubber Co. of Akron. The entire delivery of 5,000 sets was sent to troops in France for testing.



The Model 3 was one of the World War I-era helmets designed by Maj Bashford Dean, the curator of arms and armor at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Like the Model 2 it was ballistically superior, but was rejected because it was too difficult to manufacture.

The U.S. Army's Ordnance Department sought the commissioning as a major of Bashford Dean, the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art's Curator of Arms and Armor, and charged him with the development of a suitable helmet for the American army. After a fact-finding mission to Europe, Maj Dean and his staff designed at least 15 different prototype helmets and several types of lightweight body armor. However, the speed with which the U.S. Army had to be equipped and the coming of the Armistice in 1918

precluded the adoption of Dean's designs. The U.S. Army and Marine Corps fought the war wearing an American version of the inadequate, but easily-produced British Brodie pattern helmet. (One of these familiar flat "dishpan" helmets was also donated by Col Nihart.) It is this experimental American armor that constitutes the core of Col Nihart's gift.

IN THIS DONATION are two sets of the experimental body armor designed by Maj Bashford Dean and his staff of museum specialists working for the Engineering Division of the Ordnance Corps. One set was manufactured by the Hale & Kilburn Company of Philadelphia, with sponge rubber padding made by the Miller Rubber Company of Akron, Ohio. The entire contract of 5,000 sets of this type of armor were sent to France for testing. In addition, the museum received examples of neck, shoulder, and shin armor, as well as two different versions of steel slitted eye defence shields.

The most unusual helmets in this gift are three examples of the helmets designed and produced by Maj Dean and his staff. One of them, a Model 2 helmet, was a ballistically superior helmet, but it



Maj Dean's Model 5, above, was meant to improve on the Model 2, rejected because it was thought to resemble too closely the German helmet. Although turned back by the U.S. Army, the Model 5 was adopted in 1918 by the Swiss Army and until quite recently was still in production. The influence of medieval design is seen in the Model 8, below, intended for use by snipers and machine gunners, but never adopted.



Dean's protective "Liberty Bell" helmet of lightweight steel was nearly adopted as the U.S. Army standard, but since the British Brodie pattern helmet was cheaper to produce, American soldiers wore a version of that far less satisfactory "dishpan" headgear.



was rejected because it too closely resembled the German M1916 "coal scuttle" helmet. An improved version of the Model 2 helmet, the Model 5 helmet, although also rejected by the American Army, was adopted in 1918 by the Swiss Army and saw service until recent years. The influence of medieval design is apparent in the third helmet of this group. It is the visored Model 8 helmet which was intended for use by snipers and machine gunners, but never adopted. The "Liberty Bell" helmet was provisionally accepted for the American Army, but few were ever produced, again due to the brevity of the American involvement in World War I. Two examples of this helmet were also donated to the museum in this gift.

To represent the other belligerents in World War I, the museum received a French M1915 Adrian helmet, a German M1916 "coalscuttle" field gray helmet, and an Austrian M1918 helmet. The Austrian helmet is painted white and was upgraded in the 1930s with a new liner and issued to a German Waffen SS (*Shutzstaffel*) unit on the Eastern Front in World War II. Other helmets from the 1930s include examples of the helmets worn by both the Falangist and Loyalist forces during the Spanish Civil War.

THE FOREIGN HELMETS from World War II include a Soviet M1936 helmet, a Dutch helmet, an Italian cavalry helmet (with crossed lances painted on the front), and both a British paratrooper's helmet and a M1944 helmet. American helmets from the same period include a large, gray Navy "talker's" helmet and two examples of the Army Air Force armored air crew helmet, all of them made large enough to accommodate earphones. With the aviator's helmets came an armored vest for aircrewmembers.

Several of the World War I experimental helmets and one set of body armor went on display in April 1994 at the Marine Corps Air-Ground Museum. This special exhibit was mounted for a visit by the American Association of Arms Collectors and remained on public view until the end of May. In early June, its components, along with a number of other items from the collection, were packed and shipped to the German Army's Technical Museum in Koblenz, Germany, where they will be temporarily on display as part of an exhibit which documents the use of body armor through the ages. □1775□

Corps Grappled with Complex Somalia Relief Effort

by Ann A. Ferrante
Reference Historian

SINCE 1982, the Reference Section has compiled ongoing, current Marine Corps chronologies that outline significant events and dates in contemporary Marine Corps history.

Numerous primary and secondary sources are researched each week to produce the current chronology of the Marine Corps. The yearly chronologies serve as sources of information on significant events in Marine Corps history as well as tools for documenting important dates and anniversaries.

Selected entries from the 1993 Marine Corps Chronology are:

12 Jan—After five weeks of ground operations in Somalia, a U.S. Marine was shot and killed during a gun battle near the airport in Somalia's capital, Mogadishu. The Marine was the first American combat death in the military operation aimed at insuring the delivery of food and humanitarian relief supplies to thousands of people in the famine-stricken country.

15 Jan—After more than 11 consecutive days of rain, Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton succumbed to flooding which left areas of the largest Marine amphibious base under as much as 15 feet of water. The base was officially closed 17-21 January to nonessential personnel. Gen Walter E. Boomer, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, visited on 21 January to assess the estimated \$70 million in damages.

