

PART V

Assault on Tinian

The Inevitable Campaign¹

For Marines who had made the 3,200-mile voyage from Hawaii to Saipan, the trip to the next objective was a short one. Just three miles of water separate Tinian from Saipan. In the Pacific war, such proximity of the objective was unusual, but there were also other details of the Tinian assault which made it unique. Here was one

¹Unless otherwise noted, the material in this chapter is derived from: *TF 51 OpRpt*; *TF 56 OpRpt*; *TF 52 Rpt of Tinian Op*, dtd 24Aug44, hereafter *TF 52 OpRpt*; *NTLF Op Rpt*; *NTLF OPlan 30-44 (FORAGER, Phase III)*, dtd 13Jul44, hereafter *NTLF OPlan 30-44*; *VAC ReconBn OpRpts, Saipan-Tinian*, dtd 5Aug44, hereafter *VAC ReconBn OpRpts*; *4th MarDiv Representative Translations made on Tinian*, hereafter *4th MarDiv Translations (Tinian)*; *MCS, Quantico, Va., "Study of the Theater of Operations: Saipan-Tinian Area,"* dtd 15Sep44; *LtCol Richard K. Schmidt, "The Tinian Operation: A Study in Planning for an Amphibious Operation,"* MCS, Quantico, Va., 1948-1949; *Lt John C. Chapin, The Fourth Marine Division in World War II* (Washington: HistDiv, HQMC, Aug45), hereafter *Chapin, 4th MarDiv in WW II*; *Maj Carl W. Hoffman, The Seizure of Tinian* (Washington: HistDiv, HQMC, 1951), hereafter *Hoffman, Tinian*; *Crowl, The Marianas*; *Isely and Crowl, Marines and Amphibious War*; *Johnston, Follow Me!*; *Morison, New Guinea and the Marianas*; *Proehl, 4th MarDiv History*; *Sherrod, Marine Air History*; *Smith and Finch, Coral and Brass*; *Stockman and Carleton, Campaign for the Marianas*. Unless otherwise noted, all documents cited are located in the Marianas Area OpFile and Marianas CmtFile, HistBr, HQMC.

of those military enterprises that observers like to term classic. Admiral Spruance called Tinian "probably the most brilliantly conceived and executed amphibious operation of World War II."² General Holland Smith saw gratifying results of the amphibious doctrine he helped develop before the war. Tinian, he wrote afterwards, was "the perfect amphibious operation in the Pacific war."³ Marines in the battle for Tinian profited by the flexible application of amphibious warfare techniques so laboriously evolved during the practice landings of the 1930s.

WHY TINIAN?

Capture of the island was a military necessity. It was, of course, unthinkable that Japanese troops remain on Tinian, next door to Saipan. But there also existed a more positive reason for wanting Tinian—its usefulness for land-based aircraft. The island is the least mountainous of the Marianas, the one which was most suited for new American long-range bombers. It was from Tinian that the B-29s rose to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945.

The Japanese knew the military

²Adm Raymond A. Spruance ltr to CMC, dtd 27Nov50.

³Smith and Finch, *Coral and Brass*, p. 201.

value of Tinian. They had used the island for staging planes and as a refueling stop for aircraft en route to and from the Empire. On Ushi Point they had constructed an airfield which was even better than Aslito on Saipan. The two excellent strips on this field were labeled by American intelligence as Airfield No. 1 and Airfield No. 3. The older north strip, the site of the main airdrome, was 4,750 feet long. Two villages adjoined the activity, housing the personnel. On Gurguan Point was another airstrip which extended 5,060 feet (Airfield No. 2). Northeast of Tinian Town lay Airfield No. 4, still under construction. Already 70 percent surfaced, it could be used for emergency landings. These airfields drew the bulk of Japanese defensive weapons on Tinian. The enemy had sited a number of heavy and medium antiaircraft and light machine guns in the vicinity of each field, particularly the prized Ushi Point strips. (See Map 21.)

American photographic reconnaissance of Tinian, begun on a carrier strike of 22-23 February 1944, focused on the airfields, though not to the neglect of the rest of the island. Perhaps no other Pacific island, not previously an American possession, became so familiar to the assault forces because of thorough and accurate mapping prior to the landings. Documents captured on Saipan were also informative, because the Japanese, as well as the Americans, had linked the two islands in their military plans.

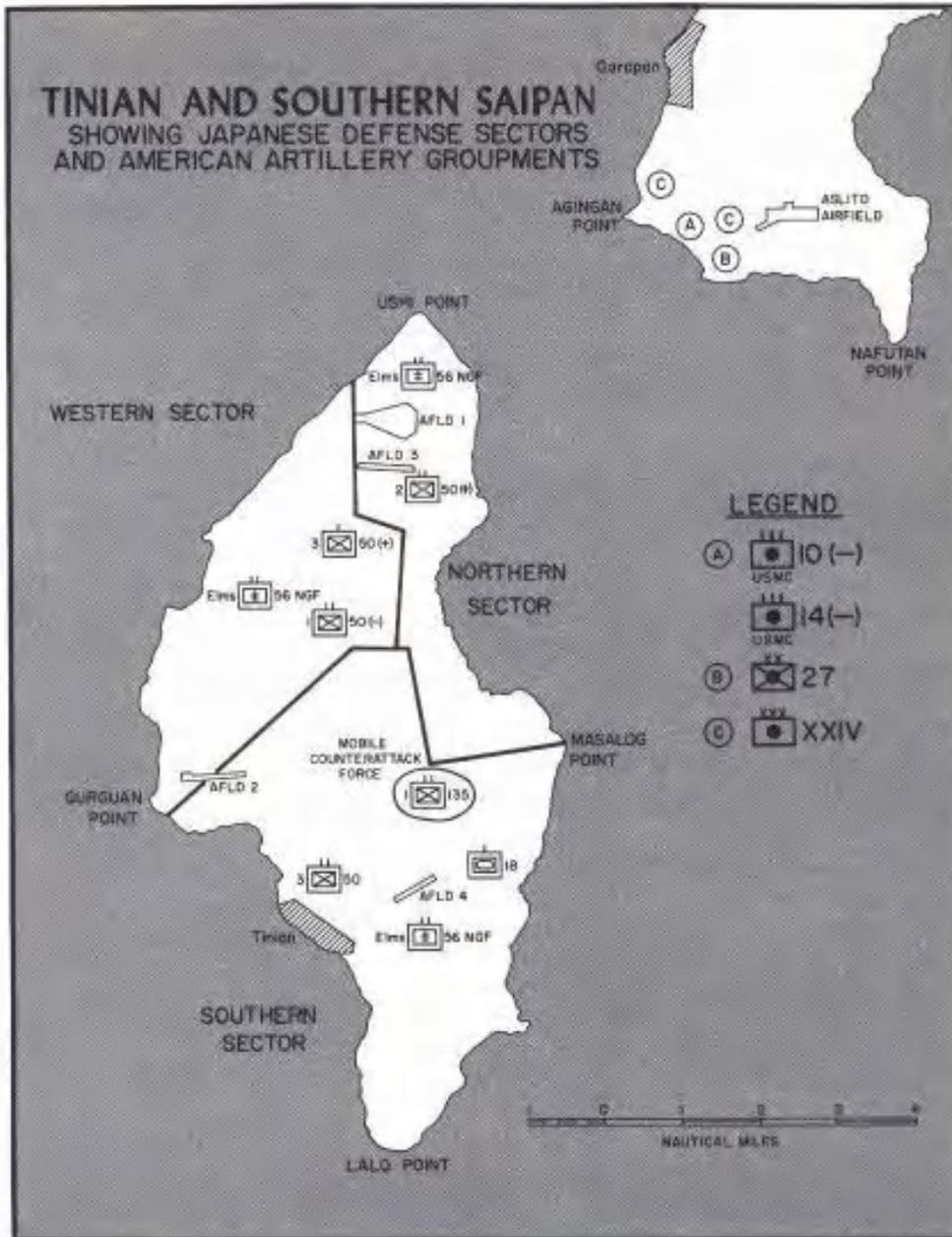
In the whole field of intelligence, the Tinian operation benefited from early planning, general though it was. Detailed planning for Tinian had to yield

precedence to that for Saipan and Guam, but once the end of the Saipan campaign was in sight, NTLF headquarters began daily conferences regarding the assault on the nearby target.

DESCRIPTION OF TINIAN

The island the commanders talked about was scenically attractive, observed from either a ship or a plane. In fact, it was said that naval and air gunners were sorry to devastate the idyllic landscape of Tinian. It consisted mainly of small farms, square or rectangular, which, viewed from the air, appeared like squares of a checkerboard. Each holding was marked off by bordering ditches, used for irrigation, or by rows of trees or brush, planted for use as windbreaks.

Tinian measures about 50 square miles. It extends 12-1/4 miles from Ushi Point to Lalo Point but never is more than 5 miles wide. In the wettest months (July to October) of the summer monsoon, the island is drenched by nearly a foot of rainfall per month. Ninety percent of the area is tillable. In 1944, the population of 18,000 consisted almost entirely of Japanese, for all but a handful of the native Chamorros had been moved off to lesser islands of the Marianas. Most of the Japanese had been brought to Tinian by a commercial organization to produce sugar, the chief island product. Tinian produced 50 percent more sugar cane than Saipan. Tinian Town was the center of the industry and had two sugar mills which received the raw product, mostly freighted over a small winding railroad. A good net-



MAP 21

R.F. STIBIL

work of roads also served the transportation needs of the island.

Basically, Tinian was a pleasant and prosperous island. The sole forbidding aspect, except for the Japanese military installations that summer of 1944, were the coral cliffs which rise from the coastline and are a part of the limestone plateau underlying Tinian. A few hills jut up from the plateau, but the principal one, Mt. Lasso, in the center of the island, is only 564 feet high, just a third the size of Mt. Tapotchau on Saipan; Mt. Maga, in the north, measures 390 feet, and an unnamed elevation in the south is 580 feet high. The cliffs which encircle the plateau vary in height, from 6 to 100 feet. Breaks along the cliff line are few and narrow, putting beach space at a premium.

It was, in fact, the question of landing beaches which particularly dominated the planning for Tinian, even more than it usually did for other island campaigns. The Japanese knew they could not escape an assault of Tinian—but where would the landings be made, when, and in what force? Concerning these matters, the enemy had to be kept in the dark until the invasion actually began.

Along the entire coastline of Tinian, only three areas have beaches worthy of the name. One is the vicinity of Sunharon Harbor near Tinian Town, where the several sandy stretches are the widest and most suitable beaches for invasion. On the opposite side of the island, along Asiga Bay, the cliff line breaks off, resulting in a beach approximately 125 yards wide. On the northwest coast, below Ushi Point, are two stingy strips of beach 1,000 yards

apart. Intelligence reported one to be about 60 yards wide and the other about 160. Japanese civilians had found the white, sandy beaches pleasant and the water there good enough for swimming and, in fact, had called them the White Beaches. This happened also to be the code name assigned to the two beaches by invasion planners, while the Asiga Bay beach was designated Yellow Beach. (See Maps 22 and 23.)

Colonel Keishi Ogata,⁴ commander of the *50th Infantry Regiment* and responsible for the defense of Tinian, believed the Americans would land either near Tinian Town or at Asiga Bay. The colonel's "Defense Force Battle Plan," issued from his command post in a Mt. Lasso cave on 28 June, showed only such expectations.⁵ He did not, of course, ignore the northwest beaches, but he anticipated only a small landing party there, at the most. To meet such a remote contingency, the colonel directed that some troops be positioned inland of the beaches. A "Plan for the Guidance of Battle," issued to those troops on 7 July, was captured by Marines the day after the landing on Tinian. In that plan, Colonel Ogata ordered his men to be ready to counterattack on the larger White Beach (White 2). But he scorned the smaller beach (White 1) as being unworthy of consideration.

An enemy strongpoint, American intelligence reported, was located

⁴ Chief, War HistOff, Def Agency of Japan ltr to Head, HistBr, G-3, HQMC, dtd 9Nov63.

⁵ DefFor BatPlan, dtd 28Jun44, in *4th Mar Div Translations (Tinian)*, hereafter *DefFor Plan*.

about 500 yards northeast of the White Beaches. It included the usual trenches, dugouts, and light machine gun or rifle positions in a wooded area. Among the heavier weapons emplaced here were a 37mm antitank gun, a 47mm antitank gun, and two 7.7mm machine guns.

JAPANESE TROOPS AND EQUIPMENT

Colonel Ogata had only about 8,900 men to dispose judiciously before the Americans came. The mainstay of the Tinian garrison was the well-trained *50th Infantry Regiment*, with a strength of about 3,800 men.⁶ The regiment consisted of headquarters, three infantry battalions (each with 880 men, organized into a headquarters detachment, three rifle companies, and a battalion gun platoon with two 70mm guns), one 75mm mountain artillery battalion (three four-gun batteries, one to each infantry battalion), supply, signal, and medical companies, one antitank platoon (six 37mm guns), and a fortification detachment.

Other Army elements included the *1st Battalion* of the *135th Infantry Regiment*, the tank company of the

⁶ The *50th Infantry Regiment* had been transferred from Manchuria in March 1944. It had been scheduled to leave Tinian on 15 June to defend Rota, but the arrival of Task Force 58 in the Marianas on 11 June caused a change of plans. On 7 July, *Imperial General Headquarters* switched the responsibility for the defense of Tinian from the *Northern Marianas Army Group* on Saipan to the *Southern Marianas Army Group* on Guam. Consequently, the *50th Infantry Regiment* came under the *29th Division*, whose headquarters was on Guam.

18th Infantry Regiment, a detachment of the *29th Field Hospital*, and a motor transport platoon. The infantry battalion had been engaged in amphibious exercises off Tinian when, at the approach of Task Force 58 on 11 June, it was detached from its parent regiment on Saipan and put into the defense system for Tinian.⁷ As a result, just about half of the strength available to Colonel Ogata was made up of Army personnel.

The naval complement on Tinian consisted chiefly of the *56th Naval Guard Force* (*Keibitai*), numbering about 1,400 men that had been partially trained as infantry. Most of the sailors of the *Keibitai* were assigned to the coastal defense and anti-aircraft guns, but some of them comprised a *Coastal Security Force* which operated patrol boats and laid beach mines. The *233d Construction Battalion* came to about 600 men, while other miscellaneous construction personnel totaled around 800. The anti-aircraft units of the *56th Keibitai* were later identified as the *82d* and *83d Air Defense Groups*, each numbering between 200 and 250 men, the former unit being equipped with 24 25mm anti-aircraft guns and the latter with 6 dual-purpose 75mm guns. Other naval units included a detachment of the *5th Base Force* and the ground elements of seven aviation squadrons.⁸

⁷ Japanese records in Tokyo indicate that other elements of the *135th Infantry* moved from Saipan to Tinian on 29 May, 31 May, and 1 June and that the strength of the regiment on Tinian may have been greater than the 900 men listed in NTLF G-2 estimates. Japanese War HistOff Cmts Tinian, *op. cit.*

⁸ *Ibid.*

In charge of all naval personnel on the island was Captain Goichi Oya, though the senior naval officer present was Vice Admiral Kakuji Kakuda, commanding the *First Air Fleet*, whose headquarters was on Tinian. Kakuda, however, was more interested in transferring his command elsewhere, and he left the Tinian naval duties to Captain Oya, who, a week before the invasion, moved his command post from Tinian Town to high ground near the town. Captain Oya was supposed to report to Colonel Ogata, but he was inclined to act independently.

Colonel Ogata had marked off the island into three defense sectors. The southern, the largest of the three, comprised the entire area below Mt. Lasso and included Tinian Town. The northern sector covered the Ushi Point air strips and Asiga Bay. To defend each of those sectors, Ogata assigned a battalion of the *50th Infantry Regiment* and a platoon of engineers. In the western sector, however, where the northwest beaches lay, he left only the *3d Company* of the *1st Battalion* and an antitank squad. The rest of the *1st Battalion* was put into reserve just south of Mt. Lasso. Though in the western sector, these troops were positioned much closer to Asiga Bay than to the northwest beaches. (See Map 21.)

A "Mobile Counterattack Force"—the *1st Battalion* of the *135th Infantry Regiment*, actually another reserve—was located in the southern sector, centrally stationed to move either toward Asiga Bay or the Tinian Town area. The force was called mobile because it would "advance rapidly to the place of landings, depending on the

situation, and attack."⁹ Mobility, in fact, was a keynote of the Japanese plan. Each sector commander would be prepared not only "to destroy the enemy at the beach" but also "to shift two-thirds of the force elsewhere."¹⁰

Incorporated within the defense were the twelve 75mm mountain guns of the artillery battalion of the *50th Infantry Regiment* which, when reinforced by the 70mm guns of the infantry battalions, made up a Mobile Artillery Force. The artillery battalion would rapidly deploy to support jointly a counter-attack with the tank company of the *18th Infantry Regiment*, whose 12 light tanks were the enemy's only armor on Tinian. This unit, positioned in the southern sector, also possessed two of the rare Japanese amphibian trucks.

Naval personnel on the island were variously employed by Colonel Ogata. They guarded the airfields, particularly at Ushi Point, and protected the harbor installations of Asiga Bay and Sunharon Harbor. Naval gunners manned most of fixed artillery on the island and its anti-aircraft weapons. The former included ten 140mm coast defense guns—three of them on Ushi Point, three on Faibus San Hilo Point, and four commanding Asiga Bay.

Three of the ten 120mm dual purpose guns on Tinian shielded the Ushi Point air strips, while three more served the airfield at Gurguan Point. Behind Tinian Harbor stood four more 120mm dual purpose guns, in addition to three 6-inch naval guns of British 1905 make. These 6-inch guns were so artfully con-

⁹ *DefFor Plan.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

cealed in a cave that until they opened up on the day of the landing their presence was unknown. The prized Ushi Point airfield was solicitously guarded by antiaircraft weapons, including 6 13mm antiaircraft and anti-tank guns, 15 25mm twin mounts, 4 20mm automatic cannons, and 6 75mm guns.

Miscellaneous types rounded out the Japanese arsenal of weapons on Tinian. In 23 pillboxes which ringed Asiga Bay there were machine guns of unknown caliber. They never took a Marine's life, however, for they—like a number of the other guns pinpointed by reconnaissance—were destroyed by bombardment prior to the invasion.

PREPARATORY BOMBARDMENT

Tinian received a more thorough going over than most other island objectives of the Pacific war, chiefly because the usual naval and air bombardment was augmented for weeks by the fires of artillery. On 20 June, hardly a week after the landings on Saipan, Battery B of the 531st Field Artillery turned its 155mm guns, the "Long Toms," upon Tinian. Other units were added thereafter until, by the middle of July, a total of 13 battalions of both Marine and Army artillery were drawn up on southern Saipan, under the command of the Army Brigadier General Arthur M. Harper, General Holland Smith's valued artillery officer. (See Map 21.)

The Corps Artillery thus emplaced in position and firing on Tinian included the 10th Marines (less the 1st and 2d Battalions, attached to the 14th Marines); the 3d and 4th Battalions, 14th

Marines (Headquarters and the 1st and 2d Battalions stayed with the 4th Division); and the 4th 105mm Howitzer Battalion, VAC, hitherto serving with the 14th Marines. These five battalions of 105mm howitzers were attached to XXIV Corps Artillery on 15 July and were designated Groupment A, under control of Headquarters, 10th Marines. The artillery of the 27th Infantry Division (less the 106th Field Artillery Battalion) was likewise attached on 15 July and comprised Groupment B. Five battalions of XXIV Corps Artillery formed Groupment C, and they set up the long-range 155mm guns and 155mm howitzers. The other Army and Marine battalions were equipped with 105mm howitzers. The Marines' four 75mm pack howitzer battalions were not used but were reserved more suitably for the invasion, where they would furnish close support for the assault divisions to which they were attached.

There was quite enough steel and powder to support the operation. The artillerymen used up 24,536 rounds prior to the landings. A total of 1,509 preinvasion fire missions included counterbattery, harassing, and area bombardment. Corps Artillery kept a valuable file of intelligence data on Tinian which was used by both aviators and naval gunners. A Corps Artillery intelligence section worked very closely with the Force G-2 at the NTLF command post on Saipan. Light spotter aircraft were assigned to the artillery units to observe fire results and to collect target intelligence data for either immediate or future use.

The sea bombardment of Tinian began before artillery was ashore on

Saipan. On 13 June, fire support ships of Task Force 52, which could be spared from the pounding of Saipan, were employed against Tinian. The chief object then was to forestall interference with the Saipan operation by Tinian guns or aircraft. Destroyers started a relentless patrol of Saipan Channel, turning their 5-inch guns upon shore batteries and harassing Ushi Point airfield.

Destroyer activity was rapidly extended to other waters. Star shells were placed over Tinian Harbor to prevent movement from the area of Tinian Town. That whole vicinity, especially the airfield, received harassing fire. Here, because of a shortage of destroyers, much of the responsibility fell to destroyer escorts (DEs), destroyer transports (APDs), or destroyer minesweepers (DMSs), whose crews enjoyed the change of routine. On 25 June, two DEs, the *Elden* and the *Bancroft*, spotted a few Japanese barges attempting to leave Sunharon Harbor and blocked their escape by shelling and destroying them. Destroyer escorts also roved to the northwest to harass Gurguan Point airfield by gunfire.

Starting 26 June, the cruisers *Indianapolis*, *Birmingham*, and *Montpelier* undertook a daily systematic bombardment of point targets, which lasted a week and paid special attention to the area of Tinian Town. Intensive bombardment by cruisers was resumed the last few days before the Tinian landings when the *Louisville* and the *New Orleans* delivered main and secondary battery fires. Both of these ships, like the *Indianapolis*, were heavy cruisers. The *Louisville* served as flagship for

Rear Admiral Jesse B. Oldendorf, who commanded the fire support ships for Tinian.

During the numerous naval gunfire missions at Tinian, a variety of shells were utilized. On 18 and 19 July, two destroyers attempted to burn the wooded areas on Mt. Lasso with white phosphorus projectiles. Results were disappointing, however, evidently because of dampness due to rain. But since such fire proved terrifying to the enemy on Saipan, destroyers continued to employ it against caves on Tinian. LCI gunboats also shelled the cliffside caves of Tinian with their 40mm guns.

Nowhere on the island were the Japanese left at peace. Starting on 17 July, destroyers from the Saipan Channel patrol delivered surprise night fire at irregular times on the beaches of Asiga Bay, where the enemy was working feverishly to install defenses. The airfields of Tinian were incessantly harassed to deny their use by the enemy. On a single day, 24 June, the battleship *Colorado* shelled every airfield on the island.

The routine of bombarding Tinian, stepped up on 16 July, was climaxed on the 23d, the day before invasion, when 3 battleships, 5 cruisers, and 16 destroyers were involved. Only the beaches due to receive the landings were slighted; for the sake of deception, they were subjected to merely casual fire from the *Louisville* and the *Colorado*. The old battleship surpassed all its previous efforts by destroying, on the same day, the three 140mm coast defense guns of Faibus San Hilo Point, with 60 well-placed 16-inch shells. On the day of the landings, however, the *Colorado* was herself

to suffer tragically from the fire of a coastal battery which had not been destroyed.

From the beginning, the Japanese did not suffer the naval shelling without reacting violently, and their return fire caused damage and casualties to a few of the fire support ships. The enemy's defenses were, as usual, well dug in, and some were able to survive the heaviest shelling. Ships found a position difficult to destroy totally except by a direct hit. Because there was a lack of profitable or suitable targets for the largest gunfire support ships, the naval bombardment was suspended for a week between the securing of Saipan on 9 July and 16 July. The only exception was night heckling of the enemy by DEs in the area of Tinian Town.

Provisions for naval gunfire were tied into the overall bombardment plan for Tinian. Efficient interlocking of the three supporting arms was served by a daily conference at NTLF headquarters on Saipan attended by representatives of artillery, air, and naval gunfire. Responsibility for daily assignments was left mainly to the fire direction center of XXIV Corps Artillery because of its collected intelligence data and excellent communication setup. Here the targets were allocated as appropriate to each of the supporting arms. If there was a unique aspect to direction of preliminary fires for Tinian, it was that artillery was a decisive factor.

The big land guns were, of course, aimed mostly at northern Tinian. The 155mm guns could stretch to the southern part of the island, but they seldom attempted it, leaving that half to air-

craft instead. Sometimes all three supporting arms had a go at a target. The area of Tinian Town, perhaps the most punished of all, was such an example, though naval gunfire did the most damage there. Use of the island road network was virtually denied to the enemy by the shells and bombs which came from everywhere, isolating some sections and destroying others.

It was neither naval gunfire nor artillery, however, which started the preparatory bombardment of Tinian. On 11 June, Vice Admiral Mitscher's fast carrier task force sailed into the Marianas. Its immediate object was to support the Saipan operation. To minimize interference from the airfields, antiaircraft guns, and shore batteries on Tinian, these installations were bombed and strafed. The Battle of the Philippine Sea began on 17 June, and TF 58 steamed there to join the battle. Five days later, however, surface elements returned to the Tinian assignment. They then were joined by CVE-based aircraft of Task Force 52 and P-47 fighters based on Aslito. All landbased aircraft (except the Marine observation squadrons), as well as the carrier-based planes engaged in the Tinian operation, operated under Commander Lloyd B. Osborne, Commander Support Aircraft, who was embarked in the *Cambria*, flagship of Admiral Hill.¹¹

¹¹ Commander Osborne acted as Commander Support Aircraft off Saipan during the periods when Admiral Turner was on night retirement and Admiral Hill was SOPA. Osborne assumed control of air operations over Tinian when Admiral Hill relieved Turner as CTF 52. Adm Harry W. Hill interview and cmts on draft MS, dtd 20Nov63.

Marine observation planes of VMO-2 and VMO-4 also took part in the pre-invasion activity over Tinian. For several days prior to the landings, pilots operating from Aslito flew over the island, learning about it and searching for targets of opportunity. The little unarmed and unarmored OYs, veterans of Saipan, would again serve infantry and artillery missions on Tinian. Until then, they performed some spotting for the artillerymen shelling Tinian from Saipan.

After the capture of Saipan, aerial reduction of the enemy's defensive positions was undertaken by rocketry, glide bombing, and strafing. Targets included railroad junctions, pillboxes, roads, covered artillery positions, and canefields. The beaches, in the main, were ignored to keep the enemy puzzled, but the airfields were unreservedly raked. Enemy air strength had already been decisively cut down. Of the 107 planes estimated as being based at Tinian airfields prior to 11 June, 70 were destroyed on the ground by carrier strikes long before the capture of Saipan.

Something new was added to air bombardment at Tinian. On 19 July, an enthusiastic Navy commander arrived on Saipan with an impressive Army Air Forces film showing what happened when napalm powder was mixed with aircraft fuel. He showed the pictures to Admiral Hill and General Schmidt and both were enthusiastic about the possibilities of the new fire bomb.¹² Enough napalm and detonators were at hand for a trial run

by P-47s. Oil, gasoline, and napalm were mixed in jettisonable fuel tanks. The formula was later improved, but initial results proved good enough to ensure acceptance.¹³

The first use of the fuel-tank bombs was an attempt to burn off wooded areas which, due to dampness, had previously resisted white phosphorus and thermite. The new incendiary badly scorched the trees, but left the needles only partially burned. Because many of the trees were of hardy and indestructible ironwood, the experiment was inconclusive. Much better results were obtained when napalm was used on canefields. Smouldering piles and smoking ashes appeared where once grew flourishing cane stalks. On 23 July, two fire bombs burned out considerable underbrush in the White Beach area.

Pilots of the P-47s, which dropped most of the bombs, objected that such missions required extremely low flying, at a risk of attracting heavy ground fire. They also reported too much upward flash, which decreased the incendiary value, and too brief a burning time—60 to 90 seconds. The idea was a promising one, however, and, when the correct formula was evolved, the new fire bomb became one of the most formidable weapons in the American arsenal.

Thus while planes, ships, and artillery foreshadowed the land battle, organization and plans for the invasion were concluded. A few command changes took place, mostly because the

¹² Adm Harry W. Hill interview with Midn Stephen S. Toth, ca. 1963, encl to *Ibid.*

¹³ Napalm was a thickener, consisting of a mixture of aluminum soaps, used in jelling gasoline.

recapture of Guam would be attempted at the same time.

COMMAND STRUCTURE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Admiral Hill took command of a reconstituted Northern Attack Force (TF 52) on 15 July, relieving Admiral Turner, who could now exercise more fully his responsibility in command of the Joint Expeditionary Force (TF 51). Hill had been Turner's able second-in-command at Saipan. General Holland Smith was relieved on 12 July and ordered to assume command of the newly-established Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, whose functions included administrative control of all Marines in the Pacific. Command of NTLF and of the V Amphibious Corps was assigned to General Schmidt, who was relieved as 4th Division commander by Major General Clifton B. Cates, one of the few officers who had commanded a platoon, a company, a battalion, a regiment, and now a division in battle. General Watson continued in command of the 2d Division.

General Smith, in retaining command of Expeditionary Troops (TF 56), also continued in overall command of ground forces in the Marianas operations. But neither he nor Admiral Turner was present at the Tinian landings. They sailed on 20 July, on board the *Rocky Mount*, to witness the invasion of Guam the next day. Though they returned on 25 July, they left the direction of the Tinian campaign to Admiral Hill and General Schmidt.

As landing force commander for Tinian, General Schmidt would be in tactical control of the troops. Admiral Hill, the attack force commander, was

responsible to Admiral Turner for the capture of Tinian. Slated to command Tinian garrison troops was Marine Major General James L. Underhill. He would have the job of developing Tinian as an air base.

The 2d and 4th Marine Divisions would still compose the assault troops of NTLF, which would make the first corps-sized Marine shore-to-shore operation under combat conditions. The two divisions, however, had suffered grievously on Saipan, and only one replacement draft of 1,268 officers and enlisted men was due before the battle on Tinian. After designating the 4th Division to make the assault landing, General Schmidt reapportioned the men and equipment available. On 18 July, he took all the armored amphibian and amphibian tractor battalions, reorganized them under a Provisional Headquarters, Amphibian Tractors, V Amphibious Corps, and attached it to the 4th Division.¹⁴

The 2d Division lost its 1st Amphibian Truck Company, its 2d Tank Battalion, and its last two battalions (the 1st and 2d) of the 10th Marines to a heavy buildup of the 4th Division, whose final reinforced strength included also the 1st Joint Assault Signal Company, the 1st Provisional Rocket Detachment, the 2d Amphibian Truck

¹⁴The 2d Division gave up its 2d Armored Amphibian Battalion, 2d Amphibian Tractor Battalion, 5th Amphibian Tractor Battalion, and 715th Amphibian Tractor Battalion (Army). The Provisional LVT Group also embraced the 10th Amphibian Tractor Battalion, already with the 4th Division, and the 534th and 773d Amphibian Tractor and 708th Amphibian Tank Battalions (Army).

Company, and the 1341st Engineer Battalion (Army).

While such reorganization served to mass combat power in the assault division for seizing and holding the beachhead, it left the 2d Division markedly understrength for its own mission of landing in support. The only reinforcing units left to General Watson were the 2d Joint Assault Signal Company and the 2d Provisional Rocket Detachment.

The reserve 27th Infantry Division was to be prepared to embark on four hours' notice to land on Tinian. The Army division, however, had been much reduced by casualties and detachments and could muster only about half of its original strength. One of its regiments, the 105th Infantry, was required for garrison duty on Saipan, and its division artillery had been detached earlier to the XXIV Corps Artillery for the reduction of Tinian.

In the two-weeks' interval between the capture of Saipan and the invasion of Tinian, the battle-experienced Marines enjoyed a break, except for Japanese sniper activity. No rehearsal for the Tinian assault was held, nor was one regarded as necessary, but a certain amount of reorganization went on. On 11 July, the 2d Marines reverted to the 2d Division and moved to an assembly area near Garapan. The next day, the 165th Infantry was returned from the 2d Division to the 27th Division. On 13 July, the 4th Division began moving to a rest area on southeast Saipan, behind the beaches where the Marines had landed. The 23d Marines stayed in northern Saipan to destroy remaining pockets of Japanese resistance until relieved on 16 July by the 105th Infantry.

At the same time the Army relieved the 6th Marines, which ended its mopping up activities and followed the 2d Marines into the assembly area. The orphan 1st Battalion, 29th Marines, which had been detached from the 2d Division to Island Command on 6 July, was due to stay on Saipan for garrison duty.

While the Saipan veterans relaxed, speculation as to the next objective was relatively absent. Troops knew the next island would be Tinian. They were left to guess where the landings would be made. That, in fact, was a question unresolved by the high command itself even after Saipan was secured.

THE ISSUE OF WHERE TO LAND

On 8 July, as time for the invasion of Tinian approached, Admiral Turner put the question to the man due to take over the Northern Attack Force. Admiral Hill was directed to prepare assault plans, suggesting where the landings be made. The debate over which beaches to use was months old. Admiral Turner's inclination to favor the beaches around Sunharon Harbor was opposed by the majority. Four possible landing spots had been noted in this area; those just off Tinian Town had been designated Red Beach and Green Beach, with the Orange and Blue Beaches nearby. The width of all these beaches totaled 2,100 yards. They were certainly the best on Tinian and superior to those on Saipan. Each was wide, with a gentle slope, and the offshore reef contained numerous channel openings. Although Tinian Harbor was a poor anchorage and would have to be developed shortly after the land-

ing, it was the only feasible place for the landing of heavy equipment.

There were, however, two major obstacles to an invasion through the Tinian Town area. One, of course, was that the Japanese expected just such an eventuality and had concentrated so many troops and weapons that a landing there could be made only at a heavy cost to the assaulting forces. The other drawback, related to the first, was that an attack there—or at Asiga Bay—would deprive the Tinian operation of just about the only element of surprise yet left to it. “The enemy on Saipan,” said Colonel Ogata on 25 June, “can be expected to be planning a landing on Tinian. The area of that landing is estimated to be either Tinian Harbor or Asiga Harbor.”¹⁵

From the beginning, therefore, American planners had viewed with interest the two small beaches on the northwest coast which, to the Japanese, seemed entirely incapable of supporting a major landing. Perhaps surprise would be obtainable there. What also favored the beaches was their proximity to Saipan for resupply purposes, and the fact that artillery support of the landing would be possible from that island.

Admiral Turner, however, saw another side to the problem. True, the beaches were close to Saipan, but that also meant a long advance down the island, once the landing on Tinian had been accomplished. A shore-to-shore movement involved risking small craft to the vagaries of uncertain weather conditions, whereas at Tinian Town

there was a protected harbor, favorable to small boats and unloading operations. Weather could also prevent the rapid displacement to Tinian of field artillery when the troops outran the range of such support from Saipan.

The limited size of the northwest beaches was the chief concern of Admiral Turner, and hardly less so for General Smith and others, though they were not so dubious about them. Everyone felt that the utmost knowledge would have to preface a decision. And, at best, such beaches could serve only as paths or routes, rather than as landing beaches in the usual sense of the word.

When reporting later to Fleet Admiral King, Admiral Hill stated, in simple terms, what the problem was: could two divisions of troops be landed and supplied across beaches the size of White 1 and White 2? Of uppermost concern was whether the amphibian tractors would be able to get ashore, move up to unload, and then turn around. Intelligence sources reported that on White 1 there were only about 60 yards usable for passage of amphibian vehicles and that on the wider White 2 only the middle 65 yards were free of coral boulders and ledges.

To check such findings and also to obtain better knowledge of the beaches,¹⁶ a physical reconnaissance was necessary. It would have to include Yellow Beach on Asiga Bay, should White 1 and White 2 be found unusable. On 3 July, men of the VAC Amphibious Re-

¹⁵ Tinian GarFor OpO A58, dtd 25Jun44, in *4th MarDiv Translations (Tinian)*.

¹⁶ Part of the assorted intelligence on the beaches of Tinian had been obtained by interrogation of native Chamorro and Kanaka fishermen captured on Saipan.

connaissance Battalion were told to be ready for a mission on some Tinian beaches. On 9 July, General Holland Smith issued the operation order to Captain James L. Jones, specifying the beaches. The mission had the approval of both Admiral Turner and Admiral Hill. The latter ordered the participation of Naval Underwater Demolition Teams.

The mission of the Marines was to investigate the beaches, measure the cliffs, and note the area just beyond, including the exits. They were to report the trafficability of the beaches for LVTs and DUKWs in particular. The naval UDT-men were to do the hydrographic reconnaissance—measuring the height of the surf and the depth of the water, observing the nature of the waves, checking the reefs and beach approaches, and looking for underwater obstacles.

After a rehearsal on the night of 9–10 July, off the beaches of Magicienne Bay, Saipan, the Marines and the Navy teams boarded the transport destroyers *Gilmer* and *Stringham*. Company A of the Marine battalion, under the command of Captain Merwin H. Silverthorn, Jr., was assigned to investigate Yellow Beach, while Company B, commanded by Lieutenant Leo B. Shinn, would undertake a reconnaissance of the White Beaches.

The evening of 10 July was very dark when the men debarked into their small rubber boats about 2030. Moonrise occurred at 2232, but fortunately a cloudy sky obscured the moon until almost midnight. Thus the final 500-yard swim to the beaches could be made under the cover of darkness.

Reconnaissance of Yellow Beach, by

20 Marines and 8 UDT-men went off just right, but the reports were unfavorable. On each side of the 125-yard beach, swimmers observed forbidding cliffs which were 20 to 25 feet high. They found also that approaches to the beach contained floating mines, anchored a foot under water off the reef, and that many underwater boulders and potholes would endanger a landing. Craft might be affected also by the relatively high surf, which is generally whipped by prevailing winds.

On the beach itself, the enemy had strung double-apron barbed wire. After working his way through it, Second Lieutenant Donald F. Neff advanced about 30 yards inland to locate exit routes for vehicles—a bold mission, for a night shift of Japanese was busy constructing pillboxes and trenches nearby, and their voices could be plainly heard. Noises resembling gunfire, which had been puzzling while the Marines were moving to the beaches, could now be identified as blasting charges. The enemy seemed vaguely conscious of something strange. Three Japanese sentries were observed peering down at the beach from a cliff, and a few lights flashed seaward. Though all went well for the reconnaissance teams, such imminence of danger caused a suggestion after the reconnaissance that, instead of being unarmed, the swimmers should be equipped with a lightweight pistol or revolver which could be fired even when wet. Captain Silverthorn reported that the reef at Yellow Beach appeared suitable for the crossing of LVTs and DUKWs, but the sum total of the situation at Yellow Beach was plainly unfavorable to a landing.

Exploration of White 1 and White 2

got off to a bad start. Whereas the current off Yellow Beach was negligible at the time, it was so unexpectedly rough on the northwest coast that it pushed the rubber boats off course. The men who were scheduled for White 2 landed instead on White 1, which they reconnoitered. The men headed for White 1 were swept about 800 yards to the north, where there was no beach.

Reconnaissance of White 2 was delayed, therefore, until the next night, when Company A undertook the mission, sending 10 swimmers ashore. On the previous night, the operation had been handled by the *Gilmer*, but this time the *Stringham* took the Marines and the UDT-men toward White 2, leaving the pickup to the *Gilmer*. Radar, which the *Stringham* possessed, enabled it to guide the rubber boats and to send course corrections over an SCR-300 radio.

Findings at the White Beaches were relatively encouraging. They showed that the measurements indicated by air and photographic coverage were approximately correct. White 1 proved to be a sandy beach about 60 yards wide, and White 2 more than twice that size. At the larger beach, however, there were coral barriers which averaged 3½ feet high. They formed the beach entrance and restricted it, for vehicles, to about 70 yards, though infantry could scramble over the barriers. On the beach itself was found a man-made wall sloping up about 1½ to 2 feet but judged passable by vehicles.

Primarily, the physical reconnaissance verified that LVTs, DUKWs, and tanks could negotiate the reef and land. Moreover, it showed that LCMs and LCVPs could unload on the generally

smooth reef which extends about 100 yards from the shore. It appeared, however, that White 1 would be able to receive just 8 LVTs—and then only if some unloaded opposite the cliffs. At White 2, the landing of a maximum of 16 LVTs seemed possible, if about half unloaded in front of the adjacent cliffs.

While the cliffs at the White Beaches were not more than 6 to 10 feet high—lower than those at Yellow Beach—and could be scaled by ladders or cargo nets, they were nevertheless rocky and sharp and were deeply undercut at the bottom by the action of the sea. There were a number of breaks in the cliff walls at both beaches, where it appeared that Marines could land single file without aid and move inland. In effect, while the avenues of approach for amphibious vehicles were severely limited, the landing area was fairly wide—on White 1 a probable 200 yards; on White 2, 400 yards.

Marines who debarked from LCVPs on the reef would be able to wade ashore without risk underfoot except from small holes and boulders. No dangerous depths were found, nor any line of mines or man-made underwater obstacles. The scouts, however, were not equipped to detect the buried mine—not easy to set into coral but quite practical in the gravel at the shore edge.

Bearing such detailed reports, UDT and VAC Reconnaissance Battalion officers went to see Admiral Turner on board the *Rocky Mount* early on 12 July. They felt that landings could be made on the White Beaches, and that successful exits were possible inland.

With the reports at hand, Admiral Turner opened a meeting on board the

Rocky Mount on 12 July. He started the conference by talking about the various beaches of Tinian from a naval standpoint. General Schmidt and Admiral Hill then were asked for their opinions, and they spoke unreservedly in favor of the White Beaches, expressing the following views:

(1) landings at the Tinian Town area would prove too costly;

(2) the artillery on Saipan could well support an invasion over the northern beaches ;

(3) capture of Ushi Point airfield, a primary objective, was immediately desirable for supply and evacuation;

(4) tactical surprise might be possible on the White Beaches;

(5) a shore-to-shore movement would be feasible; and

(6) most supplies could be preloaded on Saipan and moved directly on wheels and tracks to inland dumps on Tinian.

Admiral Turner was agreeable to the idea. He remarked, later, that he had already become reconciled to the White Beaches and, like everyone else, was awaiting favorable reconnaissance reports. General Smith had been a pioneer advocate of the White Beaches, so now, with the consent of Admiral Spruance, the issue was settled.¹⁷

The next day, Admiral Turner released his operation plan, later promulgated as an order. Some 300 copies of the plan were circulated, starting in

¹⁷ Admiral Spruance, in commenting on this passage, wrote that it was the reports of the reconnaissance and UDT teams that "decided us on the change in plan. This operation, like that later on at *Inchon* in Korea, required trained and efficient troops like our Marines to be successful." Adm Raymond A. Spruance ltr to ACofS, G-3, HQMC, dtd 4Oct63.

motion the troops and equipment which had hardly been idle since the capture of Saipan. On 20 July, Admiral Spruance confirmed J-Day as the 24th, but he authorized Admiral Hill to alter the date, if necessary, for the weather had to be right. This invasion was going to take place at the height of the summer monsoon period, a time of suddenly appearing typhoons and thunderstorms. The exacting logistical effort would require at least three calm days following the landings, a period to be forecast by Fifth Fleet weather reconnaissance.

LOGISTICS: PLANS AND PROBLEMS

Logistics, indeed, formed the heart of the operation plan, for upon that branch of military art depended, more than usually, a victory on the battlefield. The invasion of Tinian was going to test whether Navy and Marine Corps amphibious tactics were sufficiently flexible. In the attempt to land and supply two divisions over a space of less than 200 yards, there would be the risk of a pile-up at the beaches, which would be tragically compounded if the hope of surprising the enemy proved false.

A great variance from normal ship-to-shore procedure would be the fact that, except for the initial emergency supplies on LSTs, all supplies were to be landed in a shore-to-shore movement from Saipan. The usual beachhead dumps were going to be out of the question. No supplies could be landed initially except those which could roll across the beaches in LVTs or DUKWs from the LSTs to inland dumps. The

supply plan also envisaged a shuttle of resupply by LCMs and LCTs carrying preloaded cargo trucks and trailers from Saipan and by several LSTs devoted to general reserve supplies. All equipment and supplies required were on Saipan except for petroleum products and certain types of food and ammunition, which were available on vessels in Tanapag Harbor.

To permit vehicular access over the coral ledges adjoining the beaches—and thus, in effect, widen them—a Seabee officer¹⁸ on Saipan designed an ingenious portable ramp carried ashore by an LVT. Six of the 10 constructed by the 2d Amphibian Tractor Battalion were used at Tinian after being transported to the island by the LSD *Ashland* on the morning of the assault.

Even vehicles as heavy as the 35-ton medium tank could cross the ramp, which was supported by two 25-foot steel beams. These beams could be elevated 45 degrees by the LVT to reach the top of the 6-to-10 foot cliffs. As the LVT backed away, a series of 18 timbers fell into place on the beams, forming a deck for the ramp. The other end of the beams then dropped and secured in the ground at the base of the cliff, breaking free of the LVT. Such ramps were used to land vehicles until pontoon causeways were put into use. After 29 July, however, bad weather, caused by a “near-miss” typhoon, precluded unloading by anything but the agile and hardy DUKWs.

¹⁸ This inventive officer was Captain Paul J. Halloran, CEC, USN, Construction Officer, NTLF. He submitted an interesting, detailed report which may be found as Enclosure B to *TF 52 OpRpt.*

At Tinian, the amphibian trucks were the prized supply vehicles. They were better suited to the roads than were LVTs, which clawed the earth. For the amphibian tractors, the engineers often constructed a parallel road.

The shipping and amphibious craft employed for moving troops and supplies were impressively numerous at Tinian, considering the size of the operation. Every available LST in the Saipan area, 37 of them—including a few from Eniwetok—was drafted to lift the troops of the 4th Division for the landing and the initial supplies for both Marine divisions. Ten LSTs were to be preloaded for the 4th Division, 10 for the 2d Division, and 8 for NTLF. In command of the Tractor Flotilla was Captain Armand J. Robertson.

Most of the ships were loaded at Tanapag Harbor at whose excellent docks six could be handled in a day. Troops of the Saipan Island Command acted as stevedores. Beginning on 15 July, they loaded the top decks of the LSTs with enough water, rations, hospital supplies, and ammunition to last the landing force three and a half days. The assault Marines would not land with packs at Tinian. In their pockets would be emergency rations, a spoon, a pair of socks, and a bottle of insect repellent. Ponchos were to be carried folded over cartridge belts.

Four of the LSTs each loaded one of the 75mm howitzer battalions on 22 July, off the Blue Beaches. Individual artillery pieces were stored in DUKWs on board to permit immediate movement to firing position by the two amphibian truck companies assigned to the 4th Division. Full use of the pack

howitzers was especially desired, for the division did not have its 105s.

Another four of the LSTs each loaded 17 armored amphibians in their tank decks while at Tanapag anchorage on 23 July. Two of these four ships carried medical gear stowed on their top decks. In fact, all of the preloaded cargo on the LSTs was placed topside, and as much as possible remained in cargo nets. On each LST were two cranes to expedite loading and unloading over the sides into LVTs and DUKWs.