18 Jan—Approximately 850 Marines from 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, left Somalia. An additional 1,900 Marines from the 1st Force Service Support Group and Marine Aircraft Group 16 left later in the month. The number of U.S. forces remaining in the country was just over 19,000, with the total coalition figures standing at 33,430 troops, including those from 22 other countries. Marine missions would be assumed by these coalition forces. Military relief operations to Somalia were in progress since August 1992 when Operation Provide Relief was initiated to provide food to Somalia via U.S. military aircraft. Oper-



The wash from a CH-53D Sea Stallion heavy helicopter from HMH-363 raises clouds of red dust outside a hunger-stricken Somali village. The aircraft avoids landing on mined roads as it delivers a load of grain from Australia during Operation Restore Hope.

ation Provide Relief was absorbed under Operation Restore Hope last December.

25 Feb-11 Mar—Approximately 3,500 Marines and sailors from the II Marine Expeditionary Force, 2d Marines, 2d Force Service Support Group, and Marine Aircraft Group 40 participated in Exercise Battle Griffin 93. The NATO exercise included sea, air, and land operations in Norway above the Arctic Circle.

1-18 Mar—Approximately 10,000 Marines participated in Exercise Team Spirit 93, a joint/combined training exercise held in the Republic of Korea (ROK). Team Spirit involved more than 100,000 troops from all four U.S. combat services plus South Korean forces, and was the largest exercise planned for the year.

29 Mar—The Senate Armed Services Committee opened hearings on homosexuals in the Armed Forces. The committee tailored the hearings to deal initially with five major subject areas: legal questions over a change in the present policy, effects on unit cohesion, experiences of foreign countries, views of a broad cross-section of military personnel, and views of the individual service chiefs and senior DOD officials.

20 Apr-25 May—More than 20,500 serv-

ice personnel of the U.S. Marine Corps, Army, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard, along with allied forces, participated in Exercise Ocean Venture 93 held in Puerto Rico. It was designed to demonstrate the ability of continental U.S.-based forces to operate in a joint/combined environment.

23 Apr—The Department of Defense Inspector General released the final, 208-page report of the investigation into the allegations of sexual assault and other violations committed during the 1991 Tailhook convention held in Las Vegas. The report charged 117 officers with offenses ranging from indecent assault to conduct unbecoming an officer. Ninety persons, 83 women and seven men, were found to have been assaulted during the convention.

28 Apr—Secretary of Defense Les Aspin announced a revised policy on the assignment of women in the Armed Forces, implementing some of the recommendations made by the Presidential Commission on the Assignment of Women in the Armed Forces that released its report during November 1992. Aspin directed the military services to open more specialties and assignments to women, including permitting women Marines to compete for as-

signments in all aircraft, even those engaged in combat missions.

30 Apr—Marine Aircraft Group 32 at Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, North Carolina, deactivated as a result of downsizing requirements. Originally activated in 1943, the group served in the Pacific during World War II, then in North China before deactivating in 1947. The group reactivated in 1952. Elements of the group participated in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

4 May—LtGen Robert B. Johnston passed the command of the U.S.-led Somali relief operation, Restore Hope, to Turkish LtGen Cevik Bir. Approximately 4,000 Americans would remain in Somalia as part of the United Nations force.

7 May—President Clinton was treated to an evening of ceremonial pageantry as guest of honor at an Evening Parade conducted at Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C. It was his first official visit to a Marine Corps installation. Prior to the start of the parade, the nation's 42nd President and the First Lady attended a garden reception hosted by the Commandant and Mrs. Mundy.

9-30 Jun—Marines of the I Marine Expeditionary Force participated in Exercise Native Fury 93 held in Kuwait. The exercise provided training for Marines in Maritime Prepositioning Force operations.

20 Jun—The 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) returned to Mogadishu, Somalia, to assist United Nations forces in maintaining peace in the war-torn country. Earlier this month, the 24th MEU was ordered to cut short Exercise Eager Mace 93-2 in Kuwait to respond to possible contingency operations in Somalia.

23 Jun—In an effort to alleviate the Marine Corps' shortage of tanks, an agreement was made for the Corps to receive 50 M1A1 tanks from the Army. The additional 50 tanks would bring the Marine Corps total up to 271.

27 Jun—The Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission completed its deliberations and votes for the 1993 round of base closures. The most significant item for the Marine Corps was the prospective closure of Marine Corps Air Station, El Toro, California.

10-25 Jul—Approximately 5,000 Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Special Operations personnel participated in Exercise Tandem Thrust 93 in the areas surrounding and including Guam, Tini-

an, and Farallon de Medinilla Islands. The joint task force exercise was designed to emphasize response to regional crises and low- to medium-intensity conflict.

19 Jul—President Clinton announced the new policy regarding homosexual conduct in the Armed Forces. The new policy, which became known as "don't ask, don't tell, don't pursue," directed that homosexual conduct would be grounds for separation, yet sexual orientation would not be a bar to entry into the military or continued service unless manifested by homosexual conduct. It came following nearly six months of extensive review at the highest levels of government, and would become effective on 1 October.