Because all the LSTs were needed to lift 4th Division troops and supplies, one regiment of the 2d Division—the 6th Marines—would remain on Saipan until 10 LSTs could unload their troops and return to Tanapag Harbor from Tinian. The 2d and 8th Marines were to be moved on seven transports for a J-Day feint off Tinian Harbor. No general cargo was loaded on the transports, but each carried organizational vehicles of the units embarked.

On 21 and 22 July, two LSDs, the *Ashland* and the *Belle Grove*, loaded at the Charan Kanoa anchorage most of the tanks assigned to the 4th Division. The LSDs each took 18 medium tanks, each tank carried in an LCM. Their other cargo included flamethrower fuel and ammunition received from the merchant ship *Rockland Victory* on 19–20 July and a supply of water.

General Schmidt rounded up 533 LVTs, including 68 armored amphibians and 10 LVTs which were equipped with the special portable ramp.¹⁹

¹⁹ *TF 52 OpRpt*, Encl A, p. 6 indicates that 537 LVTs were used; the lower figure is contained in landing force reports.

DUKWs available came to 130. Landing craft employed for the Saipan-to-Tinian lift numbered 31 LCIs, 20 LCTs, 92 LCMs, and 100 LCVPs. Nine pontoon barges were loaded on 19 July with fuel in drums received from the merchant ships *Nathaniel Currier* and *Argonaut*. These barges would be towed to positions off the reef to service amphibious vehicles and landing craft. Captured Japanese gasoline and matching lubricants were stocked on the barges. Five additional barges were loaded on 24 July from the *Currier*.

After the initial landing, the shuttle system for resupply would begin to operate between the 7th Field Depot dumps on Tinian. Twenty LCTs, 10 LCMs, and 8 LSTs were allotted for such use. Also assigned to the resupply system were 88 2½-ton trucks and 25 trailers.

On 22 and 23 July, 32 of the LSTs sailed into the Saipan anchorage, where they embarked LVTs, DUKWs, and troops of the 4th Division from the Blue, Yellow, and Red Beaches of Saipan. Herein lay another variance from the usual ship-to-shore movement of an island campaign, for, except for the two regiments of the 2d Division embarked in transports, all other Marine units were moved to Tinian in LSTs or smaller craft.

The remaining five LSTs, still at Tanapag Harbor, embarked other troops and LVTs or DUKWs at the same time. Of the 20 LCTs available, 10 were designated for the 4th Division vehicles, which were loaded at the seaplane base in Tanapag Harbor on 23 July. Five additional LCTs were loaded the same day at the same place—three with medium tanks, four to each LCT, and two

with bulldozers and cranes. The remaining five LCTs were loaded in the forenoon of J-Day at the seaplane base with 2d Division vehicles.

Of the 92 LCMs available, 36 bearing medium tanks were loaded onto the two LSDs. Ten were loaded with 4th Division armor on 23 July at the steel pier of Tanapag Harbor; these LCMs would make a direct passage. Forty-one of the remaining 46 loaded medium tanks and waited off the Blue Beaches for movement on 24 July or shortly after. Five of these LCMs moved to Tinian directly, and 36 were loaded on board the 2 LSDs when they returned from Tinian. The other five LCMs took on 2d Division vehicles at the seaplane base on 24 July for direct transfer to Tinian. The available 31 LCIs were used to carry troops and vehicles of the 2d Division to the 7 transports at Tanapag Harbor on 20–23 July, while the 100 LCVPs loaded 4th Division vehicles at the Green Beaches on 23 July for direct movement to Tinian.

While all such loading went on, the shore party of the 4th Division prepared for its modified task on Tinian. Usually, the shore party is responsible for first dumps off the beaches, but in this case not a pound of ammunition or other supplies could be landed on the sand. Still, there would be plenty to do. The shore party at Tinian was expected to keep supply traffic moving to the inland dumps, where some of its men would be working. It was also to provide equipment and personnel to expand and improve the beaches. Farther inland, responsibility for the trails and roads fell to Seabees of the 18th

and 121st Naval Construction Battalions and to the assault engineers of the 1st Battalions of the 18th and 20th Marines.

Lieutenant Colonel Nelson K. Brown's 4th Division Shore Party for Tinian was composed of the pioneers of the 2d Battalion, 20th Marines on White Beach 2 and the Army 1341st Engineer Battalion on White 1. The Force Beachmaster was Commander Carl E. Anderson. The 2d Division did not operate a shore party, since there were already enough men on hand. But a platoon of 2/18 pitched in on White Beach 2, and the rest of the battalion worked at the division dumps.

On 26 July, an NTLF Shore Party Headquarters, commanded by Colonel Cyril W. Martyr of the 18th Marines, was superimposed upon the 4th Division Shore Party. The change indicated recent attention to consolidating shore party activities. The NTLF Shore Party Headquarters, with a strength of 6 officers and 8 enlisted men, was taken from the Headquarters of the V Amphibious Corps and of the 18th Marines.

A departure from Saipan supply practice took place at Tinian, where the unit distribution system was used. Small arms and mortar ammunition were not delivered to the regiments. Instead, those units drew from the division dumps and delivered by truck to the battalions. This practice on Tinian was in keeping with logistical procedures employed on a smaller island, and, as a result, regimental supply dumps did not have to be moved as often as they were on Saipan.

ATTACK PLANS

Because of the unusual shore-to-shore operation, involving constricted beach area, logistics monopolized much of the planning effort for Tinian. But mastery of the supply details could only enable that victory which arms must secure. In preparing for this battle, Marine commanders had a rare opportunity for reconnaissance. A number of them were taken on observation flights over the island or on cruises near its shores.

Under General Schmidt's attack plans, the 4th Division, upon pushing inland over the White Beaches, was to seize Objective 0-1, which included Mt. Maga. The main effort would be toward Mt. Lasso, reaching to a line which would include Faibus San Hilo Point, Mt. Lasso, and Asiga Point. (See Map 22.)

General Cates issued his operation order to the 4th Division on 17 July. He planned to use the 24th Marines in a column of battalions on White Beach 1 and the 25th Marines with two battalions abreast on White Beach 2. The 23d Marines would be held in division reserve and wait immediately offshore.

Because the beaches were so narrow, only Company D of the 2d Armored Amphibian Battalion was to be employed in the assault landing. One platoon would precede troop-carrying LVTs toward White 1, while the other two platoons led the attack against White 2. When the naval gunfire lifted, the armored amphibians would fire on the beaches and then turn to the flanks at a distance 300 yards from

shore, where they would fire into adjacent areas. The first wave of Marines would continue forward to the beaches alone, except for the fire of the .30 caliber machine guns mounted on the LVTs.

The 2d Division was to satisfy, partially, Colonel Ogata's belief that the major landing was due in the Tinian Town area. The 2d and 8th Marines, as part of a naval force, would execute a feint off Tinian Town at the hour of the actual landing to divert attention from the northern part of the island. Included in the show by the Demonstration Group would be the battleship *Colorado*, the light cruiser *Cleveland*, and the destroyers *Remey* and *Norman Scott*, delivering a "pre-landing" bombardment. Following the demonstration off Tinian Town, the 2d Division Marines would return northward to land on the White Beaches in the rear of the 4th Division. General Watson planned to put the 2d Marines ashore on White 2 and the 8th Marines on White 1, while the 6th Marines would land over either beach. The command post of the 2d Division was set up on board the assault transport *Cavalier* at 0800 on 23 July, as the men made ready for both a fake landing and the real thing.

The 27th Division, less its 105th Infantry and division artillery, would be ready to embark in landing craft on four hours' notice to land on Tinian. Though Army infantry was never committed there, Army aircraft, artillerymen, amphibian vehicles, and engineers helped invaluable toward success of the Tinian operation.

THE MOUNTING THUNDER

Since 20 June, artillerymen on southern Saipan had been hammering Tinian. On 23 July, Corps Artillery fired 155 missions, and for J-Day, General Harper planned a mass bombardment by all 13 artillery battalions just before the landing—a crescendo of fire against every known installation on northern Tinian, every likely enemy assembly area, and every possible lane of approach by land to the White Beaches.

The Army Air Forces was likewise dedicated to seizing Tinian, which, of course, was to become particularly theirs. On the day before the landing, P-47s of the 318th Fighter Group flew 131 sorties against targets on the island,²⁰ joining carrier aircraft from the *Essex*, *Langley*, *Gambier Bay*, and *Kitkun Bay*, which made 249 sorties. The same day saw the arrival of a squadron of B-25s on Saipan, which were shortly to join the battle for Tinian.

In order to permit heavy air strikes on southern Tinian on 23 July, naval gunners withheld their own fire for three periods of up to an hour. Off northern Tinian, the *Colorado* and the *Louisville* also ceased fire at 1720 to allow a napalm bombing mission on the White Beach area, where two fire bombs burned out some underbrush. The naval gunfire of 23 July, started at sunrise, was partly destructive, partly deceptive. Yellow Beach and the beaches around Sunharon Harbor re-

ceived fire intended chiefly to mislead the enemy. At Tinian Town, particularly, care was taken to confuse Colonel Ogata. Mine-sweeping and UDT reconnaissance of the reef off Tinian Town were conducted, both without findings or incident. In fact, mine-sweepers operating in Tinian waters prior to the landings reported no obstacles to shipping, though, later on, 17 mines, previously located by UDT reconnaissance, were swept from Asiga Bay.

Before 1845 on 23 July, when all but a few fire support ships left the area for night retirement, the *Tennessee* and the *California* had fired more than 1,200 14-inch and 5-inch shells into the vicinity of Tinian Town, already nearly demolished. A notable fact of the naval bombardment on 23 July was the comparative sparing of the Asiga Bay coastline. It would have been folly to invite Colonel Ogata's reserves to an area quite near the White Beaches, when it was better to keep them farther south.

After 1845, night harassing fire was assumed by the light cruiser *Birmingham* and five destroyers. The *Birmingham* and three of the destroyers covered road junctions between Faibus San Hilo Point and Gurguan Point on the western half of the island, besides shelling areas of enemy activity to the southwest. The destroyer *Norman Scott* was assigned to isolate road junctions on the east side of the island and the Yellow Beach vicinity.

To the rumbling of such gunfire, General Cates took the 4th Division command post on board *LST 42* at 1500

²⁰ Dr. Robert F. Futrell, USAF HistDiv, ltr to Head, HistBr, G-3, HQMC, dtd 29Nov63.

on 23 July.²¹ Admiral Hill, in his attack order of 17 July, had fixed H-Hour at 0730. The sun would rise at 0557 on a day which would tell whether Tinian planners had gambled wisely when they picked such a landing area as the White Beaches. Another question was interjected shortly before dawn of J-Day, when a UDT mission

²¹The 4th Division chief of staff recalled that this unusual use of an LST as a command ship "worked very well . . .," as, "we got in quite close to the beach and could see what was going on there." MajGen William W. Rogers ltr to ACofS, G-3, HQMC, dtd ca. 24Oct63.

on White Beach 2 was defeated by a squall which scattered the floats carrying explosives. The men had been sent from the *Gilmer* to blast boulders and destroy boat mines on the beach, the latter spotted by reconnaissance aircraft.

The squall was a phase of the rain which fell upon the assault-loaded LSTs the night of 23 July, when at 1800 they moved out to anchor. Nearby lay the line of departure, about 3,000 yards off the White Beaches, where Marines were to find every answer.

J-Day and Night ¹

STRATAGEM AT TINIAN TOWN

While Marines of the 4th Division waited in their LSTs for the morning of 24 July, transports lifting Marines of the 2d Division sailed from the anchorage off Charan Kanoa at 0330 in darkness appropriate to their secret mission. Just before sunrise, the transports and their fire support ships—the battleship *Colorado*, the light cruiser *Cleveland*, and the destroyers *Remey*, *Norman Scott*, *Wadleigh*, and *Monssen*—moved into the waters opposite Tinian Town. The 2d and 8th Marines were on board the transports

¹ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this chapter is derived from: *TF 51 OpRpt*; *TF 52 OpRpt*; *TF 56 OpRpt*; *NTLF OpRpt*; *NTLF OPlan 30-44*; *NTLF Jnl, 23Jul-8Aug44*, hereafter *NTLF Jnl*; *2d MarDiv Rpt of Ops (Pts 1 & 2)*, Phase III, FORAGER, dtd 11Sep44, hereafter *2d MarDiv Op Rpt Tinian*; *4th MarDiv Rpt of Ops (incl Rpts on Admin, Intel, Ops, Sup and Evac, Sig, SpecCmts and Recoms, 14th, 20th, 23d, 24th, and 25th Mar and 4th TkBn, dtd 25Sep 44*, hereafter *4th MarDiv OpRpt Tinian*; *4th MarDiv D-4 Jnl, 21Jul-3Aug44*; *4th MarDiv Translations (Tinian)*; Capt John W. Thomason, III, "The Fourth Division at Tinian," *Marine Corps Gazette*, v. 29, no. 1 (Jan45), hereafter Thomason, "Tinian;" Chapin, *4th MarDiv in WW II*; Crowl, *Marianas Campaign*; Hoffman, *Tinian*; Isely and Crowl, *Marines and Amphibious War*; Johnston, *Follow Me!*; Morison, *New Guinea and the Marianas*; Proehl, *4th MarDiv History*; Smith and Finch, *Coral and Brass*; Stockman and Carleton, *Campaign for the Marianas*.

Knox, *Calvert*, *Fuller*, *Bell*, *Heywood*, *John Land*, and *Winged Arrow*, with Captain Clinton A. Mission on the *Knox* in command of the Demonstration Group. Two patrol craft, *PC 581* and *PC 582*, rounded out the task group.

The fire support ships were to deliver neutralizing and counterbattery fire on Tinian Town, and on the high ground north and south of the town, to divert the enemy further. The heavy cruiser *New Orleans* and the light cruiser *Montpelier* would meanwhile execute a similarly deceptive mission at Asiga Point, delivering 30 minutes of airburst fire over the vicinity of Yellow Beach.

Shortly after 0600, the Demonstration Group, lying about four miles off Tinian Town, began the planned deception. The commander of the *Calvert* logged the action at 0612: "Stopped ship. Commenced lowering landing craft. Simulated debarkation of landing team."² By 0630 all 22 boats of the *Calvert* were waterborne. Shortly before 0700, Navy planes swept over the vicinity of Tinian Town, bombing and strafing.

From each transport the Marines descended cargo nets into the landing craft and then climbed up again. No troops remained in the boats, but to the Japanese on shore it may well have

² USS *Calvert* (APA 32) AR, dtd 4Aug44.

appeared so. At 0730, the hour set for invasion of the White Beaches, coxswains guided their craft rapidly shoreward under cover of naval gunfire. Soon the *Calvert* reported seeing "splashes from large caliber shells 1500-2000 yards off starboard quarter,"³ and Captain Mission confirmed that artillery and heavy mortar fire was being received in the boat lanes. Under orders from Admiral Hill not to jeopardize the men, he withdrew the boats to reform. A second run was then started, to make the deception realistic enough. Fire from Japanese shore batteries was again received, and some of the landing craft were sprayed with shell fragments. But no casualties resulted, and the boats moved to within 400 yards of the beaches—impressively close—before turning back. About 1000, the transports began recovering the landing craft, and an hour later all ships were under way to the transport area off the White Beaches.

Was the demonstration a success? Measured by the results intended, it was. The Japanese did believe, for a while, that they had foiled an attempted landing. Colonel Ogata sent a message to Tokyo, claiming that he had repelled more than 100 landing barges. The feint served to hold Japanese troops in the Tinian Town area, freezing the *3d Battalion, 50th Infantry* and elements of the *56th Naval Guard Force* while Marines moved inland over the White Beaches.

Not only was Colonel Ogata briefly deceived but so also were his soldiers. One Japanese infantryman of 1/135 wrote in his diary: "Up to 0900 artil-

lery fire was fierce in the direction of Port Tinian, but it became quiet after the enemy warships left. Maybe the enemy is retreating."⁴

Two of the American warships suffered grievously from the violent Japanese response. Air photos of Tinian, good as they were, had failed to show the battery of three 6-inch naval guns behind Sunharon Harbor. At 0740, when the *Colorado* had moved to within 3,200 yards west of Tinian Town, she received the first of 22 direct hits in a period of 15 minutes. Casualties were many, totaling 43 killed and 176 wounded. Of the Marines on board, 10 were killed and 31 wounded.⁵ The ship was badly damaged but was able to make it back to Saipan. The destroyer *Norman Scott*, while attempting to protect the *Colorado*, suffered 6 hits from the same guns and had 19 men killed and 47 wounded. Not until four days later was this Japanese battery destroyed by the battleship *Tennessee*.

INVASION—THE REALITY

Unlike those at Tinian Town, the fire support ships off the White Beaches (two battleships, one heavy cruiser, and four destroyers) were never in danger from guns on shore. The big ships here were given a special mission before H-Hour, after the underwater demolition team assigned to destroy the ominous mines on White Beach Two had lost its explosives in an

⁴ Diary of Takayoshi Yamazaki, in *4th Mar Div Translations (Tinian)*.

⁵ USS *Colorado* AR, ser 0033 of 12Aug44. (OAB, NHD).

³ *Ibid.*

inopportune offshore squall. The *California*, *Tennessee*, and *Louisville* fired directly on the beach. Still, because of the smoke and dust there, it was difficult to determine whether the mines had been detonated, so another approach, at closer range, was tried. At 0625, the naval and artillery bombardment of the area was lifted for 10 minutes in order that orbiting call-strike aircraft might ensure destruction of the mines. This air strike, which involved 12 fighters and 2 torpedo bombers, was partially successful. Observers reported that 5 of the 14 known mines were detonated. At the time of the strike, some of the LVTs were already waterborne. They had begun emerging from the LSTs at 0600, at the same time that minecraft began sweeping the waters off the beaches.

In order to obscure Japanese observation of such prelanding activity, a battery of 155mm howitzers on Saipan began firing a concentration of smoke shells at 0600 on Mt. Lasso, the site of Colonel Ogata's command post. Corps artillery also struck the woods and bluffs just beyond the beaches to prevent any Japanese there from observing offshore activity. Operations off the White Beaches went like clockwork until shortly before 0700, when the control group commander informed Admiral Hill that initial assault waves were not forming as rapidly as planned. H-Hour, therefore, was delayed 10 minutes—to 0740.

Shortly before H-Hour, a wind change caused the smoke and dust over the target to shift offshore, where it covered the boat lanes. Adding to this hazard to the landing was a strong tidal current running northward at a

right angle to the lanes. In order to guide the initial assault waves to the beaches, two P-47s were assigned to fly at low altitude in the direction the LVTs were to move.

At 0721, 24 LVTs took the first wave of Marines across the line of departure. In eight of the craft, Company E, 2d Battalion, 24th Marines was embarked, ready to land on White Beach 1. There, the attack was to be by a column of battalions. The other 16 LVTs lifted Company G, 2d Battalion, 25th Marines and Company I of the 3d Battalion, to land them abreast on White Beach 2. Only scattered rifle and machine gun fire was received as the troops approached the shore. Preceded by armored amphibian tractors and supported by LCI gunboats firing rockets and automatic cannon, the Marines of both RCTs hit the beach almost simultaneously. Gunfire ships and corps artillery supported the landing, but because of the long-range artillery fire on the beach area the usual strafing attack to cover the initial assault was omitted.

THE SITUATION AT THE BEACHES

At 0747, the eight tractors bearing Company E, 2/24, ground to a halt, and Marine riflemen got their first look at the cupful of sand that was White 1. The beach was just wide enough to accept four of the LVTs; the others had to debark their troops opposite the ledges adjacent to the beach. Surprise was not complete; a small beach defense detachment offered resistance. The handful of enemy troops gave some trying moments to the Marines,

especially to those who had to climb over the jagged coral ledges from waist-deep water. Marines who crossed the beach were able to tread safely above a dozen horned mines which the Japanese, expecting no landing here, had permitted to deteriorate.

The beach defenders employed hand grenades, rifles, and machine guns against the Marines. During a brief but bitter fight, Company E destroyed the Japanese in their cave and crevice defenses and then pushed inland. The attackers had to move swiftly, not only to keep the beaches cleared for successive waves, but also to keep the enemy off-balance and prevent them from counterattacking.

On the heels of Company E, the rest of the 2d Battalion landed in a column of companies—A (attached for landing only), G, F, Headquarters, and Shore Party (1341st Engineers). Company A turned left behind Company E to await its parent battalion. By 0820, Major Frank E. Garretson had his entire 2d Battalion on Tinian. Lieutenant Colonel Otto Lessing's 1st Battalion got ashore by 0846 and immediately veered left.

The advance of the two battalions was opposed by intermittent mortar and artillery fire and by small arms fire. Coming from thick brush and caves, the source of the fire was hard to spot. Yet, after the first 200 yards, progress toward the 0-1 Line eased to what Major Garretson called a "cake walk."⁶ At 0855, Lieutenant Colonel Alexander A. Vandegrift, Jr., received orders to land the reserve 3d Battalion,

⁶ Maj Frank E. Garretson ltr to Maj Carl W. Hoffman, dtd 17Aug50.

and upon reaching the shore at 0925, moved his unit to an assembly area about 300 yards inland. Marine commanders considered the opposition on White Beach 1 to be "light," and it was, when contrasted to the situation during the Saipan landing or to the moderate resistance encountered on White Beach 2.

While the Japanese hardly expected any sort of landing at White Beach 1, the same was not quite true at White Beach 2, for Colonel Ogata had cautioned against the possible appearance of a small landing party there. The result was a more vigilant force and improved defenses. The known anti-boat mines on the beach had not deteriorated; a few had been exploded by aircraft, but the bulk of them had escaped destruction. The better Japanese defense here was built around two pillboxes situated to put crossfire on the beach. They had not been damaged by the bombardment. Because of the perils on shore, it was decided not to send LVTs over the beach until engineers could get at the mines. Initial waves were to avoid the beach; instead, the first troops would have to climb rocky ledges, which rose 3 to 10 feet above a pounding surf.

There had been some talk on Saipan that the Tinian beaches would be easy to take, but the battle-tried men of Colonel Merton J. Batchelder's 25th Marines expected no simple landings as they crowded into the LVTs. While Lieutenant Colonel Justice M. Chambers' 3/25 would go ashore on the left in a column of companies, a different procedure was planned for 2/25, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Lewis C. Hudson, Jr. After the 2d Battal-

ion's Company G landed, the other two companies were to be put ashore abreast. It was believed that such a formation would permit the greatest speed in crossing the beach with the least loss of control.

Despite choppy water, some LVTs were able to edge near enough to the ledges so that two Marines, standing at the bow, could help their comrades catch a handhold on the jagged rocks along the top. The other assault companies of the regiment landed at scheduled intervals. Even the reserve 1st Battalion, 25th Marines (Lieutenant Colonel Hollis U. Mustain) was entirely ashore by 0930.

PROGRESS OF THE ATTACK ⁷

In the area of White Beach 1, 2/24 gained 1,400 yards, reaching its objective line by 1600, unopposed except by occasional small arms fire. Elements of the battalion reached the western edge of Airfield No. 3 and cut the main road from Airfield No. 1 to other parts of the island. To the left, however, 1/24's advance was delayed at the shore, some 400 yards short of 0-1, because of Japanese resistance being offered from positions in caves and brush. Though armored amphibians were employed from the water to fire into the caves and flamethrower tanks burned out vegetation, the Japanese still would not be routed.

At 1630, the reserve 3d Battalion,

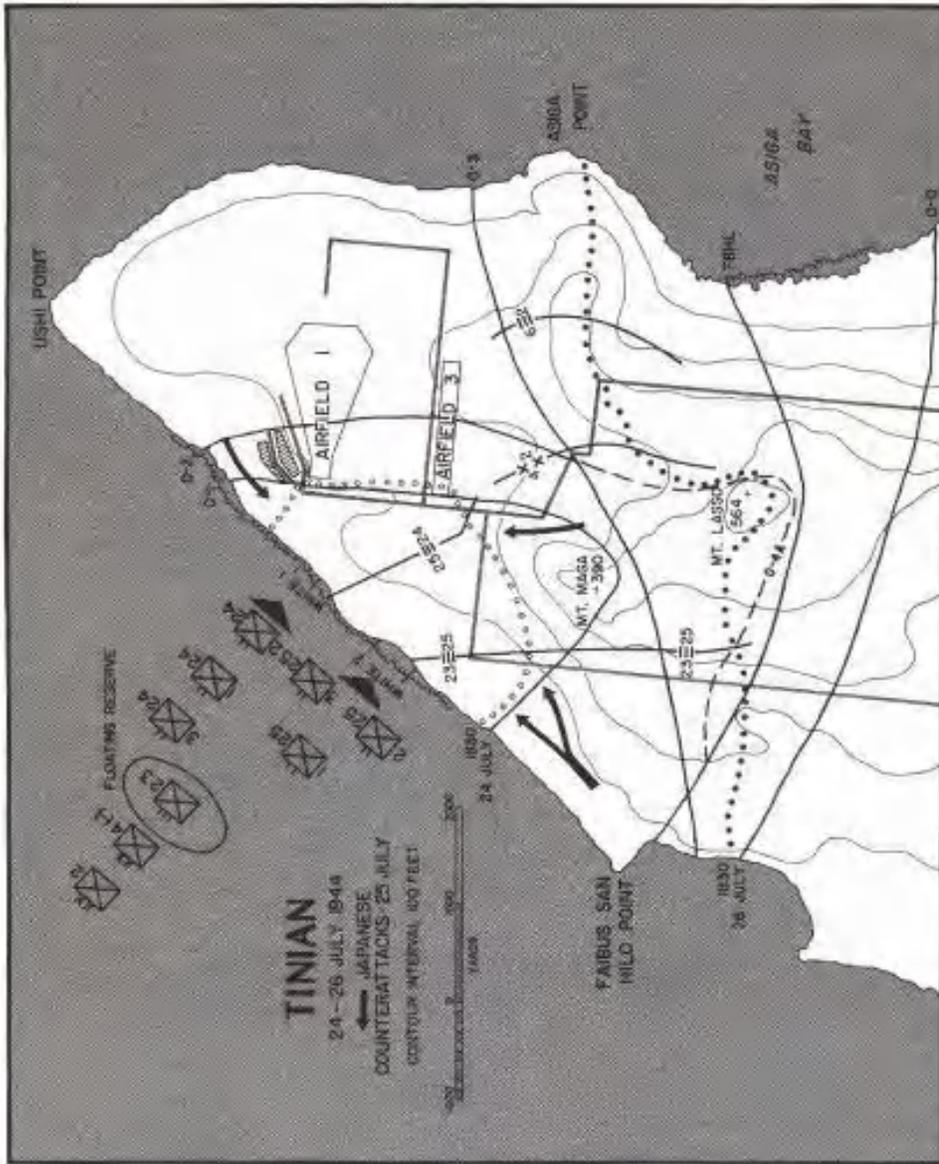
24th Marines went into line to close a gap that had opened between 1/24 and 2/24. Shortly before dark, the 1st Battalion, 8th Marines (Lieutenant Colonel Lawrence C. Hays, Jr.), after waiting in the *Calvert*, was landed. It thereupon became 4th Division reserve and took a position to the rear of 2/24.

While Colonel Franklin A. Hart's 24th Marines dealt with sporadic resistance at White Beach 1, Colonel Batchelder's 25th Marines encountered better-organized opposition. The enemy defenses included mortars and automatic weapons, located in pillboxes, shelters, caves, ravines, and field entrenchments. From Mt. Lasso some artillery pieces that had survived the preparation fires dropped shells into the beach area.

Fewer prepared defense positions were met as the 25th Marines progressed inland, but continual fire from small, well-hidden knots of Japanese held back the day's advance, keeping it to approximately 1,000 yards short of 0-1. The two pillboxes that commanded White Beach 2, and the rifle and machine gun pits which protected the fortifications, were bypassed by the initial assault waves, which were more concerned with getting a foothold inland. Other Marines reduced the two strongpoints and found 50 dead Japanese around antiboat and antitank guns.

The entire vicinity of White Beach 2 had been methodically seeded with mines, including the powerful antiboat types on the beach and deadly antipersonnel mines and booby traps inland. Experienced Marines avoided even the tempting cases of Japanese beer, but, despite all precautions, two LVTs which

⁷ Additional sources for this section include: 8th Mar SAR, FORAGER, Phase III, dtd 19Aug44, hereafter *8th Mar SAR Tinian*; 1/8 Rpt of Ops, dtd 13Aug44, hereafter *1/8 Rpt Tinian*; 2d TkBn SAR, dtd 14Aug44, hereafter *2d TkBn SAR*.



RF STIBIL

MAP 22

TINIAN
 24-26 JULY 1948
 JAPANESE
 COUNTERATTACKS 25 JULY
 CONTOUR INTERVAL 100 FEET

ventured inland were blown up 30 yards from the shore, and a third detonated a mine while attempting to turn around on the beach. Removal of the mines required the diligent efforts of UDT-men, bomb disposal teams, and engineers. Not until 1337 could the infested White Beach 2 be reported clear of mines.

Resistance to the Marine landings on Tinian had been comparatively light—casualties on J-Day numbered 15 killed and 225 wounded, including casualties in the destroyed LVTs; the known enemy dead came to 438. Still, General Cates believed it wise to land the division reserve, the 23d Marines, the first day. His understrength regiments were occupying a beachhead which was, by the end of the day, some 3,000 yards wide, and at its maximum depth, approximately 1,500 yards. Moreover, an enemy counterattack was expected momentarily.

The Marine division commander was more interested in being ready for such a counterattack than in simply reaching the entire 0-1 Line. He therefore ordered his regiments to cease the attack about 1630 and begin digging in. Marines strung barbed wire along the entire division front and stacked ammunition near their weapons. Machine guns were emplaced to permit interlocking bands of fire, while 60mm and 81mm mortar target areas were assigned. Bazookamen were stationed at every likely tank approach, and 37mm gun crews got ready with canister and armor-piercing shells.

All troops of the 23d Marines, though not their vehicles, were ashore by 1630, landed over White Beach 2. At 1030, division had ordered the debarkation

into LVTs. At 1300, Colonel Louis R. Jones received word from General Cates, written one hour before, specifying the mission. In effect, the 23d Marines was to pass through right elements of the 25th Marines along the coast and take up a frontline position in contact with 2/25. The cramped sector assigned to the 23d, however, permitted room for only the 2d Battalion in the line. The 1st Battalion dug in behind 2/23, creating valuable depth, for here seemed the "most probable counterattack zone."⁸ To the 3d Battalion fell the role of division reserve.

A few vexations marked the landing of the 23d Marines. First, there was a series of communication difficulties which delayed getting the troops ashore. Then, the fact that other units, 1/25 and elements of 2/25, were still in the immediate vicinity crowded an area where artillery and tanks also kept landing. Finally, as the 2d Battalion, 23d was moving into position, it had to subdue violent resistance from lurking Japanese employing machine gun and rifle fire. Tanks, lumbering through brush and cane fields, helped to hunt down the enemy.

These tanks belonged to Company C, 4th Tank Battalion, and were among the many landed on J-Day upon an island so suitable for armor that the Marines eventually employed more tanks here than they had on any previous amphibious operation. For the Tinian campaign, Major Richard K. Schmidt's 4th Tank Battalion had received 13 new medium tanks from the 7th Field Depot. The older tanks of the battalion, how-

⁸ BGen William W. Rogers ltr to CMC, dtd 20Dec50.

ever, were hard-used veterans of the Saipan campaign.

The tank-infantry teamwork on Saipan had been potent, so every effort was made to get the tanks ashore on Tinian at the first opportunity. By H-Hour the LSD *Ashland* had unloaded an initial cargo of tank-bearing LCMs and was off to Saipan to pick up armor of Major Charles W. McCoy's 2d Tank Battalion. At 0800, the LSD *Belle Grove* departed Tinian for the same purpose, and both ships were back before noon.

The landing of the 4th Tank Battalion, however, was somewhat hampered by conditions at White Beach 2, where the fissures in the reef proved more treacherous than was expected. One of the bulldozers, which were to prepare the beach, became irretrievably caught in a pothole shortly after emerging from an LCT. The threat of holes in the reef, when added to the danger of beach mines, led to a temporary re-routing of bulldozers and tanks over White 1 instead; there, at low tide, the LCTs and LCMs could safely unload their cargo on the fringing reef. From the smaller beach, some of the dozers and tanks crawled the 1,000 yards overland to White 2. Most of the division vehicles were likewise put ashore over White 1; in fact, except for some tanks, all vehicles were unloaded on the reef at White 1 on J-Day after a mishap to two vehicles—they were lost when the LCMs transporting them swamped at the reef edge off White 2.

In view of the crowding at the smaller landing area, one LCM debarked a tank for a trial run to White 2 at 1100. But the tank required 45 minutes to negotiate the 100 yards from reef to

beach. Moreover, upon arrival, the crew learned that the beach was not yet quite cleared of mines; a tank crewman and a reconnaissance man had been wounded when a jeep ran over and detonated an undiscovered mine. By afternoon, however, the beach was confirmed as clear, and one entire tank company (Company A) was landed over White 2 without loss.

Except for Company A, the 4th Tank Battalion landed over White 1; there, the LCMs could move to within 15 yards of the beach at some places. Eight of the medium tanks belonging to Company B, which was attached to the 24th Marines, led infantry attacks on J-Day. Tanks of Company C, attached to the 23d Marines, were landed after direct movement from Saipan in LCTs. Company D, the light (flamethrowing) tank unit, also made a shore-to-shore journey in LCMs and one LCT.⁹ Once ashore, light tanks were divided among the three medium tank companies. The initial unit ashore was the 1st Platoon, which landed at 1345 with two M5 tanks and four flamethrower tanks, and was attached to Company B. One of the M5s and two of the flame tanks were immediately dispatched to 1/24, in the area just north of White 1, where canister from the M5s helped to clean the enemy out of some heavy underbrush. The 2d Platoon was attached to Company C, and the 3d Platoon, landed at 1630, joined Company A. One platoon of four flame tanks of the 2d Tank Battalion reached Tinian in

⁹ The flamethrowing tanks used at Tinian were M3A1 light tanks, which had their turret-mounted 37mm guns and ammunition racks removed and Ronson (Canadian) flamethrowers installed to replace them.

two increments at 1700 of J-Day and early the next morning. No other 2d Battalion armor came ashore on J-Day, but all organic tanks of the 4th Marine Division were on Tinian before dark. The Headquarters and Service Company of the 4th Tank Battalion, embarked in an LST, landed during the late afternoon.

J-DAY LOGISTICS

In addition to the tanks, four battalions of artillery and the 75mm half-tracks belonging to the weapons company of each assault regiment were put ashore on J-Day. The artillery pieces were successfully carried in DUKWs from the LSTs directly to firing positions. The 1st Battalion, 14th Marines landed at 1315 on White 2. The unit went into position about 300 yards inland from the southern end of the beach, and by 1430 its 75mm pack howitzers were supporting the 25th Marines. The two battalions of the 10th Marines, which were attached to the 14th Marines, landed next—2/10 at 1630 to reinforce fires of 2/14, and 1/10 at 1635 to serve with 1/14. At 1600, Colonel Louis G. DeHaven set up the regimental command post behind an abandoned railroad embankment north of White Beach 2.

After landing the artillery, the DUKWs unloaded ammunition from ships off the White Beaches, and drivers became expert at taking the loaded DUKWs through surf that ranged from four to six feet in height. It was the amphibian trucks and LVTs which were used principally for the landing of priority combat supplies on J-Day. No heavy trucks and none but essential

light vehicles, such as jeeps, were put ashore. As it turned out, the small White Beach 1 had to absorb most of the landing effort on J-Day, and it inevitably became somewhat congested. Still, LVTs and DUKWs got up to the front line with ammunition, barbed wire, rations, and water.

Two pontoon causeway piers had been assembled at Saipan. These floating docks were towed to Tinian the afternoon of J-Day, but it was 0600 on 25 July, after Seabees worked all night on the job, before the first one, installed at White Beach 1, went into use. The pier for White Beach 2 was not emplaced until three days later, because of heavy enemy artillery and mortar fire, which impeded the task and caused several casualties. Each pier carried two tractors, anchors, chains, and mooring wire. Once the causeways were secured in place, LSTs and smaller landing craft could drop their ramps on the pier ends and run loaded cargo trucks ashore.

Advance elements of the shore and beach parties landed with the assault battalions and were ashore with communications established by 0830. All other men of these units were landed by 1000, for the need of prompt beach development was well realized. Shore party equipment had been preloaded in two LCTs, and all of that was ashore by 1400, much of it routed over White Beach 1 and thence overland to the other beach.

The bulk of the shore party on White 2—Major John H. Partridge's 2d Battalion, 20th Marines—was kept busy inland at first, unloading LVTs and DUKWs for the 4th Division dumps. In general, these dumps were located



MEDIUM TANKS move through a beach exit at WHITE 1 toward Ushi Point airfields. (USN 80-G-237343)



2D DIVISION MARINES advance through a canefield on Tinian flushing enemy snipers as an OY stands guard overhead. (USMC 87890)

inland of White 2, whereas the 2d Division dumps were set up behind White 1. Just below White 1 late on J-Day, a special portable LVT ramp was set up; it helped some of the tracked vehicles climb onto the land. An LVT carrying another ramp struck a coral head on the edge of the reef and turned over. The next day eight ramps were launched, though two were swamped.

During J-Day, the 4th Division Shore Party commander, Lieutenant Colonel Nelson K. Brown, commanding officer of the 20th Marines, and the Group Beachmaster, Lieutenant Samuel C. Boardman, USN, supervised operations on shore, both personally and from a radio-equipped tender. The next day the shore party headquarters was established at a point between the two beaches. General Cates remained at his command post on *LST 42* the first day, finding communications excellent from a radio jeep on deck.

Landing operations were discontinued for the night after 1/8 and the 23d Marines were fully ashore. The only elements of the division support group to land on J-Day were the Headquarters and Service Company and Company D of the 4th Medical Battalion, which, preloaded in LVTs on Saipan, landed over White 1 about 1630. Before that time, battalion and regimental aid stations had been set up, of course, and they handled the early evacuation of casualties to transports, usually by jeep ambulance loaded in an LVT. The division engineers, except for a platoon attached to each landing team, did not get ashore until 25 July. Aside from the division command ship, the control vessels, and three LSTs retained for emergency unloading, all ves-

sels and landing craft retired to Saipan for the night. Sufficient initial supplies of ammunition, water, rations, and medical necessities had been landed prior to darkness.

J-Day had been a memorable day in the history of Navy and Marine Corps amphibious accomplishments. More than 15,600 American troops and their primary combat materiel had been put ashore efficiently over beaches which the Japanese had regarded as impassable for a major landing—and, in fact, mostly over the very beach at which the enemy utterly scoffed.¹⁰ On the next day, the 2d Marine Division would begin landing on its own vast scale. Before then, however, the Marines of the 4th Division, remembering the great *banzai* charge on Saipan, waited seriously but calmly for the Japanese counterattack, expected to come the first night.

*THE JAPANESE COUNTERATTACK*¹¹

No one supposed that Colonel Ogata had remained long in ignorance of

¹⁰ Some idea of the logistical miracle of J-Day on Tinian may be gained from the following partial list of items unloaded prior to 2148: 99 DUKWs loaded with 75mm howitzer ammunition; 48 DUKWs loaded with 75mm gun ammunition; 48 medium tanks; 15 light tanks; 6 jeeps; 6 radio jeeps; 20 1-ton trucks; 12 2½-ton trucks; 7 bulldozers. TransDiv 7 AR, dtd 1Aug44.

¹¹ Additional sources for this section include: NTLF G-2 Jnl, 27May-13Aug44, hereafter *NTLF G-2 Jnl*; Anx A to NTLF G-2 Periodic Rpt No. 46, dtd 30Jul44; 4th MarDiv D-2 Periodic Rpt, dtd 25Jul44; 2/23 Jnl, 7May-24Aug44, hereafter *2/23 Jnl*; 2/24 Narrative of Bat of Tinian Island, n.d., hereafter *2/24 Narrative Tinian*.

where the Marines were invading. At his command post atop Mt. Lasso, he dwelt as a virtual prisoner of American gunfire, behind thick smoke, which clouded observation but not discernment. At 1000 on J-Day, he issued orders for the reserve *1st Battalion, 135th Infantry Regiment*, the Mobile Counterattack Force, to move north to the Mt. Lasso area. Still, he could not quite divorce himself from the set belief that at Tinian Town lay the greatest threat. There, while Captain Oya, hearing of the landing, fumed because his fixed guns could not be turned northwest, word was received from Colonel Ogata for the *3d Battalion, 50th Regiment* to stay in position. Also kept static initially, as the Marines moved inland, was the *2d Battalion*, assigned to defend the Asiga Bay vicinity. In the colonel's judgment, that was the only alternate invasion area.

Elements of the *56th Naval Guard Force* had been stationed in various parts of the island or had operated patrol boats off shore. The naval troops in southern Tinian were kept at their coastal defense artillery or anti-aircraft guns on J-Day. Near the White Beaches, there were also some components of the force, chiefly anti-aircraft personnel trained additionally as infantry. Other Japanese units at hand for a counterattack were the tank company of the *18th Infantry Regiment* and a company of engineers (both attached to the *50th Infantry Regiment*). The engineers were trained to double as riflemen. Finally, Ushi Airfield harbored 600 to 1,000 naval troops, who were charged with maintenance and defense of that base.

Marines had already met the well-trained soldiers of the *50th Infantry* early on J-Day besides some naval and aviation personnel who bore no unit identification. The Americans had also felt the fire of the *2d Artillery Battery*; then, on the night of 24 July, the *1st Artillery Battery*, under cover of darkness, lugged its pieces from the Asiga Bay area.

That the *1st Artillery*, or some of the other Japanese units, moved at Colonel Ogata's bidding is improbable, for enemy communications were extremely poor after the American bombardment. Every Japanese commander remembered, however, what he had been told a month before—that when the Marines land, “destroy the enemy at the beach.”¹² Lacking any contrary order, his duty appeared plain.

The most sizable enemy movement was that of the *1st Battalion, 135th Infantry Regiment*—the Mobile Counterattack Force—believed to number more than 900 men, assembled near the Marpo radio station, about two miles northwest of Tinian Town. So cleverly did Captain Izumi move his battalion more than four miles that only once did a hedge-hopping aerial observer see some marching men beneath the trees. Unobserved fire fell along the route, but the troops plodded on, moving by squads, chiefly along tree lines between cane fields, avoiding the open roads.

A day of periodic drizzle was followed by a night of pitch darkness. Close to midnight the Marines, who were waiting for the expected enemy attack, noticed that the incoming fire

¹² *DefFor Plan.*

changed from an occasional mortar shell to an increased number of rounds from heavy field guns. At 0200, men of the 1st Battalion, 24th Marines made out a compact group of the enemy some 100 yards away and opened fire. The battalion was then occupying the extreme left flank of the Marines' front, anchored on the coast. The officer commanding Company A expressed the belief later that the Japanese, who had come from the Ushi Airfield vicinity, were marching along the beach road, quite innocent of the fact that they were so near the invaders they sought.¹³

Startled to receive Marine fire sooner than they expected, some 600 Japanese naval troops hastily deployed to attack. Their small figures emerged from the darkness into the bright light of Marine flares. The enemy here was not Colonel Ogata's professional infantry; in fact, the white gloves of some of the naval officers gave a curious dress formality to the scene of carnage after more than three hours of bitter fighting left 476 Japanese dead.

At the beginning of the battle, the Japanese tried to rush the prepared Marine positions, charging into the canister of 37mm guns, machine gun fire, mortar shells, and rifle fire.¹⁴ The

enemy's weapons consisted mainly of rifles, hand grenades, and machine guns taken from aircraft. The Marines' Company A received the most pressure, being reduced to about 30 men with usable weapons, but the company well answered the enemy fire—the next morning showed that most of the Japanese dead lay forward of its lines.

In the declining phase of the battle, a platoon of Marine medium tanks moved up, while Marine artillery of 2/14 (Lieutenant Colonel George B. Wilson, Jr.) registered on the area behind the enemy, preventing retreat or reinforcement. A number of Japanese suicides by grenade signified collapse of this section of the enemy counterattack, and by 0700 the Marines were through mopping up. In that job, armored amphibians helped.

The counterattack on the left had been repulsed with no enemy breakthrough, but at the center the boundary between the 24th and 25th Marines proved insufficiently covered. The enemy's approach to the center, heralded by artillery fire, was observed shortly after midnight by a 15-man combat outpost of 2/24, stationed about 400 yards to the front. They reported Japanese in great numbers.

At 0230 the vanguard of this enemy force, including a few tanks, attacked near the boundary of the two Marine regiments, specifically on the left flank of 3/25, but was stopped by a fusillade of small arms, mortar, and 37mm fire. The battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Chambers, reported that "in the light of subsequent develop-

¹³ Maj Irving Schechter interview with Hist Div, HQMC, dtd 2Jan51.

¹⁴ In preparation for the counterattack, Lieutenant Colonel Lessing of 1/24 had emplaced attached half-tracks and 37mm guns directly in the front line, where, that night, "gun crews fought in the dual role of gunners and riflemen." Col Otto Lessing ltr to CMC, dtd 11Dec50.

ments" this thrust "appeared as a feint."¹⁵

A second attack followed, which involved elements of the *1st* and *2d Battalions, 50th Infantry*, and of the *1st Battalion 135th Infantry*—equipped with new rifles and demolition charges. About 200 of these well-trained foot soldiers broke through the lines of Company K on the extreme left of 3/25. After getting to a swamp which was not covered by machine guns, they paused and divided into two groups.

One group headed straight for the artillery positions of 2/14 near the beach. Here Battery D, receiving the impact of the charge, employed not only howitzers but also machine guns to stem it. As the surviving Japanese stole doggedly closer, despite the fire, gunners of Batteries E and F turned infantrymen, leveling enfilading fire from their .50-caliber machine guns into the area forward of Battery D. That fire was conclusive—it "literally tore the Japanese to pieces," said the battalion executive officer.¹⁶

At 0400 Colonel Hart, commanding the 24th Marines, asked that 1/8 dispatch a company to help protect division artillery. The riflemen of Company C found the situation quite improved; a platoon of tanks also arrived to mop up any surviving Japanese behind the lines. The morning light, replacing flares and star shells,¹⁷

¹⁵ "Combat Narrative of Tinian Operation," Encl B to 3/25 AR (Saipan-Tinian), dtd 19Aug44.

¹⁶ Maj William McReynolds ltr to CMC, dtd 8Jan51.

¹⁷ Naval supporting ships lit up the entire length of the Japanese counterattack—left,

showed some 100 enemy dead in the area. The cost to the Marines had been two men of Battery D, killed while manning machine guns.

The other group of the Japanese breakthrough force fared no better. After turning west into the rear areas of the 25th Marines, the enemy was stopped by a support platoon of 3/25, employing machine guns. Some of the Japanese, caught in a wooded area near Company K, were destroyed by 60mm mortars shells lobbed into their midst.

The enemy's push at the center of the Marine line had cost them approximately 500 dead. Many of these were Japanese that got caught on the barbed wire forward of the line and were cut down by machine gun fire. Identification of the Japanese that fell while attacking the center showed that most of them were of the *1st Battalion, 135th Regiment*. Some were engineers, armed and fighting as infantry, and just as dangerous with the rifle, bayonet, or grenade.

The counterattack on the right, or south, took the form of a mechanized thrust. Up the coastal road, which was crossed near the end by the lines of the 23d Marines, moved five or six Japanese tanks,¹⁸ each transporting some infantrymen and camouflaged with leaves and branches. Other Jap-

center, and right. The destroyers *Monssen*, *Eaton*, and *Conway* provided constant illumination.

¹⁸ 4th MarDiv IntelRpt, Anx B to 4th Mar Div OpRpt Tinian, gives six as the number of attacking Japanese tanks; the battalion commander of 2/23 has stated that only five tanks actually took part, an opinion supported by other witnesses. Colonel Edward J. Dillon interviews with HistDiv, HQMC, dtd 25Sep50 and 22Jan51.

anese soldiers followed on foot, marching over the hard white coral in the total darkness of the night. The tanks represented half the armor of the tank company attached to the *50th Regiment*—in fact, half of the enemy's entire armor on Tinian, all of which consisted of light tanks mounting 37mm guns and 7.7mm machine guns.

Marine listening posts reported the approach of the tanks; the stepping up of Japanese artillery fire and patrol activity had already indicated that some sort of attack was due here. At 0330 the enemy tanks were observed 400 yards forward of the Marine perimeter, specifically that section guarded by 2/23. The Japanese column then ploughed right into the weird daylight created by naval star shells, to receive at short range the fire of bazookas, 75mm half-tracks, and 37mm guns.¹⁹ The scene could be described only by someone that had seen it:

The three lead tanks broke through our wall of fire. One began to glow blood-red, turned crazily on its tracks, and careened into a ditch. A second, mortally wounded, turned its machine guns on its tormentors, firing into the ditches in a last desperate effort to fight its way free. One hundred yards more and it stopped dead in its tracks. The third tried frantically to turn and then retreat, but our men closed in, literally blasting it apart. . . . Bazookas knocked out the fourth tank with a direct hit which killed the driver. The rest of the crew piled out of the turret, screaming. The fifth tank, completely surrounded, attempted to flee. Bazookas made short

¹⁹ Col Louis R. Jones had fortunately reinforced the position of the 2d Battalion with the 37mm gun platoon of the 3d Battalion, thus doubling the 37mm firepower of 2/23.

work of it. Another hit set it afire, and its crew was cremated.²⁰

Such was the fate of five of the tanks, which, being visible over a wide area, received fire even from the attached 37mm platoon of the regimental reserve, 1/25.²¹ Despite the concerted Marine fire, however, a sixth tank at the far rear was believed to have fled undamaged.

The catastrophe which befell their armor did not break the fighting will of the surviving infantry, dedicated veterans of the *1st* and *2d Battalions*, *50th Regiment*, and of the *1st Battalion*, *135th Regiment*. Unwavering before the canister of 37mm guns and machine gun fire, they charged the lines of 2/23 and 2/25, the former unit receiving the hardest thrust of the assault. A few of the Japanese even got through to engage at savage combat the Marines of the regimental reserve, 1/23 (Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Haas), positioned to provide depth here. But total destruction was the fate of the enemy's infantry, no less than of their tanks. In the last hopeless moments of the assault, just at dawn, some of the wounded Japanese destroyed themselves by detonating a magnetic tank mine, which produced a terrific blast. Evidently, these men had been ordered to break through and de-

²⁰ Lt Jim G. Lucas, AsstDiv PubRelO, quoted in Proehl, *4th MarDiv History*, p. 101.

²¹ The parent unit of a 37mm gun platoon was the regimental weapons company, which, besides three 37mm platoons (one ordinarily assigned to each battalion), had a platoon of 75mm half-tracks. Bazookas, which showed well what they could do in stopping a light tank attack, were carried by teams of a rifle company.

molish Marine tanks at the rear of the lines. Some of those tanks were of Company C, 4th Tank Battalion, which helped to mop up the forward area after the battle.

The Japanese effort here had cost them 267 casualties. The number of counted enemy dead resulting from the total counterattack came to 1,241, of which some 700 were irreplaceable infantrymen of organized units. Such a loss represented one-seventh of Colonel Ogata's entire defense force and signaled the virtual extinction of the Mobile Counterattack Force.²² The

²² Only two POWs were taken from *1/135* in the counterattack. They said that their battalion was practically annihilated, that only a few stragglers could have remained.

percentage did not include those casualties which the enemy suffered during the bombardment of Tinian or from the landing and initial advance of the Marines on J-Day.

In retrospect, General Cates felt that by more than withstanding the organized counterattack, the Marines "broke the Jap's back in the battle for Tinian."²³ The victory certainly proved decisive, yet on the morning of 25 July no Marine believed the fight was over. As a matter of fact, the *50th Infantry Regiment* was still largely intact and composed of well-equipped troops. Its entire *3d Battalion* had not yet been committed.

²³ *4th MarDiv OpRpt Tinian*, Sec IV, p. 25, dtd 25Sep44.

Southward on Tinian¹

THE 2D DIVISION GOES ASHORE

The landing of the 2d Division on 25 July was partly accomplished before the 4th Division resumed its advance that morning. The Japanese counter-attack had depleted ammunition stocks and necessitated some reorganization of the Marine units that had been involved; the attack hour was delayed, therefore, from 0700 to 1000.

First to land was the 8th Marines, less its 1st Battalion already on Tinian. A double column of LCVPs carried the men from the transports to the reef off White Beach 1, where they waded the last 100 yards to the shore. The 2d Battalion had landed by 0922, and by 1100, Colonel Clarence R. Wallace's entire regiment was ashore. During

the landings, Japanese mortar and artillery fire, directed from the enemy observation post on Mt. Lasso, plagued the troops and caused some boat damage. American naval gunfire and artillery eventually quieted the enemy guns.

With the remainder of the 8th Marines coming ashore, 1/8 reverted to its parent regiment at 0920. The battalion had begun the day under the control of the 24th Marines, which had ordered it to relieve 1/24 along the coast on the extreme left flank of the beachhead. As the 8th Marines landed, the regiment was attached to the 4th Division and given the northernmost sector of the front.

At noon, after the 8th Marines had cleared the beach, the 2d Marines began landing and by 1755 was bivouacked some 500 yards inland.² The 6th Marines completed the loading of personnel and vehicles in LSTs at Saipan on 25 July and moved to the transport area off Tinian, but, except for 2/6, the regiment stayed on board ship until the next day. At 1745 of the 25th, the 2d Battalion was ordered to land on White Beach 2 and, upon moving to an assembly area 700 yards inland, it was detached from the 6th Marines and designated division reserve. General

¹ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this chapter is derived from: *TF 51 OpRpt*; *TF 52 OpRpt*; *TF 56 OpRpt*; *NTLF OpRpt*; *NTLF OpOs 31-44 through 37-44*, dtd 24-30Jul44; *NTLF G-2 Periodic Rpt 46, Anx A*, dtd 31Jul44; *NTLF G-3 Periodic Rpts 41-46*, dtd 25-31Jul44; *2d MarDiv OpRpt Tinian*; *2d MarDiv D-2 Periodic Rpts 75-80*, dtd 27-31Jul44; *2d MarDiv D-3 Rpts 72-77*, dtd 25-30Jul44; *2d MarSAR*; *6th Mar SAR*; *8th Mar SAR Tinian*; *4th MarDiv D-2 Periodic Rpts 71-78*, dtd 24-31Jul44; *4th MarDiv Translations (Tinian)*; Chapin, *4th MarDiv in WW II*; Crowl, *The Marianas*; Hoffman, *Tinian*; Isely and Crowl, *Marines and Amphibious War*; Johnston, *Follow Me!*; Morison, *New Guinea and the Marianas*; Proehl, *4th MarDiv History*; Smith and Finch, *Coral and Brass*; Stockman and Carleton, *Campaign for the Marianas*.

² Pending the commitment of the 2d Division, it was, except for the 8th Marines, in the status of NTLF reserve.

Watson, commanding the 2d Division, left the *Cavalier*, and at 1600 of 25 July, set up his command post on land. Division armor moved ashore during the evening. The landing of the 2d Tank Battalion had not been rushed; the tanks were not immediately required, and the beach congestion would not permit rapid deployment.

Before nightfall on the 26th, the 2d Division shore party, 2/18, had unloaded from LSTs a two-day reserve of rations, water, hospital supplies, and three units of fire. The work then went on under floodlights as a round-the-clock schedule was begun. On Saipan, the resupply machinery started to function when LCTs, with preloaded trucks and trailers, flowed toward Tinian.

*THE SECOND DAY OF THE BATTLE*³

The objective of the 4th Division on 25 July was the 0-2 Line, which began at a point about 1,200 yards north of White Beach 1; it extended south through the middle of northern Tinian and formed a juncture with the Force Beachhead Line (FBHL), which lay like a relaxed rope below Mt. Lasso, crossing the island east to west. The 0-2 Line had first been mentioned in General Schmidt's operation order for 25 July, when he directed General

Cates to seize the 0-1 Line and then "on division order seize the division 0-2 line and be prepared to seize FBHL on NTLF order."⁴ The landing plan had designated but two objectives: the 0-1 Line and the FBHL. (See Map 22.)

The withdrawal of Japanese troops from some areas to a new line, which Colonel Ogata had fixed south of Mt. Lasso, considerably eased the Marines' task on 25 July. The advance of 1/8 up the coast, however, was hindered by coral rocks and thick undergrowth and was not made easier by certain survivors of the counterattack, who harassed the Marines with rifle and machine gun fire from holes and caves. At 1115, a pocket of 20 to 25 well-hidden Japanese briefly checked the advance at a spot where tanks could not operate and where the fire of armored amphibians was not effective.

With the front of the 8th Marines expanding, Colonel Wallace committed the 2d Battalion on the right of 1/8 and ordered it to attack to the east. Units of 2/8 were soon at Airfield No. 1 and found the prized area weakly defended; most of the Japanese had left to join the counterattack of the night before, never to return. The battalion reached the middle of the airfield, and at the end of the day, made contact with 1/24, some 400 yards to the south. Colonel Hart had taken the 1st Battalion out of reserve to cover a gap between 3/24 and the 8th Marines for the night's defense.

The 3d Battalion, 24th Marines, moving out to the east, had reached the 0-2 Line at 1025 with no opposition. The unit then turned south along the

³ Additional sources for this section include: 1/8 *Rpt Tinian*; 1/24 *Rpt of Ops*, dtd 25Aug44; 2/24 *AR*, dtd 5May45; 2/24 *Narrative Tinian*; 3/24 *AR*, dtd 5May45; 3/24 *Narrative of Tinian Is Op*, dtd 5May45; 1/25 *Rpt on FORAGER, Phase III*, dtd 19Aug44; 3/25 *CbtNarrative of Tinian Op*, n.d.; 2d *Tkbn SAR*.

⁴ NTLF OpO 31-44, dtd 24Jul44.

objective to support 2/24, which was receiving small arms fire while advancing toward Airfield No. 3. By mid-afternoon, the 2d Battalion was at the 0-2 Line, which crossed the airfield. The strip and the adjoining buildings were found to be abandoned.

At the end of the second day on Tinian, the 24th Marines was in contact with the 25th Marines on the right and the 8th on the left. That night, the Japanese attempted only petty infiltration, but a sharp clash occurred when Marines of a regimental combat outpost near a road junction ambushed an enemy patrol. Manning the outpost was a platoon of the division reconnaissance company, attached to the 24th Marines for the night.

By the evening of 25 July, the 23d Marines had advanced halfway to Faibus San Hilo Point. The 1st Battalion had relieved 2/23, which passed to division reserve, and then moved through cane fields and underbrush against the light opposition of Japanese stragglers from the counterattack. The 0-1 Line was reached at 1637, and a position in advance of it was secured before dark. The 3d Battalion, the regimental reserve which had followed 1/23 during the daylight hours, moved up for the night to relieve left elements of the 1st Battalion.

The hardest fighting on 25 July took place at Mt. Maga and involved the 25th Marines, advancing at the center of the division line.⁵ Mt. Maga lay just inside the 0-1 Line and stood astride the path of the regiment.

⁵ Battalion action reports referred to Mt. Maga as Hill 440, but a captured Japanese map put its height at 390 feet.

That side of the hill which rose before the advancing Marines was the most precipitous one; Colonel Batchelder saw that a frontal assault would be arduous, and probably costly in Marine lives. He settled, therefore, upon the tactic of a double envelopment, using the 1st Battalion on the left and the 3d Battalion on the right. The 2d Battalion would hold to the front of the hill, delivering suppressive fire upon it.

While the Japanese were retiring from other sections of their defenses, they still clung to Mt. Maga. Marines of 1/25 were able to get safely into position at the foot of the hill, but when they tried to climb the east side, they were opposed immediately by such a hail of rifle and machine gun fire that Lieutenant Colonel Mustain ordered withdrawal. A road to the peak was then discovered, and engineers searched it for mines. When the path had been cleared, tanks made a strike on top of the ridge, but after being unable to locate the well-concealed enemy firing upon them, the vehicles were ordered down from the ridge. A second attempt by 1/25 drew the same violent response as the first, but now the sources were spotted. The battalion commander then employed 81mm mortar fire on the top of the ridge, while tanks fired from the hill base into pillboxes and caves in the face of the cliff. These fires did the trick. At 1200, the infantrymen again started up the hill, encountering much less resistance. Once at the top, however, the Marines received considerable fire from Japanese positions to the front. As there were yet no friendly units either on the right or left, Colonel Batchelder ordered 1/25 to hold up the

attack. At 1330, the enemy succeeded in setting up machine guns and mortars on the open right flank, forcing 1/25 to withdraw 200 yards under this fire. The ground was soon retaken, however, after Marine mortar and machine gun fire, helped by 75mm fire from the tanks, destroyed the Japanese positions. Two hours later, Colonel Hart ordered the 1st Battalion to continue the attack to the right front, encircle Mt. Maga, and join forces with the 3d Battalion before digging in for the night.

As 3/25 had started along its envelopment route, the movement was delayed by enemy fire from the hill, causing Lieutenant Colonel Chambers to order tanks and combat engineers forward of the leading Company L. The fire by the tanks, added to the work of flamethrowers, bazookas, and demolitions employed by the engineers, appreciably lessened the resistance; another delay ensued, however, while 3/25 waited for restoration of contact with the approaching 23d Marines. During the hold-up, the battalion commander requested naval and artillery gunfire upon the west slope of Mt. Maga. Under such cover, combat patrols destroyed three unmanned 47mm guns near the foot of the hill.

When the 23d Marines came abreast, Chambers ordered resumption of the attack, and by 1600, all companies of 3/25 reported being at the top, where they established contact with 1/25. The 0-1 Line in the center of the division perimeter was secured by 1715. After dark, a few bypassed Japanese attempted vainly to get through the Marine lines. The mop up of the Mt. Maga area was left to 2/25, which

finished the task by noon the next day, when the battalion was put into regimental reserve.

Casualties in the assault of Mt. Maga had been light, but a tragic toll resulted elsewhere on 25 July, when at 0920, a Japanese 75mm shell exploded on the tent pole of the Fire Direction Center, 1st Battalion, 14th Marines. The battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Harry J. Zimmer, was killed, as were the intelligence officer, the operations officer, and seven assistants. Fourteen other members of the battalion headquarters were wounded. Major Clifford B. Drake, the executive officer, assumed command.

During the same morning, enemy artillery fire was laid upon the pier, under construction by Seabees, at White Beach 2, causing several casualties there. As the shells were believed to be coming from Mt. Lasso, the 14th Marines directed counterbattery fire at caves in the face of the hill. During the afternoon, however, the Japanese guns were again active for a few minutes, setting fire to one DUKW and causing more casualties among men at the beach. An air strike that morning had supposedly destroyed two guns at the base of Mt. Lasso, and fire support ships had been directed to search for and silence Japanese guns in the vicinity. It was evident, however, that some well-concealed weapons had escaped the best efforts to destroy them.

Japanese power in the Mt. Lasso area, both of guns and men, was hard to measure. At a point 1,000 yards northwest of the hill, Marine air spotters saw a force, reported of battalion size, moving south. The 14th Marines took the enemy under fire, reducing the

force by an estimated 25 percent; the rest of the enemy scattered into the cane fields where hiding was easy. The evasive Japanese soldier and the well-hidden gun would continue to be obstinate threats on Tinian. At the end of the second day, however, the Marines' attack was proceeding beyond expectations.

PREPARING TO DRIVE SOUTH

General Schmidt's operation order for 26 July took note of a rapidly changing picture. Although the southern half of the 0-2 Line and the entire FBHL had not been reached, the Marine commander omitted both objectives from the order. Instead, he spoke of 0-3 and 0-4 for the first time. He drew the 0-3 Line from the shore 1,000 yards south of Faibus San Hilo Point to the coast at a nearly equal distance north of Asiga Point. The line almost converged with 0-4 on the west, but the two lines diverged increasingly toward the east, finally becoming nearly 5,000 yards apart. General Schmidt put the 0-3 Line across the width of the island because it appeared that the 2d Division would reach the east coast with relative ease. After that, the two Marine divisions would be in position for the sweep to the south. The FBHL stretched across the island between 0-3 and 0-4, but the beachhead line was now omitted as being incompatible with a change of tactics then being considered at General Schmidt's headquarters. On 26 July, the 4th Division was to move toward Mt. Lasso, encompassed by 0-4A. The 2d Division, leaving NTLF reserve, would take over the left

sector of the front, advance east to the coast, and envelop Airfield No. 1 in the process. (See Map 22.)

Prior to the attack hour of 0800, General Watson regained control of those of his units which had been under 4th Division control. The 1st and 3d Battalions, 6th Marines had begun landing at 0630 over White Beach 2 and were moving inland to an assembly area to await attack orders. Over the same beach, during the morning, the 2d Tank Battalion completed landing, and its elements went up to positions from which the battalion could support the 2d Division attack.

General Watson's 1st and 2d Battalions, 2d Marines relieved 1/24 and 3/24 as the battle for Tinian went into the third day. The two battalions of Colonel Hart's regiment were put into division reserve, but 1/24 was designated at a later hour as NTLF reserve. The 2d Battalion, 24th Marines was attached to the 25th Marines and committed to the left flank of that regiment to maintain contact with the 2d Division. To the right of the 25th Marines was the 23d, ready to push further down the west coast. On the left of the front, the 8th Marines waited to bring Airfield No. 1 entirely into American hands for early use.

The pace of the advance on the morning of 26 July led General Schmidt to amend his operation order shortly before noon. Instead of requiring that the division commanders wait for NTLF orders before advancing to the 0-4 Line, he permitted them to continue south of the 0-3 Line at their own discretion.

The 8th Marines crossed Airfield No. 1 on 26 July, finding it abandoned, wet,

and cluttered with Japanese planes wrecked on the ground by the American bombardment. The adjoining village, which housed airfield personnel, was likewise deserted. The Marines left the airstrip to the 121st Naval Construction Battalion, and after just a few hours of clean up and repair, the Seabees had the field usable for small observation planes. Two days later, on 28 July, the first P-47 landed and took off from airfield No. 1 with no difficulty.

In the rapid advance of 26 July, Colonel Wallace had his assault battalions, the 1st and 2d, followed by 3/8, on the east coast at the 0-3 Line at 1140. That afternoon, the 8th Marines became division reserve. The next day, 27 July, the regiment took up position as NTLF reserve, but the 2d Battalion continued in division reserve the 8th Marines, Colonel Stuart took the 2d Marines to the east coast by 1230 on 26 July, at which time he realigned his regiment to begin the attack southward.

On the right of the corps front, the 23d Marines was at the 0-3 Line by 1200, despite thick cane fields and densely wooded areas along the coast. Once at the 0-3, Colonel Jones pushed on to a point well below Faibus San Hilo. His 2d Battalion was relieved from division reserve and mopped up the rear areas as the attack progressed. The resistance encountered by the 23d Marines was not heavy; it consisted mostly of isolated machine guns or individual riflemen employing hand grenades.

For the 25th Marines, Mt. Lasso was the chief objective on 26 July. As the

1st and 3d Battalions moved out from the Mt. Maga area, they expected considerable resistance on the higher hill, whose steep approaches made it a better citadel than Mt. Maga. Moreover, Colonel Ogata's command post had been set up on Mt. Lasso, and the guns on the hill had been effectively employed since J-Day. To the Marines' surprise, however, they were able to occupy Mt. Lasso without opposition; the enemy had pulled out during the night.⁶

While 1/25 climbed Mt. Lasso, the 3d Battalion, on the right, gained the 0-4A Line which circled around the hill. Lieutenant Colonel Chambers requested permission to advance to the 0-4 Line, some 1,000 yards farther south, but the regimental commander felt that a contact problem would result. The 3d Battalion 0-4A sector lay in a depression commanded by enemy positions visible on the 0-4 ridge, so the unit was pulled back 450 yards to a more favorable location. As the 1st Battalion dug in for the night, the men put a ring of defense around the summit of Mt. Lasso.

With the advance to Mt. Lasso, the Marines on Tinian had begun to outdistance the support of artillery on Saipan. Consequently, on 26 July, the 3d Battalion, 14th Marines moved across to Tinian where it was assigned the mission of general support. The 105mm howitzers of the battalion were the first artillery heavier than 75mm to land on Tinian. The next day, 3/14 was followed ashore by the 3d

⁶ A Japanese POW said that Colonel Ogata switched his command post from Mt. Lasso to a cave about two miles northeast of Tinian Town.

and 4th Battalions of the 10th Marines and the 4th 105mm Artillery Battalion, VAC.⁷ Colonel Raphael Griffin of the 10th Marines set up his command post on Tinian, signifying the break up of Groupment A of the Corps Artillery which he had commanded on Saipan. As the colonel's regimental units landed on Tinian, they reverted at once to control of the 2d Division.

Movement of Corps Artillery 155mm howitzers from Saipan was begun on 27 July, and the next day the first of these guns began firing from Tinian positions. General Harper, commanding XXIV Corps Artillery, moved his headquarters to Tinian on the same day, leaving on Saipan only the long-range 155mm guns which could reach any part of Tinian. The increasing abundance of Marine and Army artillery on the island was reflected in the complaint of one Japanese POW: "You couldn't drop a stick," he said, "without bringing down artillery."⁸

As the Japanese withdrew under the pressure by Marine infantry, who were now supported by intensified artillery fire, any repetition of the initial enemy counterattack seemed most unlikely. Yet, on the night of 26-27 July, there were attempts to get through the lines of Lieutenant Colonel Richard C. Nutting's 2d Battalion, 2d Marines from both the front and rear. While enemy troops probed and poked along the entire battalion front, other Japanese, presumably some that had been bypassed, tried to break through the Ma-

rine rear areas, evidently hoping to get back to their units. A party of about 60 such Japanese, armed with a light machine gun and grenades, fell upon Company F from the rear and was destroyed. The enemy's activity cost him 137 dead, while the Marine battalion suffered 2 men killed and 2 wounded.

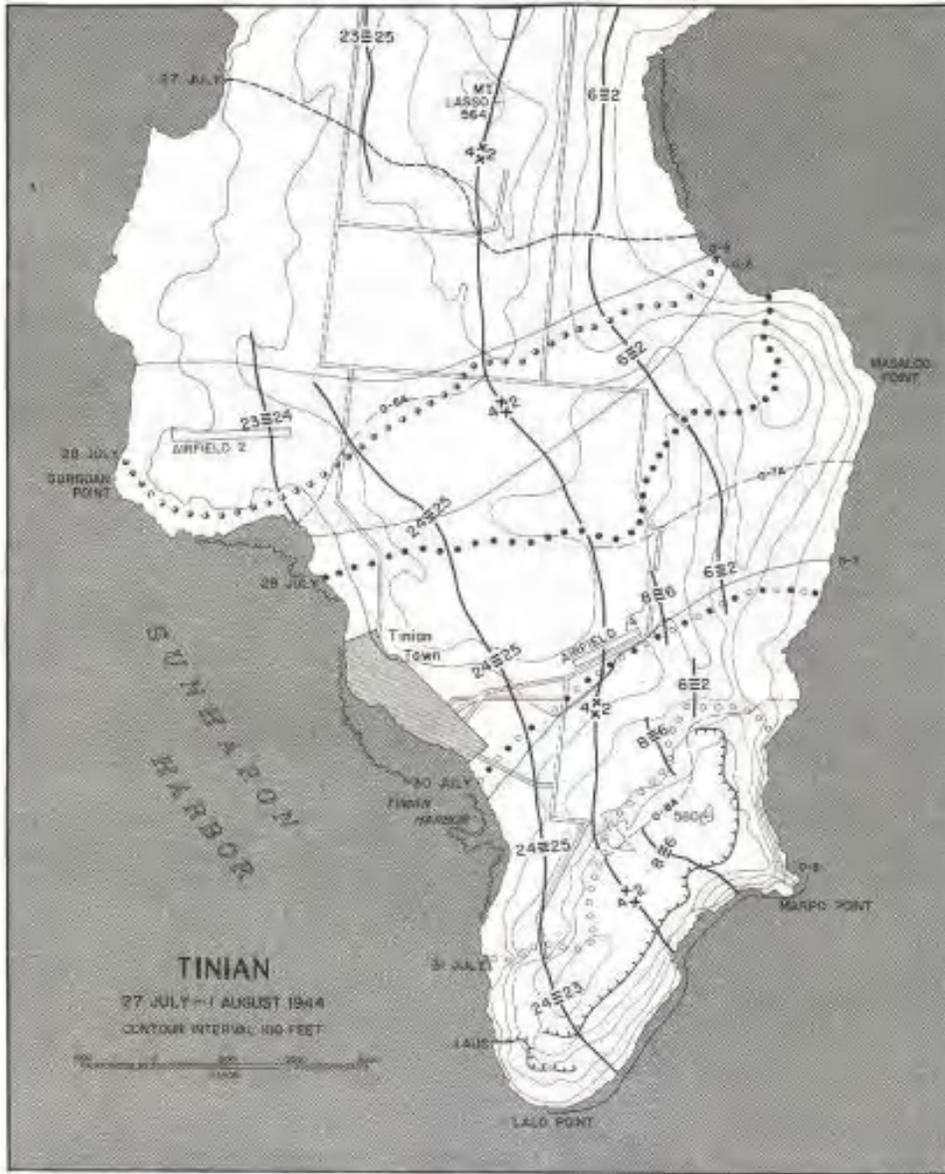
Despite the incident involving 2/2, the withdrawal of the enemy was becoming obvious. Marine patrols lost contact, so rapidly were the Japanese pulling back before the American advance. General Schmidt had his troops well forward, and the two Marine divisions were now spread across the width of the island.

After appraising the situation on 26 July, the NTLF commander decided to use elbowing tactics. In other words, he would not employ both divisions equally each day, but instead, would charge just one division with the main effort while the other made the secondary attack. On the following day, the roles would be switched; it would be like a man elbowing his way through a crowd.

By adopting such tactics, General Schmidt could put the bulk of the artillery support behind a single division. Each was to have a different attack hour; that is, the division chiefly involved that day would jump off at 0700 or 0730, while the other waited until 1000 to attack. The 0-4 Line lay much farther from the 0-3 on the east than on the west, so General Schmidt picked the 2d Division to receive the strongest support the next day. Then, looking ahead to 28 July, he drew the 0-5 Line farther from the 0-4 on the west than on the east, permitting a shift of em-

⁷ The 4th 105mm Artillery Battalion, VAC, was referred to in 14th Marines reports as 5/14, its original designation.

⁸ *4th MarDiv Translations (Tinian)*.



MAP 23

R. E. STIBIL

phasis to the 4th Division. Two days of elbowing tactics would be tried. After that, plans would have to be reviewed against the situation. (See Map 23.)

27-28 JULY—"MAGNIFICENT WORK" ⁹

At 0730 on 27 July, General Watson moved out to the attack, employing the 2d Marines on the left, along the east coast, and the 6th Marines on the right. The advance lay mostly across rolling farm country, marked by cane fields and patches of woods. Only scattered rifle and machine gun fire was encountered, and by 1345 the two assault regiments were at the 0-4 Line. The 1st Battalion, 2d Marines, on the extreme left, had moved 4,000 yards along the coast of Asiga Bay. Marines then sent patrols forward about 500 yards; only five Japanese were found by a patrol from 2/2. The strong positions near Asiga Bay had been abandoned without a fight, thanks considerably to naval gunfire. Just the day before, the battleship *Tennessee* had demolished a blockhouse by main battery fire.

In the 4th Division zone on 27 July, the 23d Marines continued the attack at 0950, and meeting no enemy resistance, was at the 0-4 Line an hour later. Both the 1st and 3d Battalions then sent patrols up to 1,000 yards forward of the line, but none of them reported enemy activity, and the regiment consolidated positions on 0-4 for the night.

⁹ General Holland Smith departed for Guam at 1800 on 28 July. Before leaving, he sent a message to General Schmidt: "Magnificent work. Keep the heat on." NTLF G-3 OpDisps 27-29Jul44.

To the left, along the division boundary, the 25th Marines had moved out at 1000, with 2/25 following the assault battalions at 500 yards. Opposition was negligible, and the 0-4 Line was gained by 1200. The progress of the 2d Division during the day closed the previously existing gap on the 4th Division left flank, so 2/24 was pinched out and moved into regimental reserve, still attached to the 25th Marines.

It was planned to bring the 24th Marines back into the lines on 28 July, and with a view to that, General Cates took 3/24 out of division reserve. The 1st Battalion was returned from NTLF reserve to its parent regiment. At 1800 of 28 July, 2/24 was detached from the 25th Marines and replaced 1/24 in the corps reserve. Lieutenant Colonel Richard Rothwell, the regularly assigned commander of 2/24, had been able to rejoin his battalion, relieving Major Garretson, on 27 July, after being in the hospital during the first three days of the campaign.

Scarcity of opposition to the 4th Division advance on 28 July—the 0-5 Line was reached by 1250—made it unnecessary to use any unit of the 24th Marines that morning. Not until 1300 was the regiment put into attack position between the 23d and 25th Marines, and it was then utilized because the island expands to its widest where the 0-5 Line was located. About two miles south of the line, however, a bay cuts into the coast, narrowing the island. Here was where General Cates desired to end the day's advance, at a shorter and more defensible line, and he received permission to go beyond 0-5 to a line he designated 0-6A.

After naval gunfire and artillery pre-

pared the forward area, the 24th Marines moved out at 1325, initially in a column of battalions with 1/24 in assault. As the advance progressed, 3/24 was put into the expected gap that developed between the 24th and 25th Marines.

With resistance light, 0-6A was reached at 1730, when the 23d Marines, pinched out by the bay indentation, reverted to division reserve. The regiment had moved 7,300 yards on 28 July; the spectacular advance was "accomplished in blitz fashion," said the regimental report, "with troops riding on tanks and in half-tracks."¹⁰ Progress of the regiment beyond the 0-5 Line had enveloped Airfield No. 2 near Gurguan Point. The field was secured at 1420 against ineffective fire from Japanese small arms and light automatic weapons.

Throughout the day, the armor of the 4th Tank Battalion had led the attack, demolishing cane stalks and other tropical vegetation to gain the infantry fields of fire. At such work the medium tanks were joined by flame tanks. The fast-moving Marine infantry set a merry pace for both armor and artillery. Units of the 14th Marines had to displace frequently to avoid getting out of range.

The 2d Division jumped off at 1024 on 28 July. The 1st Battalion, 2d Marines, which the day before had advanced 4,000 yards, now found itself restrained by division to a gain of only 350 yards, the distance from 0-4 to 0-5. With 2/8 attached for the day, the 2d Marines reached the 0-5 Line

at 1130, just an hour after moving out. Patrols roved 500 yards forward of the line and encountered no Japanese, but the regiment was kept at 0-5 for the night. At 1730, 2/8 was returned to its parent regiment, when the 8th Marines, less its 3d Battalion retained in NTLF reserve, became division reserve. The 6th Marines, which had more ground to cover than did the 2d Marines, reached the 0-5 Line by early afternoon. Both regiments dug in at 0-5 and reported minimum enemy activity that night: two Japanese soldiers tried to infiltrate the perimeter of the 2d Marines, and two small enemy patrols were discovered in cane fields near the 6th Marines.

LOGISTICS VERSUS WEATHER

Progress on Tinian had been all that could be wished; more than half of the island was already in American hands. It seemed too much to expect that the weather would likewise stay favorable. In fact, Admiral Hill had originally been hopeful of no more than three days of relatively quiet sea.

On the afternoon of 28 July, the period of moderate wind and rain suddenly ended. The Marianas felt the edge of a typhoon born in the Philippine Sea, and the storm caused such heavy swells off the White Beaches that unloading had to be suspended at 1800. The next day, the whipping winds prevented unloading except by LVTs and DUKWs; then, at last, by the amphibian trucks alone.

An LST ventured to dock at the pier on White 2; it debarked 24 loaded trucks with their drivers and took on a number of casualties. While retract-

¹⁰ 23d Mar SAR, Anx H, p. 23, to 4th Mar-Div OpRpt Tinian.

ing, however, the ship was seized by a squall and broached, then ran hard aground on the reef. The casualties were transferred to another ship, but all efforts to refloat *LST 340* proved unsuccessful. The same squall washed a control craft, *LCC 25473*, onto the reef north of White Beach 1, where it was salvaged the next day.

The causeways at each of the beaches held until the night of 29 July. Then the pier at White 1 broached when the anchor chains parted, and the pier at White 2 split. The causeway at the smaller beach was restored by the evening of 31 July, but it was then broached for a second time by the heavy surf.¹¹

The entire burden of unloading could not be put upon the DUKWs, efficient as they were, and besides, Admiral Hill did not propose to do that. He had foreseen and prepared for a change in the weather. Plans included the readying of approximately 30 tons of varied supplies for delivery by parachute drop. Moreover, the admiral called forward a previously alerted Army Air Forces squadron of cargo aircraft at Eniwetok to supplement the planes available on Saipan for transporting supplies to Tinian.

On 29 July, the 9th Troop Carrier Squadron at Eniwetok sent its C-47s (Douglas Skytrains) to support the emergency air-supply plan for Tinian.¹²

¹¹ The wrecking of these piers prevented the landing of the 4th Battalion, 14th Marines, which was kept on board the *Cambria* until 1 August. The unit then landed over the beaches at Tinian Town.

¹² The two-engine C-47, known as the R4D by the Navy and Marine Corps, was the aerial

Except for a few other priority items, only rations were actually delivered by air; on 31 July, approximately 33,000 (99,000 meals) were flown to Tinian. On the way back, the planes carried wounded men to Saipan. The 30 tons of parachute drop material, while valuable emergency resources, were never needed on Tinian.

By 28 July, the day when the good weather ended, supply requirements on Tinian consisted only of rations, ammunition, and fuel. A fourth indispensable, water, was never a problem; Marines were well taken care of by their initial supply and by the output of engineer distillation units, which at the beginning of the campaign, used a small lake near the White Beaches. As to rations, a reserve supply of approximately two days was kept undiminished, thanks partly to the airlift. The demands for ammunition rose with the flow of artillery ashore, but here again no shortages were suffered. Two ammunition ships, the *Rockland Victory*, which arrived on 26 July, and the *Sea Witch*, which anchored on the 27th, remained off shore until the island was secured, and DUKWs shuttled back and forth to keep the guns firing.

The only near supply shortage occurred in the matter of fuel. Here, the rapid advance of the Marines stepped up the estimated requirement of 400 drums a day. Beginning 27 July, a daily supply of 600 to 800 drums of fuel was provided via pontoon barge, from which the oil would be delivered to the dumps by amphibian tractors. A satis-

workhorse of World War II, useful for transporting either soldiers or cargo.

factory reserve had not been built up on shore before the weather reverse made further unloading into the tractors too risky. Only the DUKWs could then be relied upon; so, in addition to their other chores, the tough amphibian trucks undertook the transporting of fuel. Their service, coupled with the fact that much gasoline was captured from the Japanese, averted a major fuel shortage on Tinian.¹³ Delivery of fuel by air, though contemplated, did not become necessary.

PROGRESS ON 29 JULY

The logistics of the Tinian campaign were spared the complication of a pressing enemy. Until the withdrawing Japanese made a stand beside their comrades in southern Tinian, the path was devoid of collective opposition. General Schmidt, who moved his headquarters to Tinian on 28 July, desired to put no restraints upon his fast-moving Marines. Let the advance be as rapid as practical—such was the essence of the orders for 29 July. The elbowing technique was abandoned; both divisions would again move out at the same time, 0700, and their commanders, after seizing the 0-6 Line, could advance to the 0-7 Line as they saw fit. The usual preparatory fires were not to be delivered on the morning of 29 July. It seemed idle to draw upon the depleted supply of artillery shells left on Saipan, or waste naval gunfire on areas largely deserted by the enemy.

General Watson did not expect to

¹³The 8th Marines, for example, captured 1,600 gallons of Japanese gasoline, 90 octane.

gain the 0-7 Line on the 29th because of the distance involved; 0-7 lay nearly 5,000 yards forward of the 2d Division line of departure. Instead, he fixed an intermediate 0-7A Line, 3,000 yards away. The 2d Marines and the 6th Marines both reached the 0-6 Line about 0800 with no difficulty; after that, however, fire was received periodically along the entire division front. Local resistance developed near the east coast when the 1st Battalion, 2d Marines, on the regimental left, approached a 340-foot hill on Masalog Point and was met by machine gun and mortar fire. In the center, 2/2 made good progress, and the same was true for 2/8, which had been again attached to the 2d Marines on 29 July.¹⁴ Such relatively easy advances put those two units a few hundred yards past the 1st Battalion, prompting Colonel Stuart to bring up two companies of his reserve 3d Battalion to attack the Masalog Point elevation from the right. The companies moved through the area cleared by 2/2 and 2/8. By 1715, much of the high ground had been taken by the 2d Marines, and the entire capture of it was left to 3/2 for the next morning. The regiment dug in between 0-6 and 0-7A. The day's advance had been mostly across thick cane fields; Colonel Stuart reported a number of casualties from heat exhaustion.

Resistance to the advance of the 6th Marines on 29 July was erratic, as enemy groups kept up a constant fire from machine guns and mortars but fell back whenever units of the assault

¹⁴3/8 continued in NTLF reserve and 1/8 in division reserve.

battalions, 1/6 and 3/6, deployed to attack. By 1500, the regiment was on line just short of 0-7A but on the commanding ground of the area, so no further advance was attempted that day. During the night, a patrol of 20 Japanese tried to break into the lines of the 6th Marines; otherwise, there was no enemy activity.

To the right of the 2d Division, the advance of the 25th Marines lay across dense cane fields which impeded progress, especially when crossed diagonally. As the Marines pushed through, in the heat of the day, units had difficulty keeping contact. Scattered nests of Japanese, well-hidden in the fields, harassed the advance with rifle fire and occasional machine gun fire. Still, the 3d Battalion reached the 0-6 Line at 1030, and the 1st Battalion was there shortly after.

The 25th Marines chief encounter with the enemy on 29 July occurred after the 3d Battalion had gained 0-6 and been ordered to continue the attack. While moving along an unimproved road, Marines of the battalion came upon a number of well-dug-in Japanese, and a heavy firefight ensued, resulting in several Marine casualties before the resistance was overcome. The tanks supporting 3/25 were involved in the fight, and one light tank was knocked out by a mine. The crew was evacuated with one casualty.

Near the west coast, the 24th Marines reported no opposition before passing the 0-6 Line at 0900 on 29 July. Then the 1st Battalion, on the regimental right, encountered an enemy strongpoint, consisting of a series of mutually-supporting bunkers. They were believed to be defensive works

meant to oppose a landing at Tinian Town. It took a tank-infantry assault to destroy the resistance offered by rifle fire and crossfire from automatic weapons. Company B, 4th Tank Battalion reported that the area "had to be overrun twice by tanks."¹⁵ By 1300, the Marines of 1/24 were again able to move freely. The 3d Battalion had preserved contact with the 25th Marines, and when the 24th Marines halted for the day, at 1525, a company of the regimental reserve, 2/24, moved into a gap which had developed between 1/24 and 3/24.¹⁶ The 23d Marines (less 2/23) continued in division reserve; to keep up with the assault regiments, it had displaced twice during the day.

As the Marines of the 4th Division dug in for the night on 29 July, some of them could see Tinian Town from their foxholes and gun emplacements. The town and Airfield No. 4 lay inside the 0-7 Line. East of Tinian Town, a valley stretched across the island. Cheerful prospects of the campaign ending were dampened, however, by a night of heavy rain which soaked everything from the ground up. Added to this unpleasantness was incessant enemy artillery and mortar fire, which kept Marine gunners replying throughout the wet and dark hours. In front of 3/25, the rustling sounds of enemy movement were heard and silenced. The next morning, 41 Japanese dead were found, victims chiefly of Marine mortar fire.

¹⁵ 4th TkBn Rpt, Encl B, p. 3 to *4th MarDiv OpRpt Tinian*.

¹⁶ 2/24 had reverted to regimental control at 0600 of 29 July, being relieved as NTLF reserve by 2/23.

30 JULY—TINIAN TOWN AND BEYOND

Inasmuch as 0-7 still lay ahead, General Schmidt had fixed no additional objective line for 30 July; he ordered simply that the divisions continue operations to complete the mission assigned. He set H-Hour at 0700 but moved it later to 0745, following a request from the 25th Marines. Colonel Batchelder had asked a delay to 1000 to permit the men time to clean and service weapons.

Preparatory artillery fire, omitted the day before, was resumed on the morning of 30 July. All battalions of the 14th Marines took part, opening 10 minutes of fire at 0735 and shelling areas just ahead of the Marine front lines. Then, at 0800, the gunners delivered five minutes of fire, lifting it to areas 400 yards farther out.

Two destroyers were assigned a preparation fire mission on the slopes just south of Sunharon Harbor from 0745 to 0845, and a cruiser was assigned to 1/24 to deliver preparatory fires in support of the attack on Tinian Town. By 1100 of 30 July, however, as Admiral Hill reported, the Marines "had advanced so rapidly that only four square miles of the island remained for safe firing by ships not supporting battalions (i.e., not with shore spotter)." ¹⁷

For the 4th Division—specifically, the 24th Marines—Tinian Town was a significant objective on 30 July. For the Japanese, the coming of the Marines by land to the area where they had first been expected by sea must

have been a regretful event; against it they could summon only a shadow of the resistance once available. Indeed, the only tangible opposition to the 24th Marines as the regiment approached Tinian Town came not from the area itself but from caves along the coast north of the town, where Japanese machine gunners and riflemen were holed up. The 1st Battalion, 24th Marines had progressed about 600 yards from its line of departure when the left flank was stopped by enfilade fire. The resistance was overcome with the help of tanks and of armored amphibians offshore. Flame tanks seared the caves, and following that, combat engineers employed demolitions. It was the approach that had become a Marine classic, and it was extremely effective. In one cave the Marines destroyed a 75mm gun sighted toward Tinian Town.

At 1000, Colonel Hart committed his reserve 2d Battalion in a column of companies, between 1/24 and 3/24, in the vicinity of the cliff line. When 1/24 resumed the advance at 1100, the 2d Battalion was assigned to follow the attack. The 3d Battalion, ordered to preserve contact on the left with the 25th Marines, advanced rapidly; in fact it got so well forward that it stretched the battalion lines, causing a temporary gap inside the unit.

At 1420, the 24th Marines reached Tinian Town, to find it virtually leveled by the American bombardment and almost entirely deserted—the population had left, and only one Japanese soldier was discovered. By 1700, Marine infantrymen had thoroughly combed the ruins and gone on to occupy the 0-7 Line south of the town. The

¹⁷ *TF 52 OpRpt*, Pt VI, p. 78.

only enemy fire received came, it was believed, from tanks in the distance and caused no harm. Enemy emplacements in the town had been evacuated as useless, for the guns were trained to repel an attack from the Tinian Town beaches. Nearby, there were also some deserted emplacements and abandoned caves. In the streets of the town, the Japanese had left barriers, such as log barricades or timber cribs filled with stones, but none of these obstacles was sufficient to stop a medium tank.

Where the peril lay for the Marines was in the mines which the Japanese had planted. From the Tinian Town area, the engineers removed a new type of antipersonnel mine. It consisted of a wooden box containing 10 to 12 pounds of dynamite. A pressure type of igniter required an estimated pressure of 200 pounds, while a companion pull type seemed explosive with just 8 pounds of pull. The enemy had also conceived a device to make the beach mines more dangerous. Some of the horned mines—78 were removed from the Red Beach alone—were joined by rods about 20 feet in length fastened to the horns. Pressure applied by a vehicle to any part of the rods could theoretically detonate two or three of the mines simultaneously.

While the 24th Marines found Tinian Town deserted, the 25th Marines beheld the same forlorn scene at Airfield No. 4, though enemy mortar fire from beyond it was received as the Marines pushed across the strip, gaining the 0-7 Line at 1430. Prior to reaching the airfield, the Marines had met little else but scattered enemy sniper fire. The area of advance was dotted with

concrete dugouts and emplacements but few Japanese.

The strip surface of Airfield No. 4 consisted of rolled coral, pocked with holes from artillery hits but repairable. Marines reported finding one small Zero-type plane. In a supply room, the Japanese had left some flying suits, helmets, and goggles. The field was still under construction; prisoners said that until the Marines came, it was being rushed to completion upon orders from Tokyo, to bring help by air. Such rumors gave enemy morale a needed lift.

The seizure of the Tinian Town airfield marked the last battle action of the 25th Marines on the island. The regiment, less its 3d Battalion assigned to division reserve, was put into NTLF reserve and continued there for the rest of the campaign. The 23d Marines relieved elements of the 25th Marines on the 0-7 Line at 1600 of 30 July; 3/23 reverted from NTLF reserve to its parent regiment.¹⁸ The 1st Battalion, 25th Marines was relieved by 1/8 at 1800, shifting the division boundary.

On 30 July, the 2d Division had encountered fitful opposition, sometimes amazingly strong, which the Japanese offered as their hold on the island slipped away. Shortly before the attack hour, a 1/2 patrol, pinned down only 500 yards from the front lines by enemy machine gun fire, was rescued by a platoon of tanks. The offending strongpoint was destroyed by Marine artillery, removing it from the path of the battalion, which then moved rapidly

¹⁸ 3/23 had relieved 2/23 as NTLF reserve at 1000 of 30 July.

south along the coast below Masalog Point.

A task for 3/2 that had been left unfinished on 29 July was the capture of the Masalog Point high ground, but most of the Japanese there had withdrawn under cover of darkness, and the Marines gained the objective early on 30 July. The battalion then hastened to catch up with 1/2 on its left. The advance of 3/2 was briefly delayed by a Japanese 70mm howitzer, which was destroyed by a combat patrol. At 1345, the 2d Marines reached the 0-7 Line. The 2d Battalion was then detached and designated as NTLF reserve, relieving 3/8. The attached 2/8 had been pinched out before noon, so both battalions of the 8th Marines were back with their parent regiment, whose 1st Battalion, however, was still in division reserve.