22 Jul—Eight F/A-18D Hornets from Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (All Weather) 533 arrived at Aviano Air Base, Italy, to participate in an extension of Operation Deny Flight, the enforcement of the no-fly zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina launched by NATO officials in conjunction with the United Nations on 12 April.

11 Aug—Defense Secretary Les Aspin reversed a new Marine Corps directive that would have barred enlistment of married recruits after 1995. The Secretary of Defense would initiate a Department of Defense-wide comprehensive study of first-term enlistment issues.

1 Sep—Following more than five months of detailed study and analysis, the Department of Defense announced results of its Bottom-Up Review, leveling off Marine Corps strength at 174,000 active Marines and 42,000 Reserve personnel. The review was a comprehensive look at the U.S. Armed Forces and overall military strategy in the post-Cold War era.

In the capital city of Mogadishu, Marines assigned to Task Force Somalia prepare to search an old, fortified compound for weapons caches. With the collapse of their government, Somalis found themselves at the mercy of "warlords" with "armies" of their own.



27-28 Sep—Following a string of mishaps that killed 13 people, the Commandant ordered all Marine aircraft grounded for two days. The standdown came in the wake of six accidents involving Marine aircraft in a six-week period. The standdown was used to review safety procedures, and affected all Marine aircraft except those in Europe under NATO command and the helicopters used by the President.

7 Oct—After the deaths of 14 U.S. soldiers in Somalia, President Clinton announced the deployment there of an additional 1,700 soldiers and 104 armored vehicles. Additionally, he directed an aircraft carrier and both the 13th and 22d Marine Expeditionary Units (Special Operations Capable) to positions off the Somali coast.

11 Nov—The Vietnam Women's Memorial was dedicated in a ceremony at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. The bronze statue depicts three women and a wounded soldier. It honors the thousands of women who served in Southeast Asia.

22 Dec—The Department of Defense issued new regulations that would enable homosexuals to serve in the military so long as they keep quiet about their sexual orientation and refrain from engaging in homosexual acts. The policy allows service members to acknowledge homosexual feelings and sympathies, provided that they can demonstrate that they are not engaging in homosexual conduct. The new regulations would take effect on 5 February. They codify the Administration's compromise policy dubbed, "don't ask, don't tell, don't pursue," which was challenged by the Supreme Court. □1775□

World War II Predominant in Marine-Interest Book List

by Evelyn A. Englander
Historical Center Librarian

THE LIBRARY of the Marine Corps Historical Center receives many recently published books of professional interest to Marines. Most of them are available from local bookstores or libraries.

The Proud: Inside the Marine Corps. Bernard Halsband Cohen. New York: Quill, 1992. 282 pp. The author spent a year traveling with the men and women of the Marine Corps, looking at their roles in today's world. "The Marine Corps," the author concludes, "is a relatively small group of men and women who still believe in themselves . . . it is a force that has retained its pride in an era that too easily lets slip the lion's share of that virtue. It seems to me necessary to keep that belief and that pride alive . . . I am convinced that people who really believe they are ready for anything are the ones most likely to be so . . ." Includes photographs. \$13.00

The Devils Anvil: The Assault on Peleliu. James H. Hallas. Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 1994. 297 pp. The battle for Peleliu fought in Septem-

ber 1944 on a tiny coral island 500 miles east of the Philippines was one of this country's costliest victories in World War II. Writing in tribute to all who fought on the island, the author has tried to show Peleliu as it appeared to the rifleman as well as the planner. Hallas reports on the personal combat experiences of scores of officers and enlisted men. A list of those interviewed is included in the bibliography. Includes maps, photographs, bibliography \$27.50

Men of War: Great Naval Leaders of World War II. Stephen Howarth, editor. New York: St. Martin Press, 1992. 602 pp. Essays from 26 eminent-naval historians, including Marine Corps Chief Historian Benis M. Frank, on 31 leaders who planned and conducted the Second World War at sea: German, Japanese, British, and American. Mr. Frank authored the chapter on Marine LtGen Holland M. Smith. The sections of the book are: the high command; the air admirals; the amphibious admirals; and unsung heroes. Other biographies include: Admiral Arleigh Burke; Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay; Fleet Admiral William F. Halsey; Vice Admiral Chuichi Nagumo; Grand Admiral Erich Raeder; and Grand Admiral Karl Donitz. Includes maps and illustrations. \$27.95