At 1700, after the 2d Marines dug in for the night along the 0-7 Line, the 3d Battalion began to receive enemy machine gun and mortar fire from caves in the cliffs to its rear. The positions were reduced by flamethrowers and demolitions prior to darkness. The night was quiet except for some movement to the front of 3/2, apparently from small groups of the enemy digging in caves. The Japanese attempted no fire upon the Marine positions.

The advance of the 6th Marines was mostly uneventful on 30 July. By 1245, the 1st Battalion, on the right, had reached the 0-7 Line. The 3d Battalion, however, received fire from a Japanese field piece which caused a brief delay. A combat patrol sent out to locate it was unsuccessful, but the

weapon did become silent; it was probably the 70mm howitzer which Marines of 3/2 had knocked out. At 1604, 3/6 reported its position on the 0-7 Line. The 2d Battalion had been detached at 1345 when General Watson ordered it into division reserve. The 3d Battalion, 8th Marines relieved 1/6, which then went into regimental reserve. By 1830, the 8th Marines, with its 2d Battalion as regimental reserve, was in position and wired in for the night, relieving extreme left elements of the 4th Division and the rightmost elements of the 6th Marines.

THE FIGHT STILL AHEAD

The commitment of additional 2d Division troops took care of a widening in the division front, as General Schmidt prepared the concluding moves of the campaign. His operation order issued at 1730 on 30 July was more detailed than usual, and it had a single purpose—"to annihilate the opposing Japanese," now cornered in southern Tinian.¹⁹ The two divisions, jumping off at 0830, were to seize 0-8, the southeast coastline between Lalo Point and Marpo Point.

Preparatory naval gunfire of exceptional intensity was scheduled to begin at 0600; assigned to deliver the goods were the battleships *California* and *Tennessee*, the heavy cruiser *Louisville*, and the light cruisers *Birmingham* and *Montpelier*. At 0710, the ships would cease firing for a period of 40 minutes, to permit a bombardment by 126 air-

¹⁹ NTLF OpO 37-44, dtd 30Jul44.

craft.²⁰ Corps and division artillery were to step up their fires of the previous night. Once the Marines moved to the attack, all three supporting arms would be on call.

There were good reasons, indeed, for General Schmidt's cautious preparations. In the first place, the Japanese would be making their last desperate stand on Tinian, and experience indicated that it would be a very tough one. Marines speculated on whether the enemy would wait concealed, to exact a high price for the last one-fifth of the island, or stage a counterattack in a final *banzai*, the most likely tactic. A third but lesser possibility was a mass suicide by the enemy, using ammunition dumps and hoping to take some of the Marines with them.

According to a 4th Division intelligence report of 7 August,²¹ based upon interrogation of Japanese prisoners, Colonel Ogata issued his last order on 29 July, directing Army and Navy units to assemble in the wooded ridges of southern Tinian, to make their last stand. It was to that area below Tinian Town that the Japanese commander moved his CP the same day. Captain Oya, supposedly, issued his own orders to the naval troops; they were to defend the high ground of southeast Tinian. A rumor among Oya's men was that their commander had received a radio message from

Tokyo on 29 July, advising that the Imperial Fleet was en route.

The Battle of the Philippine Sea, a month before, had rendered such help most illusory, for with its air arm destroyed, the Japanese fleet was crippled. Nevertheless, there were enough enemy troops left on Tinian to keep the Marines from undue optimism. A Japanese warrant officer of the *56th Naval Guard Force*, captured on 29 July, said there were about 500 troops left in that force. He believed the *50th Infantry Regiment* still had 1,700 to 1,800 men. Marines had met elements of the *50th*, but as the 4th Division D-2 emphasized, there was "no concrete evidence" that the regiment "has been committed in force."²²

Another reason for General Schmidt's modified optimism on 30 July was the geography of Tinian at its southern end. Not only would the Marines probably experience their hardest fighting of the campaign, but most certainly they were approaching the most difficult terrain on the island. The gentle landscape around Tinian Town ended suddenly about a mile to the south. There, the ground rose to a high plateau, thick with brush and rock, measuring about 5,000 yards long and 2,000 yards wide, with altitudes over 500 feet. Approach was blocked by cliffs and jungle growth. Along the east coast, the cliffs rose vertically and were next to impossible to scale. In the center, a road leading to the plateau had to wind a tortuous way; a prisoner said it had been mined. Only on the

²⁰ Assigned for the air strike were 80 P-47s of the 318th Fighter Group, 16 B-25s of the 48th Bombardment Squadron (Medium), and 30 torpedo bombers from the escort carrier *Kitkun Bay*.

²¹ SpecIntlRpt No. 4, D-2 Sec, 4th MarDiv, dtd 7Aug44, in *4th MarDiv Translations (Tinian)*.

²² 4th MarDiv D-2 Periodic Rpt No. 77, dtd 30Jul44.

west were the cliffs relatively easy to negotiate.

Such was the picture as Marines dug in for the seventh night on Tinian.

The land itself, not the Imperial Fleet, would try to save the Japanese. The toughness of that ground matched the enemy's will.

The Island Secured¹

ORGANIZED RESISTANCE DECLINES²

At 0200 on 31 July, a Japanese force of company size led by three tanks stole through the darkness upon the lines of the 24th Marines on the division right. A heavy outburst of fire stopped the enemy thrust, knocking out one of the tanks and scattering the attackers. Japanese mortar fire fell along the entire corps front that night but was eclipsed at daylight by the

¹ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this chapter is derived from: *TF 51 OpRpt*; *TF 52 OpRpt*; *TF 56 OpRpt*; *NTLF OpRpt*; *NTLF OpOs 38-44 and 39-44*, dtd 31Jul and 1Aug44; *NTLF G-2 Periodic Rpts 47-54*, dtd 1-8Aug44; *NTLF G-3 Periodic Rpts 47-57*, dtd 31Jul-3Aug44; *2d MarDiv OpRpt Tinian*; *2d MarDiv OpOs 52-55*, dtd 31Jul-10Aug44; *2d MarDiv D-2 Periodic Rpts 81-88*, dtd 2-8Aug44; *2d MarDiv D-3 Rpts 78-85*, dtd 31Jul-7Aug44; *2d Mar SAR*; *6th Mar SAR*; *8th Mar SAR Tinian*; *4th MarDiv OpRpt Tinian*; *4th MarDiv D-2 Periodic Rpts 79-84*, dtd 1-6Aug44, *4th MarDiv Translations (Tinian)*; Thomason, "Tinian"; Chapin *4th MarDiv in WW II*; Crowl, *Marianas Campaign*; Hoffman, *Tinian*; Isely and Crowl, *Marines and Amphibious War*; Johnston, *Follow Me!*; Morison, *New Guinea and the Marianas*; Proehl, *4th MarDiv History*; Smith and Finch, *Coral and Brass*; Stockman and Carleton, *Campaign for the Marianas*.

² Additional sources for this section include: *1/8 Rpt Tinian*; *1/24 Rpt of Ops*, dtd 25Aug44; *2/24 AR*, dtd 5May45; *3/24 AR*, dtd 5May 45; *3/24 Narrative of Tinian Island Op*, dtd 5May45; *2d TkBn SAR*.

thunder of American naval guns; they expended approximately 615 tons of shells in the preplanned bombardment. Aircraft dropped another 69 tons of explosives. For the cornered Japanese, the effect of such preparation fire was, according to prisoners, "almost unbearable."³

The cliff facing the 2d Division left and center was almost impossible to climb. A twisting road with hairpin turns led up to the plateau from the division right. General Watson's plans, therefore, were influenced by the terrain over which his troops had to fight. He set up an O-8A Line which followed the base of the cliff except on the right. There he included not only the cliff but also 500 yards of plateau. On the division left, then, the 2d Marines would halt at the base of the cliff and remain in position to prevent Japanese escape along the east coast. In the center, the 6th Marines would not attempt the hopeless cliff but would turn west at the base and follow the 8th Marines up the road.

The 2d Marines moved out at 0830 and was opposed by sniper fire while advancing to the cliff, which was reached at noon. Large numbers of Japanese and Korean civilians who surrendered held up the advance much more than did enemy troops. In the center of the division line, the 6th

³ *4th MarDiv OpRpt Tinian*, Anx C, p. 11.

Marines moved forward against scattered rifle and machine gun fire coming from positions on the cliff face and light mortar fire dropping from the plateau above. After his advance elements reached the 0-8A Line at 1330, Colonel Riseley received permission to pull back about 400 yards to better defensive positions. Later that afternoon, General Watson committed the 3d Battalion, 2d Marines in relief of 3/6 and moved that battalion behind the 8th Marines as division reserve.

It was the 8th Marines that bore the major responsibility on 31 July and that posed the greatest threat to the enemy. It was expected that the Japanese would concentrate defensive fires along the route into their positions, yet unless Colonel Wallace could establish a foothold on the plateau the division plan would fail.

The first yards of the day's advance were relatively easy. Supported by tanks, the 1st and 3d Battalions moved out across a flat land where cane fields, brush, rocks, and a railroad track embankment gave concealment to some Japanese riflemen and machine gunners. In one instance, 15 Japanese left their hiding place to make a *ban-zai* charge upon a Marine tank; they caused no damage but lost their lives. Following 1/8 and 3/8, the reserve 2d Battalion advanced, mopping up behind the attack.

At noon, the 3d Battalion reached the foot of the plateau. The 1st Battalion had more yards to cover, but by 1500 it was also at the cliff base, in contact with 3/8 on the left and the 4th Division on the right. In front of the 1st Battalion there was a road, the only

practical route for tanks. The commander of the 3d Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel Gavin C. Humphrey, wanted to move his supporting tanks up this tortuous path but was denied permission because 1/8 had not yet secured the path.

The cliffs which faced the 8th Marines had the same innocent appearance as the enemy's fortified hills of Saipan, which the Marines remembered so well. Vegetation masked the deep caves and fissures where Japanese riflemen and machine gunners were waiting. Their vigil ended as Marines of 3/8 started scrambling up the rocky incline. The sudden outburst of Japanese fire prompted Humphrey to hold up the infantry assault and look to measures for reducing the opposition. Exploratory fire from medium tanks failed to find the enemy positions, and the flamethrower tanks were able to burn off only part of the vegetation. The fire of the half-tracks was equally ineffectual. Permission to withdraw the battalion 400 yards and to call down artillery fire upon the cliff had to be withheld by the regimental commander because it would involve danger to 1/8 on the right. The 3d Battalion was then forced to dig in for the night.

While the Marines of 3/8 had struck vainly against the cliff in their area, the 1st Battalion turned to its mission of opening the road. Engineers removed mines; tanks moved up, withstanding the fire of 37mm and 47mm antitank guns, and destroyed Japanese bunkers in the cliff; the infantrymen climbed step by step, opposed by rifle and machine gun fire and by hand grenades

rolled downhill into their path. The thick vegetation alongside the road served both the enemy and the Marines. While it concealed the Japanese, it often obscured their view of the advancing men.

Movement was inescapably slow; by late afternoon it began to seem that the Marines would never get to the top that day. At 1650, however, Lieutenant Colonel Lawrence C. Hays, Jr., commanding the 1st Battalion, received the cheering report that a platoon of Company A was at the top. Several minutes later, a platoon of Company C dispatched the same good word.

Encouraged by such reports, Colonel Wallace ordered Hays to press the attack and get the entire battalion onto the plateau. The regimental commander, moreover, requested General Watson's permission to commit his reserve 2d Battalion, for the purpose of exploiting the success of 1/8 and gaining a surer foothold on the plateau before dark.

With the division commander's approval, the 2d Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Lane C. Kendall, began moving up the road shortly after 1700. By then, all three rifle companies of 1/8 were represented at the top. The 2d Battalion received heavy mortar fire while moving into position on the left of the 1st Battalion. Part of Kendall's mission was to attempt physical contact with 3/8 at the base of the cliff. The 1st Battalion had lost contact with the 4th Division, to the regimental right; in fact, a gap of 600 yards developed as 1/8 shifted to the east while 4th Division elements moved westward.

BATTLE FOR THE PLATEAU

For the Marines on the plateau the situation was tense. The ground they intended to take was still commanded by hidden enemy positions, and the least motion invited a furious outburst of fire. Company E, leading 2/8 up the road, had just come upon the high ground when, at 1830, the Japanese openly attacked along the boundary between that company and Company A. The momentum of the assault forced a part of the Marine line back a few yards before it could be repulsed. Most of the 75-100 attackers were destroyed.

Company G of the 2d Battalion reached the base of the cliff at sunset, 1845, and went on to the top without delay. There it tied in immediately with Company E and disposed its line down the cliff to seek contact with 3/8. Still a gap of 350 yards existed between the 2d and 3d Battalions. Colonel Wallace was determined to remain on the plateau and elected to cover the gap with machine gun fire rather than commit the regimental reserve, Company F, with which he wanted to strengthen the forces at the top.

Two platoons of the reserve company and two 37mm guns established secondary positions at 2100 behind Company A, for if the enemy followed his usual tactics, he would direct another counterattack at the same spot. When, two hours later, the expected assault came, it was decisively broken up by the Marine guns. Yet the enemy persistently approached; Marine combat patrols fought groups of Japanese less than 20 yards from the front line. The night was foreboding; a major enemy coun-

terattack was surely yet to come. The enemy kept probing.

While the Marines on the plateau waited, the situation on the road became equally suspenseful. Over the white coral surface, visible in the dark, cargo jeeps lugged ammunition, barbed wire, and supplies, while jeep ambulances evacuated casualties. Half-tracks and tanks labored up the winding road, adding to a traffic which was intolerable to the enemy.

An attempt to cut the supply route took form about 0100. After locating the open flank on the right of 1/8, by their favorite practice of forcing return fire, a well-organized group of at least 100 Japanese, armed with rifles and grenade launchers, infiltrated through the gap between 1/8 and the 4th Division and moved to the rear of 2/8. A part of the force appeared on the road, burned two jeep ambulances, and started to block the supply route. In the same hour, nearer the top of the road, a platoon of Japanese captured a few parked vehicles belonging to the 2d Battalion.

The command post of 2/8 was still at the base of the cliff, its headquarters personnel tied in with the left of Company G. On the plateau, the battalion executive officer, Major William C. Chamberlin, was organizing the defenses. When the Japanese attempted to cut the road, he took two platoons of Company F and elements of Company A, issued the simple oral order—"Let's go!"—and led the Marines in removing the threat. Major Chamberlin then positioned two platoons of Company F left of the road and a support platoon of Company G on the right, halfway down the cliff, as a preventive measure.

Most of the infiltrating Japanese had been killed by the Marine counterattack, but an isolated group of 20 were discovered the next day on the hill—suicides by grenade. The vehicles captured by the Japanese were retaken intact.

The imperiling of Marine rear positions and the virtual certainty of a much larger enemy attack upon the front lines hastened commitment of the 2d Division reserve. Upon request by Colonel Wallace, 3/6 was attached to the 8th Marines at 0320, and the battalion at once started moving toward the cliff. Beginning then also, artillery fire by the 10th Marines was employed to prevent the enemy from bringing up reserves. Both the 2d Marines and the 6th Marines, whose sectors had been quiet, were alerted to the danger of a massive breakthrough in the wide gap which existed between the 8th Marines and the 4th Division. The two battalions of the 8th Marines were practically alone on the plateau, a fact probably understood by the Japanese, who struck before that situation could change.

At 0515, a well-organized force totaling more than 600 soldiers and sailors, equipped with nearly every weapon except tanks, charged the Marine positions, especially those of 2/8. Here the enemy tried to disable the two 37mm guns that strengthened the Company E position, but were unable to stop the fearful canister fire. Japanese 13mm machine guns tore holes in the upper shield of one of the Marine guns. Eight of the 10 37mm crew members were casualties of the assault, but other Marines kept the guns firing. "Without these weapons," said the regimental

commander, "the position would have been overrun."⁴

The 1st Battalion received a lesser attack, numerically considered; about 150 Japanese charged the left flank, which adjoined 2/8, and were driven off "without great difficulty" by Marine fire.⁵ The same *banzai* fervor which marked the larger attack excited these Japanese. Neither here, however, nor elsewhere along the front, was the enemy able to penetrate, though some of their number were killed just five yards from Marine positions.

In less than one hour of fighting, which cost the 8th Marines 74 casualties, the enemy suffered a loss of 200 killed—about half of the number fell in an area only 70 yards square. Despite the terrific repulse, however, the Japanese preserved organizational integrity and staged a very orderly withdrawal to the woods and cliffs to the southeast. The enemy rear guard was destroyed by Marine tanks.

The situation on the plateau appeared favorable to a steady Marine advance, but still unrectified was the gap which existed between the 2d and 4th Divisions. Progress of the 23d Marines on 31 July had been good until the left flank of the 1st Battalion, exposed by the gap, received machine gun and mortar fire from the cliff line. The attached tank platoon, advancing in front of the 1st Battalion, then suddenly ran into close range, high velocity antitank fire from beyond the tree line of the cliff. The left flank tank received six hits in rapid succession, one of them penetrating the turret. The tank com-

mander backed off about 15 yards to a defiladed spot from which he fired two smoke shells to bracket the area in the cliff to the left front, where he believed the enemy gun was located. Rockets, naval guns, and tanks then plastered the suspected ground.

In the quiet that followed, the tanks went forward once more, this time with another tank on the left flank, the disabled vehicle following about 10 yards behind. When the replacement tank came to the spot where the other had been struck, it too was hit six times, three of the shells tearing through the armor plate. Then, however, the enemy gun was located; it was 30 yards to the left, beyond the tree line which paralleled the Marines' advance. The two battered tanks took their revenge. One of them fired a blinding smoke shell in front of the gun, while the other tank maneuvered behind the gun, knocked it out, and killed about 20 Japanese running out of the emplacement. The enemy position had been roofed over and enclosed on three sides with concrete. From an aperture a 47mm antitank gun was able to cover a fire lane about 10 yards wide. Into that lane the two Marine tanks had unhappily moved.

After the encounter, 3/25, then in division reserve, was assigned to the 23d Marines to form a perimeter defense around the tanks and service vehicles of 1/23 on the low ground. The 1st Battalion had secured the high ground in its zone by 1745, but mines along the only road to the top prevented moving the machines up until the next day. The regimental reserve battalion, 3/23, which had followed the advance, moved onto the high ground to the rear of the

⁴ *8th Mar SAR Tinian*, p. 10.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8.



MACHINE GUN on a half-track lays searching fire along a tree line on Tinian to cover advancing 4th Division Marines. (USMC 88220)



PACK HOWITZER, firmly lashed in position, fires on enemy caves in cliffs along the Tinian coast. (USMC 94660)

1st Battalion. There the two battalions established a perimeter defense with flanks bent back and anchored on the cliff line. One company of 3/23 stayed on the low ground, however, for the protection of the left flank and to contain those Japanese that still remained in the gap between the Marine divisions. Patrols from the units of 3/23 on the high ground roved the gap but were unable to locate any elements of the 2d Division. The 23d Marines settled down to a night marked only by sniper fire and infiltration attempts.

To the right, next to the two battalions on the high ground was one company of 2/23, which had worked its way to the top before dark by moving through the zone of 1/23. Progress of the 2d Battalion on 31 July had been good until the afternoon. Then the attached tank platoon leading 2/23 reached a well-seeded minefield planted across the valley road which led to the high ground. Engineers started to clear lanes through the field for each tank of the platoon; two engineers walked in front of each tank, removing the mines as they were discovered. Suddenly, Japanese riflemen and machine gunners opened up from a trench 20 yards away and across the route of advance. The engineers, as well as the accompanying Marine infantrymen, were pinned down.

Tanks took the trench under fire; one of them started toward the end of the trench, to fire down the length of it. Traversing some ground which was judged the least dangerous, the tank got to just five yards from the objective when it hit a mine. The explosion shattered the tank's suspension system and injured the tank commander, the

driver, and the assistant driver. Emboldened by this success, a number of Japanese darted from concealment to attack the Marines openly and were either killed or pinned down by point-blank fire. One of the tanks rescued the crew of the disabled vehicle and after pulling back saw the Japanese trying to set up machine guns in the wreck. To prevent this, the Marine tanks blew it apart.

Darkness approached before the strong enemy position could be reduced, so Lieutenant Colonel Edward J. Dillon, commanding 2/23, left one infantry company behind to contain the pocket. Other Marines of the battalion moved around to the left and went on to the base of the high ground, digging in there for the night. The tanks remained with the containing company until it had set up its defenses. During the night the Marines at the foot of the cliff received some enemy fire from caves near the base.

For the 24th Marines on 31 July opposition developed early along the west coast south of Tinian Town. The 1st Battalion received light artillery fire shortly after moving out; then at 1000 the Marines of Company C, advancing along the beach, were stopped short by rifle and machine gun fire coming from an isolated enemy position defended by 70 naval troops. It took an hour of hard fighting to subdue the Japanese. The mopping up of the beach area behind Company C was left to Company E of 2/24, which followed the advance at 600 yards.⁶ In overcoming the resistance of the Japanese naval troops,

⁶ 2/24, though then in division reserve, was under the control of the 24th Marines.

and of other enemy groups hiding in caves or jungle brush, the 1st Battalion was aided by armored amphibians offshore. Flame tanks seared enemy caves and also burned off some of the vegetation which entangled the individual Marines or hid Japanese positions.

The movement of 3/24 on 31 July was interrupted at noontime by a loss of contact with the 23d Marines on the left. After an hour or so the gap was closed, and 3/24 resumed the advance. At 1600, however, as the battalion neared the cliff, the enemy opened up with machine gun and mortar fire from the ridge line to the left front. Tanks and half-tracks were called upon to overcome the resistance, but the terrain forbade their movement except along the road to the high ground, a path which the enemy had thoroughly and meticulously mined. Engineers began the tedious and delicate work of removing the threat—they cleared 45 mines from an area 30 yards long. In view of the late hour, the battalion halted for the day. Neither here nor in the zone of 1/24 was the Marines' position especially good. Division reported that the troops dug in for the night "on the least unfavorable ground."⁷

1 AUGUST: THE NINTH DAY

Victory on Tinian was obviously near, but the situation of the Marines was momentarily difficult. General Watson ordered that the attack by the 2d Division on 1 August, scheduled for 0700, be delayed an hour, for not until daylight would there be more than two battalions, 1/8 and 2/8, at the top of the

cliff, and both of those units had suffered a number of casualties from the Japanese counterattack. The 2d Battalion, the hardest hit, was put into regimental reserve when 3/6 reached the plateau at daybreak. The 3d Battalion, 8th Marines, which also climbed the hill that morning, took up a position to the left of 3/6.

By 0800 then, General Watson had three battalions ready to attack across the plateau—3/8, 3/6, and 1/8. The 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, which followed 3/6 up the cliff, would be committed when necessary. To the division left, the 2d Marines was kept at its mission of preventing any Japanese escape up the east coast. On the plateau, it was Colonel Wallace of the 8th Marines who would command the advance to the 0-8A Line.

The first battalion to reach the objective was 1/8; it was on the line just 15 minutes after moving out. The other two battalions were at the objective well before noon. Resistance was negligible and came mostly from isolated groups of Japanese. It had been planned that when 0-8A was reached the 6th Marines would be more fully committed with the regiment scheduled to assume responsibility for the left half of the division zone. Colonel Riseley was to take over the two left battalions, 3/8 and 3/6. The right half of the division zone would still be under Colonel Wallace, but with 2/8 in reserve, he would have only 1/8 in the assault. Such a weighting of the division line indicated the slant of the concluding push, due southeast, chiefly against Marpo Point.

To the 6th Marines, which had not suffered the violent enemy counterat-

⁷ *4th MarDiv OpRpt Tinian*, Sec. IV, p. 31.

tack of the night before, went the major effort on 1 August. Neither 1/8 nor the 6th Marines, however, met any organized resistance while advancing to the cliff above the shore; one company of the 8th Marines reached the objective by 1455. The most significant fact revealed by the easy advance was that a tedious mop up would ensue after the campaign itself was over. Innumerable caves sheltered the remnants of the enemy force; these Japanese lacked command and organization, but they still possessed some weapons and ammunition.

Other caves had been the refuge of frightened civilians, but as Japanese resistance collapsed they began to emerge from hiding. In fact, the progress of the 6th Marines was interrupted on 1 August by the flock of civilians who approached waving white cloths. The large-scale surrender was partly in response to leaflets and voice broadcasts by Marine language personnel, who sought to avoid a repetition of the mass suicides which occurred on Saipan. Division intelligence had estimated that from 5,000 to 10,000 civilians were in hiding on the southeast part of the island. Some had been living in caves since J-Day.

Many of the civilians that surrendered were thirsty and hungry, but few lacked clothing. Some of them came forth lugging suitcases full of clothes, which they had taken upon leaving Tinian Town. A few wore their Sunday best, to greet the Americans they no longer feared. A number of the civilians needed medical attention, but remarkably few of the Tinian population had been wounded by the American bombardment of the island.

The outflow of confused humanity—they were all either Japanese or Korean—reached such a number in the path of the 6th Marines that at 1510 Colonel Riseley received orders to halt for the day, even though the regiment was short of the cliff above Marpo Point. No Japanese troops were observed, but the colonel took the precaution of committing his 2d Battalion on the regimental right, to tighten the lines. Moreover, when he received 1/6 back from division reserve at 1730, he put Company A on watch near the cliff where many Japanese soldiers were known to be hiding.

The processing of civilians that surrendered on 1 August was not a problem for the 6th Marines, because at 0600 that day the control of civilian internment was assumed by the Island Commander, Major General James L. Underhill, who took over a NTLF internment camp established south of the old 0-4 Line on 31 July. Few civilians or prisoners of war had been taken by the Marines until late in the campaign. By the evening of 2 August, however, NTLF G-1 reported that 3,973 civilians had been received, while 48 prisoners were in custody. By 4 August, the number of civilians had reached 8,491 and the prisoners totaled 90.⁸

Early in the campaign, the 2d Division had established a stockade, to care for both civilians and prisoners, near the Ushi Point Airfield. The 4th Division tried regimental stockades which were moved forward with the regimental CP. For Marines who had fought only in jungles and on barren atolls,

⁸ NTLF G-1 Periodic Rpts No. 48, dtd 3Aug44, and No. 50, dtd 5Aug44.

the handling of civilians and their property was, even after Saipan, still a new experience. Not until Tinian did the 4th Division use civil affairs teams on a regimental level.

As it happened, the 4th Division met fewer civilians on 1 August than the 2d Division did, and those were mostly Korean field laborers. On the west side, the enemy soldier proved the more obstructive element. Until 1045 the 2d Battalion, 23d Marines was occupied at reducing the strong point encountered the day before. Tanks and vehicles then started up the hillside road which engineers had cleared of mines. As the battalion climbed, one rifle company was posted to prevent ambush of following troops and vehicles.

The other two battalions of the 23d Marines, already on the plateau, were harassed by considerable enemy machine gun and rifle fire as they adjusted frontage before moving out at 1000. About 50 Japanese ventured near the lines of 1/23 and were destroyed by Marine machine gunners hitting them from two sides. Enemy opposition the rest of the day consisted of rifle and machine gun fire from cane fields and tree lines. At 1715 the two battalions reached the furthest possible line of advance, a cliff overlooking the sea on the east coast. Patrols then reconnoitered routes to the low ground in front of the cliff and along the coast; they reported a honeycomb of caves and deep recesses, hiding Japanese. The two battalions encountered no immediate trouble, however; nor did 2/23, which had halted to the rear on commanding ground.

The 24th Marines reported that 1 August "was almost a prototype of the

day before."⁹ So it was, in the respect that more rocks and more of the same dense undergrowth kept the advance to a plodding pace. The sort of enemy resistance was much the same also—isolated groups, usually hidden by caves or vegetation and ever ready to fire or throw some hand grenades at the Marines.

The regiment had moved out at 0800, with 3/24 and 1/24 from left to right. Artillery of the 14th Marines fired a 5-minute preparation 600 yards forward of the front lines, and two others subsequent to the attack hour, the last one 1,200 yards forward of the line of departure. After that, however, the restricted area of combat made risky not only any artillery support but also call strikes by aircraft, or assistance from gunfire support ships.

At 1500 the 2d Battalion, released from division reserve, was committed to the attack. The Marines were then reaching curious terrain "of a palisade-like nature."¹⁰ It consisted of three levels, descending from the cliff top to the sea. The regimental lines were consequently readjusted, all three battalions being deployed abreast. The 3d occupied the high ground on the regimental left, 2/24 moved onto the center level, and 1/24 stayed on the low ground, its flank on the coastline.

After such an adaptation the advance was resumed, turning from a southward to an easterly direction around the tip of the island. The advance was not rapid here; the Marines received intermittent machine gun and

⁹ 24th Mar SAR, Anx I, p. 13, to 4th MarDiv OpRpt Tinian.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

rifle fire before reaching the 0-8 Line on Lalo Point at 1800. Delay was once occasioned when several dozen civilians had to be removed from a cave. In some areas, progress was only by small fire groups, working their way through the obstructive vegetation between coral boulders. The Japanese took advantage of such difficulty. After the daylight turned to pitch darkness, some Marine casualties resulted from mines actually thrown down upon the men from the cliff.

FIGHTING OFFICIALLY ENDS

The hostile fire received by the Marines on 1 August did not suggest that organized resistance was over, but General Schmidt recognized the essential facts: Colonel Ogata's well-planned defense of Tinian had irrevocably collapsed; most of the Marines were either on or near the concluding objective line. At 1855 on 1 August, the American commander declared the island secured.

A statement like that, however, was a sort of partial truth on any Pacific territory captured from the Japanese. On Tinian, even more than elsewhere, the residue of the enemy force was troublesome. Some of the Japanese preferred self-destruction to surrender, but the proportion of soldiers and civilians that committed suicide on Tinian was smaller than on Saipan.¹¹ The Japanese soldier that chose to live was

¹¹ Some of the Japanese civilians who killed themselves were members of the Civilian Militia, or *Zaigogunjin*, which had been quite inoperative. The men had received a bit of military training but no weapons, and their prime interest was fleeing to safety with their families.

a die-hard type, able to hide out for months.

Most of the Marine casualties after 1 August were caused by those Japanese, who faithful to their military code, decided to forego security and die in combat. The 4th Division D-2 correctly predicted that the enemy would "sally forth from the caves in group *banzai* charges."¹² Just before the dawn of 2 August nearly 200 Japanese, armed with rifles, machine guns, and grenades, attacked the command post of the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines. The pistols, carbines, and two automatic rifles available to the Marines seemed insufficient against the do-or-die spirit of the Japanese, and the outcome was uncertain until the Headquarters Company commander obtained a medium tank, along with a rifle platoon, from nearby Company F of 2/6. Two hours of combat left 119 Japanese dead. The Marines lost their battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel John W. Easley, and suffered other casualties. Major John E. Rentsch, the executive officer, assumed command of the unit.

The 2d Battalion, 6th Marines reported a similar assault upon their command post. Developing shortly before 3/6 was hit, the incident appeared to have been connected with the same enemy outbreak. The brunt of the Japanese attack here was borne by the Mortar Platoon of the Headquarters Company. Three Marine tanks, which had bivouacked for the night at the CP, proved handy. The Japanese pulled back, leaving 30 of their number dead, but they withdrew toward the com-

¹² 4th MarDiv D-2 Periodic Rpt No. 79, dtd 1Aug44.

mand post of 3/6, either by design or mistake.

The next morning at 0530, 3/6 and 3/8 (still attached to the 6th Marines) had to withstand a second enemy attack, staged by a composite group of 150 Japanese soldiers and sailors.¹³ Here also the enemy achieved only the wish to die in battle, rather than surrender; 124 Japanese lay dead after the attack. On succeeding days, the hopeless efforts were repeated. On 3 August, the 4th Division killed 47 of the enemy. On 4 August, when Battery I of the 14th Marines was attacked by 15 Japanese in a cane field, 12 of the enemy were killed.

The protracted chore of mopping up on Tinian went to the 8th Marines, which on 6 August became Ground Forces Tinian, under the command of Brigadier General Merritt A. Edson, assistant commander of the 2d Marine Division. He thereupon assumed tactical responsibility for the island. At the same time, he released one rifle company to the control of the Island Commander to assist the Civil Affairs Officer in the handling of prisoners and civilians on Tinian. The Japanese troops were removed to Hawaii.

On 25 October 1944, the 8th Marines went back to Saipan, but its 1st Battalion remained on Tinian until 1 January 1945. In the period from the securing of the island until the end of

¹³ Some prisoners said that Colonel Ogata was involved and became a casualty. Marines did find his last command post, which afforded a view of Tinian Town, the harbor, and the airfield. American artillery and naval gunfire had demolished the headquarters; a prisoner said that Colonel Ogata had left the area on 31 July.

the year, more than 500 Japanese were killed during exchanges of fire, but such encounters cost the 8th Marines 38 killed and 125 wounded.

These losses appear high when compared to the Marine casualty figures for the campaign itself. The 2d Division reported 105 killed and 653 wounded;¹⁴ the 4th Division, 212 killed and 897 wounded.¹⁵ Marines missing in action came to 27 for the two divisions. NTLF records, which included Army casualties, show a total of 328 killed and 1,571 wounded.¹⁶ For the Japanese, the price of the vain defense of Tinian had been extremely high; nearly 5,000 men were killed.¹⁷

While patrols of the 8th Marines hunted enemy survivors, units of the 2d Division departed for Saipan; by 7 August, 2/6 and 3/6 had left via LSTs. On Saipan the division was to relieve the 27th Infantry Division and remain on that island until the Okinawa campaign the next spring. The 4th Division went back to Camp Maui, the last units boarding ship on 14 August. In Hawaii, the division would prepare for its next battle: Iwo Jima.

At 1200 on 10 August, upon orders from Admiral Spruance, General Schmidt passed the command of all forces on Tinian to the Island Com-

¹⁴ 2d MarDiv G-1 Periodic Rpt No. 83, dtd 5Aug44.

¹⁵ 4th MarDiv OpRpt Tinian, Anx A, p. 1.

¹⁶ NTLF G-1 Periodic Rpt No. 50, dtd 5Aug44, Anx B; *NTLF OpRpt*, Encl H (LVT Rpt), pp. 5-6. A unit breakdown of NTLF casualties is contained in Hoffman, *Tinian*, p. 150. Final official Marine casualty totals are contained in Appendix H.

¹⁷ NTLF G-2 Periodic Rpt No. 48, dtd 2Aug44, gives the figure of 4,858 enemy killed prior to 1800 of 1 August.

mander, who thereafter handled the embarkation of men and equipment. NTLF was dissolved on 12 August. On the same day, TF 52 closed its books; Admiral Hill had eminently fulfilled his responsibility for the capture of Tinian.

LOGISTICS AT TINIAN TOWN

The garrison troops had begun landing the day after the island was secured, unloading by LCTs at Tinian Town.¹⁸ The units went ashore over Green Beach, where once the land mines had been cleared and four wrecked Japanese small craft removed, three LCTs could be received simultaneously. One additional LCT could be handled alongside South Pier, which, being hardly damaged, was easily put into commission.

On 1 August, upon orders from the NTLF Shore Party Commander, the 4th Division Shore Party, less the 1341st Engineer Battalion, had left the weather-battered White Beach 2, to take over all supplies landed over the Tinian Town beaches.¹⁹ The shore party immediately opened up and operated South Pier and that section of Green Beach which extended south of it. The depth of the water at South Pier did not permit landing LSTs either alongside or at the end, so pontoon causeways, brought from White

Beach 1 and Saipan, were installed at the end. On 4 August, the first LST docked there.

North Pier had been severely damaged by bombardment, and like the other pier, rigged with booby traps; complete repair took until 3 August. The 2d Battalion, 20th Marines then began operating that pier, turning over South Pier to the Island Commander.²⁰ By 5 August, the stretch of beach between the two piers (the wider section of Green Beach) had been cleared of land mines and surfaced with coral. Here it was possible to land 15 LCMs simultaneously. The waters of Sunharon Harbor presented no problem except for the sunken Japanese hulks which had to be blasted by UDT men. The Japanese had not mined the waters.

American merchant ships soon crowded the harbor, bringing equipment to reconstruct Tinian. On 3 August, the Stars and Stripes had been officially raised over the island, marking its commission as a naval base. Primarily, however, Tinian would serve the Army Air Forces. They had wanted Saipan and Guam also, but Tinian was the most suitable of the three islands because of its relatively level ground. The Navy, on the other hand, had less interest in Tinian, whose Sunharon Harbor was unable to berth many ships.

Tinian would be "developed as an air base for . . . heavy, medium, and light aircraft," said General Underhill when

¹⁸ The Tinian garrison force eventually numbered 5,235 men—2,527 Marines, 2,693 Navy, and 15 Army.

¹⁹ White Beach 1 was closed shortly after. Yellow Beach was never used, even after the mines had been cleared away, because of the consistently heavy surf and the nature of the reef.

²⁰ Both piers were under the Island Commander after 10 August, when the 4th Division Shore Party was disbanded. Until then, however, the shore party helped embark Marines and their equipment.

he was designated Island Commander.²¹ Navy and Marine aircraft did use the base, but the island became particularly a home for the Army Air Forces giant Superforts. Two wings of the Twentieth Air Force operated from Tinian, flying the B-29s nonstop to Japan itself. The island was developed into the largest B-29 combat base in the Pacific.

Immediate responsibility for construction and defense fell upon General Underhill, who reported to the Commander Forward Area Central Pacific, Task Force 57 (Defense Forces and Land-Based Air, Vice Admiral John H. Hoover). To prevent Japanese interference with construction, the Island Commander relied upon two Marine anti-aircraft artillery battalions, the 17th and 18th, assigned there. They formed the Anti-aircraft Defense Command. The 17th Battalion set up 90-mm guns and two platoons of automatic weapons for defense of the port area. Not until November, however, did any Japanese planes fly near the island, and never were any bombs dropped.

THE CAMPAIGN REVIEWED

The absence of enemy air or sea interference, following the Battle of the Philippine Sea, had been one of several ways in which Tinian differed from other Pacific island campaigns. The major differences arose, as we have seen, from the nearness of Saipan. Such proximity of the staging base to the objective permitted a shore-to-shore operation, the first large-scale one in the Central Pacific, and that, in turn,

allowed the landing and supplying of two Marine divisions over the extremely narrow beaches.

The plan was not only a bold one, it was the only possible plan if the Marines were to be spared a bloody assault of the well-defended beaches at Tinian Town. Success of the attempt hung upon two unpredictable elements—the will of man and the fancy of the wind. If Colonel Ogata, by a flash of insight, had decided to wait for the Americans at the northwest beaches instead of near Tinian Town, or if the weather had suddenly changed, the logistically complex landings could have ended in disaster. To save Marine lives, the gamble was taken; fortunately, all went well. The tactical surprise unbalanced Colonel Ogata's defense plan beyond repair, leading to General Holland Smith's opinion that "our singular success at Tinian lay in the boldness of the landing."²²

It was ironic that the Japanese were caught by surprise here on an island where they were absolutely certain of an American invasion. The loss of Saipan made that inevitable. Long before then, however, the Japanese had seen American planes flying over Tinian from the captured fields of Saipan or ships nearby—reconnaissance planes getting photographs and bringing Marine commanders for a view of their next battlefield, or P-47s and carrier planes bombing defense installations. Most of all, it was the preparatory bombardment which had destroyed any Japanese illusion that Tinian would not be invaded.

The nearness of Saipan made possi-

²¹ Directive issued by CG, TG 10.12 and Prospective Island Comdr, dtd 15May44.

²² Smith and Finch, *Coral and Brass*, p. 203.

ble the unusual bombardment of a Pacific island objective by land-based aircraft and artillery positioned on adjacent soil. The fact that artillery support would be available from Saipan had influenced the choosing of the northwest beaches, and, next to the landings, the preassault bombardment by artillery, ships, and planes was decisive. For never did a single island of the Pacific war receive a more prolonged and continuous pounding before the Marines landed. Afterwards, when the artillery was moved to Tinian, the Marines enjoyed the wealth of such support, especially at the last when the restricted area of combat made naval gunfire and air strikes impractical.

The task of naval gunfire was somewhat lightened at Tinian because land-based artillery joined the preparatory bombardment. Still, according to Japanese prisoners, there was plenty of hell from the sea. Naval gunfire had been improved by the Saipan experience and was even more effective than before. Call-fire procedure was carried out better than at Saipan. The TF 56 naval gunfire officer noted that ships and shore fire control parties "worked in far greater mutual understanding than on any prior operation."²³ He recommended the addition of another battalion spotter, to ensure best results.

The fire support ships did not have the complications with artillery which were occasionally reported by the pilots of P-47s. Field guns were sometimes firing into the same area assigned to planes. To avert such a difficulty in the future, Admiral Hill suggested a Combat Liaison Team, to be composed

of air, naval gunfire, and artillery officers, each with his portable radio set. The team would move forward as a unit and decide just which weapon should be used on the target in question. Spotting and the checking of results was simplified at Tinian by the absence of Japanese ships or planes and by the next-door nature of the targets. The busy Marine observation planes, which did much of that work, were controlled entirely by artillery units.

The mission of preparatory air bombardment was vigorously executed by the P-47s on Saipan and by Navy planes from the escort carriers. After J-Day, the Army Air Forces and the Navy complied with requests for air support by a system of alternating, each furnishing four call strikes a day, assigned by Commander Support Aircraft in the *Cambria*.

The P-47s also undertook a new kind of mission at Tinian: the dropping of the napalm bomb, initially used there and then later on other Pacific islands in a more improved form. During the entire Tinian operation, 147 jettisonable tanks were dropped from 21 July to 1 August. Fourteen of them were duds, but 8 of the 14 were subsequently set afire by strafing runs. Owing to a shortage of napalm powder on Saipan, only 91 of the fire bombs contained the napalm mixture; the rest consisted of an oil-gasoline mixture.²⁴

For the airmen, as for artillerymen and naval gunners, the relatively level terrain of Tinian made targets easier to

²⁴ Figures for the employment of napalm bombs are derived from 318th FAGru Intel-Rpt, dtd 1Aug44, cited in Dr. Robert F. Futrell, USAF HistDiv, ltr to Head, HistBr, G-3, HQMC, dtd 29Nov63.

²³ TF 56 OpRpt, NGF Sec, p. 138.

hit than was true on Saipan. Indeed, the nature of the ground appears hardly second to the nearness of Saipan as an influence upon the campaign. Except at the southern end, the landscape of Tinian is fairly gentle, offering little opposition to the advance of troops or vehicles. The Marines employed more tanks here than ever before on a Pacific island. Many of the enemy were killed in the open by medium tanks leading infantry attacks. Traversing the cane fields did impose a problem, however. Rows of high stalks obscured the already restricted vision of a tank platoon leader, who normally had to poke his head out the turret to observe his vehicles. The difficulty prompted one tank officer to suggest a new type periscope or a protected turret. Tank communication, however, was better on Tinian than before. The efficient SCR-500 series of push-button type radio had recently become standard for Marine tank battalions and was first employed at Tinian.²⁵

The flat stretches of Tinian were favorable to wire communication; the Japanese had prepared the entire island for sending messages by telephone, only to have the system wrecked by the American bombardment. Moreover, until the last days of the Tinian campaign, the Marines advanced so rapidly that their communications men were hard-pressed to string wire fast enough.

In such a short campaign, however, contact by radio was often sufficient,

the infantry again finding the SCR-300 a reliable set. This Army Signal Corps radio had become the standard field radio used by Army and Marine infantry in World War II. Tank commanders on Tinian also had an SCR-300 for communicating in infantry command nets. It was a portable radio set, adapted for carrying on a soldier's back. The SCR-536, a small hand-carried radio was also used at Tinian by platoon leaders and company commanders. The range of these field sets, however, did not exceed a mile or so; the water-proofing was inadequate for the almost daily rain; and transmission was often blanketed by other stations on the net.

In getting supplies across country to the fast-moving Marines, the level nature of the island was helpful. Moreover, the Japanese had constructed a good network of roads. Yet, logistically, the Tinian operation was constantly challenged: first by the beaches and then by the weather. Problems had begun at the planning stage. General Schmidt gathered enough LVTs to form a provisional LVT group, but he saw the necessity for a permanent LVT group organization for corps-size landings. The labors of the shore party, herocially performed, emphasized likewise the need for a permanent corps shore party organization, large enough for a major amphibious assault.

When the weather turned, it was the DUKW that saved the day. The tough amphibian truck again demonstrated its usefulness under conditions risky for other craft. Colonel Martyr, who commanded the NTLF Shore Party, said that without the DUKW "supply in this operation would have

²⁵ The Marine Corps Table of Organization for a tank battalion, T/O F-80, dated 4 April 1944, authorized the Army Signal Corps radios 508 and 528, the short-range, frequency-modulated sets expressly created for armored divisions and well liked by Army tankmen.

been practically impossible.”²⁶ He recommended that henceforth amphibian trucks should be supplied not only to the artillery but also to the shore party—and in greater numbers. Admiral Hill advised that DUKWs, manned by Navy crews, replace the LCVPs then carried on deck by transports and attack cargo ships (AKAs).

Two of the four amphibian truck companies at Tinian were Army units: the 477th Amphibian Truck Company and the 27th Division Provisional Amphibian Truck Company. Much credit belongs to both Army and Marine drivers of the DUKWs, who worked long hours through a taxing surf.

The same weather reverse which forced reliance upon the DUKWs invoked the employment of C-47s for transporting rations and supplies from Saipan and evacuating wounded men. For the Tinian campaign, cargo delivery by air had been planned only as an emergency method, and no more than 60 tons of air cargo was actually delivered. It was enough, however, to show that cargo delivery by air was very practicable and open to future development.

The battle for Tinian had required logistic ingenuity from the very beginning of plans, but there was less demand for tactical adaptation once the troops were ashore. Because of the narrow beaches, General Schmidt had concentrated power behind a single assault division on J-Day, thus combining mass with economy of force. In the elbowing technique, he applied the same principles. Mostly, however, there was little necessity for tactical in-

ventiveness at Tinian. The Japanese, disorganized by the preassault bombardment and the surprise landings, fell back upon their usual *banzai* attacks and cave warfare, tactics which the Marines were prepared by experience to meet.

After the Americans landed on Saipan, Colonel Ogata had prepared an elaborate battle plan, issued new rifles and other field equipment to a well-trained garrison, and hastened the construction of defenses. He was short of tanks, having only 12, but he possessed a large stock of other weapons; even on the last day of the battle, Marines encountered well-armed Japanese. A poor command relationship existed between Army and Navy officers, but whether it was consequential is hard to tell.

In preparing the defense of Tinian, Colonel Ogata worked in a sort of glass headquarters. Documents captured by Marines on Saipan revealed his strength and order of battle; photo reconnaissance, the best yet obtained of a Pacific objective, located every major Japanese installation. In the preassault bombardment a number of the defense positions were destroyed, one exception being the well-camouflaged guns which damaged the *Colorado* and the *Norman Scott* on J-Day. Many of the enemy artillery positions illustrated the Japanese art of camouflage. Guns were well-hidden in caves and wooded terrain, so that Marines were able to locate them only by observation of gunflashes and by sound ranging.

Among the objects visible to photo reconnaissance were Japanese planes idle on the fields of Tinian. The headquarters of the *First Air Fleet* and two

²⁶ *NTLF OpRpt*, Encl J (2), p. 9.

naval air groups had been identified as located on the island, but the pilots left in May or June for missions elsewhere, and survivors were unable to get back. Photo reconnaissance was unrestrained, therefore, except by Japanese antiaircraft fire.

Air observation was unfortunately limited to what lay above the ground. At Tinian, the Japanese seeded the earth with a larger number of mines than Marines had encountered elsewhere. The certainty of invasion allowed the enemy time for planting many antipersonnel, antitank, and antiboat mines, besides setting booby traps. The usual home-made types of mine appeared, but the only true novelty at Tinian was the interconnection of horned mines.

Some destruction resulted from the enemy's antitank mine; a Marine tank commander was killed by one which a Japanese lodged upon the hatch. The enemy sometimes buried a 500-pound bomb beneath the anticipated flight path of low-flying American aircraft. Then when a plane appeared they would electrically detonate the bomb from a remote vantage point. One Army flier was killed by such a device. Most of the time, the vigilance of Marines and the tireless efficiency of their engineers minimized casualties and damages. The antiboat mines resulted in far less damage than the Japanese expected they would.

No obstacle the enemy imposed, whether a mine underfoot or a hidden gun, equalled the well-trained Japanese soldier himself. On Tinian, he exhibited the usual professional skill in attack and a calm order in withdrawal which contrasted to the emotion of the *banzai* charge. The enemy withdrawals before the pressing Marine advance, which marked the battle on Tinian, illustrated, as did camouflage, the Japanese art of furtive action. Troops moved usually at night, in small groups and with few losses due to detection. The heavy Japanese casualties resulted from impatience to defeat the invader not by a well-concealed defense, at which they were masters, but by a hopeless open attack against superior firepower and Marine infantrymen who were second to none at close combat.

The opening fires of the American bombardment foretold the capture of Tinian. With a numerically inferior garrison, isolated from reinforcement, the Japanese commander fought a losing battle. Yet if he had made a more subtle judgment on where the Americans intended to land, the campaign would probably have been longer and the ratio of casualties different. As it was, Tinian became a model victory for Navy and Marine Corps amphibious tactics.

PART VI

The Return to Guam

Preparing for Guam

PLANS MADE—AND REVISED¹

The battle to recapture Guam took place at the same time as the Tinian campaign, but it was the former that drew more attention from the American people. A possession of the United States since the island was taken from Spain in 1898, Guam had fallen to the Japanese just three days after Pearl Harbor.²

To regain the island was not only a point of honor; Guam was now definitely wanted for an advance naval base in the Central Pacific and for staging B-29 bomber raids upon Japan

¹ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: FifthFlt FinalRpt on Ops to Capture the Mariana Islands, dtd 30Aug44, hereafter *FifthFlt FinalRpt*; TF 51 OpRpt; TF 56 OpRpt; TF 53 Rpt on PhibOps for the Capture of Guam, dtd 10Aug44, hereafter *TF 53 OpRpt*; IIIAC SAR, dtd 3Sep44, hereafter *IIIAC SAR*; Maj Orlan R. Lodge, *The Recapture of Guam* (Washington: HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC, 1954), hereafter Lodge, *Recapture of Guam*; Crowl, *Marianas Campaign*. Throughout this and succeeding chapters dealing with the Guam campaign, Lodge, *Recapture of Guam*, and Crowl, *Marianas Campaign*, have served as overall guidelines. For this reason, they will be cited only in direct reference hereafter. Unless otherwise noted, all documents cited are located in the Marianas Area OpFile and Marianas CmtFile, HistBr, HQMC.

² The Japanese seizure of Guam in December 1941 is related in Volume I of this series, pp. 75-78.

itself. Recapture of Guam had been scheduled as phase II of the FORAGER operation; it was slated to follow phase I immediately after the situation at Saipan permitted.³ In May 1944, when the preparations for Guam were taking shape, the tentative landing date was expectantly set as 18 June, three days after the scheduled D-Day at Saipan. As it turned out, however, the landings on Guam did not come until 21 July.

There were several reasons for postponing W-Day, as D-Day of Guam was called. The first was the prospect of a major naval engagement, which evolved as the Battle of the Philippine Sea. Intelligence that a Japanese fleet was headed for the Marianas had been confirmed by 15 June, and Admiral Spruance cancelled W-Day until further notice to prevent endangering the transports and LSTs intended for Guam. These vessels were then ordered to retire 150 to 300 miles eastward of Saipan.

On 20 June the Battle of the Philippine Sea was over; Japanese ships and planes were no longer a substantial threat to American forces in the Marianas. By then, however, there were other facts to consider before W-Day could be reset. Japanese resistance on

³ For the background and planning of FORAGER, see Chapter 1 of Part IV, "Saipan: The Decisive Battle."

Saipan had required the commitment of the entire 27th Infantry Division, the Expeditionary Troops Reserve. The only available force was the 77th Infantry Division, which was then ashore in Hawaii.

The Marines assigned to recapture Guam had been deprived of their reserve; yet the dimensions of the approaching battle appeared to increase. Japanese prisoners and documents captured on Saipan confirmed what aerial photographs of Guam were indicating, that enemy strength on the island had been increased. Anticipating a campaign even more difficult than Saipan, Admiral Spruance saw the necessity for having an adequate reserve immediately available. At the same time, he realized that additional troops might yet be needed on Saipan, so the task force slated for Guam was retained as a floating reserve for the Saipan operation during the period 16-30 June.

Admiral Nimitz was willing to release the 77th Division to General Holland Smith as Expeditionary Troops Reserve, and on 21 June, he sent word that one regimental combat team would leave Hawaii on 1 July, with the other two following as the second echelon after transports arrived from Saipan. In a hastily assembled transport division of five ships, the 305th RCT and an advance division headquarters sailed from Honolulu on 1 July. On 6 July, General Holland Smith assigned the 77th Division to General Geiger's control. Admiral Nimitz then sent for the 26th Marines to serve as Expeditionary Troops Reserve for Guam, and the regiment departed San Diego on 22 July.

It was Nimitz' wish that Guam be attacked as soon as the 305th reached the area. Further postponement of the landings would give the Japanese more time to prepare. Besides that, the weather normally changed for the worse in the Marianas during late June or early July. The rainfall increased, and to the west of the islands, typhoons began to form, creating sea conditions unfavorable for launching and supporting an amphibious operation.

Just as anxious as Nimitz to avoid prolonged delay, Spruance reviewed the situation with the top commanders assigned to the Guam operation. At a meeting off Saipan on 30 June, they concurred in his judgment that "the Guam landings should not be attempted until the entire 77th Division was available as a reserve."⁴ To that decision, Nimitz agreed. On 3 July, Spruance designated the 25th as tentative W-Day. On 8 July, after learning that the entire Army division would be at Eniwetok by the 18th, four days before it was expected, he advanced the date to 21 July, and there it stood.

The Fifth Fleet commander had postponed W-Day "with reluctance,"⁵ knowing that for the Marines due to land on Guam, it meant more days of waiting on board crowded ships under the tropical sun. Except for the replacement of the 27th Division by the 77th, the command and troop organization for the Guam campaign had not been changed, and troop movements until the middle of June had gone ahead as planned. The task

⁴ *FifthFlt FinalRpt*, p. 5.

⁵ *Ibid.*

force charged with the recapture of Guam sailed from Kwajalein for the Marianas on 12 June, to act as reserve at the Saipan landings before executing its primary mission.

COMMAND AND TASK ORGANIZATION⁶

The top commands for Guam were the same as those for Saipan and Tinian. Under Admiral Spruance, commanding Central Pacific Task Forces, Admiral Turner directed the amphibious forces for the Marianas, and General Holland Smith commanded the landing forces. Guam was to involve Admiral Turner's and General Smith's subordinate commands, Southern Attack Force (TF 53) and Southern Troops and Landing Force (STLF). At Guam, unlike Saipan, the hard-hitting senior Marine general would not take direct command of operations ashore, but would leave it to Major General Roy S. Geiger, whose III Amphibious Corps had been designated the landing force for the Guam campaign.

In direct command of the Southern Attack Force, activated on 24 May 1944, was Admiral Conolly, who had taken Roi and Namur in the Marshalls a few months before. Admiral Nimitz had assigned to TF 53 a number of ships from the South Pacific Force, which until 10 May, had been engaged

⁶ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *TF 51 OpRpt*; *TF 56 OpRpt*; TF 56 OPlan 2-44, dtd 11Apr44; *TF 53 OpRpt*; *IIIAC SAR*; IIIAC OPlan 1-44, dtd 11May44, hereafter *IIIAC OPlan 1-44*; III Corps Arty SAR, dtd 2Sep44, hereafter *Corps Arty SAR*.

in General MacArthur's Hollandia operation. As the attack plan for Guam envisaged simultaneous landings at two points, Admiral Conolly divided his task force into a Northern Attack Group, which he himself would command, and a Southern Attack Group, to be led by Rear Admiral Lawrence F. Reifsnider. To facilitate joint planning, Conolly and key members of his staff flew to Guadalcanal, arriving on 15 April, and set up temporary headquarters near the CP of the landing force.⁷

Admiral Conolly's task force was the naval echelon immediately superior to the Southern Troops and Landing Force. That organization traced back to the I Marine Amphibious Corps (IMAC) activated in November 1942. On 10 November 1943, after the successful start of the Bougainville operation, the then corps commander, Lieutenant General Alexander A. Vandegrift, left the Pacific to become 18th Commandant of the Marine Corps. He was relieved by Major General Geiger, who had led the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing at Guadalcanal.⁸ On 15 April 1944, IMAC became the III Amphibious Corps (IIIAC), still under

⁷ This move by CTF 53 "permitted detailed planning between the two staffs of very great benefit to both, as well as cementing personal relations, neither feasible by dispatch communication." LtGen Merwin H. Silverthorn ltr to CMC, dtd 9Jun65.

⁸ It was the introductory command of a large ground force for the veteran Marine airman, who had commanded a bombing squadron in World War I. General Geiger had been so much a part of Marine aviation since its early years that friends liked to say he had been "weaned on aviation gasoline." *Newsweek*, 31Jul44, p. 25.

Geiger and with headquarters on Guadalcanal.

The III Amphibious Corps consisted largely of the 3d Marine Division, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, and Corps Artillery. The division had returned to Guadalcanal in January 1944 after its first campaign, the battle for Bougainville, and had camped at Coconut Grove, Tetere. Few command changes took place. Major General Allen H. Turnage retained command for the Guam campaign; Brigadier General Alfred H. Noble became assistant division commander, relieving Brigadier General Oscar R. Cauldwell; and Colonel Ray A. Robinson relieved Colonel Robert Blake as chief of staff, the latter assuming command of the 21st Marines. On 21 April, Colonel Blake was relieved by Lieutenant Colonel Arthur H. Butler who was promoted to colonel shortly thereafter and then led the regiment on Guam. The other regiments that comprised the division were the 3d, the 9th, the 12th (artillery), and the 19th (engineer).

The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was just a few months old, having been organized at Pearl Harbor on 22 March 1944, but the Marines that composed it were battle-trying men. The historic 4th Marines, with its traditions of Dominican and China service, and lastly of Corregidor,⁹ had been reactivated on Guadalcanal on 1 February 1944, absorbing the famed

Marine raiders, veterans of fighting in the Solomons.¹⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Alan Shapley, who had commanded the 1st Raider Regiment, was assigned to command the 4th Marines; he led the regiment in the seizure of Emirau Island in March.

The other major unit in the brigade was the 22d Marines, which had fought at Eniwetok before coming to Guadalcanal in April 1944. Colonel John T. Walker, who had commanded the 22d in the Marshalls, became temporary commander of the brigade on 10 April 1944, when Brigadier General Thomas E. Watson, its first commander, was assigned to lead the 2d Marine Division. On 16 April, Brigadier General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr. assumed command of the brigade, but Colonel Walker remained as chief of staff, leaving the 22d Marines under Colonel Merlin F. Schneider. The new commander of the brigade had served with the old 4th Marine Regiment, having been its adjutant in Shanghai for a period during the 1920s. Now, with the new 4th Marines part of his command, General Shepherd arrived at Guadalcanal on 22 April from duty as ADC of the 1st Marine Division during the Cape Gloucester campaign on New Britain.

Planning for the Guam operation began immediately, but as General Shepherd later noted:

⁹ For the story of the 4th Marines at Corregidor see Volume I of this series, pp. 155-202, and Kenneth W. Condit and Edwin T. Turnbladh, *Hold High the Torch, A History of the 4th Marines* (Washington: HistBr, G-3 Div, HQMC, 1960), pp. 195-240, hereafter Condit and Turnbladh, *Hold High the Torch*.

¹⁰ In the reactivation of the 4th Marines, the Headquarters and Service Company of the 1st Raider Regiment became the same type of unit for the new regiment. The 1st, 3d, and 4th Raider Battalions became the 1st, 2d, and 3d Battalions, 4th Marines. The Regimental Weapons Company was formed from the 2d Raider Battalion.

. . . the limited staff provided the 1st Brigade and lack of an adequate Headquarters organization, placed a heavy load on the Brigade Commander and his Chief of Staff. Since each of the two Regiments composing the Brigade had operated independently in previous campaigns the task of molding these infantry units and their supporting elements into a unified command presented many problems to the new commander and his embryo staff in the limited time available before embarkation for the Guam operation. With customary Marine sagacity, however, plans were completed and units readied for embarkation on schedule.¹¹

The artillery component of IIIAC had been activated originally in IMAC on 13 April 1944 and then consisted of the 1st 155mm Howitzer Battalion and the 2d 155mm Gun Battalion, in addition to the 3d, 4th, 9th, 11th, 12th, and 14th Defense Battalions. Two days later, when IMAC was redesignated, the artillery organization became III Corps Artillery and the 2d 155mm Gun Battalion was redesignated the 7th.¹² For the Guam operation, it was decided to employ the two 155mm artillery battalions and the 9th and 14th Defense Battalions. Elements of the 9th were attached to the brigade, and units of the 14th would serve with the division. On 16 July, the 2d 155mm Howitzer Battalion of the V Amphibious Corps was added. It replaced the 305th Field Artillery Battalion (105mm) and the 306th Field Artillery Battalion (155mm howitzer), which were reattached to their parent 77th Division for the landing.

¹¹ Gen Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., cmts on draft MS, dtd 22Jun65.

¹² The designation "III Corps Artillery" appears in the organization's documents and will be used here.

Named to command the III Corps Artillery was Brigadier General Pedro A. del Valle. He had led an artillery regiment, the 11th Marines, in the battle for Guadalcanal. At Guam he would have control over all artillery and antiaircraft units in the STLF. Under his command also would be a Marine observation squadron (VMO-1), equipped with eight high-wing monoplanes.

Once Guam was again under the American flag, Marine Major General Henry L. Larsen's garrison force would begin its mission. The prospective island commander and part of his staff arrived at IIIAC headquarters on Guadalcanal on 29 May. The time proved somewhat early, considering the postponement of W-Day, but it helped to unify the total plans for Guam.

*GUAM, 1898-1941*¹³

The delay of the Guam landings was not without some benefits. For one thing, it permitted American military intelligence to gain a better knowledge of the island and of Japanese defenses there. The easy capture of Guam by the enemy in 1941 followed years of neglect by the United States. In 1898 the American Navy had wanted

¹³ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: TF 53 OPlan No. A162-44, Anx B, dtd 17May44, hereafter *TF 53 OPlan No. A162-44*; Capt Lucius W. Johnson (MC), USN, "Guam—Before December 1941," *USNI Proceedings*, v. 68, no. 7 (Jul42); Laura Thompson, *Guam and Its People* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1947), hereafter Thompson, *Guam and Its People*.

Guam chiefly as a coaling station for vessels going to the Philippines. The other islands of the Marianas, including Saipan and Tinian, were left to Spain, which sold them the next year to Germany.¹⁴ In 1919, by the Treaty of Versailles, Japan received those islands as mandates, a fact that put Guam in the midst of the Japanese Marianas.

At this time, it seemed unlikely to many Americans that they would ever be at war with Japan. In 1923, when one of the worst earthquakes of history devastated Japan, Americans gave generously to relieve the suffering. A year before, the United States had joined with Japan, Great Britain, France, and Italy in a treaty that restricted naval armament and fortifications in the Pacific. As one result, the United States agreed to remove the six 7-inch coastal guns that had been emplaced on Guam. The last gun was removed by 1930.

Japan withdrew from the arrangement in 1936, but by then the treaty had quashed some ambitious planning by American naval officers to fortify Guam. The idea of turning the island into a major base had not been supported, however, either by the Secretary of the Navy or by the Congress, which was averse to large military appropriations.¹⁵ As late as 1938, it refused to fortify Guam.

¹⁴ The Spanish occupation of Guam had begun in 1668 when a few Jesuits and soldiers founded a mission on the island.

¹⁵ In a letter to the Navy General Board on 10 June 1920, Secretary Josephus Daniels cited Rear Admiral Alfred T. Mahan, then the oracle of naval thought. It was Mahan's view that unless Guam were impregably fortified,

The collapse of efforts to transform Guam from a naval station into a major naval base did not, however, put an end to preparing plans on paper. In 1921, the Commandant of the Marine Corps approved a plan of operation in the event of war with Japan. From 1936 on, officers attending the Marine Corps Schools at Quantico bent over a "Guam Problem," dealing with capture and defense of the island.¹⁶

As for Guam, it remained a minor naval station, useful mainly as a communications center. It had become a relay point for the trans-Pacific cable, and the Navy set up a powerful radio station at Agana, the capital.¹⁷ Few ships docked at the large but poorly improved Apra Harbor. In 1936, Pan American clippers began to stop at the island, bringing more contact with the passing world. No military airfield existed, although plans were underway to build one in late 1941.

The Governor of Guam was a naval officer, usually a captain, who served also as Commandant of the United

a costly project, military resources should not be squandered on the island simply for Japan to take if war came. Quoted in Stockman and Carleton, *Campaign for the Marianas*. "The Guam Operation," p. 1.

¹⁶ Actually, the solution to the Guam problem taught at the Marine Corps Schools was rather out of date by 1944, so rapid had been the development of Marine Corps amphibious craft and techniques. A number of the officers that later served at Guam were grateful, however, for what they had learned about the island. Col William F. Coleman ltr to CMC, dtd 5Sep52.

¹⁷ In the spelling of Agana and other Spanish proper names the anglicized usage of American reports has been followed.

States Naval Station. He controlled the small Marine garrison with its barracks at the village of Sumay, overlooking Apra Harbor. The Marines guarded installations such as Piti Navy Yard and the governor's palace. Ten Marine aviators and their seaplanes had been sent to Guam in 1921, but they were withdrawn in 1931 and no others came until 13 years later.¹⁸

The American, however, is a Robinson Crusoe on whatever island he finds himself. On Guam he fostered the health of the natives, developed compulsory education, and improved the road and water supply systems. The naval administration also took some interest in the economic welfare of the island, encouraging small industries such as those manufacturing soap and ice, but avoiding interference with the farmers' preferred old-fashioned methods. Little was exported from the island except copra, the dried meat of the ripe coconut. The largest market for native products was the naval colony itself. In addition, the Navy employed many Guamanians in the schools, the hospital, and other government departments. A heritage of that service was a devoted loyalty to the United States, which was not forgotten when war came and the Japanese occupied the island. The enemy made no attempt to use the conquered people as a military force but did press them into labor digging trenches, constructing fortifications, and carrying supplies.

The Guamanians are a racial mixture of the original islanders—the intelligent and gentle Chamorros, a Polynesian people from Asia—and Spanish

or Filipino colonists. In 1940, the governor reported the native population as 21,502. It was concentrated near the harbor of Apra; about half of the number dwelt at Agana, and another 3,800 lived in villages close to the capital. Piti, the port of entry for Agana, located about five miles southwest of it, contained 1,175 inhabitants. Asan, a village between Agana and Piti, had 656. The municipality second in size to Agana was Sumay, with a population of 1,997, on the northeast shore of the Orote Peninsula. Here, in addition to the Marine barracks and rifle range, were the headquarters of the Pacific Cable Company and of Pan American Airways. The rest of the peninsula consisted of rolling terrain, marked by tropical vegetation, with some mangrove swamps and a few coconut groves. (See Map 24).

Six other villages in the southern half of the island accounted for 5,000 of the population: Agat, Umatac, Merizo, Inarajan, Yona, and Sinajana.¹⁹ Most of the other natives lived on farms, some near rural centers like Talofofu in the south, or Dededo, Barrigada, Machanao, and Yigo in the north. Such centers included simply a chapel, a school, and a store. On the farms, most of which were located in southern Guam, the natives raised livestock, corn (the chief food staple), vegetables, rice, and fruit. Villagers, too, would sometimes have a plot of land that they tilled. The farmers took their products to market on carts

¹⁹ On the southwest coast at Umatac was a marker claiming that in 1521 the explorer Magellan stopped there while on his famous voyage around the world. He is credited with discovery of the Marianas.

¹⁸ Sherrod, *Marine Air History*, p. 27.

drawn by the carabao, a water buffalo.

The people of Guam were under the supreme authority of the governor, but not unhappily. They did not receive American citizenship, but they had the status of American nationals and their leaders served on the governor's staff of advisors. When the Japanese seized the island in 1941, they tried at first to preserve the contentment of the natives.²⁰ They offended the Guamanians, however, by changing the name of their homeland to "Omiyajima" (Great Shrine Island) and that of their capital to "Akashi" (Red or Bright Stone). The schools were ordered to teach Japanese instead of English. In 1944, as the Japanese rushed work on island defenses, they closed the schools and required labor even by children. Much of the island food supply was taken over by the expanded garrison. Native health and welfare was neglected because the Japanese became engrossed in preparing for the American invasion.

The enemy had a sizable territory to get ready. Guam is the largest island north of the equator between Hawaii and the Philippines. With an area of 225 square miles, it is three times the size of Saipan and measures 30 miles long by 4 to 8½ miles wide. The island is encircled by a fringing coral reef, ranging in width from 25 to 700 yards. For the most part, the coastline was familiar only to the na-

²⁰ Prior to the Japanese invasion, there had been only 39 Japanese adults on the island and 211 Japanese-Guamanian children. According to the same count, in 1940, only 13 Spaniards still dwelt on the island, though Spain had possessed Guam for nearly 200 years.

tive fishermen, although the United States Navy had prepared some good hydrographic charts.

Guam consists actually of two topographic entities, the north and the south, joined by a neck of land between Agana and Pago Bays. A small river starts in the Agana lowland and empties into the bay. North of that central strip, the island is largely a *cascajo* (coral limestone) plateau, covered with hardwood trees and dense tropical vegetation, but partly useful for agriculture. The southern half of Guam is the truly agricultural section, where streams flow through fertile valleys. Cattle, deer, and horses graze upon the hills. A sword grass, called *neti*, is common to the whole island.

A warm and damp air hangs over the land, but the temperature seldom rises much above the average of 87 degrees. Like the rest of the Marianas, Guam was often called "the white man's tropics." From July to December, however, the island is soaked by rain nearly every day. The road system became rough to travel when it rained. A mere 100 miles of hard-surfaced roads were joined by unsurfaced roads and jungle trails which turned to mud when wet.²¹ The main road on the island ran from Agat along the west coast to

²¹ The commanding officer of the 9th Marines noted that the hard-surfaced roads were actually very narrow with just enough room for two cars to pass. "They were surfaced with a combination of native *cascajo* and crushed stone which was rolled down. Apparently little maintenance had been done during the Japanese occupation and in addition ships' gunfire and air bombing had seriously damaged them in hundreds of places." LtGen Edward A. Craig ltr to ACofS, G-3, dtd 22Jun65, hereafter *Craig 22Jun65 ltr*.

Agana, thence northeast to Finegayan, east of Tumon Bay. There it split into two parallel branches, both ending near Mt. Machanao. Despite the high precipitation, problems of water supply had occurred until the Americans constructed some reservoirs. The water system was then centered in the Almagosa reservoirs around Agat.

A number of elevations, high and low, appear on the landscape, but there are no real mountains. Cliffs rim the shoreline of the northern plateau, from Fadian Point to Tumon Bay. Above the tableland itself Mt. Santa Rosa (840 feet) rises in the northeast. At the center of the plateau is Mt. Mataguac (620 feet), and near the northern tip lies Mt. Machanao (576 feet). Marking the southern edge of the plateau, Mt. Barrigada rises to 640 feet, and from its slopes a 200-foot bluff reaches west to upper Agana Bay. These hills are not so high as those of southern Guam, but they are comparably rocky at the top and covered on the sides with shrubs and weeds.

A long mountain range lies along the west side of southern Guam from Adelup Point south to Port Ajayan at the tip of the island. Parts of the mountain range, such as Chonito Cliff near Adelup Point, rise very close to the shore. Inland of Apra Harbor is a hill mass, with a maximum height of 1,082 feet. Here are Mt. Chachao, Mt. Alutom, and Mt. Tenjo. The highest hill on Guam—Mt. Lamlam (1,334 feet)—rises from the ridge line below the Chachao-Alutom-Tenjo massif. Conspicuous in the ridge, which starts opposite Agat Bay, are the heights of Mts. Alifan and Taene. Near Agana Bay and the central lowland,

which links northern and southern Guam, lies Mt. Macajna.

Several prominent points of land that figured in the fighting jut from the west coast of the island—Facpi, Bangi, Gaan, Asan, and Adelup. On the northern end are Ritidian Point and Pati Point. The largest island off the coast is Cabras, a slender finger of coral limestone about a mile long; the island partly shelters Apra Harbor. Others, like Alutom, Anae, Neye, and Yona, are hardly more than islets. Rivers are numerous on Guam but most of them are small. The Talofoto and the Ylig are difficult to ford on foot, but others are easy to cross except when they are flooded.

Such geographic forms were known to Navy and Marine officers that had been stationed on Guam, and from those men was gleaned much of the intelligence necessary for planning the operation. Other sources were natives that were serving in the United States Navy at the time the Japanese seized Guam. Despite the fact that Guam had been an American possession for almost a half-century, the sum total of knowledge held by American authorities concerning the island was relatively small. In February 1944, the Office of Naval Intelligence issued a useful "Strategic Study of Guam;" the data was compiled by Lieutenant Colonel Floyd A. Stephenson, who had served with the Marine garrison on the island, and who returned in July 1944 as Commanding Officer, IIIAC Headquarters and Service Battalion.

The Marine Corps Schools had prepared some materials in connection with the "Guam Problem," and its map of the island was of particular use. It

formed the basis of the maps drawn by the Joint Intelligence Center, Pacific Ocean Areas and furnished to the III Amphibious Corps. The cartographers at the Marine Corps Schools had worked from ground surveys made by Army engineers, but the Corps C-2 complained that the contours on the maps they received "did not portray anything like a true picture of the terrain except in isolated instances."²² The road net, they said, was "generally correct" but did not show recent changes or roads built by the Japanese.

To correct such omissions and errors, aerial photography was called for. The first photo mission, flown on 25 April 1944, suffered the handicap of cloud cover, but subsequent flights in May and June produced somewhat better results, and photographic reconnaissance was kept up until after the landings. A naval officer, Commander Richard F. Armknecht, who had been a public works officer on Guam, prepared an excellent relief map, based largely upon his own thorough knowledge of the terrain. Admiral Conolly was so impressed with the map that he ordered several more made to give the fire support ships for study. By these means, information about the island was expanded, but knowledge of it was still deficient, especially regarding the areas of vegetation and the topography.²³

²² *IIIAC SAR*, Encl C, p. 1.

²³ The lack of information regarding the reefs off the landing beaches and the belief that they might drop off sharply on the seaward side prompted the 3d Division to provide for a certain number of LVT(A)s, "after landing and providing support fire for the infantry . . . to return to the edge of the reef

Intelligence of the coastline was obtained by a submarine and by UDT men. The USS *Greenling* got some good oblique photographs of the beaches and also took depth soundings and checked tides and currents. The underwater demolition teams started their reconnaissance and clearing of the assault beaches on 14 July. The men destroyed 940 obstacles, 640 off Asan and 300 off Agat; most of these were palm log cribs or wire cages filled with coral. Barbed wire was sparsely emplaced, however, and no underwater mines were found. On the reef that men of the 3d Division would cross, the UDT men put up a sign: "Welcome, Marines!"²⁴

*THE JAPANESE ON GUAM, 1941-1944*²⁵

The size of the Japanese force and the state of its recent defenses indicated that the enemy did not plan a

at the time of the landing of the tanks in LCMs. The LVT(A)s were then to provide 'anchors' for the LCMs and to guide the tanks onto the beach." BGen Louis Metzger memo to ACofS, G-3, HQMC, dtd 19Jul65, hereafter *Metzger memo*.

²⁴ Morison, *New Guinea and the Marianas*, p. 380.

²⁵ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *TF 56 OpRpt*; *IIIAC SAR*; LtCol Hideyuki Takeda, IJA, "Outline of Japanese Defense Plan and Battle of Guam," encl to LtCol William F. Coleman ltr to CMC, dtd 4Oct46, hereafter *Takeda ltr I*; Mr. Hideyuki Takeda ltr to Dir of MarCorps Hist, dtd 20Feb52, hereafter *Takeda ltr II*; Japanese GSDF Staff School, "How the Guam Operation Was Conducted," translation of a series of articles published in the staff school journal, *Kambu Gakko Kiji* (Oct-Dec62), hereafter *GSDF Study*.

cordial welcome for the Marines.²⁶ After the Japanese seized Guam in 1941 they undertook no better preparation to defend it than the Americans had done. The enemy left only 150 sailors on the island—the *54th Keibitai*, a naval guard unit. Guam and other isolated Pacific islands were regarded merely as key points of the patrol network, not requiring Army troops for defense.

In late 1943, Japan became fearful of an American push through the Central Pacific and put new emphasis upon defense of the Marianas. As a result, the *13th Division*, which had been fighting in China since 1937, was slated for duty in the Marianas. In October 1943, an advance detachment of about 300 men sailed for Guam, but military developments in south China prevented the sending of the rest of the division. Instead, the *29th Division* was substituted. It took up the great responsibility indicated by advice from Tokyo: "The Mariana Islands are Japan's final defensive line. Loss of these islands signifies Japan's surrender."²⁷

The *29th Division* had been a reserve for the *Kwantung Army*. In February 1944, while undergoing anti-Soviet combat training in Manchuria, the unit received its marching order for the Marianas. Horses were left behind,²⁸

²⁶ The C-2 of the IIIAC compiled a final Japanese order of battle summary, which proved remarkably accurate. The tabulation is the basis for Appendix VII, "Japanese Order of Battle on Guam," in Lodge, *Recapture of Guam*, pp. 196-197.

²⁷ *GSDF Study*, p. 68.

²⁸ Before departing for the Marianas, the *29th Division* was streamlined into an RCT type of organization. The engineer, cavalry,

the troops were supplied with summer uniforms, and on 24 February the division embarked in three ships at Pusan, Korea. On board the *Sakito Maru* was the *18th Infantry Regiment*; on another ship, the *50th Infantry Regiment*; and on the third, the *38th Infantry Regiment* and division headquarters.

Disaster befell the *Sakito Maru* when it was just 48 hours' sailing distance from Saipan. The American submarine *Trout* sank the ship by a torpedo attack at 1140 on 29 February. The regimental commander and about 2,200 of the 3,500 men on board ship were drowned. In addition, eight tanks and most of the regimental artillery and heavy equipment were lost.²⁹ The two destroyers of the convoy picked up survivors and took them to Saipan, where the *18th* was reorganized. The *1st Battalion* stayed on Saipan, and the tank company went to Tinian. The regimental headquarters, newly commanded by Colonel Hiko-Shiro Ohashi, and two battalions were sent to Guam, arriving there on 4 June. The regiment brought along two companies of the *9th Tank Regiment*. The two infantry battalions each had three rifle companies, a trench mortar company (seven 90mms), and a pioneer unit. Minus the battalion on Saipan, the regiment numbered but 1,300 men after the reorganization.

The *50th Infantry Regiment* went to Tinian. Division headquarters, with Lieutenant General Takeshi Takashina

and transport regiments were dropped, and a tank unit was added. Each of the infantry regiments was assigned an artillery battalion and an engineer company.

²⁹ Losses according to *GSDF Study*, p. 68.

commanding, and the *38th Infantry Regiment* (Colonel Tsunetaro Suenaga) proceeded to Guam, arriving there on 4 March. This regiment numbered 2,894 men and included signal, intelligence (finance and quartermaster), medical, transport, and engineer units. Its three infantry battalions each contained three rifle companies, an infantry gun company, and a machine gun company. Attached to each infantry battalion was one battery of 75mm guns from the regimental artillery battalion.

The second largest Army component sent to Guam was the *6th Expeditionary Force*, which sailed from Pusan and reached Guam on 20 March. This unit totaled about 4,700 men drawn from the *1st* and *11th Divisions* of the *Kwantung Army*; it comprised six infantry battalions, two artillery battalions, and two engineer companies. On Guam, the force was reorganized into the 2,800-man *48th Independent Mixed Brigade (IMB)*, under the command of Major General Kiyoshi Shigematsu, who had brought the force to the Marianas, and the 1,900-man *10th Independent Mixed Regiment (IMR)*, commanded by Colonel Ichiro Kataoka.

The infantry battalions of the *48th IMB* and the *10th IMR* included three rifle companies, a machine gun company, and an infantry gun company (two 47mm antitank guns and either two or four 70mm howitzers). The infantry battalions of the *38th Regiment* had the same organization, except that the gun company had four 37mm antitank guns and two howitzers.

The total number of Army troops, including miscellaneous units, came to

about 11,500 men.³⁰ The overall command of both Army and Navy units on Guam went to General Takashina, whose headquarters strength was estimated at 1,370. Upon arrival on the island, he had been given the Southern Marianas Group, which included Guam and Rota, and, after the fall of Saipan, also Tinian. Defense of the entire Marianas was the responsibility of General Obata, commander of the *Thirty-first Army*, into which the *29th Division* had been incorporated, but the general left the immediate defense of Guam to the division commander.

In February 1944, the Japanese naval units on Guam had comprised about 450 men. From then on, however, the *54th Keibitai* was steadily reinforced by additional coast defense and antiaircraft units, so that by July the organization totaled some 2,300 men commanded by Captain Yutaka Sugimoto, once island commander. Two naval construction battalions had 1,800 men relatively untrained for fighting. With nearly 1,000 miscellaneous personnel, the figure for naval ground units reached about 5,000. Naval air units probably held some 2,000 men.³¹ Most accounts agree that the entire Japanese troop strength on

³⁰ Major Lodge gives this total in *Recapture of Guam*, p. 197. It is lower and more precise than the IIIAC C-2 figure of about 13,000 because the latter estimate included several units which, as it turned out, were not present during the battle for Guam. See *IIIAC SAR*, Encl C, Intelligence.

³¹ This figure, cited in Lodge, *Recapture of Guam*, App. VII, p. 197 embraces facts revealed later than the IIIAC C-2 report which put enemy air unit strength at 600.

Guam totaled a minimum of 18,500 men.³²

On 23 June, the *1st Battalion* of the *10th IMR*, with one artillery battery and an engineer platoon attached, moved to Rota for garrison duty. Shortly thereafter, the battalion was joined by a task force composed of the *3d Battalion*, *18th Regiment*, supporting engineers, and amphibious transport units; the object, a counterlanding on Saipan. The condition of the sea made such a mission impossible, however, so *3/18* returned to Guam on 29 June. The *1st Battalion*, *10th IMR* remained on Rota, but since it could possibly be transferred in barges to Guam, both American and Japanese listings included it as part of defensive strength of the larger island.

Documents showing enemy strength figures and unit dispositions fell into American hands with the capture of *Thirty-first Army* headquarters on Saipan. Such information helped IIIAC intelligence officers prepare a reliable sketch map indicating the main Japanese defensive dispositions as of late June. General Takashina had set them up on the premise that the landing of a division-level unit was possible on beaches in the Tumon Bay-Agana Bay-Piti coastal section and the beach of Agat Bay. The Japanese were expecting four or five American divisions, a force adequate for landing operations at two fronts. (See Map 25.)

The enemy's immediate concern was the defense of Apra Harbor and of the island airfields. Construction of a mil-

itary airfield near Sumay on the Orote Peninsula (occupying the golf course of the former Marine Barracks) had not been started until November 1943. The Japanese based about 30 fighter planes here. In early 1944, construction was begun on two other airfields, one at Tiyan near Agana and the other in the vicinity of Dededo. The Tiyan (Agana) airfield became operational by summer. This was intended for use by medium attack planes; the Japanese had six of those on the island.

Assigned to the Agana sector, which covered that part of the west coast from Piti to Tumon Bay, were the four infantry battalions of the *48th Brigade*. The *319th Independent Infantry Battalion* was positioned inland, east of Agana, in reserve. The *320th Battalion* manned defenses near the coastline between Adelup Point and Asan Point. The *321st Battalion* was located around Agana Bay, and the *322d Battalion* at Tumon Bay. The Agana sector received most of the Army artillery: the brigade artillery unit and the two artillery batteries of the *10th IMR*, all under the control of the *48th IMB*.³³ In the Agana sector also were naval land combat troops holding the capital city, most of the *29th Division* service troops, and General Takashina's command post at Fonte. The *3d Battalion*, *38th Infantry*, initially stationed in reserve behind the *48th Brigade* positions, was returned to Colonel Suenaga's control in July and moved south to rejoin its regiment.

The rest of the *38th Infantry* had

³² The G-2 of TF 56 put the figure at 18,657, "excluding aviation." *TF 56 OpRpt*, Encl D, App H, p. 3.

³³ The brigade artillery unit was formerly the *3d Battalion*, *11th Mountain Artillery Regiment*, *11th Division*.

been put into the Agat sector, which stretched along the coast between Agat Bay and Facpi Point, with 1/38 covering the Agat Beach area. Colonel Suenaga's command post was located on Mt. Alifan. The Agat sector included the Orote Peninsula, where most of the naval infantry, the 60th *Anti-aircraft Defense Unit*, and coast defense elements of the 54th *Keibitai* were stationed; 2/38 occupied the base of the peninsula. Completing the troop organization for the peninsula was the 755th *Air Group*, which had reorganized its 700 men for ground combat.

Until General Takashina was fairly sure where the unpredictable Americans would land, he kept some troops in other parts of the island. Stationed in southeast Guam until July was the 10th *IMR* (less 1/10 on Rota). In extreme northern Guam was the 2d *Battalion*, 18th *Regiment*. The 3d *Battalion* of the regiment, after failing to get to Saipan, took up defense positions between Piti and Asan Point in the Agana sector. General Shigematsu, commanding the 48th *IMB*, had the responsibility for island defense outside the Agat sector, which was under Colonel Suenaga.

In early July, the Japanese virtually abandoned other defense positions and began to localize near the expected landing beaches on the west coast. The 10th *IMR* went to Yona, thence to positions in the Fonte-Ordot area—ominously near the Asan beaches. The 9th *Company* of the regiment was ordered into a reserve position near Mt. Alifan to lend support to the 38th *Regiment*. Most of the 2d *Battalion*, 18th *Regiment* was brought south to

back up the 320th *Independent Infantry Battalion*; the 5th *Company* of 2/18 was put to work constructing defenses in the hills between Adelup Point and Asan Point. These troop movements, made mostly at night, were handicapped by the American bombardment.

The enemy's armor was shifted around as the Japanese got ready. The tank units were positioned in reserve, prepared to strike the beachhead with the infantry. One was the 24th *Tank Company*, assigned as the division tank unit, with nine light tanks (eight of its tanks had been lost in the sinking of the 18th *Regiment* transport). That company was put at Ordot, inland of Fonte. The 2d *Company*, 9th *Tank Regiment*, with 12 to 14 tanks, mostly mediums, was turned over to the 48th *IMB*. The 1st *Company*, 9th *Tank Regiment*, with 12 to 15 light tanks, was assigned to the 38th *Regiment* and took up a position to the rear of the Agat beaches.

The Japanese fortification of Guam was, like the buildup of manpower on the island, a hasty development. Before the 29th *Division* was stationed here, the enemy had only a few batteries on the island, and these were not dug in. The principal armament consisted of 75mm field guns, the largest caliber artillery was 150mm. Two cave-type dugouts for the communications center at Agana were under construction, and a concrete naval communications station was being built at Fonte.

In the fever of preparations after 1943, the Japanese armed the ground from Tumon Bay to Facpi Point, providing concrete pillboxes, elaborate trench systems, and machine gun em-

placements. Mortars, artillery, and coast defense guns were positioned along the coast. The number of anti-aircraft weapons was increased; the *52d Field Antiaircraft Battalion* was assigned to the Orote airfield and the *45th Independent Antiaircraft Company* to Tiyan. In the defense of the Orote Peninsula, the 75mm anti-aircraft guns of the *52d* could serve as dual-purpose weapons, augmenting the artillery.

An unfortunate result of the postponing of W-Day was the extra time it afforded the Japanese to prepare. They overworked the naval construction battalions and native labor to bulwark the island, mostly in the vicinity of the beaches and the airfields. Some inland defenses were constructed, however, and supply dumps were scattered through the island.

American photo reconnaissance between 6 June and 4 July showed an increase of 141 machine gun or light anti-aircraft positions, 51 artillery emplacements, and 36 medium anti-aircraft positions. Better photographs may have accounted for the discovery of some of the additional finds; still, the buildup was remarkable considering the short period involved. The number of coast defense guns, heavy anti-aircraft guns, and pillboxes had increased appreciably also. The distribution of weapons to Army forces on Guam was indicated from a captured document dated 1 June 1944:

- 14—105mm howitzers
- 10— 75mm guns (new type)
- 8— 75mm guns
- 40— 75mm pack howitzers
(mountain)
- 9— 70mm howitzers
(infantry)

- 8— 75mm anti-aircraft guns
(mobile)
- 6— 20mm anti-aircraft machine cannon
- 24— 81mm mortars
- 9— 57mm antitank guns
- 30— 47mm antitank guns
- 47— 37mm antitank guns
- 231— 7.7mm machine guns
- 349— 7.7mm light machine guns
- 540— 50mm grenade dischargers³⁴

Of grim significance in the enemy's defensive organization was their intention to deny land access to Orote Peninsula. A system of trenchworks and foxholes was constructed in depth across the neck of the peninsula and supported with large numbers of pillboxes, machine gun nests, and artillery positions. Rocks and tropical vegetation provided concealment and small hills lent commanding ground.

*THE PREPARATORY BOMBARDMENT*³⁵

If the postponing of W-Day permitted the Japanese to put up more defenses, it also gave American warships and planes time to knock more of them down. Beginning on 8 July, the enemy was subjected to a continuous 13-day naval and air bombardment. It was the wholesale renewal of the first naval gunfire on 16 June, when two battleships, a cruiser, and a number of destroyers from Task Force 53 shelled the Orote Peninsula for some two hours, exciting Japanese fears of imminent invasion. Planes from Task

³⁴ *TF 56 OpRpt*, Encl D, App H, p. 7.

³⁵ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *TF 51 OpRpt*; *TF 53 OpRpt*; *TF 53 OPlan No. A162-44*; *IIIAC SAR*; *Takeda ltr II*; Morison, *New Guinea and the Marianas*.

Force 58 had started bombing Guam on 11 June, hitting the enemy airfields particularly; by 20 June, the Japanese planes based there had been destroyed and the runways torn up.³⁶ On 27 June, Admiral Mitscher's airmen bombed Japanese ships in Apra Harbor. Then, on 4 July, destroyers of TF 58 celebrated the day by exploding 5-inch shells, like giant firecrackers, upon the terrain in the vicinity of Agana Bay, Asan Point, and Agat Bay.

Such gunfire, however, was a mere foretaste of what was to come from the sea and air. On 8 July, Admiral Conolly began the systematic bombardment, day after day, which was to assume a scale and length of time never before seen in World War II.³⁷ Destroyers and planes struck at the island, and on 12 July they were joined by battleships and cruisers. Two days later, Admiral Conolly, arriving in his command ship, the *Appalachian*, took personal charge of the bombardment. From then on it reached, the Japanese said, "near the limit bearable by humans."³⁸ The incessant fire not only hindered troop and vehicle movements and daytime work around positions, but it also dazed men's senses.³⁹

Admiral Conolly, justifying his nickname "Close-in," took his flagship to

³⁶ "As a result, there was no Japanese plane in the sky over Guam" on W-Day. *Takeda ltr I*, p. 3.

³⁷ From 8 July until W-Day the expenditure of naval ammunition against shore targets amounted to 836 rounds of 16-inch, 5,422 of 14-inch, 3,862 of 8-inch, 2,430 of 6-inch, and 16,214 of 5-inch shells. *TF 56 OpRpt*, Encl G, p. 71.

³⁸ *GSDF Study*, p. 117.

³⁹ There were "scattered outbreaks of serious loss of spirit." *Takeda ltr II*, p. 9.

3,500 yards from the shore and went to his task with dedication. "He made a regular siege of it," wrote a naval historian.⁴⁰ On the *Appalachian*, a board of Marine and Navy air and gunnery specialists kept a daily check of what had been done and what was yet to be done. General Geiger, who was on board with Conolly, said that "the extended period of bombardment, plus a system of keeping target damage reports, accounted for practically every known Japanese gun that could seriously endanger our landing."⁴¹ It was the belief of Admiral Conolly's staff that "not one fixed gun was left in commission on the west coast that was of greater size than a machine gun."⁴²

Every exposed naval battery was believed destroyed; more than 50 percent of the installations built in the seashore area of the landing beaches were reported demolished.⁴³ A number of guns emplaced in caves, with limited fields of fire, were reduced in efficiency when naval shells wrecked the cave entrances. Some permanent constructions, however, which were thickly walled with concrete and *cascajo*, and at least partially dug into the earth, resisted even a direct hit.

Certain installations and weapons escaped. The Japanese reported later that their anti-aircraft artillery on

⁴⁰ Morison, *New Guinea and the Marianas*, p. 378.

⁴¹ *IIIAC SAR*, Encl G, p. 3.

⁴² *TF 53 OpRpt*, Encl B, p. 11.

⁴³ These estimates of destruction were confirmed later by the Japanese. *Takeda ltr II*, pp. 7-9, contains a credible summary of what was and was not accomplished by the American preparatory bombardment.

Guam "sustained damage from naval gunfire only once,"⁴⁴ and only once did water pipes receive a direct hit. Communications installations were constructed in dead spaces immune to bombardment, and practically no lines were cut by naval gunfire. Moreover, no damage was done to power installations because generators were housed in caves. The interior of the island was, of course, less the province of ships' guns than of roving aircraft; the Japanese claimed that naval gunfire had very little effect beyond four kilometers (roughly, two miles) from the shoreline. It thus did little damage to enemy construction in the valleys or the jungle.