Andrew Jackson Higgins and the Boats that Won World War II. Jerry E. Strahan. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1994. 382 pp. One key element of the amphibious landings of World War II was the LCVP (Landing Craft Vehicle Personnel). This is the story of the boat's designer and builder, Andrew J. Higgins, who started his career in New Orleans in 1938, with one small boat yard. (By 1943 this had expanded to seven plants.) During the war Higgins Industries produced 20,094 boats: the 36-foot LCVP; lightning-fast PT boats; tank landing craft; and airborne lifeboats dropped from B-17 bombers. Even Adolf Hitler was aware of Higgins, calling him "the New Noah." In writing his book, Strahan conducted personal interviews along with using the Hig-

gins Industries Archives. \$29.95

The Neck of the Bottle: George W. Goethals and the Reorganization of the U.S. Army Supply System. Phyllis A. Zimmerman. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1992. 201 pp. Dr. Zimmerman, who teaches at Ball State University, is a recipient of a Marine Corps Historical Foundation grant for her work on BGen Evans F. Carlson. In this history of Gen Goethals and his efforts to reorganize the U.S. Army supply system to meet the demands of World War I, Dr. Zimmerman shows these efforts fell far short of what was desired as the result of politics, inertia, and bureaucratic resistance to change. \$39.50

Dearest Buckie: A Marine's Korean War Memoir. John I. Williamson. Austin, Texas: Speights Publishing Company, 1993. 200 pp. Col Williamson, who was one of the commanding officers of 1st Tank Battalion, 1st Marine Division, during the Korean War has compiled a book based on the letters he wrote to his wife during his tour of duty from 20 May 1952 to 14 April 1953. The author provides a glimpse of his emotions and describes the daily routine of Marines in the closing phase of the Korean War. \$17.45, including postage, from Speights Publishing Company, 1506 Thornridge Road, Austin, Texas 78758.

Arms for the Horn: U.S. Security Policy in Ethiopia and Somalia, 1953-1991. Jeffrey A. Lefebvre. University of Pittsburgh Press, 1991. 351 pp. Provides a background for understanding the present U.S. and U.N involvement in Somalia, by tracing U.S. diplomacy with northeast Africa in the decades following World War II. \$49.95

Saipan in Flames: Operation Forager, The Turning Point in the Pacific War. William H. Stewart in cooperation with Pedro P. Tenoria and J. M. Guerrero. J.M. & Associates, 1993, 110 pp. Mr. Stewart, an economist and military historical cartographer, uses his considerable skills to produce an interesting and well-designed

WWII Bibliography Updated

The U.S. Marine Corps in World War II, An Annotated Bibliography, which updates the original 1965 edition, is available from the Marine Corps Historical Center on diskette for WordPerfect 5.1 software.

The bibliography was compiled by two of the Center's interns, Lee Gatchel and Midshipman Walter Hoysa, USNA, with the guidance of the Center staff. It is planned that the bibliography will be revised at regular intervals. It is also to be available on MCCAT through on-line books.

At present the bibliography is 50 pages in length and is arranged in broad subject categories. Diskettes are available by writing to the Library at Building 58, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, D.C. 20374-5040.

commemorative edition for the 50th anniversary of the invasion of Saipan. The effective use of maps and charts combined with illustrations of the islands of the Northern Marianas makes this 110-page color book a valuable addition to all libraries interested in the battles of World War II. \$25.00 (available from JM & Associates, P.O. Box 1292, Saipan, MP, 96950 U.S.A.)

A View from the Rear Rank: A Story of Marine Air Warning Squadron Eight in World War II. Edward W. Farmer. Privately

published (three copies available at Marine Corps Historical Center Library). 250 pages, 17 chapters, 2 appendices, photos, maps. This book discusses aircraft warning squadrons of the Marine Corps as they were developed, equipped, and deployed during the latter stages of the war. While air control and direction were primitive compared to today, the job was done with what was available. The fragmented detachments of a unit of this size in active combat areas make for unusual and interesting situations not often recorded.

The first five chapters cover the training period in the U.S., and contain much of the "high jinks" of the time. The remainder covers the deployment of the unit, its excellent combat record, and its disposition at the end of the war. Throughout, there is enough of the "field Marine" vernacular to make the story real, but it is not overburdened in this respect. The book capably researched and is an interesting and balanced small unit history. (Review by MajGen John P. Condon, USMC [Ret]) □1775□

Personal Papers Describe the Marine at 'Teapot Dome'

by Frederick J. Graboske
Head, Archives Section

WHEN I ASKED to prepare a regular feature on what's new in the Archives, my expectation was that I would be writing about new donations of personal papers. Indeed, we have received several during the past months, and I will be writing about one of them below. But the Archives also has an Official Records Unit, which receives all the command chronologies. The importance of those documents lies in their role as source material for histories of the Marine Corps, and especially of its deployments, such as Desert Shield and Desert Storm and Somalia. The Marine Corps Historical Center deployed historians to both of those operations to ensure that important documents would be saved by the various units.

The 3d Battalion, 11th Marines, did a particularly thorough job on its command chronology for Somalia. Such deployments are a particular problem for our historians because units under unusual pressure sometimes fail to do command chronologies as required, or the ones they produce are so cursory as to be of little value. Not only are important pieces of USMC history lost, but also those units fail to receive the attention they deserve when the histories are written.

One of the great pleasures in working in the Archives lies in learning the histories of individual Marines. We recently received the papers of Maj George K. Shuler, who had a very interesting career. While attached to the USS *North Dakota*, he landed with the Marine detachment during the occupation of Vera Cruz, Mexico, in 1914. He commanded the 66th Company in the first Marine unit sent to

France in 1917, the 5th Marines. There he also won fame as the commander of the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, at the battle of Blanc Mont in October 1918. For his bravery he was decorated by both the French and American governments, entitled to wear the Croix de Guerre, the Legion d'Honneur, and the Distinguished Service Medal. Although his war record undoubtedly enumerates his greatest services to his country, an equally interesting aspect of his career was political.