While air bombardment and strafing was able to reach where naval gunfire could not, the Japanese mastery of the art of concealment still hampered destruction. On 28 June, Admiral Mitscher's aircraft began periodic strikes against Guam; then on 6 July, TF 58 and two carrier divisions of Admiral Conolly's TF 53 started the full-scale preparatory air bombardment. Targets included supply dumps, troop concentrations, bridges, artillery positions, and boats in military use. Most such craft were sunk by strafing, the rest by naval gunfire. Harbor installations were spared for use after the battle. In the period of the preparatory bombardment, the island was divided into two zones—naval gunfire and air alternated zones morning and afternoon. Aircraft were particularly useful at hindering Japanese troop movements; they were less effective against enemy gun emplacements.

⁴⁴ *Takeda ltr II*, p. 8.

On 12 July, before leaving Eniwetok for Guam, Admiral Conolly met with Admiral Mitscher, and they set up a schedule of intensified strikes, which were to take place from 18 July through W-Day. Mitscher greatly increased the number of aircraft available to Conolly for the final all-out attacks. Until 18 July, TF 58 had made strikes on Guam independently of Commander, Support Aircraft, Guam. For the period 18–20 July, the combined tonnage reached the figure 1,131, including bombs, depth charges, and rockets. The explosives were not delivered, however, without some losses to American aircraft. Sixteen naval planes were brought down by the Japanese antiaircraft fire before W-Day.

*JAPANESE FORTUNE TELLING*⁴⁵

It was the focus of the intensified bombardment starting 18 July which tipped off American intentions. From the action of the ships at sea, rather than from any leaves in a teacup, the Japanese were able to foretell more specifically where the invaders would come ashore.⁴⁶ When UDT men

⁴⁵ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: CinCPac–CinCPOA Items No. 10452–10791, Translations of Captured Japanese Documents, dtd 29Sep44, hereafter *CinCPac–CinCPOA Item*, with appropriate number; *GSDF Study*; *Takeda ltr I*; *Takeda ltr II*.

⁴⁶ Some American naval officers felt that the bombardment on 16 June was a tip-off to the Japanese. The enemy knew, however, that the Orote Peninsula, as well as Apra Harbor, would be early objectives of an invasion, wherever it came. From the beginning, the Japanese had suspected that the landings would be on the west coast.

cleared obstacles from the chosen beaches, all doubt was removed.

In 1941, the Japanese had landed their main force at Tumon Bay, so at first they had supposed the Americans would attempt the same; the beach was ideal for an amphibious assault (at least two miles of sand), the reef was not impassable, and inland the ground rose gently. This judgment regarding the Tumon beaches did not give much weight to the factors that decided American planners against them—their distance from Apra Harbor and the highly defensible terrain that blocked the way to the harbor.

The enemy had not, however, really expected a repetition of their other landings elsewhere on the island, where neither the surf nor the ground was appropriate for a large-scale invasion. It was not until the middle of June, when the Americans began shelling the beaches below Tumon Bay, that the Japanese gave serious attention to fortifying the west coast south of the bay. Before then, they had viewed as dismaying to an invader the wide reef protecting the beaches here—"a reef varying in width from 200 to 500 yards offshore."⁴⁷ Moreover, on the commanding ground just inland, the defenders would have excellent observation for mortar and cannon fire.

As late as 16 July, General Shigematsu regarded the Agana sector as the probable area of invasion, with the Agat sector as a second target area if a two-front attack were staged. A landing force at Agat Bay could seize the Orote airfield. The white sandy beach along most of Agat Bay was

comparable to that of Tumon Bay. Before the American bombardment shattered the picture, the beach was fringed with palm trees. The northern coastline of Agat Bay, along the Orote Peninsula, is different, however; there a fringe of cliffs ranges from 100 to 200 feet high.

The Japanese did not rule out a possible small American landing at Pago Bay on the east coast for the purpose of getting behind their lines, but General Takashina's defense efforts were almost wholly devoted to the west coast. *Imperial General Headquarters* doctrine insisted upon the destruction of the assault forces at the beaches, though Lieutenant Colonel Hideyuki Takeda, the perceptive operations officer of the *29th Division*, favored a deployment in depth at Guam.⁴⁸ If the Japanese beach defense units should fail to destroy the American landing force at the beaches, General Takashina had instructed the *10th IMR* and the two battalions of the *18th Regiment* to counterattack in force.

AMERICAN TACTICAL PLANS⁴⁹

American tactical spadework for the assault on STEVEDORE, the code

⁴⁸ *Imperial General Headquarters* soon modified its policy. In September 1944, Marines met a preplanned Japanese defense in depth for the first time at Peleliu.

⁴⁹ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *FifthFlt Final Rpt*; *TF 51 OpRpt*; *TF 56 OpRpt*; *TF 56 OPlan A162-44*; *IIIAC SAR*; *IIIAC OPlan 1-44*; *Corps Arty SAR*; *1st ProvMarBrig Op and SAR*, dtd 19Aug44, hereafter *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*; *1st ProvMarBrig OPlan 1-44*, dtd 26May44, and *Mod No. 5*, dtd 12Jul44,

⁴⁷ *TF 53 OpRpt*, Encl H, p. 5.

name assigned to Guam, had been started at Pearl Harbor as early as March 1944. General Geiger's staff prepared the tentative operation plan, which was approved by General Holland Smith on 3 April and shortly after by Admirals Turner and Spruance. The working out of details went forward on Guadalcanal, where, with the establishment of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade command post on 2 May, every major unit of the corps was present.

On 17 May, General Geiger circulated the corps operation plan. As originally evolved at Pearl Harbor, it provided for a 3d Marine Division landing on beaches between Adelup Point and Asan Point, while to the south the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was to go ashore between Agat village and Bangi Point. Subsequent junction of the beachheads was planned.

Early capture of the Orote Peninsula-Aprra Harbor area was imperative to secure the use of the harbor and the Orote airfield. Here was, as General Holland Smith said, "the focal point of attack."⁵⁰ Upon General Shepherd's brigade fell the hard assignment of seizing the Orote Peninsula, a rock-bound fortress. In order to free the brigade for such a mission, the 305th Infantry of the 77th Division was attached on 10 July to follow the brigade ashore, while the rest of the Army division remained as corps reserve.⁵¹

hereafter *1st ProvMarBrig OPlan 1-44*; 77th InfDiv G-3 Jnl, 6Jun-10Aug44, hereafter *77th InfDiv Jnl*.

⁵⁰ Smith and Finch, *Coral and Brass*, p. 214.

⁵¹ The attachment of the 305th RCT involved a modification of the brigade tactical plan, which had been issued on 26 May.

Major General Andrew D. Bruce, commanding the 77th, wanted to use his other two regiments for a secondary landing on northwest Guam about W-Day plus four to attack the Japanese rear, but it was felt that the Army troops should be kept in reserve, available for support at the beachheads.

The 305th Regiment was to relieve the brigade on the Force Beachhead Line (FBHL), which extended from Adelup Point along the Mt. Alutom-Mt. Tenjo-Mt. Alifan ridge line to Facpi Point. The brigade could then reorganize for the attack on the Orote Peninsula. Once that area was secured, the brigade would again take over the defense of the FBHL, while Army troops joined with the 3d Marine Division in seizing the rest of Guam.

The two assault points were five miles apart, creating the situation of two almost separate military operations by the same landing force. Owing to this distance, each of Admiral Conolly's two attack groups, northern and southern, would land and support its own assault troops.

In the north, the three regiments of the 3d Marine Division would land abreast on a 2,500-yard front—the 3d Marines on Beaches Red 1 and 2, the 21st Marines in the center on Beach Green, and the 9th Marines on Beach Blue. At one end of the front jutted Adelup Point and at the other, Asan Point; both had cave-like holes appropriate for enemy machine gun positions. Beyond the beaches lay dry rice paddies, yielding to the Fonte Ridge which overlooked the landing area. On 15 July, General Shigematsu moved his battle command post to this high ground. (See Map VII, Map Section.)

The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade would go ashore with two regiments abreast—the 22d Marines on Yellow Beaches 1 and 2; the 4th Marines on White Beaches 1 and 2, to the south. These beaches stretched more than a mile between Agat village and Bangi Point, with Gaan Point at the middle. The cliffs of the Orote Peninsula 2,000 yards to the north flanked the landing area. Neye Island, just off the peninsula, and Yona Island, near the White Beaches, rose from the water like enigmatic bystanders, probably carrying hidden weapons.

Two 155mm battalions of the III Corps Artillery were to land behind the brigade, whose artillery group included the 75mm pack howitzer battalion of each regiment and two other units to be attached on landing—the Army 305th Field Artillery Battalion and Battery C, 1st 155mm Howitzer Battalion. Artillery support for the 3d Division would be provided by the 12th Marines, comprised of two 75mm pack howitzer battalions and two 105mm howitzer battalions. The fires of the 12th Marines were to be reinforced by the 7th 155mm Gun Battalion firing from the southern beachhead, while the brigade artillery group would be backed up by the 1st 155mm Howitzer Battalion.

LOGISTICS ⁵²

The 105mm howitzers would be taken ashore in amphibian trucks of the IIIAC Motor Transport Battalion,

⁵² Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *TF 51 OpRpt*; *TF 56 OpRpt*; *TF 53 OpRpt*; *IIIAC SAR*;

which had been converted to a DUKW organization for Guam. DUKWs would also carry radio jeeps, 37mm antitank guns, and infantry ammunition; after that, they would be used for resupply. Of the 100 amphibian trucks in the battalion, the 40 of Company C were assigned to the brigade, while the remaining 60 would support the 3d Division.

Other supplies would be moved by amphibian tractors from the reef edge across the beaches to dumps inland. The 180 LVTs of the 3d Amphibian Tractor Battalion would serve the Marine division; the 4th Amphibian Tractor Battalion, with 178 LVTs, was attached to the brigade.⁵³ After the securing of the beaches, LSTs would anchor at the reef edge for unloading.

At the northern beaches the reef was dry at low water, and trucks would be able to run out from the shore to the edge. At the southern beaches the water over the reef was always too deep for trucks to operate; LVTs and DUKWs would have to bear the cargo, risking the usual coral heads and pot-holes.

Neither reef was covered at any time with water deep enough for shallow draft craft to pass over. In fact, nowhere along the entire coastline of Guam was the reef covered at high tide by more than two feet of water. Cranes could be operated on the northern reef, but only those cranes that

3d MarDiv SAR, dtd 19Aug44, hereafter *3d MarDiv SAR*; *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*; *77th InfDiv Jnl*.

⁵³ Both battalions had been reinforced: Company A of the 10th Amphibian Tractor Battalion was attached to the 3d, and Company A of the 11th to the 4th.

were mounted on pontoon barges would be usable on the southern reef. Forty-four 9 x 21-foot barges and twelve 6 x 54-foot pontoon causeways were to be carried to Guam on the sides of LSTs to save deck space for troop cargo; brackets for that purpose were installed on 17 of the landing ships.

Task Force 53 mounted out in the Solomons, where ships drew upon the storage dumps at the Naval Base, Tulagi, and the floating storage in Purvis Bay. The transports anchored close to Cape Esperance and Tetere, Guadalcanal, to be near the Marine camps to facilitate training and combat loading. Kwajalein and Roi Islands in the Marshalls served as the staging area, but owing to the postponement of W-Day it was necessary to restage at Eniwetok. The restaging involved topping off with fuel, water, provisions, and ammunition.

Adequate shipping had been provided to lift the units originally assigned to IIIAC, but additional units to be embarked required some reductions of cargo, particularly vehicles. On 4 May, for instance, Admiral Conolly was directed to take on board the entire first garrison echelon, comprising 84 officers and 498 enlisted men, an addition that somewhat complicated the allotment of space between assault and garrison troops.

In general, the logistic planning for operations on the large island of Guam had been so efficiently accomplished that no serious difficulty arose. The shipping available for FORAGER was never really enough, but miracles of adjustment were performed. Square pegs were practically fitted into round holes, and the distances between Gua-

dacanal and the chief sources of supply at Pearl Harbor, Espiritu Santo, and Noumea were telescoped by fast ships.

Outstanding and new in the logistic preparation for Guam was the IIIAC Service Group, an organization used again later at Okinawa. Staffs of the Corps Engineer and Corps Quartermaster formed the nucleus of the group, which shortly after W-Day, would include personnel of the engineer, construction, medical supply, and transport services. The Corps Engineer, Lieutenant Colonel Francis M. McAlister, was assigned to command the group; he would supervise the corps shore party operations once the Japanese port facilities had been seized. Until the garrison commander took over, the Service Group would operate the port to be established in Apra Harbor and also the airfields to be built. In a word, no time was going to be lost in transforming Guam into an advance base.

For landing the mountain of supplies, the harbor offered Piti Navy Yard and the seaplane ramp at Sumay as the best unloading points, at least at the start. The corps shore party planned to operate Piti with the 2d Battalion, 19th Marines, and Sumay with the two pioneer companies of the brigade. Two naval construction battalions, the 25th and the 53d, had been attached to IIIAC; initially the Seabees, along with corps engineers, would develop the road net in the beachhead area. After the battle was over, the 5th Naval Construction Brigade, comprised of three regiments, would begin its work under the Island Command.

Essential to the ambitious plans for developing a base, however, was the recapture of the island. The American

ground forces to be engaged totaled 54,891 men:

3d Marine Division	20,328
1st Provisional Marine Brigade	9,886
77th Infantry Division	17,958
III Amphibious Corps Troops	6,719 ⁶⁴

A provisional replacement company (11 officers and 383 enlisted men) embarked with the assault troops. The unit would help with unloading until its men were needed to replace combat losses. A provisional smoke screen unit, formed to augment a Seabee battalion, was also to be available for frontline combat.⁶⁵ For the handling of casualties, the landing force had a corps medical battalion, which embarked with equipment and supplies to operate a 1,500-bed field hospital. In addition, there were two medical companies with the brigade and the division medical battalion. The 77th Division would bring an Army field hospital.

As at Saipan, the APAs would bear the initial casualty load from the beach assault. After treatment by frontline medical personnel, wounded men would be taken either by stretcher bearers or ambulance jeep to the beaches, where they would be received by beach medical parties and placed in an LVT or DUKW for movement to transports and LSTs equipped and staffed to handle the casualties.

⁶⁴ *TF 56 OpRpt*, Encl F.

⁶⁵ No replacements arrived while the Guam operation was in progress, but some 2,600 were en route directly to the 3d Marine Division from Administrative Command, FMFPac, when the operation ended. In later Pacific campaigns, Marine divisions took along an entire replacement battalion, and used its men for beach and shore party duties until they were required in combat.

TRAINING AND SAILING⁶⁶

Most of the Marines that would fight on Guam were veterans of recent combat and experienced in an amphibious operation, but training on Guadalcanal was none the less intensive. Emphasis lay upon development of efficient tank-infantry teams. From 12 to 22 May, training included six days of ship-to-shore practice (three for each attack group), two days of air support exercises in conjunction with regimental landings, and two days of combined naval air and gunfire support exercises. On the 22d, the Northern Attack Group sortied from Guadalcanal and Tulagi, cruised for the night, and then made its approach to the rehearsal beach at Cape Esperance. All assault troops and equipment of the 3d Division were landed, supported by air and naval gunfire bombardment. Only token unloading of heavy equipment, such as tanks and bulldozers, was made. The Southern Attack Group conducted a similar rehearsal in the same area during 25-27 May. The practice was particularly designed to test communications and control on the water and on the shore.

Training on Guadalcanal was some-

⁶⁶ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *TF 53 OpRpt*; *IIIAC SAR*; *Corps Arty SAR*; *3d MarDiv SAR*; *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*; *77th InfDiv Jnl*; Cdr H. E. Smith (CEC), USN, "I Saw the Morning Break," *USNI Proceedings*, v. 72, no. 3 (Mar46), hereafter Smith, "I Saw the Morning Break"; Lt Robert A. Aurthur and Lt Kenneth Cohlma, *The Third Marine Division* (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1948), hereafter Aurthur and Cohlma, *The Third Marine Division*; Maj Frank O. Hough, *The Island War* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1947).

what handicapped because the island has no fringing reef, such as would be encountered at Guam. In the ship-to-shore phase, troops had to practice transferring from boats to tractors at an arbitrary point simulating the edge of the reef. Reality was lent to the rehearsals, however, by the use of live bombs and ammunition in the naval air and gunfire support exercises.

The Army troops due for Guam went straight from Hawaii to their staging area at Eniwetok, so they did not take part in the IIIAC training on Guadalcanal. The 77th Infantry Division had not yet experienced combat, but the men had been schooled in amphibious warfare, desert and mountain warfare, village fighting, and infiltration tactics at Stateside camps and then had spent some time at the Jungle Training Center on Oahu.⁵⁷ The 305th Infantry Regiment joined Task Force 53 at Eniwetok on 10 July, and the remainder of the 77th Division reached there a week later.

Marines of the 3d Division, their dress rehearsals over, embarked on transports and LSTs from docks at Tetere. Other ships loaded brigade troops at Kukum. On 1 June, the tractor groups left for the staging area at Kwajalein. The faster transport and support groups of TF 53, which included the *Appalachian* with IIIAC Headquarters on board, followed on 4 June. The ships stayed in the Marshalls long enough to take on fuel, water,

and provisions and to transfer assault troops from transports to landing ships. By 12 June, Admiral Conolly's entire task force had left in convoy formation, bound for the Saipan area. For 10 days, from 16 June, Marines waited on board ships near Saipan, retiring every night and returning every morning, to be ready in the event they were needed on shore. On 25 June, Admiral Spruance sent ships of the Northern Transport Group, which was carrying the 3d Marine Division, to a restaging area at Eniwetok, but he detained the brigade for five more days before returning it to the Marshalls.

Among the Marines sidetracked at Eniwetok were men of Marine Aircraft Group 21. On 4 June, the forward echelon of MAG-21, then attached to the 4th Marine Base Defense Aircraft Wing, had sailed from Efate in the New Hebrides for Guadalcanal, expecting to go on to Guam. The pilots of Marine Corsairs were prepared to fly close support missions on Guam once Orote airfield was secured and made ready. To their dismay, the men were kept on board ship at Eniwetok from 19 June to 23 July.

While the ships lingered at Eniwetok, Marines were debarked, a few at a time, for exercises on sandy islets of the lagoon, but that was hardly a respite from the average of 50 days that troops had to spend on board the hot and overcrowded ships before getting off at Guam. Marines tried to shield themselves from the burning sun by rigging tents and tarpaulins on the weather decks of LSTs. As was common on every troop ship in the Pacific, men would leave the stuffy holds to seek a cool sleeping spot topside. In the ships

⁵⁷ LtGen Andrew D. Bruce, USA ltr to ACofS, G-3, HQMC, dtd 18Jun65. The Army's 77th, which was suddenly pitched into a hard Pacific campaign and fought like veterans, consisted mostly of draftees from the New York metropolitan area.

due for Guam, there were several platoons of war dogs, who shared the discomfort of the voyage but were not bothered by the dwindling supply of cigarettes. A variation of shipboard monotony occurred on 17 June when a formation of Japanese torpedo bombers approached the Northern Tractor Group; the attackers were turned away by the fire of LSTs and LCTs, which shot down three of the enemy planes. One of the prized LCI(G)s was hit; the gunboat was taken under tow, but finally had to be sunk by destroyer gunfire.⁵⁸

General Geiger reported that "contrary to popular opinion, this prolonged voyage had no ill effect upon the troops."⁵⁹ Nevertheless, everyone breathed a sigh of relief when finally, beginning on 11 July, elements of Task Force 53 again sailed for Guam. The bulk of the troops, including RCT 305, departed in transports on 18 July.

⁵⁸ The LCI(G)s had been used in their new role as gunboats at Saipan, but they were planned for wider use at Guam, again preceding the first assault wave to the shore. At Guam the reefs were near enough to the shore, so that the gunboats could fire their rockets successfully. These little vessels, with a five-foot draft, were armed with five 20mm cannon and three 40s, and their forward decks were packed tight with rocket frames. Originally, the LCIs had been used to carry assault infantry from shore to shore. The LCI(G) now carried a crew of 70 and 6 officers, about thrice its original T/O.

⁵⁹ *IIIAC SAR*, p. 2.

The ships which had been sent from Saipan to Pearl Harbor to pick up RCTs 306 and 307, arrived at Eniwetok just before the main force got underway for Guam. They continued on their long voyage to the objective on the 19th. On 20 July, the *Indianapolis*, bringing Admiral Spruance, joined the great task force, and, on the same day, Admiral Turner and General Holland Smith departed Saipan in the *Rocky Mount* to observe the Guam landings. The Japanese, viewing the armada from the crest of Mt. Tenjo, counted 274 vessels.

By the afternoon of 20 July, every ship that would be connected with the amphibious assault was either at or approaching its designated position off Guam. Prospects for success on W-Day appeared to be good, except for a flurry of concern lest an impending typhoon move near the area—and that worry was dismissed by Admiral Conolly's hurricane specialist. The weather prediction for W-Day was optimistic: a friendly sky, a light wind, a calm sea.

Admiral Conolly confirmed H-Hour as 0830. In a dispatch to the task force, he felt able to say, that because of the excellent weather, the long preparatory bombardment, and the efficient beach clearance, "conditions are most favorable for a successful landing."⁶⁰ Events of the next day would show whether he was right.

⁶⁰ *TF 53 OpRpt*, p. 11.

W-Day

THUNDER AT SUNRISE¹

“My aim,” Admiral Conolly had remarked, “is to get the troops ashore standing up.”² In the preparation fires at Guam, he had left no shell unused if it would remove some peril to the landings. The same zeal to accomplish maximum results went into the bombardment on the morning of W-Day.

Some improvements upon fire support had been suggested by the experience at Saipan on D-Day. It was felt that the beach preparation there could have been enhanced by continuous deep fires along the high ground 1,500 yards in the rear of and overlooking the beaches, started well before H-Hour and kept up until the assault troops were reorganized ashore and had pushed out toward their objectives. That moment was anticipated to occur at H plus 90, or 1000. Such a procedure appeared especially worth trying at Guam, where the most serious opposition would probably come not from fixed defense guns at the beach—most of them were be-

lieved to be out of commission—but from mobile artillery inland which had not fired and had not been located. In addition, simultaneous naval gunfire and air bombardment was going to be attempted to increase overall volume and the shock effect upon the enemy. Finally, a greater use of rocket-equipped gunboats had been planned for Guam. Nine thousand 4.5-inch rockets were scheduled to be fired between 0530 and 1000.

The morning twilight of 21 July, beginning at 0445, erased a tropical sky “bespangled with stars.”³ At 0530, a half hour before sunrise, all fire support ships were on their assigned stations, and at 0535 four battleships off Orote Peninsula and Cabras Island opened fire with 12 14-inch guns each. Inside Agat Bay, the old *Pennsylvania* thundered at the cliff line of the peninsula. Other battleships, cruisers, and destroyers up and down the west coast immediately joined with slow and deliberate fire on the landing beaches, their flanks, and the areas just inland. Admiral Conolly in the *Appalachian* directed the bombardment of the Asan beaches, while Admiral Reifsnider in the *George*

¹ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *TF 51 OpRpt*; *TF 56 OpRpt*; *TF 53 OpRpt*; *TF 53 OPlan A162-44*; *IIIAC SAR*; Smith, “I Saw the Morning Break.”

² A hope expressed to General Geiger and recalled by the Corps C-2. Col William F. Coleman ltr to CMC, dtd 5Sep52.

³ Smith, “I Saw the Morning Break,” p. 409. War seemed out of place on a beautiful tropical night over the Pacific, and the sky would inspire poetic description by witnesses such as Commander Smith. His account of the events of W-Day morning is personal and vivid.

Clymer handled the shelling of the Agat beaches.⁴

By 0615, 12 fighters, 9 bombers, and 5 torpedo planes from the carrier *Wasp* were on station as a roving combat air patrol, an experiment at Guam. In the first air strike of W-Day, the nine bombers hit at buildings, machine gun nests, and anti-aircraft emplacements on Cabras Island. The Commander, Support Aircraft, in the *Appalachian*, planned that such roving patrols be kept on station through most of W-Day, to seek out hidden guns and mortars in defiladed positions inaccessible to naval gunfire.

A spectacular sweep of the 14 miles of coastline from Agana to Bangi Point was executed between 0715 and 0815 by carrier planes flying parallel to the beaches. Assigned to the mission were 85 fighters, 62 bombers, and 53 torpedo planes. An unusual feature was that naval gunfire accompanied the attack. Under what was called Plan Victor, the firing calculations of the ships had to be adjusted so that the trajectory of their projectiles would bring them no higher than 1,200 feet. Pilots pulled out of their runs before reaching as low as 1,500 feet.

SHIP TO SHORE⁵

To the familiar sounds of the pre-

⁴One witness of the preassault bombardment, an officer of the 9th Marines, wrote later: "I was particularly impressed to see Japanese soldiers still alive right on the landing beaches after almost 24 hours of incessant bombardment by naval gunfire." LtCol Calvin W. Kunz ltr to HistBr, G-3, HQMC, dtd 27Feb52.

⁵Unless otherwise noted, the material in

landing preparation,⁶ Marines moved closer to the island. The 1st Provisional Brigade arrived in the transport area 12,000 yards east of Agat at approximately 0600. The ships carrying the assault troops of the 3d Marine Division stopped about the same time at an equivalent distance from the Asan beaches.

The brigade and the division each used 16 LSTs, and these moved into the launching area about 0700. There the landing ships opened their bow doors to disgorge LVT(A)s and LVTs carrying assault troops. On board the transports, Marines of the reserve battalions waited to debark into LCVPs. Once loaded with troops, the boats would proceed to the reef transfer line and stand by until the first waves of tractors returned from the beach. About the same time that the reserves began landing, the tanks that had moved to the target by LSD would start rumbling across the reef. Each LSD (two served the division and one the brigade) carried 20 medium tanks, loaded in a LCT and 14 LCMs.

Close on the tracks of the tanks, the direct support artillery would begin to

this section is derived from: *TF 51 OpRpt*; *TF 53 OpRpt*; *IIIAC SAR*; *3d MarDiv SAR*; *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*; 1stLt Millard Kaufman, "Attack on Guam," *Marine Corps Gazette*, v. 29, no. 4 (Apr45), hereafter Kaufman, "Attack on Guam"; Smith, "I Saw the Morning Break"; Aurther and Cohlma, *The Third Marine Division*.

⁶Marine veterans of the Pacific campaigns sometimes felt that "when you've seen one naval prelanding bombardment, you've seen them all." This quip is recalled in Hough, *op. cit.*, p. vii. At Guam, however, the innovations would seem to make such a comment less applicable.

land, either in DUKWs that carried 105mm howitzers direct from ship-to-shore or in LVTs that picked up 75mm pack howitzers at the reef edge. Detached from the LSTs that had carried them to the target, pontoon barges, some mounted with cranes, would move to the reef to facilitate the transfer of supplies and equipment. As soon as the situation ashore permitted, the LSTs themselves would nose up to the coral shelf and begin landing vehicles and supplies directly on the reef.

The ships off Guam on 21 July included the 12 transports of the 3d Marine Division and the 8 of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, besides the destroyers which screened the transports. Five assault cargo ships (AKAs) shared the task of supplying thousands of Marines on Guam. The 77th Infantry Division had 12 transports, 5 cargo ships, and 3 LSTs, which rounded out a weight of shipping which lay upon some of the deepest water of the Pacific Ocean.⁷

Waiting to lead the assault were 18 gunboats, the LCI(G)s—evenly divided between the Marine division and the brigade. These vessels had each been fitted with 42 rocket launchers, in addition to their 20mm and 40mm guns, for the Guam operation. The craft would form the vanguard at the landings, shelling the beaches and then swinging to the flanks when about 200 yards from the reef.

Following the gunboats would be the 1st Armored Amphibian Battalion (Major Louis Metzger), its turreted LVT(A)s firing their 37mm guns at

⁷About 200 miles southwest of Guam, the ocean floor is five miles below the surface.

targets on the beach. Running behind such interference, 360 LVTs were to land the assault troops almost on the heels of the first wave of LVT(A)s. Such was the usual pattern, and at Guam on the morning of 21 July, no hitches developed. "The ship to shore movement," Admiral Conolly proudly reported, "was executed with perfect precision and exactly on schedule."⁸

A few minutes before 0800, the gunboats crossed the line of departure and headed toward the beaches, followed seconds later by the wave of armored amphibians. Behind were six waves of LVTs, formed up and ready for the attack. H-Hour was just 30 minutes away. So far a silent enemy appeared dazed by the constant air and naval gunfire bombardment, and while there were no illusions about what could happen later, a minimum of resistance was expected to the landings.

On the northern front, as the LVTs took the assault troops shoreward, the smoke and dust of the bombardment obscured the beaches where the men were to land. The 2,500 yards of enemy-held coastline which lay between Asan Point and Adelup Point had been parceled out among the three infantry regiments of the 3d Marine Division, which were to land abreast in a column of battalions, each regiment keeping one battalion as a reserve afloat.⁹ (See Map VII, Map Section.)

On the left, the 3d Marines, commanded by Colonel W. Carvel Hall, would go ashore over Red Beaches 1 and

⁸TF 53 *OpRpt*, p. 11.

⁹The division, lacking a floating reserve, would have to rely upon the corps reserve (77th Infantry Division, less the 305th Regiment).

2. The immediate task of the regiment was to secure Adelup Point, Chonito Cliff, and the high ground southeast of the cliff, thus protecting the left flank of the division. The 21st Marines (Colonel Arthur H. Butler), landing on Green Beach, would seize the cliff line to its front and hold there until the division was ready to move inland. Upon securing the objective, Colonel Butler would assign one battalion as division reserve. On the right, the 9th Marines (Colonel Edward A. Craig) was to cross Blue Beach and take the low ridges just beyond. Colonel Craig's 3d Battalion, which was landing in assault, would become regimental reserve once the other two battalions were ashore, and it would be prepared, if so ordered, to make an amphibious landing on Cabras Island. The Piti Navy Yard, down the coast from Blue Beach, appeared also as a probable objective for the 9th Marines.

To the south, the assault troops of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade moved toward narrower beaches than those that faced the 3d Marine Division. The lesser width was compensated for by more favorable ground immediately inland; the hills were lower and the terrain more open. This promise of an easier initial advance had played a large part in influencing the choice of beaches to be hit by the two major assault units of IIIAC. Despite its smaller size, the brigade was "a two-regiment division, if I ever saw one," said Admiral Conolly later, in tribute to its accomplishments.¹⁰ Actually, the

¹⁰ Quoted in "Combat Leadership," The John A. Lejeune Forum, compiled by Capt Robert B. Asprey, *Marine Corps Gazette*, v. 46, no. 11 (Nov62), p. 26.

brigade was substantially a division once its reserve, the Army 305th RCT was called into action.

On the morning of W-Day, Colonel Schneider's 22d Marines was to land on Yellow Beaches 1 and 2, occupy Agat, and then turn north to seal off the Orote Peninsula. The 4th Marines under Lieutenant Colonel Shapley would go ashore over White Beaches 1 and 2, establish a beachhead, and protect the right flank of the brigade. A major and perhaps costly mission lay ahead of the brigade once the 305th was ashore—the seizure of the Orote Peninsula.

Japanese opposition to the oncoming waves of Marines was late in appearing. The enemy's coastal defense guns had either been destroyed by the bombardment or left unmanned. At 0800, the division air observer saw no activity inland of the beaches. Twelve minutes later, when the first LVTs in the assault waves were well under way, he reported "no enemy fire from the beach observed."¹¹ At 0810, the brigade air observer reported "no firing on our boats of the leading wave."¹² The American gunboats were then firing tremendous salvos. At the southern beaches a number of the rockets fell short, but the division air observer reported at 0820 that "the rockets are landing and giving them hell."¹³

The armored amphibians of the lead-

¹¹ *TF 53 OpRpt*, Encl A, p. 27. These air observers were infantry officers assigned by the IIIAC. From carrier planes they reported to headquarters ships by voice radio (the SCR 694).

¹² 1st ProvMarBrig Jnl (App 2 to 1st Prov-MarBrig SAR), 21Jul44, hereafter 1st Prov-MarBrig Jnl.

¹³ 3d MarDiv SAR, p. 1.

ing assault wave, moving forward at 150 yards per minute, were then about 1,200 yards from the beaches—the scheduled time for air observers to drop their white parachute flares as a signal to the gunfire ships. Major caliber guns were then to raise their fire inland, while the rate of 5-inch gunfire would be stepped up until the armored amphibians started across the reef.

The white flares were also a signal for a special air strike by 32 Navy fighters. They were each to drop a depth bomb and then strafe the beaches until the Marines were almost on land. Following that strike, 12 other planes were to strafe just inland from the beaches until the troops set foot on the shore. Adding to the last violent preparation by naval shelling and air bombardment, the armored amphibians would fire their guns when crossing the reef, while, stationed on the flanks of the beaches, the gunboats employed their 20mm and 40mm weapons to disrupt any enemy movement sighted.

As the LVTs carrying the assault troops headed for the beaches, there was no sign of enemy activity. Admiral Conolly turned naval gunfire upon Gaan Point and Bangi Point, both of which were believed to contain well-hidden defenses, and upon Yona Island, where the brigade observer had noticed some firing. The gun there was later found to be a 75mm field piece. Except from such scattered positions, however, the Japanese did not return fire.

It was not until the Marines were within the last few yards of the beaches that the situation changed. The cumbersome amphibian tractors had nego-

tiated the reef successfully, but they fared badly thereafter from enemy fire and mines, as the beach defenses suddenly came to life. Off the northern shore, the armored amphibians and the following wave of LVTs were nearly at the beach when they received fire from Japanese small arms and antiboat guns ranging from 37mm to 75mm in size. Several tractors were hit; at least one was disabled by .30 caliber armor-piercing bullets.¹⁴ Admiral Conolly's hope of getting the troops ashore standing up took an ironic twist when Marines had to leave a crippled tractor and wade in to the beach. From the high ground just inland, the Japanese turned mortar and artillery fire upon other approaching LVTs; a number of the vehicles were damaged by shell fragments.

Off the southern beaches, 24 of the tractors serving the brigade were put out of commission either by enemy fire, by damage to the treads caused by jagged coral, or by mechanical trouble.¹⁵ When the first wave of the 22d Marines was about 100 yards from the beaches, intense enemy fire was received.¹⁶

¹⁴ A mountain gun located on Adelup Point hit several armored amphibians. The weapon was "silenced by a destroyer that closed to the reef edge in a beautiful bit of seamanship. The destroyer's action saved the lives of a lot of Marines." One antiboat gun located at the junction of Asan Point and the beach hit two armored amphibians. That weapon was silenced by LVT(A) 37mm guns. LtCol Louis Metzger ltr to CMC, dtd 29Oct52.

¹⁵ The leading waves of the brigade had 10 LVT and LVT(A) casualties. The division reported nine LVTs and LVT(A)s destroyed by enemy fire during the landing.

¹⁶ One officer of 3/22, which went ashore at noon on W-Day, recalled later that "the gun

"Looks like 75mm," the brigade air observer radioed. "Can you locate source of fire?" came the query in reply.¹⁷ The source proved to be a concrete blockhouse on Gaan Point. Built deep into a small coral hill, the installation had evaded photographic detection. Here was a 75mm gun lodged below four feet of rock. A shelter for a companion 37mm gun was also walled with concrete.¹⁸ A few of the LVTs bound for the Yellow Beaches were damaged by the enemy fire, and some of the Marines they carried were hit.

Crossfire from Gaan Point and from Yona Island raked White Beach 2, a 300-yard strip of sand where the 1st Battalion, 4th Marines was landing. Scattered resistance came from pillboxes between Agat and Bangi Point; other fire developed from well-concealed guns at Bangi Point and artillery on the south side of the Orote Peninsula. Some resistance to the landings was offered even by guns at Faepi Point, down the coast.

Despite such spirited attempts, however, the Japanese plan of stopping the American return to Guam at the beaches had been set back, thanks in large part to Admiral Conolly's efforts. His planes and guns had not destroyed as many enemy installations as he

was firing on line of fire as landing craft passed without traversing." Maj Samuel A. Todd ltr to CMC, dtd 30Oct52.

¹⁷ *1st ProvMarBrig Jnl*, 21Jul44.

¹⁸ The guns "were in a double cave, one above the other. . . . The mouth of the caves could not be seen from the sea, and trees and shrubbery prevented them from showing in aerial pictures." Col Edwin C. Ferguson interview by HistBr, G-3, HQMC, dtd 28Nov52.

believed; still, as the Japanese explained later, it was "the interruptive operation of the severe bombardments" that upset their plan.¹⁹

Nowhere were the Marines prevented from landing on schedule. They were not delayed either by damage to tractors or by opposition from those enemy riflemen and machine gunners who had not yet deserted the shell-ridden beaches. Marines had a foretaste, however, of the hard fighting due on Guam; the 3d Marines received ominously heavy fire from the vicinity of Adelup Point.

At 0833, the division air observer, flying over the Asan beaches, reported: "Troops ashore on all beaches."²⁰ The brigade was on the island by 0832. Now, said the division report, "the capture of Guam was in the hands of the foot soldier."²¹

THE NORTHERN BEACHES²²

Once the Marines were ashore, and at least until the end of W-Day, the battle for Guam shaped up as two

¹⁹ *Takeda ltr I*, p. 3.

²⁰ *3d MarDiv SAR*, Encl A, p. 1.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *TF 53 OpRpt*; *IIIAC SAR*; *SARs of 3d MarDiv regiments and organic and attached units enclosed with 3d MarDiv SAR*, hereafter cited separately as necessary, e.g., *9th Mar SAR*, *3d TkBn SAR*; *3d Mar Jnl*, 21Jul-12Aug44, hereafter *3d Mar Jnl*; 1/3 *Jnl*, 21Jul-16Aug44, hereafter *1/3 Jnl*; 2/3 *Jnl*, 21Jul-24Aug44, hereafter *2/3 Jnl*; 3/3 *Jnl*, 21-31Jul44, hereafter *3/3 Jnl*; 9th Mar URpts, 21Jul-19Sep44, hereafter *9th Mar URpts*; 2/21 *Jnl* on Guam, hereafter *2/21 Jnl*; 3/21 *Jnl*, 21Jul-1Nov44, hereafter *3/21 Jnl*; Aurthur and Cohlma, *The Third Marine Division*.

separate military operations on beaches miles apart. On the left of the 3d Division beaches, the 3d Marines had the hardest going on the morning of 21 July. The whole division was landing between what the Marines called "a pair of devil's horns"—Adelup Point and Asan Point.²³ The latter, on the right, had been dulled by the naval and air bombardment, but was still infested with enemy troops.²⁴ The devil's left horn, the reports understate, "still had some life in it."²⁵ To be more specific, the Japanese had weathered the terrific preassault gunfire and explosives, emerged from their caves and wooded folds on the reverse slopes of the high ground, and returned to their prepared gun and mortar positions on Chonito Cliff, which overshadowed the Red Beaches, and on the ridges to the south and southeast. (See Map VII, Map Section.)

Expecting grim resistance to the advance of the 3d Marines, Colonel Hall drew his first objective line across the enemy's well-defended high ground immediately inland. He was landing the 1st Battalion over Red Beach 2 and the 3d to the left over Red Beach 1. The 2d Battalion was to land in reserve and move to an assembly area behind Red 1. The regimental commander planned to put the reserve either at the center of the objective line once it was gained, or else to pass it through the left com-

pany of the 3d Battalion, to seize Adelup Point.

The immediate situation at the Red Beaches was not favorable. Minutes after the leading waves of the 3d Marines were ashore, the Japanese opened up in earnest, turning artillery, mortars, and machine guns upon the beaches and the reef, lobbing well-directed mortar shells squarely among the LVTs. Some of the Marines were casualties before getting on land; others were hit when they were barely on the beaches by an enemy enjoying perfect observation. At 0912, the commander of 3/3, Lieutenant Colonel Ralph L. Houser, reported "mortar fire and snipers very heavy," resulting in "many casualties."²⁶

The optimistic hope of a dash to the initial objective, Chonito Cliff, before the enemy revived from the preassault bombardment dissolved into grim acceptance of the struggle ahead. The danger posed by the Japanese in their caves on Chonito Cliff led to some exaggerated news reports of its size. The cliff itself was only the seaward edge of the steep ridge which overlooked the whole length of the Red Beaches; it lay northeast of Red Beach 1. While Chonito Cliff's rugged terrain was a boon to its defenders, it was curiously obstructive to the Japanese on adjoining Adelup Point. Projecting to the edge of the water, Chonito Cliff walled off Red Beach 1 and restricted the enemy guns on Adelup Point to attacking the approaching LVTs rather than the Marines on the beach. That fire was fi-

²³ *3rd MarDiv SAR*, Encl A, p. 1.

²⁴ Asan Point and ridge running inland from it came alive with enemy fire as the 9th Marines advanced inland. Many Japanese held their fire as the assault troops passed and then opened up on support and CP echelons. *Craig 22Jun65 ltr.*

²⁵ *3d MarDiv SAR*, Encl A, p. 1.

²⁶ *3/3 Jnl*, 21Jul44. The spare litters were soon used up. Others were constructed from poles and ponchos.



3D DIVISION ASSAULT TROOPS take cover along the Asan beaches as messengers crouch low to avoid enemy fire. (USMC 88167)



MARINES watch tensely as a flamethrower blasts an enemy dugout in the advance inland on Guam. (USMC 88072)

nally silenced by a destroyer which moved up to "rock throwing" range,²⁷ but the Marines were not yet through with Adelup Point.

In the approximate 400 yards between Adelup Point and Chonito Cliff lay a deep dry stream bed where the beach road which followed the west coast went over a concrete bridge after cutting through Chonito Cliff. "The bridge and the ridge tip between the beach and the road formed an enemy strong point," recalled a Marine officer of 3/3. "The cut and the bridge afforded excellent protection from bombardment and bombing."²⁸ The Japanese had dug an ingenious tunnel system, permitting them to fire upon both the road and the beach. South of the cliff was a draw leading inland.

Company I, landing on the right of Red Beach 1, tried to get through the draw but was stopped by enemy fire. Company K crossed the stream bed and started up Chonito Cliff but without success. The support platoon of Company K then attempted to force a way through the cut but was badly hurt by machine gun fire and grenades. The enemy rolled some of the grenades down the cliff.

To break up the impasse, Lieutenant Colonel Houser employed flamethrowers and called upon tanks of Company C, 3d Tank Battalion, which took position along the beach road and fired squarely into the caves.²⁹ The battalion com-

mander then committed his reserve, Company L, which "breached the cut and pushed on to the flat land north of Chonito Cliff. This move required the entire company to move down the beach road with the sea on the left and the steep cliff face on the right."³⁰

By noon, the danger of Chonito Cliff had been removed, and here, at least, the 3d Marines had reached its initial objective.³¹ The situation permitted Colonel Hall to confer with battalion commanders on top of the cliff at 1300. That afternoon, Marines of 3/3, supported by tanks and armored amphibians, overcame some Japanese resistance on Adelup Point; a few of the enemy guns there had escaped the sea bombardment. Meanwhile, Lieu-

into action on Guam. The rest of the division's 40 medium tanks were ashore by 1000. General Craig commented in regard to this feat: "The tanks did a wonderful and dangerous job in getting ashore. Transferring those big 45-ton tanks from Navy landing craft to a sheer reef edge in choppy seas and then driving them through rough coral spotted with deep potholes to the beach is an accomplishment which I believe deserves special note. The method devised of holding the Navy landing craft against the face of the reef by using LVTs and cables is also worthy of note. The tanks would probably have never made it if someone had not worked out this method." *Craig 22Jun65 ltr.*

³⁰ *Bastian ltr.*

³¹ Later, while enlarging the beach road, engineers and Seabees altered the appearance of Chonito Cliff so that, as one Marine officer recalled, "the area was not recognizable when I returned several weeks after the landing." *Ibid.* General Craig noted that the same situation held true regarding Asan Point, where Army engineers set up a quarry and rock crushing machine and tore down most of the ridge leading from the point for road construction material. *Craig 22Jun65 ltr.*

²⁷ BGen W. Carvel Hall ltr to CMC, dtd 4Dec52, hereafter *Hall ltr.*

²⁸ LtCol Royal R. Bastian, Jr., ltr to CMC, dtd 23Aug52, hereafter *Bastian ltr.*

²⁹ Company C had landed from LCMs on Red Beach 1 at H-Hour plus 29 minutes, and just a half hour later its tanks were the first to go

tenant Colonel Houser moved the battalion command post from the beach to a bend of the road.³² The subsequent movement of 3/3, however, was handicapped not only by enemy fire from the front but also, particularly, by the Japanese defenses on Bundschu Ridge, which lay in the path of 1/3, commanded by Major Henry Aplington, II.

Bundschu Ridge was one of those inherently worthless pieces of land which were emotionally remembered by the men who fought there in World War II. On board ship, before the landing, it had been named for Captain Geary R. Bundschu, commander of Company A, who had been assigned to take the ridge. It was also referred to in the reports as "Our Ridge." Similar to Chonito Cliff, but farther inland and beyond some rice paddies, the ridge stood near the boundary of the two Red Beaches, a rock pile 400 feet high and 200 yards square, thatched with jungle vegetation. It was so situated that even a handful of well-hidden men, using mortars and machine guns, could repel a much larger force moving up from below.

Captain Bundschu's company had already suffered from enemy fire while on the water and on the beach. Now, with but a few minutes for reorganization, he started the attack, moving across the rice paddies toward the ridge, with two platoons in assault and one in support. By 0920 the lead platoons were pinned down in a gully to the west of the ridge by Japanese mortar and machine gun fire, so the support platoon was com-

mitted to the left, or east side. Captain Bundschu was then able to get up to within 100 yards of the ridge top. At the same time, 1045, he called for more corpsmen and stretcher bearers. Company B was somewhat better off. Advancing on the right, it was delayed more by jungle and rock than by enemy fire; still the company lost five men killed in the day's action. Company C, the reserve, was not committed to the fighting on W-Day, but Major Aplington did receive permission to use two platoons for a combat outpost on the right flank.

The plight of Company A led the regimental commander to drop his original plan of massing 81mm mortar fire on Adelup Point, where enemy resistance had proved relatively minor.³³ Instead, at 1045, he reassigned control of the 1st Battalion 81s to Major Aplington. The platoon was pinned down, however, shortly after moving up to Bundschu Ridge. Its gunnery sergeant and four men were hit, and late that day the unit was still unable to move. Colonel Hall committed the reserve 2d Battalion, under Lieutenant Colonel Hector de Zayas, to the center of the regimental front and ordered renewal of the attack at 1500 along the entire line.

For Captain Bundschu, the situation had been frustrating and saddening, as the hidden enemy exacted a toll of Marines for every step taken. About 1400 he asked Major Aplington for permission to disengage, a request which had

³² A branch of the beach road wound from near Adelup Point into the Fonte hill mass, where General Shigematsu's battle command post was located.

³³ The battalion mortar platoons were to land with their parent units and then combine into a mortar groupment near the boundary of Red Beaches 1 and 2. 3d Mar OPlan 3-44, dtd 27May44.

to be denied because the company was so involved. It was Colonel Hall's view that a second attack on the ridge should be attempted, but he "did not specify a frontal assault."³⁴

Apprehensive about the results, Captain Bundschu reorganized what was left of Company A and prepared to undertake again the last 100 yards of the ridge. At nearly the end of a day oppressive with tropical heat, the Marines tried again, knowing the odds. They once more encountered the machine gun fire that had stopped the initial assault; now, however, with the effective support of 40mm guns of Battery I, 14th Defense Battalion, "a thin line of Company A men reached the crest."³⁵ Other Marines, shot en route up the steep slope, fell backwards to the ground far below. At the top of the ridge, enemy fire of savage intensity prevented a reorganization for defense of the ground gained; the foothold became untenable. The second attack on the ridge had cost the life of Captain Bundschu and further depleted Company A. At nightfall, the enemy still held Bundschu Ridge, and the Marines were reminded of this fact by the Japa-

nese fire which kept up through the unhappy night.

While 1/3 was stalled at the initial regimental objective line, the 2d Battalion was past it, yet still short of the first division objective, which Colonel Hall had fixed as the goal of a renewed attack at 1500. The arc of steep hills which circled the Asan beachhead was everywhere well-defended by the enemy who had started moving up reserves from the Fonte area to combat the invasion.³⁶ This movement was impeded but not prevented by the fire of 75mm and 105mm howitzers of the 3d Division artillery regiment. The first battery of the 12th Marines had landed and registered by 1215. By 1640, all the division artillery was ashore. Close support artillery, however, was not available to the 3d Marines on W-Day; the range was too short, and the fire could not be seen by forward observers.³⁷

W-Day had ended with the 3d Marines still out of contact with the 21st Marines on its right. Colonel Butler's regiment had landed on Beach Green in a column of battalions, in order 3d, 2d, and 1st. Nowhere were the results of the naval gunfire preparation more evident than here on Beach Green; it was "extremely effective."³⁸

The Japanese had abandoned their

³⁴ *Hall ltr.*

³⁵ BGen James Snedeker ltr to CMC, dtd 28Sep52. Colonel Snedeker, executive officer of the 3d Marines, assumed fire direction of the 40mm guns. He recalled "sitting on a sand dune with a portable radio. From this position I could see the 40mm guns and the enemy, but neither could see the other. Enemy machine gun fire picked up the sand all about my exposed position." The 14th Defense Battalion was armed chiefly with antiaircraft weapons; however, with the absence of enemy planes over Guam, the weapons were handy for other uses.

³⁶ Even on W-Day, the 3d Marines were already opposed by an enemy force of at least three companies "with a large number of automatic weapons." 3d MarDiv D-2 Periodic Rpt No. 70, dtd 23Jul44.

³⁷ Once the Marines were farther inland, artillery was employed more often. In fact, the 3d Marines reported that "for close support, there is no substitute for artillery." *3d Mar SAR*, p. 7.

³⁸ *21st Mar SAR*, p. 1.

organized defenses in the beach area; no enemy dead were found there. The scene of wreckage included a demolished coconut grove along the beach; trunks of the trees lay across the road. The assault waves of the 3d Battalion encountered no resistance in landing but received mortar fire from the Japanese positions on the high ground just inland. Such fire on the beach area became more intense by the minute and resulted in a number of casualties. When the regimental headquarters landed in the 11th wave, it had to set up temporarily in a ditch near the beach to obtain cover.

At Guadalcanal, officers had been briefed on the "almost impossible" cliffs which the 3d Marines and the 21st Marines would face shortly after landing.³⁹ Colonel Butler had mapped out a tactical plan based on aerial photos which identified two defiles, or narrow passages—one at each end of the regimental zone—which permitted access to the cliff tops via the steeply rising ground inland of Beach Green. The defiles were related to the two forks of the Asan River, which joined to emerge into the rice paddies.

According to Colonel Butler's plan, the 2d Battalion, landing behind the 3d Battalion, would pass through the left of 3/21 when the latter had reached its first objective, a moderate height beyond the village of Asan. The 2d Battalion would then move up the defile on the left toward the steep cliffs, while the 3d Battalion undertook the other passage. The two units would not try for contact until they had gained the

plateau, where they would extend to form a new line. Behind the advance to the cliffs, the regimental reserve, 1/21, would mop up and then revert to division reserve.

Starting up the Asan River valley, the 3d Battalion suffered casualties from enemy mortar fire. At one point, the advance was held up by a Japanese machine gun platoon which was so positioned that it could also fire southwest into the zone of 1/9 on the right of 3/21. Here Lieutenant Colonel Carey A. Randall, commanding 1/9, joined with Lieutenant Colonel Wendell H. Duplantis of 3/21 in removing enemy threats. He laid down preparatory fires for an attack on the machine gun position by 3/21, while naval gunfire, directed by 3/21, neutralized a mortar position on the objective of 1/9. "Approximately 14 machine guns, heavy and light, 6 mortars, and the entire supply of ammunition were seized in this section."⁴⁰ Two Japanese were captured in the machine gun position; they were "believed to be the first prisoners seized in the campaign."⁴¹

By midmorning, the 3d Battalion had reached the high ground behind Asan, and at 1250, the 2d Battalion passed through the lines of Company K. For 2/21, the ordeal of the cliff area, which was to drag out for days, began in earnest. Some Marines would remember it in total as the battle for Banzai Ridge.⁴² Actually, the battle involved a

³⁹ Col Wendell H. Duplantis ltr to CMC, dtd 30Oct52, hereafter *Duplantis ltr*.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ See 1stLt Anthony A. Frances, "The Battle for Banzai Ridge," *Marine Corps Gazette*, v. 29, no. 6 (Jun45), hereafter Frances, "The Battle for Banzai Ridge."

³⁸ Aurthur and Cohlma, *The Third Marine Division*, p. 147.

series of cliffs, "where every ridge gained by the 21st Marines disclosed another pocket of the enemy behind it." ⁴³

After travelling almost a mile from the beach, the 2d Battalion, moving up through the defile, approached a steep 100-foot cliff which cut diagonally across the main axis of attack. The Japanese expected no one to be hardy or bold enough to attempt a frontal attack here, but the terrain required it; there was no room to maneuver troops. Upon Company F fell the burden of the assault. Company E was echeloned to the right rear, while Company G took its position below the cliff as the reserve.

The rifle platoons of Company F started up the rocky cliff face, climbing via three indentations which permitted some concealment. "Slowly the men pulled themselves up the cliff, clinging to scrub growth, resting in crevices, sweating" under the tropical sun—it was a story often to be repeated on Guam. "Scouts on the left drew the first enemy fire. The platoons kept climbing. The platoon on the right was nearly decimated." ⁴⁴ Company E started two squads and a patrol up the cliff and also suffered casualties. Results of the shipboard confinement seemed to show here; a few of the men

⁴³ *3d MarDiv SAR*, Encl A, p. 3. The Commandant of the Marine Corps, Lieutenant General Alexander A. Vandegrift, a veteran of jungle and mountain warfare in the Caribbean and in the South Pacific, later inspected the terrain here and in the zone of the 3d Marines; he called it "some of the most rugged country I have ever seen." *Ibid.*, p. 4.

"Frances, "The Battle For Banzai Ridge," p. 13.

were unable to finish the arduous climb.⁴⁵ The Marines who did get to the top received machine gun fire there from a ridge less than 50 yards away, but they held on while the battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Eustace R. Smoak, set up the defense for the night; he put Company G on the left, Company F in the center, and Company E on the right flank. The battalion dug in on the objective under artillery and mortar fire from the ridge beyond.

The 3d Battalion, moving upon the high ground to the right, was able to tie in with 2/21 by outposts only; the jungle vegetation made contact difficult. The 1st Battalion, after mopping up to the rear and encountering few of the enemy there, reverted to division reserve. To the regimental left, a deep jungle-thick ravine separated the 21st and 3d Marines, leaving a gap of 150 yards, despite the efforts of patrols to make contact. Yet it was "a well neutralized gap," the division reported. "Enemy mortar fire kept the gap open; our own kept out the enemy." ⁴⁶

To the right, contact was well established between the 21st and the 9th Marines. Of the division infantry regiments, the 9th Marines had met the least resistance from the terrain, although as much from enemy troops. It was able to make the most actual progress on W-Day. The regiment landed in a column of battalions, with 3/9 in the assault, followed by 2/9 in support and 1/9 in reserve. The mis-

⁴⁵ A shortage of water added hardship to a hot day. At 1730, however, 3/21 reported that "one canteen of water arrived at CP for each man." *3/21 Jnl*, 21Jul44.

⁴⁶ *3d MarDiv SAR*, Encl A, p. 3.

sion of the 3d Battalion (Lieutenant Colonel Walter Asmuth, Jr.) was to seize the high ground immediately inland, including Asan Point. The other two battalions would then pass through when so ordered, while 3/9 became regimental reserve. The 1st and 2d Battalions, the latter on the right, were scheduled to seize the next objective, a line 1,000 yards from the beach and just short of the Tatgua River.

The 9th Marines landed under Japanese mortar and artillery fire directed at LVTs in the water, on the reef, and on the beach; a considerable number of casualties resulted.⁴⁷ Once past the beach, the troops encountered negligible small arms fire while crossing the dry rice paddies. Further along, however, the southeasterly course of Company I on the right was slowed by fire from caves on Asan Point and along the ridge which extended from Asan Point to the mouth of the Nidual River, but no line of enemy resistance was set up. Lieutenant Colonel Asmuth used the reserve Company L to assist in taking and clearing the ridge, while tanks provided overhead fire support. Company K, on the battalion left, fared very well; after a steady advance across the rice paddies, it took the ridge to its front "with astonishing rapidity."⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Here, as along the entire division landing area, the enemy fire benefited from perfect observation. The commander of the 9th Marines remarked later that "until the FBHL in the Mt. Alutom-Mt. Tenjo area was taken by us, direct observation of practically all our rear areas was possible by the enemy." LtGen Edward A. Craig ltr to CMC, dtd 30Sep52, hereafter *Craig ltr.*

⁴⁸ Col Walter Asmuth, Jr., ltr to CMC, dtd 11Sep52.

Following the seizure of the rice paddy area near the mouth of the Asan River, the 12th Marines (Colonel John B. Wilson) began setting up its firing batteries to support the infantry assault.

At 1350, the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines reached its objective, and 1/9 and 2/9 waited orders to pass through. At 1415, just eight minutes after receiving the word from the division commander, Colonel Craig attacked, advancing to within 400 yards of the Tatgua River by 1600. There the troops dug in for the night.

The progress of 1/9 and 2/9 had not been devoid of enemy resistance. Though Asan Point had been previously well covered by 3/9, there were still small groups of Japanese in concealed firing positions.⁴⁹ When the 2d Battalion crossed the bridge over the Nidual River, enemy machine guns on the point opened up, and the Marines had to fight to the rear a short distance in order to reduce the opposition.⁵⁰

Colonel Craig had set up his advance command post immediately to the rear of the 3d Battalion, and it was fire from Asan Point apparently which wounded the regimental executive officer, Lieutenant Colonel Jaime Sabater, on W-Day.⁵¹ A Marine antitank gun at the command post knocked out a con-

⁴⁹ Three weeks later, the Marines were still finding Japanese in the honeycomb of caves on Asan Point. *Craig ltr.*

⁵⁰ Besides the machine gun positions on Asan Point, there was a battery of three 8-inch naval guns in concrete emplacements. The battery covered the beaches and seaward to the west of Asan Point; Marines found it abandoned.

⁵¹ The 9th Marines then had no executive officer until 30 July when Lieutenant Colonel Ralph M. King joined the regiment.

cealed Japanese antitank gun in the vicinity. Like the machine guns that covered the Nidual River bridge, the enemy weapon, manned by eight men, was so well camouflaged that it escaped detection by 3/9.

At 1830, the 9th Marines tied in with the 21st Marines. The progress of the 9th Marines on W-Day—the regiment had secured a beachhead 1,500 yards in depth—was dearly won, for casualties had been high.⁵² Included in the figure of 231 were 20 officers killed or wounded. Lieutenant Colonel Asmuth of 3/9 was among the wounded; he was relieved on 22 July by Major Donald B. Hubbard. The commanders of Company I and Company K were both killed in action.

*SUNSET OVER THE ASAN BEACHHEAD*⁵³

The first day on Guam had cost the 3d Marine Division 105 men killed, 536 wounded, and 56 missing in action. A number of these casualties had resulted from the mortar, artillery, and sniper fire which fell upon the beaches—hand-

⁵² This was the maximum depth of the division beachhead at the end of W-Day. In width it measured 4,000 yards. Such figures are illusory, however, because of the numerous gaps in the line and the fact that the enemy held strong positions overlooking the beachhead.

⁵³ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *TF 53 OpRpt*; *IIIAC SAR*; *3d MarDiv SAR*; *5th FldDep SAR*, dtd 25Aug44, hereafter *5th FldDep SAR*; Capt Edwin H. Klein, "The Handling of Supplies at Guam," *Marine Corps Gazette*, v. 29, no. 2 (Feb45), hereafter Klein, "The Handling of Supplies at Guam."

icapping but never stopping the movement of supplies.⁵⁴

To get the immediate necessities ashore, every available man was employed; bakers of the 3d Service Battalion, who did not have to bake bread until later, turned to as boat riders and handled cargo. It was the 19th Marines, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. Fojt, which formed the backbone of the division shore party. Company B, 5th Field Depot, of the Supply Service, FMFPac, had been attached to the division and at 1030 the unit landed on Red Beach 2 to operate the supply dumps. The 5th Field Depot, which was part of the Island Command, had been assigned a string of prospective dump sites on Guam, totaling more than 600 acres, but most of the areas "proved to be suitable for rice cultivation and not much else."⁵⁵

As General Geiger reported, the ship-to-shore movement was "skillfully executed."⁵⁶ There were instances where some things could have been done differently and better, but they were relatively few in proportion to the size of the division landing.⁵⁷ Men trans-

⁵⁴ Such enemy fire kept up all day and "had troop leaders been less aggressive in moving their units off the beach, casualties would have been much heavier." Lodge, *Recapture of Guam*, p. 47.

⁵⁵ Klein, "The Handling of Supplies at Guam," p. 26. Company B was attached to the 3d Service Battalion for the landing.

⁵⁶ *IIIAC SAR*, Encl B, p. 2.

⁵⁷ Teams of the 3d Joint Assault Signal Company (JASCO) landed less than 20 minutes after H-Hour, much sooner than necessary. They had their ship-to-shore and lateral beach communications set up by 1100, but there was no traffic until more than two hours later. Major John H. Ellis, the company commander, recommended after the campaign that "the

ferred tons of cargo from landing craft to LVTs and DUKWs, using large cranes mounted on pontoon barges anchored just off the reef. The amphibian tractors and trucks then took the cargo from the reef to the shore.⁵⁸

The reef here extended at distances varying from 100 to 350 yards from the beaches. At high tide it was covered by 30 inches of water and at low tide by 6 inches. The edge dropped off abruptly; the reef detachment often worked in waist-high water. When fuel drums were deposited from landing craft at the reef edge they were floated in by wading Marines. Unloading was continued for some hours after dark—an unusual procedure on the day of a landing, for it required partial lighting on the ships—but the absence of enemy aircraft allowed such a risk.

By sunset of W-Day, the 3d Marine Division was well started on the battle to recapture Guam. At 1715, General Turnage assumed command ashore.

THE SOUTHERN BEACHES⁵⁹

The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade on W-Day encountered more favorable

teams should not be landed until they are operationally useful. Four JASCO teams," he said, "took boat spaces of 80 infantrymen and then waited on the beach for more than four hours before their services were required." *3d JASCO SAR*, p. 1.

⁵⁸ Marines of the 2d Separate Engineer Battalion comprised the reef transfer battalion. For the immense job at the reef, they were helped by men of the 3d Service Battalion.

⁵⁹ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *IIIAC SAR*; *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*; *5th FltDep SAR*; *1st ProvMarBrig URpts* Nos. 1-12, 21Jul-1Aug44,

terrain than the division. The enemy, however, supplied the resistance which the earth itself did not. In spite of the preassault bombardment, there were Japanese waiting for the Marines—deafened and shocked, but waiting grimly. The beach defenses, some of them intact although scarred by gunfire, included concrete pillboxes and a trench system with machine gun emplacements and tank traps. Casualties were numerous at Yellow Beach 2, where Marines received savage fire from the concrete blockhouse on Gaan Point—a cornerstone of the beach defense—and small arms, mortar, and machine gun fire from other well-concealed positions overlooking the beach. (See Map VII, Map Section.)

Brigade assault troops set foot on Guam at 0832. At the extreme left, the 1st Battalion, 22d Marines landed on Yellow Beach 1, while 2/22 went ashore on Yellow Beach 2 and the 3d Battalion, boated in LCVPs, marked time at the line of departure, in ready reserve. When ordered, the Marines of 3/22 would transfer at the edge of the reef to LVTs returning empty from

hereafter *1st ProvMarBrig URpts*; 22d Mar Jnl, 21Jul-16Aug44, hereafter *22d Mar Jnl*; 1/4 WarD, 30May-9Sep44, hereafter *1/4 WarD*; 3/4 WarD, 21Jul-9Aug44, hereafter *3/4 WarD*; 1/22 Jnl, 21Jul-9Aug44, hereafter *1/22 Jnl*; 6th TkbN SAR, dtd 30Mar45, hereafter *6th TkbN SAR*; Condit and Turnblad, *Hold High the Torch*; Charles O. West, et. al., eds., *Second to None! The Story of the 305th Infantry in World War II* (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1949), hereafter West, *Second to None*; LtCol Max Myers, ed., *Ours to Hold it High: The History of the 77th Infantry Division in World War II* (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1947), hereafter Myers, *Ours to Hold it High*.

the beach.⁶⁰ Led by their share of the 37 armored amphibians assigned to the brigade, assault troops of the 4th Marines landed on White Beaches 1 and 2—the 2d Battalion on the left and the 1st on the right, with 3/4 in reserve.⁶¹ At 0846 Lieutenant Colonel Shapley reported “battalions landed and received mortar fire on beaches.”⁶² The brigade had begun its battle for Guam.

The 22d Marines suffered a considerable loss of men and equipment while landing, but once the troops were some 200 yards inland, out of range of the Japanese guns aimed at the beaches, progress was easier—at least briefly so. The 2d Battalion (Lieutenant Colonel Donn C. Hart) had advanced to high ground about 1,000 yards inland before noon, when it began to receive artillery fire, a foretaste of the resistance beyond the beaches. Such fire increased as Lieutenant Colonel Hart reorganized on the high ground and prepared to move out at 1250 to seize his portion of the brigade objective, a line which included the crest of Mt. Alifan and the village of Agat. Progress that afternoon was measured by inches. When a Japanese dual-purpose gun stopped Company E, the battalion commander requested an air strike. But the strafing hit the front lines, and casual-

ties resulted when several bombs fell in the vicinity of Company F. The accident prevented resumption of the attack before the battalion received orders to dig in for the night.

The 1st Battalion (Lieutenant Colonel Walfried H. Fromhold) had wheeled left toward Agat after landing. The villagers had long since deserted the town, but the rubble left by the naval and air bombardment was still inhabited—by Japanese snipers. The Marines expected to encounter organized resistance from the surrounding area, if not from the town itself. While Company A moved rapidly across the rice paddies, Company B, to the left, advanced up the beach. Both units reported little opposition, but Lieutenant Colonel Fromhold took the precaution of committing the battalion reserve, Company C, on the seaward flank.⁶³

In the ruins of Agat, the Marines received some sniper fire, but at 1020 Lieutenant Colonel Fromhold reported: “We have Agat.”⁶⁴ By 1130 the 1st Battalion was at Harmon Road, which led from the middle of Agat to the Maanot Pass on the northern shoulder of Mt. Alifan, and the regimental commander ordered the capture of the rest of the town.

Company C, on the extreme left of

⁶⁰ “The LVT waves had been ordered to proceed inland a distance of 1,000 yards from the beach before stopping to unload, but that was found to be impracticable, except in isolated places, due to obstacles and mines inland of the beach.” *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*, p. 4.

⁶¹ The 3d Battalion began landing on White Beach 2 at 0930. Due to failure of radio communications, the reserve battalion of the 22d Marines did not receive orders to land until 1236.

⁶² *1st ProvMarBrig Jnl*, 21Jul44.

⁶³ Regimental headquarters then attached Company I as the 1/22 reserve, after landing the company on Yellow Beach 2 at 1010. The 3d Battalion headquarters and Company K landed at 1255 and moved to an assembly area. At 1615, Company L was attached to 2/22. At 1630, the 3d Battalion, less Companies I and L, moved to set up defenses for Yellow Beach 1.

⁶⁴ *22d Mar Jnl*, 21Jul44.

the brigade, had some rough going that afternoon. While attempting to flank an insignificant mound east of Agat, the Marines received machine gun fire from the beach 50 yards away, which forced their withdrawal to a series of trenches near the foot of the hill. Here the men were pinned down for an hour. When a reserve platoon of Company I was sent forward, the Marines renewed the attack, only to be turned back again by the intolerable fire of automatic weapons concealed in a maze of underbrush.

In graphic language, a Marine officer described the situation: ⁶⁵

. . . the Marines didn't know where the emplacements were, and many of them died trying to find out. The men wondered and waited, and dug in for the night.

Then occurred one of those inexplicable things known to every Marine who has fought Japs, and understood by none. Down a trail leading to the center of the trench marched 12 Japs. They carried the machine guns—three heavies and a light—which had held up the American advance all afternoon. The Japs were riddled by Marine bullets. 'Those Nips were so heavy with slugs we couldn't lift them,' said one of the men.

The fighting had depleted Company C. At 1705, the commander reported he had only 100 effectives, including the reserve platoon, and would "need help for tonight." ⁶⁶ A second reserve platoon was moved up. The battalion commander ordered Company C to fall back 50 yards to a better position for the night and to tie in with Company B. At 2000, all companies of the battalion

were dug in, believing they could hold their positions until morning.⁶⁷

The 1st Battalion, 22d Marines had lost a number of men on W-Day. The handling of casualties had been complicated for hours after the landing because a shell from a Japanese 75mm field gun hit an aid station party, destroying medical supplies and injuring every member except one. Not until afternoon did the battalion have a doctor, but it was still short of corpsmen, stretchers, and bearers. Evacuation was hampered until an amphibian tractor was obtained.

It was the shortage of amphibian tractors, due to losses, that was chiefly responsible for the supply headaches that plagued the brigade on W-Day. Commanders called for more ammunition at the frontlines. When the situation did not improve, General Shepherd sent word to the commander of the Southern Transport Group and to the control vessel:

Supplies not coming ashore with sufficient rapidity. Believe delay at transfer line at edge of reef. Expedite movement, with preference to all types ammunition.⁶⁸

Getting supplies transferred at the reef was never a picnic; with insufficient LVTs, the difficulties were compounded and the tasks made even harder. Another handicap was the deposit of silt at the inner edge of the reef, which caused some of the amphibian tractors and DUKWs to bog down.

⁶⁷ General Shepherd had ordered that the brigade attack cease not later than 1700 and that particular attention be paid to defenses in depth and maintenance of a local reserve against possible counterattacks. 1st ProvMarBrig OpO No. 9, dtd 21Jul44.

⁶⁸ 1st ProvMarBrig Jnl, 21Jul44.

⁶⁵ Kaufman, "Attack on Guam," p. 3.

⁶⁶ 1/22 Jnl, 21Jul44.

Rubberboat causeways and ship life rafts partially helped to relieve the congestion on the reef, and every available man was put to work here.⁶⁹

Among the brighter aspects of W-Day were the optimum conditions for use of armor. With the advance inland, 1/22 came to "good tank country" before noon and reported it "would like to use the tanks here."⁷⁰ The 22d Marines armor support had reached the reef at 0840 and run into mortar fire, mines, and shell holes while moving onto the beaches; two tanks submerged before getting ashore.

Due to the condition of the reef, the tank company of the 22d Marines had been ordered to land on the 4th Marines beaches and then travel along the waterline to join its regiment. The detour took time but it was not without benefit, for en route the tanks destroyed the troublesome Japanese emplacement at Gaan Point, knocking out one of the guns at a range of 50 yards.⁷¹ Machine gun and mortar positions along the beach were also fired upon. The tanks reported to 2/22, according to orders, but the lack of opposition and the unsuitable terrain there suggested support of 1/22 instead, and armor led the afternoon attack by Company A. To-

⁶⁹ Except for Company B, which went ashore on Red Beach 2, the assault echelon of the 5th Field Depot was landed over the Yellow and White Beaches and attached to the brigade. The pioneer companies of the 4th and 22d Marines passed to control of the brigade shore party.

⁷⁰ 1/22 *Jnl*, 21Jul44.

⁷¹ A misfortune of the trip was that two tanks got stuck in shell holes on the beach. In retrieving the vehicles, the Marines suffered several casualties from mortar and artillery fire.

ward evening, tanks were sent to reinforce the hard-hit Company C.

Before dark of W-Day, the Marines of 2/22 could see the 4th Marines to their right, across a deep gully. Lieutenant Colonel Shapley's regiment had moved rapidly inland after meeting negligible enemy resistance at the beaches. Up to an hour after the landing, casualties were still "very light."⁷²

The immediate ground encountered by the 4th Marines was more flat than that the 22d Marines had met; in fact, the elevations were so low that the maps did not show them. The Japanese knew of them, however. One such rise—it was 10 to 20 feet high—lay in the path of the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines, at a distance of less than 100 yards from the beach. The Japanese were dug in on the reverse slope, and the pocket of resistance briefly delayed the advance of 2/4. By 0947, however, Lieutenant Colonel Shapley reported that the 2d Battalion (Major John S. Messer) was 700 yards inland.

The 1st Battalion (Major Bernard W. Green) had landed with Company A and Company B in the assault. When 30 yards from the beach, Company B, on the left, had two Marines killed and three wounded by machine gun fire before the pillbox from which it came was located and its five defenders killed. Company A reported less opposition, but a platoon leader was killed by enemy fire while crossing an open rice paddy.

When Companies A and B were some 700 yards inland, in contact with 2/4, the reserve Company C was landed and turned right to attack Hill 40 and

⁷² 1st *ProvMarBrig Jnl*, 21Jul44.

Bangi Point. The latter had been heavily worked over by naval gunfire and was readily occupied, but Hill 40 was still bristling with live Japanese and machine guns whose fire halted the attack by Company C. When Company A, to the left, also caught some of the fire, Major Green called up two tanks, which supported a second and successful assault of the hill. At 1130 two companies of the reserve 3d Battalion (Major Hamilton M. Hoyler) started forward to relieve the 1st Battalion and free it to push on toward Mt. Alifan. Company K took over Hill 40 and Bangi Point, relieving Company C which reverted to regimental reserve. Company I moved up on the left flank in the battalion zone and relieved Company A. One platoon of the reserve Company L was assigned to seize Alutom Island off Bangi Point, which it found undefended. The rest of the company moved into a small river valley 300 yards upstream and straight east of Alutom Island.

Before noon, the two assault battalions of the 4th Marines had reached the initial regimental objective line, over 1,000 yards inland. At 1345, on brigade order, Lieutenant Colonel Shapley resumed the attack to seize the brigade objective, including the peak of Mt. Alifan. Scattered resistance was encountered as the Marines crossed open fields, but by 1700 they reached the rough and wooded ground at the foot of the mountain.

Digging in for the night, the men prepared for an expected counter-attack. Company B set up a roadblock on Harmon Road; five tanks of the 4th Marines Tank Company were parked in a hollow just off the road, not far from

the 2/4 CP. The regimental line stretched from heights above the Ayuja River around the lower slopes of Mt. Alifan to the beach at Bangi Point. It was a long line, measuring about 1,600 yards, and strongpoints had to be wisely located to cover the gaps with fire. Lieutenant Colonel Shapley also bolstered the line by tying in his Reconnaissance Platoon and an engineer detachment on the Company A left. Company C, kept in reserve near the regimental command post, would be ready for action if needed.

The brigade command post, located about 200 yards southeast of Gaan Point, had opened at 1350, when General Shepherd assumed command ashore. When he reported the brigade situation at the end of W-Day, the southern beachhead measured about 4,500 yards long and 2,000 yards deep:

Own casualties about 350. Enemy unknown. Critical shortages fuel and ammunition all types. Think we can handle it. Will continue as planned tomorrow.⁷³

The next day the brigade commander would have the reserve 305th Infantry Regiment at hand. Its 2d Battalion had landed on the afternoon of W-Day. With no LVTs to use—no Marine amphibian tractors were available and the Army had none—the soldiers had to wade ashore from their LCVPs, which could not cross the reef or negotiate the shallow waters beyond it. It was a blessing that the Japanese were too involved with the Marines to endanger the Army landing with fire, but the curse of sharp coral and deep potholes plagued the watery approach by foot. After reorganizing on White Beach 1,

⁷³ *1st ProvMarBrig Jnl*, 21Jul44.

the battalion moved to an assembly area about 400 yards inland from Gaan Point.

At 1430, General Shepherd ordered the rest of the 305th to land; owing to communication problems, the regimental commander (Colonel Vincent J. Tanzola) did not receive the message for an hour. He had only enough craft to move one battalion, and he turned to the 1st (Lieutenant Colonel James E. Landrum), but naval officers had received no landing instructions and refused to dispatch the boats to the reef. As a result, the men of 1/305 waited in their LCVPs until 1730 when the brigade confirmed the movement. With darkness fast approaching, Colonel Tanzola suggested suspension of the battalion landing. General Shepherd, however, desired that the reserve get ashore that night, so the 1st Battalion continued on to the beach. Again the troops had to wade ashore, but now the water had become chest-high from the incoming tide, and, though weighted with their gear, some soldiers attempted swimming. By 2130, 1/305 was digging in on land. The 3d Battalion followed; it was 0200 before the leading waves got to the reef, and 0600 before the last men got to shore. An hour later, the battalion was still wet and tired but reorganized.⁷⁴ The landing of the 305th had been a confused and dragged-out affair, but it revealed a stamina that

⁷⁴ The commander of 3/305, was able to borrow five LVTs from the Marines, and the later waves of the battalion were taken across the reef by four of the vehicles while the fifth LVT was used as a control vehicle. Col Edward A. Chalgren, Jr., USA, ltr to Head, HistBr, G-3, HQMC, dtd 23Jan53.

was to be indicated again in battle.

One battery of the 305th Field Artillery Battalion was landed at dark on White Beach 1 and attached to the Brigade Artillery Group.⁷⁵ General Shepherd stressed the early landing of artillery, and he wanted the Corps 1st 155mm Howitzer Battalion to get ashore before the second day on Guam. At 1835, however, he could report that only three 155mm howitzers had been landed.⁷⁶

The brigade's two pack howitzer battalions were in position with batteries registered before dark. The weapons of these battalions had been loaded on DUKWs, which delivered the goods despite jagged coral heads and potholes. Actually, there was only one point where it was practical for the amphibian trucks to move to the beach from the reef edge, so their traffic was restricted. As soon as they had delivered their loads of howitzers and ammunition, the DUKWs were pressed into service as cargo carriers, joining the LVTs at the transfer line.

Unlike the operations at the northern

⁷⁵ The battalion had been loaded on five different ships, complicating the task of getting ashore. The unit report describes some of the woe of landing on a tropical Pacific island: the battalion "was brought to the edge of the reef in LCMs, and then an attempt was made to drive across the reef. In most cases vehicles stalled and had to be towed. Equipment was soaked in salt water, and two howitzers were out of action for several days." 305th Fld-ArtyBn OpRpt, dtd 14Aug44 (WW II Recs-Div, FRC, Alexandria, Va.)

⁷⁶ The 1st 155mm Howitzer Battalion of the Corps Artillery was to reinforce fires of the brigade. Battery C would be attached on landing to the Brigade Artillery Group.

beachhead, where the water was more shallow and it was possible to set up some cranes on coral heads at the sharp edge of the reef dropoff, all cranes off the Agat beaches had to be barge mounted. Most cargo transfer took place in deep water, utilizing the barges or makeshift raft platforms as floating dumps. The shortage of LVTs, as a result of W-Day casualties, was the

crowning logistic difficulty and kept the supply situation tight on shore. Recognizing this, Admiral Conolly ordered unloading to continue through the night to insure that the brigade had adequate supplies for its mission. Regardless of the logistic situation, General Shepherd felt that his men could handle whatever the enemy should attempt that night or the next day.

Consolidating a Foothold

*FIRST NIGHT AT AGAT*¹

The day had not gone well for the enemy's *38th Regiment*. Most of the men in the two *1st Battalion* companies that had tried to hold the Agat beach defenses were dead by noon, including the commander of *1/38* who was killed as he led his headquarters and reserve elements in a "Banzai" counterattack against 4th Marines assault troops. The guns of the two artillery batteries that had fired in direct support of the beach defenses had been demolished by naval gunfire and air bombardment. Only a few members of the gun crews survived the destructive fire.

On the northern flank of the beachhead, the 22d Marines had wiped out forward elements of *2/38* that tried to hold Agat. Most of the units of the enemy battalion were still intact, however, when darkness fell. Since the battalion commander had lost contact with regimental headquarters at about 1200, he had little knowledge of how the battle was going except on his own front, where it was going badly.

To the south of the Marine positions,

¹ Unless otherwise noted the material in this section is derived from: *1st ProvMarBrig WarD*; *1st ProvMarBrig URpts*; *22d Mar Jnl*; *1/4 WarD*; *3/4 WarD*; *6th TkBn SAR*; *77th InfDiv* and *1st ProvMarBrig NGF LnOs Rpts to CGFMFPac*, variously dtd 14-24Aug 44; *GSDF Study*; Myers, *Ours to Hold it High*.

the *8th Company* of *3/38* was committed early on W-Day to reinforce the *1st Battalion* platoons that had tried to hold Hill 40 and Bangi Point. The remainder of the *3d Battalion*, spread out through a defensive sector stretching to Facpi Point and beyond, was assembled by its commander by mid-afternoon, ready to move against the American beachhead. Marine intelligence officers considered the situation was ripe for a Japanese counterattack—and a counterattack was coming.²

From his command post on the slopes of Mt. Alifan, Colonel Tsunetaro Suenaga had seen the Americans overwhelm his defenses along the island shore. The resulting swift inland advance of Marine infantry and tanks threatened to make a mockery of the attempt by the *38th Regiment* to hold the Agat sector unless the Japanese commander regained the initiative. Suenaga, who felt that his only chance to retrieve the situation lay in an all-out counterattack, gave orders for his

² Contemporary intelligence studies by the brigade and IIIAC located *3/38* in reserve in the Agana area on W-Day. This error was repeated in text and maps in both Lodge, *Recapture of Guam*, and Crowl, *Marianas Campaign*. The best Japanese account of the battle, the *GSDF Study*, correctly places the battalion in the Agat sector and sheds fresh light on conflicting evidence of 1944, which was the basis of the original order of battle information.

battalions to prepare for a three-pronged assault against the center and both flanks of the 1st Brigade position. By word of mouth and runner, all *1st Battalion* survivors of the day's battles were ordered to assemble at regimental headquarters.

At about 1730, Colonel Suenaga telephoned the *29th Division CP* to inform General Takashina of his counterattack plans. At first, the general refused permission for the attack because the regiment had been "badly mauled during the day,"³ but finally, in view of the overall battle situation, he reluctantly authorized the assault.⁴ Takashina cautioned the colonel, however, to make plans for reassembling his men following the counterattack in order to continue the defense of Mt. Alifan. Doubt about the outcome of the attack was obviously shared by Suenaga, who, soon after this call, burned the colors of the *38th Regiment* to prevent their capture.

The pending Japanese counterattack was fully anticipated by General Shepherd's veteran troops. All along the Marine front lines as darkness deepened, company and battalion mortars

registered their fire along possible avenues of approach. Taking position offshore, gunfire support ships checked into the control nets shared with the liaison officers and spotter teams. The six pack howitzer batteries of the Brigade Artillery Group made preparations for their part in the night's proceedings.

The early hours of the evening were tense but quiet. Occasional brief flare-ups of firing marked the discovery of enemy infiltrators. Finally, just before midnight, a flurry of mortar shells burst on the positions of Company K of 3/4, on the right flank of the brigade line. Japanese infantrymen, bathed in the eerie light of illumination flares, surged forward toward the dug-in Marines. The fighting was close and bitter, so close that six Marines were bayoneted in their foxholes before combined defensive fires drove the enemy back.⁵

This counterattack was but the first of many that hit all along the beach-head defenses during the rest of the night. Illumination was constant over the battlefield once the Japanese had committed themselves; naval gunfire liaison officers kept a parade of 5-inch star shells exploding overhead. Where the light shed by the naval flares seemed dim to frontline commanders, 60mm mortars were called on to throw up additional illumination shells. The attacking enemy troops were nakedly exposed to Marine rifles and machine

³ *GSDF Study*, p. 151.

⁴ A Marine officer, well acquainted with the Japanese accounts of this action and the personalities involved, commented: "In my judgement, permission to launch this piecemeal counterattack was given because the 38th Japanese Regiment was isolated and on the extreme right flank of the American landing (Japanese left flank). As this regiment was isolated and therefore not available to the overall attack which was planned for later, the Division Commander gave his permission, with hopes of turning the American flank or at least delaying the inland movement of the 1st Marine Brigade." *Metzger memo*.

⁵ Bevan G. Cass, ed., *History of the Sixth Marine Division* (Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1948), p. 15, hereafter Cass, *6th MarDiv History*.

guns and the lethal bombardment directed by forward observers for heavier supporting weapons. The carnage was great, but the men of the *3d Battalion, 38th Infantry* kept trying to break through the American lines.⁶

Hill 40, 300 yards inland from Bangi Point, became the focal point of the *3/38* attack. The platoon of Company K holding the small rise was hard pressed and driven out of its positions twice, but rallied each time, counter-attacked, and recovered its ground. Similar dogged efforts by Major Hoyer's men kept the remainder of the *3/4* defenses intact, but when small arms ammunition ran low in the forward holes, the Marines reserved their fire for sure targets. The defensive fusillade, however, had accomplished its purpose; there were few Japanese left alive in front of Company K.

In the confusion of the fighting, small groups of the enemy, armed with demolition charges, made their way through the lines headed for the landing beaches. Some of these Japanese stumbled into the night defensive perimeters of the 1st and 2d Battalions of the 305th Infantry; those that did were killed by the alert soldiers. Other Japanese made life miserable for the Marine artillerymen that were firing in

⁶ A Japanese prisoner taken on Guam aptly described the attacking troops' dilemma in a situation that occurred frequently on the island, noting: "We had been thinking that the Japanese might win through a night counter-attack, but when the star shells came over one after the other we could only use our men as human bullets and there were many useless casualties and no chance of success." Quoted in CominCh, *The Marianas*, Chap 3, p. 13.

support of the frontline troops. As one battery executive officer recalled:

By 0130, we were up to our necks in fire missions and infiltrating Japanese. Every so often, I had to call a section out for a short time so it could take care of the intruders with carbines and then I would send it back into action again.⁷

Explosive-laden parties of enemy soldiers got as far as the beach road, where they disabled two weapons carriers and three LVTs before they were gunned down. A platoon from the Ammunition Company, 5th Field Depot intercepted and killed 14 Japanese headed for the brigade ammunition dump.⁸ The 4th Marines Tank Company also had a rough night with infiltrators; 23 were killed in and around the service park.

Not all the Japanese that found their way into the rear areas of the brigade came through the thinly spread positions on the south flank of the beachhead. A few filtered through the 22d Marines lines on the north, and others were offshoots of the force that attacked the 4th Marines units dug in on the lower slopes of Mt. Alifan. Here, where Colonel Suenaga was in the forefront of the assault troops, the Japanese made an inspired effort to break through to the beach, but in vain. In the course of the fighting the enemy commander himself was killed.

Japanese probing attacks began hitting all along the lines of *1/4* shortly before midnight, but the fire fights that developed were just preliminaries to

⁷ Capt Benjamin S. Read ltr to Capt Orlan R. Lodge, dtd 3Jan52, quoted in Lodge, *Recapture of Guam*, p. 55.

⁸ *5th FldDep SAR*, p. 7.

the main event. At about 0230, the rumble of tanks was heard above the din of battle by the Marines guarding Harmon Road. A hurry-up call for Marine tanks was sent to the 2/4 CP, where a platoon of the regimental tank company was on alert for just such an eventuality. First two and later the remaining three mediums of the platoon moved up to the area where Company B held blocking positions on the road. At 0300, Marine infantry and tank machine guns opened up on a column of Japanese light tanks as they approached the American lines. When tracers located the targets, tank gunners and a bazooka team close by the roadside opened fire at pointblank range. The first two enemy tanks were hit by rockets before the bazooka gunner was cut down by the return fire. The 75s of the Shermans also hit both lead tanks and two others besides. Helped by the light of burning tanks and the flares which sputtered overhead, the men of Company B beat back the Japanese infantry that had accompanied the abortive tank thrust.

To the right of the Harmon Road positions, Company A had a hard night-long struggle to hold its ground against the Japanese troops that repeatedly charged down the heavily wooded slopes of the mountain. But the Marines did hold, despite casualties that reduced one rifle platoon to a strength of four able-bodied men.⁹ By dawn, the worst part of the night's

battle to hold the center of the brigade line was over. As the sun came up, a Japanese tank was spotted well up in the mountain pass near the Maanot Reservoir. A Marine Sherman, one of those that had helped repulse the night's attacks, fired four armor-piercing shells at a range later figured at 1,840 yards, and scored two hits, setting the tank afire.

Marine tanks, sharpshooting or otherwise, were not needed on the northern flank of the perimeter during the night's fighting. Although there was a constant drumfire from enemy infiltration attempts all along the 22d Marines lines, there was no all-out effort by the Japanese, since the commanding officer of 2/38 had received no orders to join in the counterattack of his regiment. Only his *6th Company*, which was positioned near Maanot Pass, got caught up in the *38th Infantry* attempt to break through the Marine lines. As a consequence, Company G on the right flank of the lines of 2/22 had a busy night of fighting, killing 30 enemy troops between 0100 and 0500. Bands of infiltrators that did get into the rear areas harassed the 22d Marines CP until daylight, when Colonel Schneider's headquarters troops mopped up the area.

Dawn brought a general cleanup of the surviving Japanese infiltrators throughout the brigade perimeter. Local attacks supported by tanks quickly restored the lines wherever they had contracted for better night defense during the height of the fighting. The brigade lost at least 50 men killed and twice that number wounded during the

⁹ Company A operated with two platoons for the rest of the campaign since replacements were not available. Maj Orville V. Bergren ltr to CMC, dtd 6Jun47, hereafter *Bergren ltr*.

counterattack,¹⁰ but counted over 600 enemy dead within, on, and in front of the perimeter.

After one day and a night of battle, the *38th Regiment* ceased to exist as an effective fighting force. Only its *2d Battalion* was still intact, and it now started to pull back from contact with the 22d Marines and retire toward Orote Peninsula. The dazed and scattered survivors of the counterattack, about 300 men in all, gradually assembled in the woods northeast of Mt. Alifan. There, the senior regimental officer still alive, the artillery battalion commander, contacted the *29th Division* headquarters. He soon received orders to march his group north to Ordot, the assembly point for Japanese reserves in the bitter struggle for control of the high ground that commanded the Asan-Adelup beaches.

BUNDSCHU RIDGE AND CABRAS ISLAND¹¹

There were few members of the enemy's *320th Independent Infantry Battalion* left alive by nightfall on W-Day. Two of its companies, once concentrated in the Chonito Cliff area and the other at Asan Point, had defended the heights

¹⁰ The American casualty total is an estimate based on unit accounts of the fighting. The casualty figures available in contemporary personnel records generally cover a longer period than the time encompassed by the counter-attack.

¹¹ Unless otherwise noted the material in this section is derived from: *3d MarDiv SAR*; *3d Mar Jnl*; *1/3 Jnl*; *2/3 Jnl*; *3/3 Jnl*; *9th Mar R-2 Jnl*, 21Jul-31Aug44, hereafter *9th Mar Jnl*; *21st Mar URpts*, 22Jul-3Nov44, hereafter *21st Mar URpts*; *3/21 Jnl*; *Craig ltr*; *GSDF Study*.

that rimmed the 3d Marine Division beaches. The third rifle company, originally located along the shore east of Adelup Point, had been committed early in the day's fighting to contain the attacks of the 3d Marines. The commander of the *48th IMB*, General Shigematsu, had also committed his brigade reserve, the *319th Battalion*, to the battle for control of the high ground on the left flank of the American beach-head.

According to plan, as soon as the landing area was certain, General Shigematsu assumed command of most of the *29th Division* reserve strength and began its deployment to the rugged hills above the Asan beaches. Elements of the *2d Battalion*, *18th Infantry* plugged holes in the defenses in the center of the Japanese position, where they tangled with the 21st Marines. The *9th Company*, *38th Infantry* reinforced the troops holding the well-concealed emplacements and trenches atop Bundschu Ridge. From positions near Ordot, the *2d* and *3d Battalions* of the *10th Independent Mixed Regiment* were ordered to move out to reinforce 2/18, hard pressed by Colonel Butler's Marines who had seized a lodgement on the cliffs behind Green Beach.

American carrier planes spotted the movement of the *10th IMR* battalions as soon as they began to move out—about 1100. Although the regiment was only 2½ miles from its initial objective, it took most of the long, hot afternoon to reach it. Towards dusk, the leading elements of the *10th* began filing their way up the steep, brush-filled valley between Fonte Plateau and Mt. Macajna. (See Map 27.)

Just about the time that the *10th IMR*

was reaching the relatively open ground along the Mt. Tenjo Road, the *321st* and *322d Independent Infantry Battalions* began moving toward the fighting, too. Leaving one company and a rapid fire gun unit to man its defenses at Agana Bay, the *321st* started south at 2000.¹² An hour earlier, the *322d*, which had 2–3 miles farther to travel, had left Tumon Bay on a forced march for the battlefield.

Using the Fonte River valley as their gateway to the heights, Japanese reserves continued to arrive at their assembly area on Fonte Plateau throughout the night. General Shigematsu, operating from his battle command post in a quarry not far from the road, dispatched reinforcements into the fight as they became available. Repeatedly, as the night wore on, small groups of enemy infantrymen charged out of the brush, hurling grenades and firing their rifles as they attempted to drive the defending Marines off the high ground. Japanese mortar fire tore at the thin American lines throughout these attacks, and casualties were heavy, but the men of the 21st Marines held. The brunt of the assaults fell on 2/21 along its right flank, but Lieutenant Colonel Smoak drew back his right company to the edge of the cliff where it held and beat back all comers.