IN 1920 HE received a leave of absence from MajGenComdt John A. Lejeune so that he could seek political office. Shuler lost his race for the Congress and returned to the Marine Corps. While on active service in 1922 he faced an even tougher political test: Teapot Dome. This was later to become a great, national political scandal, akin to the Whiskey Ring of the Grant Administration and the Watergate of the Nixon Administration. Secretary of the Interior Albert Fall had leased the naval petroleum reserve called Teapot Dome, in Wyoming, to private companies for exploitation. That bribes were paid for these favors was exposed in 1924. In the meantime, another company, owned by a contributor to President Harding's 1920 campaign, who was resentful of Fall's apparent favoritism, began drilling without permits. On 30 July 1922, this came to the attention of Acting Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. He instructed MajGen Lejeune to send an officer "of discretion" to eject the Mutual Oil Company from the reserve. Lejeune's choice was Shuler.

He named Shuler Commandant of the

Salt Creek Naval District and dispatched him with four Marines to oust the intruders. As one newspaper put it, "He may give to these oil squatters a little more time in which to get off from government land than he did to the Germans in getting off from that hill in France."

Accompanied by members of the press, Shuler travelled from Washington to Casper and thence to the drilling site. He accomplished his mission quickly and with no difficulty. However, there was considerable criticism of the government for what was termed the unconstitutional use of military force in a private dispute. When the scandals broke in 1924, Shuler's role was remembered and he testified before the Congress on his expedition.

IN NOVEMBER 1922, Shuler was elected Treasurer of the State of New York and left the Marine Corps. In 1924 he received a few votes at the Democratic Party's national convention to be the candidate for vice president. He was not named to his state party's ticket in 1924 and retired to private life as the publisher of movie magazines. He did have one further contact with the Marine Corps. In November 1926, President Adolfo Diaz of Nicaragua asked Lejeune for a competent, well-trained American officer to head the constabulary and the Nicaraguan Army. Lejeune's first choice was Shuler, who turned down the offer because of the low salary. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee investigated the offer, which was regarded as tantamount to American intervention. Thus ended Shuler's connection to the Marine Corps, political to the last. □1775□

The Okha Suicide Flying Bomb

by Kenneth L. Smith-Christmas and Michael E. Starn

BY THE MIDDLE of the Pacific War, Japan had lost large numbers of its warships and aircraft. In late 1943, Japanese naval fighter pilots proposed special suicide attacks against the U.S. Navy ships supporting American amphibious landings on the Pacific islands. Originally, the idea was refused, but as the war worsened for Japan, support grew for kamikaze suicide operations. Kamikaze, meaning "Divine Wind," was a term derived from the name of the typhoon which frustrated the Mongolian invasion of Japan in 1280. The first use of Kamikaze tactics was in October 1944 when Japanese pilots flew Mitsubishi A6M Zero fighters armed with a single 500-kilogram

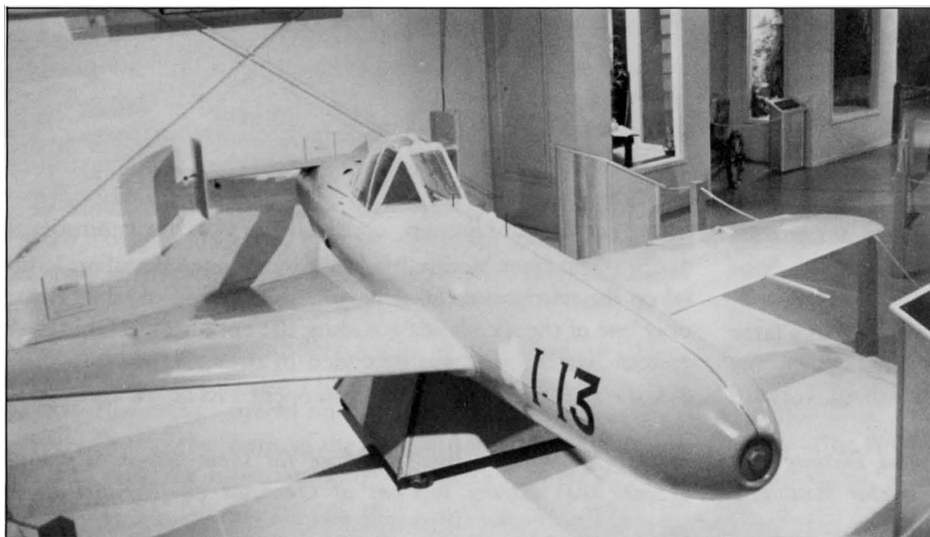
bomb against American ships supporting the landings on the Philippine island of Leyte.

During the summer of 1944, Ens Mitsuo Ota (one of the Japanese naval officers who had suggested the kamikaze program in the previous year) was given permission to draw up plans for a special kamikaze attack aircraft. The Japanese Navy approved Ota's design in late 1944. The aircraft was named Okha, which translates as "cherry blossom" in Japanese. (When the Okha became known to U.S. forces, it was labeled the Baka bomb, meaning "foolish bomb.") The Okha bomb was constructed of wood and metal, with silk-covered wings. Power-

ed by three rocket motors, it was usually carried close to the target and launched from the belly of a twin-engine Mitsubishi G4M "Betty" bomber.

The Okha was first carried into battle on 21 March 1945, by the 721st Kokutai. En route to the target, the 16 parent aircraft were intercepted by Allied fighters and were forced to drop their Okha bombs short of the target. The first combat success was achieved on 12 April when Okhas damaged the U.S. battleship *Tennessee*, sank the U.S. destroyer *Mannert L. Abele* and damaged three transport vessels. Statistics compiled at the war's end reveal that although very few Okhas were successful, kamikaze attacks during the last 10 months of the war accounted for 48.1 percent of all warships damaged and 21.3 percent of all ships sunk by Japan during the war.

The Okha on exhibit in the Marine Corps Air-Ground Museum at Quantico is one of six Okha Bombs discovered at Kadena Airfield in 1945. When restoration by the museum began in 1977, some problems presented themselves. First, the aircraft had been on display, with little or no preservation, for two decades as war booty on Okinawa, where it had been captured. The second problem was that none of the museum staff could read Japanese. The Baka Bomb had already been stripped of its paint when Mr. Frank Howard, then the Museum's carpenter, began the restoration of the wooden structure. This phase of the restoration would require more than 70 hours of labor to return the aircraft to near original condition. One of the concessions, due to cost, was to cover the aircraft with paper, instead of silk, before painting it grey-green. The translation of the original *kanji* writing was accomplished with help of MajGen Tsuneo Azuma of the Japanese Air Self-Defense Force (and senior military attache with the Japanese Embassy in Washington, D.C.) MajGen Azuma not only translated the characters, but also assisted in the recreation of them on the completed aircraft for display. The aircraft has been on display since the Museum opened in 1978, and is one of the most popular attractions. □1775□



The Okha (cherry blossom) was known to U.S. pilots as the Baka bomb ("foolish bomb"). The lightweight aircraft was specifically designed for kamikaze operations.

Technical Data

Manufacturer: Dai-Ichi Kaigun Kokusho, Kasumigaura

Type: Single-seat suicide aircraft

Accommodation: Pilot only

Power plant: Three solid propellant rocket motors with a combined thrust of 1,764 pounds

Dimensions: Span: 16 feet, 9 9/16 inches; Length: 19 feet, 10 3/16 inches.

Weight: Empty: 970 lbs; Gross: 4,718 lbs.

Performance: Max speed, 403 mph at 11,485 feet; Dive speed: 576 mph; Range: 23 miles

Armament: 2,646 lb. warhead in nose

April-June 1945

*By Robert V. Aquilina
Assistant Head, Reference Section*

Fortitudine's World War II Chronology continues with the largest Marine Corps operation of World War II. The American campaign for Okinawa in the Ryukyu Islands would be the point of final intersection of the Navy and Marine Corps' drive across the Central Pacific and the Army's march up from the Southwest Pacific. The island of Okinawa is approximately 60 miles long and from two to 18 miles wide; the northern part was wild and mountainous, and the southern portion somewhat more open, but still hilly with several ridges crossing the island from east to west. After months of planning, the stage was set in early spring 1945 for one of the bloodiest American campaigns of World War II.

Okinawa

1 Apr—Preceded by naval gunfire and air support, the III Amphibious Corps (1st and 6th Marine Divisions, reinforced) and the XXIV Corps (7th and 96th Infantry Divisions, reinforced) landed on Okinawa north and south of Bishi Gawa, respectively, on the Hagushi beaches of the island's western shore. The XXIV Corps captured Kadena airfield and advanced south along the coast to the Chatan vicinity, and the III Amphibious Corps made extensive ground gains to the east. Yontan airfield was secured by the 4th Marines, and the 7th Marines moved through Sobe Village, a first-priority objective.

2 Apr—The 2d Marine Division effectively immobilized a large body of Japanese forces by a diversionary feint against the Minatogawa beaches on the eastern side of the island. Forward

With naval gunfire thundering in the background, landing craft of Company A, 1st Armored Amphibian Tractor Battalion,



First Division Marines go over the low wall on Blue Beach No. 2 on Okinawa on 1 April. The division and its parent III Amphibious Corps made large first-day ground gains to the east.

elements of the 7th Infantry Division reached the eastern coast, severing the island.

4 Apr—The 6th Marine Division attacked north up the west coast road; it was relieved of responsibility for the Yontan airstrip by the 29th Marines in III Amphibious Corps reserve. The 1st Marines, 1st Marine Division, occupied the Katchin Peninsula.

5 Apr—The Fleet Marine Force Reconnaissance Battalion landed on the northern coast of Tsugen Shima, Eastern Islands, the only one of the six islands guarding the entrances to Okinawa's eastern beaches that was defended in strength.

6 Apr—The 96th Infantry Division opened its attack against the

form into line 500 yards offshore for their first-wave charge against the western beaches of Okinawa on 1 April 1945.





Famed Scripps-Howard newspaper columnist and combat correspondent Ernie Pyle, hatless and sharing around his pack of cigarettes at left center, talks with 1st Division Marines at an

Okinawa roadside rest stop on 8 April. Soon after this picture, Pyle was instantly killed by a blast of Japanese machine gun fire on Ie Jima, an island adjacent to Okinawa in the Ryukyus chain.

Shuri defenses in the southern sector of the island.

6-7 Apr—Japanese air units from Kyushu launched the first of 10 major kamikaze attacks on Allied shipping off Okinawa.

7 Apr—During the Battle of the East China Sea, planes of Task Force 58 sank the superbattleship *Yamato*, a cruiser, and four destroyers, ending all chances of a Japanese sea attack on Okinawa.

7 Apr—The first F4U of Marine Aircraft Group 31 landed on Yontan airfield.

7 Apr—Elements of the Fleet Marine Force Reconnaissance Battalion scouted the remainder of the Eastern Islands—Takabanare, Hamahika, and Kutake Shima.

8 Apr—The 29th Marines, 6th Marine Division, moved across the base of the Motobu Peninsula and occupied the villages of Gagusuku and Yamadadobaru.

9 Apr—The main body of the 27th Infantry Division went ashore on the Orange Beaches near Kadena.

9 Apr—The Kadena airfield was adjudged ready for its first planes, and Marine Aircraft Wing 33 began tactical operations from the field immediately.

10 Apr—The 2d Battalion, 29th Marines, seized Unten Ko on the Motobu Peninsula where the Japanese had established a submarine and torpedo boat base.

10-11 Apr—Elements of the 27th Infantry Division assaulted and captured Tsugen Shima, the only defended position in the Eastern Islands.

12-14 Apr—The Japanese launched coordinated counterattacks against the XXIV Corps line, coinciding with a second round of major aerial suicide attacks.

13 Apr—The Fleet Marine Force Reconnaissance Battalion occupied Minna Shima, an island lying off the northwest coast of Okinawa, in preparation for an assault on Ie Shima.

14 Apr—The 4th and 29th Marines launched a coordinated attack on the Motobu Peninsula inland in an easterly direction

Overcoming a line of well-camouflaged cave positions prepared by the Japanese around the Okinawan capital of Naha was a bitter task for 1st Division Marines, here with rifles aimed at the anticipated survivors of an explosive charge in one such cave.





Fighting for control of Okinawa continued for three months, into both May and June. Here, on 6 May, Marines man a machine

and west and southwest from the center of the peninsula, respectively.

16 Apr—The 6th Marine Division launched a full-scale attack from three sides against Japanese positions on the Motobu Peninsula; Companies A and C, 1st Battalion, 4th Marines, took possession of Yae Take, the key terrain feature of the peninsula.

16-21 Apr—The 77th Infantry Division assaulted and captured Ie Shima, an island lying off the northwest coast of Okinawa.

19 Apr—The XXIV Corps launched a three-division assault against the Shuri defenses in the southern sector of the island.

20 Apr—The 4th and 29th Marines reached the north coast of Motobu Peninsula having eliminated all organized resistance on the peninsula.

24 Apr—The Japanese withdrew to the second ring of the Shuri defensive zone.

28 Apr—The 3d Battalion, 165th Infantry, 27th Division, captured Machinato airfield.

30 Apr—The 1st Marine Division was attached to the XXIV Corps, and began moving south to relieve the 27th Army Division.

2 May—The 27th Division officially passed to Island Command control. The 165th Infantry was assigned responsibility for the 1st Marine Division sector, and the 105th and 106th Infantry were sent north to relieve the 6th Marine Division on Motobu Peninsula and in the areas farther north.

3-4 May—The Japanese launched an all-out ground and air attack on XXIV Corps positions and U.S. shipping off the island. Marine aircraft and antiaircraft gunners as well as units of the 1st Marine Division assisted in repulsing the assault.

3-4 May—The III Amphibious Corps took over the western sector

gun atop a position called "King's Hill." On 3-4 May, the Japanese had launched a desperate, final ground and air attack.

of the Tenth Army front in the southern portion of the island.

3-9 Jun—The 8th Marines, 2d Marine Division, secured Iheya Shima and Aguni Shima west of Okinawa. Immediate steps were taken to set up air warning and fighter direction installations to strengthen the defensive perimeter surrounding Okinawa.

4 Jun—The III Amphibious Corps boundary was shifted to the west, and the 1st Marine Division—attacking in the narrowed III Amphibious Corps zone—was made responsible for cutting off Oroku Peninsula, capturing Itoman, reducing the Kunishi and Mezado ridge positions, and driving to the southernmost point of the island, Ara Saki. The XXIV Corps was assigned the commanding Yaeju Dake-Yuza Dake escarpment.

4 Jun—The 4th Marines spearheaded an amphibious assault by the 6th Marine Division against Oroku Peninsula in the southwest sector of the island.

11 Jun—MajGen Louis E. Woods, USMC, assumed command of both the Tactical Air Force and the 2d Marine Aircraft Wing.

13 Jun—MajGen Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., USMC, commanding the 6th Marine Division, announced that all organized resistance on Oroku Peninsula had ceased.

14 Jun—The 6th Reconnaissance Company secured Senaga Shima, an island lying off the southeast coast of Oroku Peninsula.

15 Jun—The 8th Marines, 2d Marine Division, arrived on the island and was attached to the 1st Marine Division.

17 Jun—The XXIV Corps gained control of all the commanding ground on the Yaeju Dake-Yuza Dake escarpment, its primary objective.

17 Jun—A 7,000-foot runway at Yontan airfield was completed.

18 Jun—LtGen Simon B. Buckner, USA, Tenth Army commander, was killed while observing the progress of the 8th Ma-



MajGen Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., commanding general of the 6th Marine Division, consults his maps during the fighting on

Oroku Peninsula. By 13 June, the future Commandant could announce that organized resistance on the peninsula had ceased.

rines' first attack on the island. MajGen Roy S. Geiger, USMC, senior troop commander, assumed temporary command of the Tenth Army and directed its final combat operations.

elements of the Tenth Army marked the official end of resistance by the Japanese *Thirty-Second Army*.

18 Jun—Tank-infantry teams of the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, crushed the last organized resistance on Kunishi Ridge.

22 Jun—The 1st and 6th Marine Divisions and the 7th and 96th Army Divisions were ordered to conduct a sweep to the north. Ten days were allotted to complete the mopping up-action.

21 Jun—Organized resistance in the III Amphibious Corps zone ended when units of the 1st Marine Division secured Hill 81, and the 29th Marines—in the 6th Division zone—swept through Ara Sake, the southernmost point of the island.

23 Jun—Gen Joseph W. Stilwell, USA, formally relieves Maj-Gen Geiger as Commanding General, Tenth Army.

21 Jun—MajGen Geiger, commanding the Tenth Army, declared the island secured.

25 Jun—The Tenth Army launched its four division clean-up drive to the north.

22 Jun—A formal ceremony attended by representatives of all

26-30 Jun—The Fleet Marine Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion captured Kume Shima, the last and largest island of Okinawa Gunto. □1775□

A Marine convoy is halted on Okinawa's Motobu Peninsula, the heavily defended site of an enemy submarine and torpedo base.

Japanese strongholds on the peninsula were overpowered by full-scale attacks by the 4th and 29th Marines on 14-16 April.



OFFICIAL BUSINESS



Students Given Shepherd, Gridley Memorial Fellowships

*by Charles R. Smith
Secretary, Marine Corps Historical Foundation*

THE MARINE CORPS Historical Foundation recently announced the award of the first Gen Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., Memorial Dissertation and the LtCol Lily H. Gridley Memorial Masters' Thesis Fellowships for the 1994-1995 academic year.

The Shepherd Fellowship, named to honor the 20th Commandant, went to David B. Crist of Florida State University at Tallahassee for a doctoral dissertation that will examine Earnest Will, the operation carried out in the Persian Gulf during the late 1980s to protect Kuwaiti tankers.

Dawn L. Tepe of Abilene Christian University was awarded the Gridley Fellowship for a thesis on women Marines in World War I. The Gridley Fellowship honors a pioneering Marine and the first woman to serve as a judge advocate in the Marine Corps.

David Crist's dissertation will consider the accomplishments of Central Command in the Persian Gulf as a prelude to

the actions taken during Desert Shield and Desert Storm. These involved a number of activities from escorting Kuwaiti tankers to assaulting fortified Iranian oil platforms. The study will examine the innovative tactics developed by Marine units to cope with what has been called a guerrilla war at sea.

DAWN TEPE POSSESSES background in the study of the World War I period in American history and has several scholarly papers and publications to her credit. Her thesis will provide a narrative of the background and development of the women reserve program, as well as a social history of the 305 women who served in the Marine Corps during the Great War.

Jefferson P. Marquis of Ohio State University received the Foundation's annual Dissertation Fellowship for a study of the American and South Vietnamese pacification program in the four years following Tet 1968 based on American,

South Vietnamese, and Communist sources. His analysis will focus on a comparison of two provinces—Long An in the Mekong Delta, where the South Vietnamese government took the lead with the U.S. Army and civilian support, and Quang Nam in I Corps where the key feature was the use of Marine Combined Action Platoons.

Full annual Master's Thesis Fellowships were awarded to Benjamin H. Kristy of Kansas State University, for an operational assessment of Marine Corps night fighters in the Korean War, and to David J. Ulbrich of Ball State University for a study of the creation and eventual employment of defense battalions under MajGen-Comdt Thomas Holcomb. A partial Master's Fellowship was granted to Marine Maj James R. Davis, who currently is assigned to the Amphibious Vehicle Test Branch and who also is studying at the University of San Diego. His thesis will provide a historical perspective of the tactical development of Marine Corps tracked amphibious vehicles. □1775□