Helped immensely by the constant flare light overhead, American mortar, artillery, and naval gunfire observers

¹² Convinced that Agana Bay remained a logical landing point for the Americans, the Japanese were reluctant to completely denude its defenses. In addition to the infantry that remained, naval troops continued to hold reserve positions at Tiyan airfield and in the vicinity of the ruins of Agana.

rained a holocaust on the determined attackers. According to Japanese estimates, during this one night's fighting, 2/18 had two-thirds of its men killed or wounded, 2/10 suffered comparably heavy losses, and 3/10 lost "approximately 200 men."¹³ The remaining attackers drew off at dawn to join forces with the troops that General Shigematsu had called up from Agana and Tumon Bay.

Neither of the battalions of the *48th IMB* was able to make its way up through the Fonte valley in time to have a significant effect on the night's fighting. The *321st* in fact was "thrown into utter disorder"¹⁴ by Marine artillery fire as the battalion struggled upward in the darkness, and was scattered again by strafing carrier aircraft after first light. The *322d Battalion*, which followed, could do little more than move into holding positions in the Fonte area, where it arrived near dawn, and wait for a more auspicious occasion to launch a counterattack. The focus of Japanese efforts to dislodge the Marines now shifted from the center to the left of the 3d Division lines.

The Marines of 2/3 and 3/3 that had seized Adelup Point and Chonito Cliff had a precarious hold on their prize terrain. Early in the morning, the men of the *319th* and *320th Independent Infantry Battalions*, who had lost the positions on the 21st, tried to win them back by an all-out counterattack. The situation was serious enough for Colonel Hall to commit all his strength and, at 0605, to request reinforcement from

¹³ *GSDF Study*, p. 153.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

the division reserve. One company of 1/21 was ordered to report to the 3d Marines immediately, the shore party on the Red Beaches was alerted to back up the lines on the left, and priority of air support was given to the 3d Marines. Offshore the fire support ships that had illuminated and fired harassing fires in the Agana area all night were anxious to give all the help they could, but the enemy was too close to the Marine lines. The commander of the destroyer *McKee* could see Japanese troops attacking the men on Chonito Cliff, but could not obtain permission to fire from control parties ashore.¹⁵

While some Japanese units made frontal attacks on the Marine positions, others found their way along the dry stream bed that cut between Adelup Point and the looming cliffs. These attackers moved through the 3/3 command post area and began climbing the slopes in the rear of the Marine foxholes. Fire from Lieutenant Colonel Houser's headquarters troops and from supporting LVTs eventually stopped this thrust and eliminated the remaining Japanese that had penetrated the lines.¹⁶ By 0830, the enemy had started to withdraw and the threat of the counterattack was ended. On the heels of the retreating Japanese, the Marines began to advance but the enemy was able to throw up an almost impenetrable barrier of artillery, mortar, and small arms fire.

The nature of the Japanese counterattacks, and of the terrain that gave them added impetus, provided the pat-

tern for the American response. Originally, the 3d Division had scheduled a three-regiment attack for 0700 on the 22d. Now the 21st Marines held fast, since any advance would dangerously expose its left flank. The 3d Marines had to come abreast of the 21st to make a concerted advance possible. The key to that advance appeared to be possession of Bundschu Ridge. Until the 3d Marines could win its way to the top of this well-defended salient, there could be little progress on the left or center of the 3d Division lines.

The situation was different on the right, where Colonel Craig's regiment fought its way into the flats beyond Asan Point and eliminated most of the defending company of the *320th Battalion* in the process. Elements of *3/18* then attempted to slow the Marine advance during the rest of the day. After nightfall, as the enemy battalion commander prepared to launch a counterattack, he was ordered instead to move most of his men, supplies, and equipment into the hills east of the 9th Marines positions. The Japanese were concentrating their remaining strength on the high ground, and the *18th Infantry* was to hold the left flank of the main defensive positions. As a result of this withdrawal, only small delaying groups countered the advance of 1/9 and 2/9 when they jumped off at 0715 on 22 July.

Inside of two hours the assault companies of both battalions were consolidating their hold on the day's first objective, the high ground along the Tatgua River. Resistance was light and plans were laid for a further advance which would include seizure of the villages of Tepungan and Piti. At

¹⁵ CO, USS *McKee* ActRpt of Guam Op, dtd 7Aug44 (OAB, NHD).

¹⁶ *Bastian ltr.*

1300, the battalions moved out again, and by 1700, 2/9 had captured both villages and the shell- and bomb-pocked ruins of the Piti Navy Yard as well. Inland, the 1st Battalion had kept pace with difficulty, as it climbed across the brush-covered slopes and gulleys that blocked its path. It was obvious that the Japanese had been there in strength; recently abandoned defensive positions were plentiful. The fire of the few enemy soldiers that remained, however, kept the advancing Marines wary and quick to deploy and reply in kind.

While 1/9 and 2/9 were driving forward to secure the coastal flats and their bordering hills, Colonel Craig was readying 3/9 for the assault on Cabras Island. The regimental weapons company, a company of Shermans from the 3d Tank Battalion, and 18 LVT(A)s from the 1st Armored Amphibian Battalion were all alerted to support the infantry, which would make a shore-to-shore attack mounted in LVTs. The morning advance of the regiment had uncovered an area, near the mouth of the Tatgua River, that Craig had designated for the assembly of troops and amphibious vehicles.

Shortly after 1400, the armored amphibians crawled out across the reef and began shelling the beaches on the eastern end of Cabras. The tractor-borne assault platoons followed, avoiding the mined causeway and moving across the reef and water. At 1425, they clattered ashore on the elongated islet.¹⁷ There was no defending fire,

¹⁷ "Due to the steep banks in the landing area, it was necessary to make and issue scaling ladders and these were used." Although

but there was a defense. Marines soon found that the ground was liberally strewn with mines spread out beneath a blanket of thick brush; as a result, the going was cautious and slow. At 1650, Major Hubbard reported that 3/9 had advanced 400 yards without making enemy contact, but that the combination of mines and brambles would keep his men from reaching the end of the island before dark. On order, the battalion halted and set up for night defense; two platoons of tanks reinforced the beach positions. With no opposition in sight, the early capture of Cabras on 23 July seemed assured.

Although the situation of the 9th Marines was a favorable one, the regiment was fully committed and holding far longer lines than either the 3d or the 21st. Impressed by the need for strengthening his positions on the left and center of the beachhead and for maintaining the impetus of the attack, General Turnage asked General Geiger to attach a regimental combat team of the corps reserve to the 3d Marine Division. The one reserve infantry battalion that was available to the division commander was "40% depleted"¹⁸ as a result of two days' combat, as 2/21 had been pulled out of the cliff positions it had defended so ably and replaced by 1/21 late on the 22d. Colonel Butler, wanting to give maximum effect to any 21st Marines attack on W plus 2, had requested the switch of battalions in division reserve and the last units were

none of the assault troops were hit, one LVT was blown up by a mine, while it was returning to the main island; there were four casualties. *Craig 22Jun65 ltr.*

¹⁸ *3d MarDiv Jnl*, entry of 1455, 22Jul44.

exchanged in place on the shell-battered heights at 2115.

When Lieutenant Colonel Williams' battalion moved into the lines, it had the responsibility of extending the zone of action of the 21st Marines 200 yards to the left of the regimental boundary, which had remained unchanged since the landing. This shift, which appeared to offer a better control point for contact, had been directed by General Turnage in order to improve the opportunity for the 3d and 21st Marines to link their frontline positions. The gap had opened and stayed open, not as a result of a lack of will but of a way, to close it. Patrols attempting to find a lateral route which joined the flanks of 1/3 and 2/21 (later 1/21) could find none that did not include a time-consuming return to the lower slopes back of the beaches. No amount of maps, terrain models, or aerial photographs, nor advance intelligence from former island residents, could do full justice to the nightmare of twisting ravines, jumbled rocks, and steep cliffs that hid beneath the dense vegetation.

With such terrain on its flanks and upper reaches, Bundschu Ridge was a natural fortress for the relative handful of Japanese troops that defended it. Throughout the fighting on 22 July, Major Aplington tried repeatedly to work some of his men up onto the high ground that appeared to lead to the enemy positions. Using Company C on the right and coordinating his attack with Company E of 2/3 on the left, the 1st Battalion commander maintained constant pressure on the Japanese, but could make no permanent headway. Despite some temporary success, Marine units that fought their way to the

high ground could not hold what they had won in the face of punishing enemy mortar and machine gun fire. About the only encouraging event in the day's action came near nightfall, when the remnants of Company A were finally able to pull out of exposed positions on the nose of Bundschu Ridge, after Japanese fire, which had pinned them down, slackened and then ceased.

General Turnage planned an all-out attempt to erase the Bundschu salient on 23 July and to make sure that there was a firm and permanent juncture between the 3d and 21st Marines. In a way, the Japanese helped him by sacrificing more of their men in another fruitless attempt to break through the left flank positions of the 21st Marines on the night of 22–23 July. The counterattack that developed against 1/21 was not the one, however, that was planned. The operations officer of the *29th Division*, Lieutenant Colonel Hideyuki Takeda, had issued careful instructions to the commander of the *321st Independent Infantry Battalion* to work his assault units up close to the Marine lines, to throw grenades at the unsuspecting Americans, and then to withdraw in the resulting confusion.¹⁹ In the heat of combat, the enemy assault platoon commanders ignored their orders and charged the Marines. The results were devastating. Japanese casualties were heavy, and only about 50 men of what had been a 488-man

¹⁹ Curiously, *21st Mar URpts* state that this counterattack opened with "an intense light mortar barrage" and make no mention of the hail of grenades ordered by Lieutenant Colonel Takeda.

battalion remained when the last attackers pulled back at about 0300.

The losses suffered by the Japanese in this attack, and the steady attrition of two days of battle, were rapidly thinning the ranks of the *29th Division* and *44th IMB*. Although there were thousands of service and support troops of varying quality left alive to fight, the number of veteran infantrymen was fast shrinking. The valley between Fonte Plateau and Mt. Macajna, site of the division field hospital and that of the naval guard force too, was crowded with wounded men. Aggravating the medical situation was the fact that the Fonte River, which coursed the valley, was so fouled by blood and bodies that it could not be used as a source of drinking water. Thirsty Japanese troops holding the arc of Asan defenses received short water rations from the small supply that could be carried in from Sinajana.

The enemy situation was deteriorating and no one knew it better than General Takashina. His aggressive defensive tactics had cost him many casualties. Faced with what appeared to be almost certain defeat by a superior force, he had the choice of conserving his strength and prolonging the battle as long as possible or trying to obtain a decisive advantage by a massive, coordinated counterattack. By the 23d, the enemy division commander had made his decision, the key decision in the Japanese defense of Guam. He would stage a full-blown attack employing all the men and guns he could bring to bear on IIIAC positions, while he still had substantial strength in veteran troops. At 1300 on the 23d, he issued orders outlining areas of responsibility for

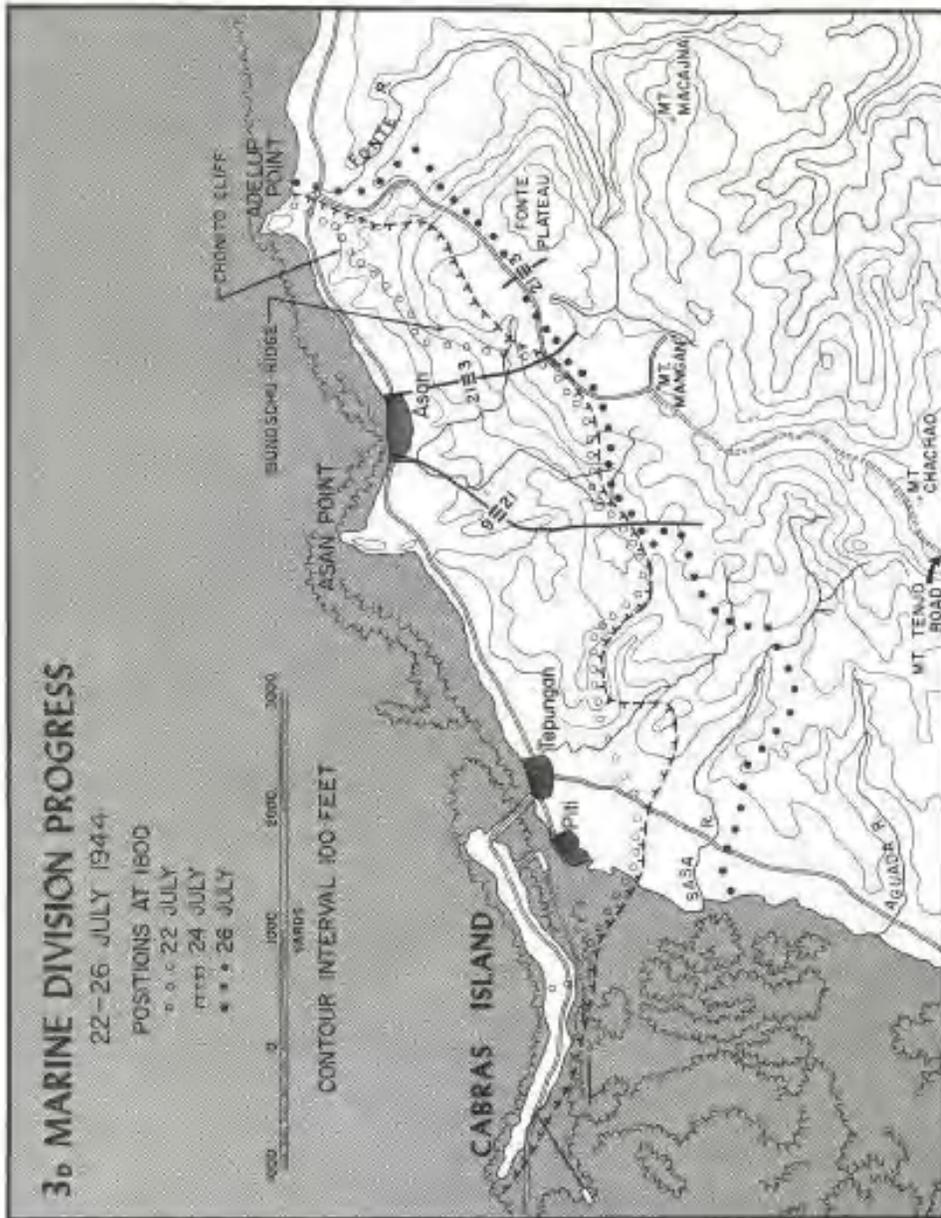
combat and support units in preparing for the assault.

A lot of fighting, and a lot more casualties on both sides, occurred before the Japanese were ready to strike. On the morning of the 23d, the 3d Marines continued its attack to seize a firmer hold on the ridges which overlooked every part of the beachhead. To give Major Aplington more men, and thus a better chance to bridge the troublesome gap between the 3d and 21st Marines, Colonel Hall attached to 1/3 a provisional infantry company formed from his regimental weapons company. Referring to Bundschu Ridge, he reported:

I am going to try to advance up that mess in front of me. What I really need is a battalion whereas I have only 160 men to use on that 500-yard slope. They might move to the top but they couldn't advance on. Company A is down to about 30-40 men with an air liaison officer in charge. Company E is down to half strength. They have no strength to push on.²⁰

To give the new thrust as much impetus as possible, every available supporting weapon—naval guns and carrier air, field and antiaircraft artillery, half-tracks and tanks—bombed the wooded slopes ahead of the 3d Marines before the regiment attacked at 0900. In the center, parallel drives by the 1st and 2d Battalions converged on the Bundschu strongpoint, but the Japanese position was strangely silent. During the night, the enemy had pulled back to fight again on some other ridge of the many that still lay ahead of the Marines. Defense of Bundschu had cost the *9th Company, 38th Infantry*,

²⁰ *3d Mar Jnl, 23Jul44.*



R.F. STIBIL

MAP 27

30 casualties, but the return exacted from the 3d Marines was far greater.

Assault platoons of 1/3 and 2/3 linked up atop the ridge at 1108, and the battalions spent the rest of the day cleaning out nests of enemy riflemen and machine gunners who held out in deftly hidden cliffside and ravine defenses within the Marine lines. The concealment offered the Japanese by the dense vegetation and the cover by numerous caves and bunkers made the task of consolidating the newly won positions a formidable one. The incredible complexity of the cut-up terrain in this relatively small area was clearly demonstrated by the failure of all attempts to make permanent contact on the frontline boundary between the 3d and 21st Marines. On the 23d, a 1/3 patrol in radio contact with both regiments moved out from the left flank of 1/21 and "attempting to rejoin its own lines in broad daylight, over a gap of a few hundred yards . . . was lost." The 3d Division comment on the plight of the patrol was sympathetic, noting that "the innumerable gulleys, valleys, and ridges might as well have been gorges and mountains."²¹

The continued existence of the gap plagued Marine commanders, but the Japanese did little to exploit its potential.²² In fact, they, like the Marines, peppered the area with mortar fire at night to discourage infiltrators.

What the Japanese were really concerned about was readily apparent on

²¹ *3d MarDiv SAR*, p. 4.

²² The commander of 1/3, discounting the threat posed by the gap, did not believe "that the terrain made anything but minor infiltration possible." Maj Henry Aplington II, ltr to CMC, dtd 9Apr47, hereafter *Aplington ltr*.

the 23d, once 3/3 opened its attack. The enemy reaction was swift, violent, and sustained; a heavy fire fight ensued. Lieutenant Colonel Houser's battalion, by virtue of its hard-won positions at Adelup Point and Chonito Cliff, threatened to gain command of the Mt. Tenjo Road where it climbed to the heights. Once the Marines controlled this vital section of the road, tanks and half-tracks could make their way up to Fonte Plateau and bring their guns to bear on the enemy defenses that were holding back the units in the center of the 3d division line.

During the morning's fighting, Houser was hit in the shoulder and evacuated; his executive officer, Major Royal R. Bastian, took command of 3/3. At 1217, the major reported that his assault companies, I and K, had seized the forward slopes of the last ridge before the cliff dropped off sharply to the rear and the Fonte River valley. The Japanese used their positions on the reverse slope to launch counterattacks that sorely pressed the Marine assault troops. Major Bastian put every available rifleman into the front, paring down supporting weapons crews for reinforcements, and his lines held. By 1400, Colonel Hall was ordering all his units to consolidate their hold on the ground they had won and to tie in solidly for night defense.

The main thrust of the 3d Division attack on 23 July was on the left flank; the rest of the division kept pressure on the Japanese to its front. The battalion on the right of the 3d Marines, 1/21, had its hands full destroying a network of caves and emplacements that covered the sides of a depression just forward of its nighttime positions. The 3d Bat-

talion, 21st Marines spent the day improving its positions, establishing outposts well forward of its lines, and tangling with small groups of Japanese, who themselves were scouting the American defenses. In general, the right half of Colonel Butler's zone of action was as quiet as it had been since the night of W-Day.

This absence of significant enemy activity carried over into the 9th Marines zone. Squad-sized Japanese units made sporadic harassing attacks both day and night, but there was little organized enemy opposition. The 3d Battalion finished its occupation of Cabras Island early in the morning and at division order, turned over control of the island to the 14th Defense Battalion at 0900. An hour later, Colonel Craig received word from division that his 2d Battalion would replace 2/21 in division reserve. The regimental commander ordered 3/9 to take over the lines held by Lieutenant Colonel Cushman's unit. The relief was effected at 1230, and Cushman moved 2/9 to the positions formerly occupied by 2/21.

Once it was released to Colonel Butler's control, Lieutenant Colonel Smoak's battalion moved to an assembly area near the 21st Marines left boundary. In the attack on the 24th, 2/21, which was all too familiar with the rugged terrain, would spark the drive to close the gap between regiments. The lone infantry battalion in reserve was all that General Turnage could spare from the front lines; he had learned earlier in the day that he could expect no immediate reinforcement from the IIIAC reserve. General Geiger had decided that the situation ashore did not warrant the landing of a

77th Division combat team in the Asan beachhead.

Enemy activity was markedly less after dark on the 23d than it had been on previous nights. Only 2/21 was seriously threatened, and the Japanese thrust at its lines was turned back by artillery and naval gunfire. Since most of the 3d Division front was held by strongpoints only, the support provided by the howitzers of the 12th Marines and the guns of destroyers and cruisers standing by offshore was vital. The constant harassing fire laid on enemy-held territory and the prompt interdiction of actual or suspected routes of approach to the American positions held the Japanese in check.

The fourth day of attacks to expand the 3d Division beachhead saw no spectacular gains, but Marine assault platoons were able to make steady progress. Yard by yard, they increased their hold on the high ground, and, on the left particularly, won positions that gave access to the Mt. Tenjo Road. Not unexpectedly, the hardest fighting took place in a densely wooded draw in the troublesome boundary area between the 3d and 21st Marines.

Lieutenant Colonel Smoak's battalion stirred up a hornet's nest when it attempted to center its drive to the heights on the draw. In it, Japanese troops were set up in mutually supporting cave positions whose machine guns drove the Marines to cover. Emboldened by this temporary success, the enemy made two counterattacks, which were readily beaten back. Assault units, moving upward on the flanks of the Japanese position, were able to bring fire to bear on the caves, but could not silence the enemy guns. A supporting

air strike at 1205 enabled a platoon working its way up the bottom of the draw to advance 200 yards before heavy fire again forced a halt. This time the carrier planes, although they were mainly on target, dropped three bombs amongst the Marines, causing 17 casualties. Although this unfortunate accident marked the end of the day's advance, 2/21 had accomplished its mission. When Smoak adjusted his lines for night defense, he was able to tie in strongly with both 1/3 and 1/21. The gap was finally closed.

Highlighting the action on this same day, in the relatively quiet sector of the 9th Marines, was the first attempt to contact the brigade. In the morning, a 30-man patrol worked its way south along the Piti-Sumay Road, while a covey of six LVT(A)s guarded its Apra Harbor flank. Scattered rifle and machine gun fire coming from the high ground inland, coupled with fragments flying from a bombing and shelling of Orote Peninsula forced the patrol to turn back after it had gone 2,600 yards. It found evidence that the Japanese had once occupied the area in force and discovered "huge dumps of all classes of supply near the [Aguada River] power plant, enough to service a regiment, but no traces of the regiment."²³

If the 18th Infantry had disappeared from one shore of the harbor, there was ample evidence to show that there was no lack of Japanese on the other side. Soon after night fell on the 24th, the 9th Marines spotted enemy barges along the coast of Orote near Sumay. Star shells were fired by the call fire support ship assigned to the regiment, the de-

stroyer *Franks*,²⁴ and the area of Japanese activity was hammered by newly emplaced 90mm guns of the 14th Defense Battalion on Cabras Island. At 2010, after receiving permission from the shore fire control party with 3/9, which was spotting for it, the *Franks* illuminated the suspected area with its searchlight in order to conserve star shells.²⁵ The light on the ship was shuttered when two 14th Defense searchlights on Cabras took over the sweeping search of cliff, beach, and water, looking for targets for the 90s. The night's events showed plainly that the Japanese on Orote Peninsula were stirring. The Marine observers who knew it best were those who were charged with its capture.

CLOSING OFF OROTE PENINSULA²⁶

The heavy losses suffered by the enemy 38th Infantry in its counterattack on the 1st Marine Brigade perimeter opened the way for a rapid advance on

²⁴ CO, USS *Franks* Rpt of Fire Support during Guam Occupation, dtd 16Aug44 (OAB, NHD).

²⁵ On 23 July, General Geiger had authorized the use of destroyer searchlights for night illumination "in view of limited star [shells] available." *3d MarDiv Jnl*, entry of 23Jul44.

²⁶ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: TG 53.2 OpRpt, dtd 11Sep44 (OAB, NHD), hereafter *TG 53.2 OpRpt*; 77th InfDiv OpRpt FORAGER, 21Jul-16Aug44, containing reports of all major component units (WW II RecsDiv, FRC, Alexandria, Va.) hereafter *77th InfDiv OpRpt*; *77th InfDiv Jnl*; *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*; *1st ProvMarBrig Jnl*; *1st ProvMarBrig URpts*; *22d Mar Jnl*; *1/22 Jnl*; *2/22 Jnl*; *1/4 WarD*; *3/4 WarD*; *6th TkBn SAR*; Cass, *6th MarDiv History*.

²³ *3d MarDiv SAR*, p. 4.

the 22d. Isolated from the rest of the Japanese garrison, the remaining troops were incapable of fighting a delaying action on all fronts. The enemy could muster strength enough to put up a stiff fight to block one route of advance—the road to Orote Peninsula. The task of opening that road fell to the 22d Marines; the rest of the brigade was charged with the mission of reaching and securing the Final Beachhead Line where it ran along the Alifan-Taene massif, crossed Maanot Pass, and reached the high ground leading to Mt. Tenjo. (See Map 26.)

General Shepherd's plan for the brigade operations on W plus 1 called for the 1st and 3d Battalions of Colonel Tanzola's 305th Infantry to pass through the left flank of the 4th Marines and attack to seize and hold Maanot Pass. The 2d Battalion of the 305th was to remain in brigade reserve. The 305th was given responsibility for maintaining contact with the 22d Marines, which was to move out echeloned to the left rear of the Army regiment, making its main effort on the left along the Agat-Sumay Road. The initial objective of the 4th Marines was the capture of Mt. Alifan and the seizure of the ridge leading toward Mt. Taene. Once the regiment secured this commanding ground, 3/4 was to drive south to take Magpo Point, extending the south flank of the beachhead 1,200–1,500 yards beyond Hill 40 and Bangi Point.

By 0740, it became apparent that 1/305 and 3/305 would need several hours to regroup and reorganize after the unavoidable delay and disorganization resulting from their nighttime landing. Consequently, General Shep-

herd ordered 2/305 to move forward and relieve 2/4 in position. The 4th and 22d Marines jumped off at 0900, and the 305th followed suit an hour later, passing through elements of both 2/305 and 2/4 and striking northeast through Maanot Pass. Colonel Tanzola's men found their first taste of combat an easy one to take. Except for scattered opposition by individuals and the sporadic fire of one mortar, the regiment met little resistance. The 3d Battalion, on the left, took its part of the day's objective by 1300, and the 1st Battalion, slowed by thick underbrush and more rugged terrain, came up on line at dusk. Most supporting units of the 305th RCT, including half-tracks, antitank guns, and tanks, came ashore during the day, and the 305th Field Artillery moved into firing positions and registered its 105mm howitzers.²⁷

The terrain problems posed by the heavily wooded slopes that slowed the advance of 1/305 were multiplied in the zone of the 1st Battalion, 4th Marines. The day's objective included the top of Mt. Alifan and the direction of advance was up. The steep sides of the mountain were covered with dense, thorny undergrowth, and only a few trails wound their way through the sprawling tree roots and tangled vines. The mountain itself was a formidable obstacle, but the Japanese made it even more difficult. On the lower slopes, bunkers, reinforced with coconut logs, and some of the numerous caves contained Japanese defenders. These were methodi-

²⁷ Battery B of the 305th had landed late on W-Day but did not move into position and start firing until 0945 on the 22d. 305th FA Bn AAR, 21Jul–10Aug44 (WW II RecsDiv, FRC, Alexandria, Va.).

cally eliminated by the grenades and rifle fire of assault squads of Company C and Company G, attached to 1/4 after the 2d Battalion was relieved by the 305th Infantry.

At about noon, the climb for the mountain peak began, an ascent that grew steadily tougher as the Marines went higher. Fortunately, the Japanese did not contest the last stages of the advance when packs and all excess gear were discarded to lessen the burden on the sweating climbers. Finally, at 1530, a patrol reached the very top, where it could see the other side of the island. The peak proved to be indefensible, so night positions were dug in on the lower slopes, where 1/4 tied in with 1/305 on the left. On the right, where the lines of the battalion extended southwest along the ridge leading to Mt. Taene, the flank hung open.

In order to help block this gap, Company E of 2/4 was attached to 3/4 late in the afternoon of the 22d. Major Hoyler's companies had begun their attack at 1100 to extend the beachhead south. Resistance was light on all company fronts, and naval gunfire, artillery, and mortars helped discourage any Japanese attempt to hold in strength. Company K, advancing across the low, rolling ground along the shore, was supported by a platoon of Shermans, which knocked out enemy machine gun nests before they could do any damage. Once the battalion had reached and secured Magpo Point, extending its lines inland, the tanks set up close to the frontlines to bolster night defenses. There was no significant number of Japanese in front of 3/4, however, to stage a repeat of the wild counterattack on the first night

ashore. The few survivors of 1/38 and 3/38 were already assembling behind Mt. Tenjo to move north to Ordot.

The pattern of light and scattered resistance, which marked the advance of the other regiment of the brigade, was repeated in the right portion of the 22d Marines zone of action. Moving out at 0900, 2/22 had little difficulty in eliminating the few Japanese it met; naval gunfire knocked out several pillboxes, which might have meant more serious opposition. The battalion was held up more by the extreme difficulty of getting supplies up to its assault platoons than it was by enemy activity. LVTs, which might have negotiated the broken, trackless ground, were in such short supply and so vital to the ship-to-shore movement that General Shepherd forbade their use inland except in emergency situations.

Along the shore, where 1/22 attacked astride the Agat-Sumay Road, the supply situation was not a problem but amphibian tractors were still needed. Here the call went out for LVT(A)s to act in lieu of tanks and half tracks. During the morning's action, mediums of the 22d Marines Tank Company helped clear the way through partially abandoned defenses outside Agat, where the enemy had held up the advance on W-Day. Armor had to stop at the Ayuja River, since the only bridge over it had been demolished and the banks were too steep for fording. When the request went back for engineers, LVT(A)s were asked for too, and a platoon was ordered up, to come in by sea if necessary, in order to join the advancing infantry. By late afternoon, Company C of 1/22 had taken Road Junction 5 (RJ 5) and won its

way about 300 yards beyond, fighting through a nest of enemy pillboxes. Company A on the right flank had crossed Old Agat Road. At 1800, Lieutenant Colonel Fromhold ordered his men to dig in along a line about 50–100 yards back of their farthest advances in order to set up stronger defensive positions tied in with 2/22.

The second night ashore in the southern beachhead was a relatively quiet one. There were infiltration attempts at various points all along the perimeter and occasional fires from Japanese mortars and artillery emplaced on Orote Peninsula, but no serious threats to the perimeter. Should another large-scale counterattack come, however, it would be met by a markedly increased volume of supporting fires. Most of the men and guns of General del Valle's III Corps Artillery had landed during the day; the "Long Toms" of the 7th 155-mm Gun Battalion to support the 3d Division and the shorter range pieces of the 1st and 2d 155mm Howitzer Battalions to reinforce the fires of the 1st Brigade and the 77th Division.²⁸ The Light Antiaircraft Group of the 9th Defense Battalion had landed on the 22d also and sited its .50 caliber machine guns and 20mm and 40mm guns in positions where they could improve beach defenses. Lieutenant Colonel Archie E. O'Neill, commanding the 9th Defense Battalion, was placed in charge of all shore party, LVT, and LVT(A)

²⁸ *TF 53 OpRpt*, p. 12. The 2d 155mm Howitzer Battalion had been detached from VAC Artillery at Saipan on 14 July and reassigned to IIIAC to increase available firepower.

units used to defend the beaches and inland beach area perimeter.²⁹

On 23 July, General Geiger was prepared to send thousands of men and guns of the 77th Division ashore in keeping with the prelanding scheme of maneuver. The corps commander conferred with General Bruce early on the 22d and authorized the landing of all but one infantry regiment of the floating reserve. The 307th RCT, less its reinforcing artillery battalion, was to stay on board ship for the time being while the need for its commitment in the 3d Division beachhead was assessed. General Bruce issued warning orders for the landing to all units of his division at 1400 on the 22d and followed through with a request to Admiral Reifsnider that the 306th RCT be landed on White Beach 2 at the earliest practicable daylight hour on the 23d. The Army regiment, commanded by Colonel Aubrey D. Smith, was slated to relieve the 4th Marines in its positions along the southern flank of the beachhead.

At 0800 on the 23d, the 22d Marines and the 305th Infantry attacked to seize an objective line that ran across the neck of Orote Peninsula to Apra Harbor and then southeast to the ridge leading to Mt. Tenjo and south along commanding ground to Maanot Pass. The 305th, with the 1st and 3d Battalions in assault, encountered little opposition to its advance and secured its objective, part of the FBHL, without difficulty. By the day's end, Colonel Tanzola's regiment was digging strong

²⁹ 9th DefBn WarDs, Jul–Aug44, hereafter *9th DefBn WarDs*.

defensive positions along the high ground overlooking Orote Peninsula.

General Bruce had intended to relieve the 4th Marines with the 306th Infantry by nightfall on the 23d so that the Marine regiment could move north to take part in the brigade attack on Orote Peninsula. Since no LVTs or DUKWs could be spared from resupply runs, the soldiers of the 306th had to wade ashore, like those of the 305th before them. Admiral Reifsnider recommended that the men come in at half tide at noon, when the water over the reef would be about waist deep. This timing precluded the early relief of the 4th Marines. The first battalion to land, 3/306, began trudging through the water at about 1130. Three hours later, the Army unit, reinforced by a company of 1/306, began relieving 3/4 in place; a platoon of Marine 37mm guns and one of Sherman tanks remained in position as a temporary measure to strengthen night defenses. The remainder of Colonel Smith's combat team came ashore during the afternoon and went into bivouac behind the 4th Marines lines. Colonels Smith and Tanzola met with General Bruce in the 77th Division advance CP ashore at 1400 to receive orders for the next day's action, when the division would take over responsibility for most of the brigade-held perimeter.

Once it was relieved, the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines was ordered to move to positions near Agat and was attached to the 22d Marines as a nighttime reserve. One company of the 4th, F, had already been attached to the 22d as a reserve during the day, and a platoon of the 4th Marines tanks was also sent

to back up the regiment driving towards Orote.

During the morning's advance, the 22d Marines had met only light resistance. The Japanese appeared to be falling back before the assault platoons of 1/22 and 2/22. Colonel Schneider's regiment keyed its movement on Company I, attached to 1/22, which had relieved Company C as the unit charged with fighting its way up the Agat-Sumay Road. The attack plan called for the companies on the right of Company I to swing north and west across the neck of the peninsula. By noon, tanks were again available to support the attack, since a tank dozer and tankmen armed with pick and shovels had built a causeway across the Ayuja.

Prior to the attempt to close off the neck of the peninsula, the attacking Marines paused while an intensive air, artillery, and naval gunfire preparation was laid on the difficult terrain that lay ahead. Much of the ground that lay between the Agat-Sumay and Old Agat Roads was covered with rice paddies interspersed with small hillocks and stretches of thick brush. It was terrain calculated to spread the attacking troops thin and to make contact and any concentration of unit strength difficult. The defending Japanese infantry, presumably from 2/38, had organized the ground effectively, taking good advantage of natural obstacles. Enemy supporting artillery and heavy mortars on Orote Peninsula, well registered in the area of Marine advance, frequently timed their fires to coincide with American preparations, a practice that led to a rash of reports about American fires falling short into friendly lines.

Once the Marines jumped off, they found that the little hills ahead were infested with enemy riflemen and machine gunners. When squads of men advanced into the open paddies, small arms and light mortar fire pinned them down in the mud and water. Heavier guns positioned on Orote raked the lines with enfilade fire. Stretcher bearers and ammunition carriers attempting to reach the front lines were driven back by the hail of explosions, only to come on again with the needed aid. Supporting tanks could not maneuver in the soft footing of the paddies, and when they tried to use the roads, one was knocked out by 37mm antitank fire and another was disabled by a mine. In a wearying afternoon marked by repeated but fruitless attempts to reach its objective, the 22d Marines suffered over a hundred casualties. As darkness approached, the units that had been pinned down were able to shake loose and pull back to better night defensive positions along the Old Agat Road, giving up about 400 yards of untenable ground in the process.

On the night of 23-24 July, there was still a considerable hole between the flank units of the 305th Infantry and the 22d Marines, but the Japanese took no advantage of the gap. Instead, at about 0200, counterattacks by small units, attempts at infiltration, and harassing fires from mortars and artillery were directed against the Marine positions along Old Agat Road at the boundary between 1/22 and 2/22. The Brigade Artillery Group was quick to respond to requests for supporting fire, and the fire support ships offshore joined in with increased illumination

and heavy doses of 5-inch high explosive. The flurry of Japanese activity died away quickly beneath the smother of supporting fires.

General Shepherd and his operations officer, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas A. Culhane, Jr., worked out a plan of attack for the 24th that was designed to outflank the Japanese defensive complex encountered on 23 July. Issued at midnight, the brigade operation order called for two battalions of the 22d Marines to attack in column on a 200-yard front with the left flank resting on the coast. Once through the narrow corridor between the rice paddies and the sea, the trailing battalion would extend to the right, seize en route the troublesome hill defenses that had stopped the previous day's attack, and then drive for the shore of Apra Harbor on a two-battalion front. In an attack simultaneous with the main thrust up the Agat-Sumay Road, the remaining battalion of the 22d would advance on a 400-yard front on the right of the regimental zone, jumping off from Old Agat Road with an objective of seizing and holding the shore of Apra Harbor. The 4th Marines, when relieved by the 306th Infantry, would assemble in brigade reserve in the vicinity of RJ 5. One platoon of the 4th Marines tanks and a platoon of LVT(A)s would be attached to the 22d Marines to beef up the attack along the coast.

The time of the attack was set for 0900 following a lengthy softening-up of the target by air, naval gunfire, and artillery, with corps 155mm howitzers adding their heavier metal to the fires of the brigade 75s. The attack was delayed an hour to increase the effect

of cruiser and destroyer bombardment along the southern coast of Orote Peninsula, where suspected and known Japanese positions could pour fire into the western flank of the attacking Marines. At 1000, Company C of 1/22 led off a column of companies driving forward from a line of departure at Apaca Point. The regimental tank company, reinforced by the platoon of the 4th Marines Shermans, moved out with the assault rifle squads.

The enemy reaction to the advance of 1/22 was immediate; artillery and mortar shells exploded among the leading units and automatic weapons fire whipped across the front. Taking advantage of natural cover and of the shelter provided by the tank armor, riflemen of Company C kept moving forward. When five enemy tanks suddenly appeared to block the advance, the Marine mediums made quick work of destroying them, and continued forward using their 75mm guns and machine guns to blast concrete and coconut log emplacements.³⁰ As the leading units reached the area beyond the rice paddies, fire from enemy guns concealed in the cliffs of Orote near Neye Island became so troublesome that two gunboats were dispatched to knock them out. In a close-in duel, both craft, *LCI(G)s 366* and *439*, were hit by enemy fire and suffered casualties of 5 killed and 26 wounded.³¹ But

³⁰ The day's tank score was eight. At 1205, aerial observers discovered three tanks inland near Harmon Road at the center of the island. Commander, Support Aircraft ordered them attacked by fighter-bombers; all three were destroyed.

³¹ LCI(G) Div 15 AR, dtd 17Aug44 (OAB, NHD).

their 20mm and 40mm cannonade beat down the fire of the Japanese guns, and a destroyer came up to add 5-inch insurance that they would remain silent.

At 1400, after the ship and shore gun battle had subsided, the rest of 1/22 started moving up on the right of Company C. The 3d Battalion (Lieutenant Colonel Clair W. Shisler), echeloned to the right rear of the 1st, now had maneuver room to attack and roll up the line of enemy positions that had held up the 22d Marines' attack across the rice paddies on W plus 2. Moving quickly, 3/22 took and demolished the strongpoint and then turned north toward the harbor. Lieutenant Colonel Shisler's companies encountered the same type of light-to-moderate small arms, artillery, and mortar fire that confronted 1/22 and the going over rugged terrain was slow. By dusk, the 1st Battalion was dug in on its objective, but the 3d Battalion had to set up its night defensive perimeter about 400 yards short of the harbor shore. This gap was well covered, however, as a result of the success of the attack by 2/22 on the right of the regiment.

Lieutenant Colonel Hart's battalion was getting ready to move out from Old Agat Road at 1000 when lead elements were hit by fire, which appeared to herald an enemy counterattack. At almost the same time, fragments from the heavy naval shelling in support of the Marine attack began hitting along the front lines. While the troops were waiting for this fire to be lifted and moved farther ahead, they spotted a column of about 100 Japanese moving across the front towards the flank

of 1/22. Mortar and artillery fire was called down on the enemy, scattering the group, and the Marine battalion prepared for a counterattack, but none came. Once the confusion caused by the shelling and the abortive counterattack was straightened out, the attack was rescheduled. At 1300, 2/22 moved out with patrols to the front and overran a succession of small dumps and abandoned cave positions along the road; the latter were seared by flamethrowers to eliminate any stragglers. Only a few Japanese were encountered in the advance to the harbor and these were soon killed.

Once 2/22 had reached its objective, it was ordered to continue its advance east along the coast and to occupy the high ground at the road junction village of Atantano. In late afternoon, while it was moving into position through the dense underbrush which blanketed the area, the battalion was harassed by enemy fire. In view of its exposed position, 2/22 was reinforced for the night by Company F of 2/4, which marched into the Atantano perimeter at about 1850. The remainder of 2/4, attached to the 22d Marines as a nighttime reserve, was moved up after dark to the Old Agat Road, where it set up all-around defenses to plug the gap between 3/22 and 2/22.

All units of the 4th Marines were available to back up the 22d by the evening of 24 July as a result of the day's shifting of troops and reorganization of areas of responsibility within the southern beachhead. At 0800, the 77th Division assumed control of the entire perimeter east of Old Agat Road, and the 306th Infantry took command of the defenses formerly held by the

4th Marines. During the morning and early afternoon, elements of the 306th relieved companies of 1/4 in position. At 1400, while Lieutenant Colonel Shapley's Marines were shifting to a bivouac area north of Agat, General Bruce opened his CP ashore close to the area where the 307th Infantry was assembling after a rough passage to shore.

On the 23d, General Bruce had requested that two battalions of the 307th be landed and placed under his command so that he would have enough men to expand the perimeter to the originally planned FBHL. General Geiger felt that this expansion, which involved the movement of the southern flank over 3,000 yards south to Facpi Point, was no longer desirable or necessary. The move would also leave IIIAC with only one uncommitted infantry battalion in reserve. The corps commander did decide, however, that the situation now warranted the landing of the reserve, to remain under corps control. The 307th began crossing the reef at 1300 on the 24th. The luckless soldiers had to wade to the beach, like all 77th Division infantrymen before them. Their ship to shore movement was complicated by heavy ground swells raised by a storm at sea; two men were lost when they fell from nets while clambering down the sides of rolling transports into bobbing LCVPs.

The landing of the last major element of IIIAC on 24 July found both beachheads soundly held and adequately supplied. The price of that secure hold was high to both sides. The III Corps count of enemy dead consisted of the conservative figure of

623 bodies buried by the 3d Division and the 1st Brigade estimate of 1,776 Japanese killed. By enemy account of the four days' fighting, the casualty totals must have been significantly higher, particularly on the Asan front. In winning its hold on the heights, the 3d Marine Division had had 282 of its men killed, 1,626 wounded, and had counted 122 missing in action. For the same period, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade casualty totals were 137 killed, 700 wounded, and 87 missing; the 77th Infantry Division had lost 12 men and had 20 wounded.

SUPPLY AND EVACUATION ³²

By nightfall of W plus 3, most of the logistical problems that had arisen during the first days of the assault phase had been solved. For Guam, the majority of such problems had been anticipated and countered by a proper mix of ships, service troops, and equipment. The veteran planners of TF 53 and IIIAC were well aware that the success of an amphibious operation depended as much upon rapid and effective unloading and distribution of supplies as it did upon the courage and aggressiveness of assault troops. Profiting from lessons learned in earlier campaigns, the task force vessels and shore parties were able to put an average of 5,000 tons of vehicles, supplies, and equipment ashore in both beachheads during each of the first four days.

The prime obstacle to unloading

³² Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *TF 53 OpRpt*; *IIIAC SAR*; *IIIAC C-4 PeriodicRpts*, 21Jul-10Aug44; *3d MarDiv D-4 Jnl*, 21Jul-10Aug44; *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*.

progress was the reef which denied landing craft access to shore. And the prime weapon in combatting the reef was the LVT. The III Corps logistics officer observed that without them "the unloading of assault shipping would have proceeded only under greatest difficulty."³³ Hampered only by the limitation that it could not operate effectively in rough or irregular terrain, the DUKW was almost equally useful. The amphibious vehicles were used everywhere on the reef and in the immediate beach and dump area, and, as most men of the 77th Division discovered, proved to be too valuable as cargo carriers to be used to transport troops after the assault waves landed. As a result of their almost continuous operation, many of the vehicles were deadlined by operational mishaps and mechanical failures. Herculean efforts by crewmen and mechanics kept the daily unserviceability rate to about 35 percent for amphibian tractors and 40 percent for amphibian trucks. Spare parts were at a premium, particularly for the newly acquired DUKWs of III Corps Motor Transport Battalion, and vehicles knocked out by enemy guns and others wrecked by surf and reef obstacles were cannibalized to keep cripples going.

The pontoon barges and cranes at reef edge were a vital part of the unloading process. In the shallower water over the coral shelf off Asan, versatile tractor-mounted cranes could maneuver in waist-deep water dragging, lifting, and carrying as the load to be landed required. Where the water was too deep off both Asan and

³³ *IIIAC SAR*, Encl D, p. 5.

Agat, the barge-mounted cranes swung bulging cargo nets from boats to vehicles and lifted out the heavy drums of fuel and water that were often floated and pushed to the beaches by men of the reef transfer battalions.³⁴ Since few wheeled vehicles could make shore under their own power, tractors and LVTs were used to tow most trucks from the ramps of LSTs onto dry land.

By 24 July, nine LST unloading points had been opened on the reef off each beachhead and landing ships had been about half emptied. The transports and cargo vessels that had carried the assault units to the island were 90 percent unloaded, and those that had brought the 77th Division had landed 25 percent of their cargo. At 1700, Admiral Conolly reported that 15 of

the big ships were cleared of landing force supplies, and preparations were made to return the first convoy of those emptied to Eniwetok on 25 July.

Many of the APAs that had served as casualty receiving stations during the first days of fighting were among those that were sent back. The hospital ship, *Solace*, which arrived according to plan on 24 July, took on board some of the most seriously wounded patients from the transports lying offshore. The transports *Rixey* and *Wharton*, both remaining in the area, loaded those walking wounded that would require no more than two weeks hospitalization. Once the major unit hospitals were fully established ashore, these men would be landed to recuperate on Guam and rejoin their units. Many of the 581 casualties that filled the *Solace* when she sailed on W plus 5 were men loaded directly from the beaches that had been hit in the heavy fighting on 25 and 26 July.

³⁴ On 24 July, the opening of a water point at springs near Asan brought an end to the need to land drummed water for the 3d Division. All ships were directed to dump the remainder of such water supplies that they carried.

Continuing the Offensive

ATTACK AND COUNTERATTACK ¹

General Geiger's original operation plan for the coordinated IIIAC advance on 25 July called for the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade to begin its assault on the Japanese defenses of Orote Peninsula. When it became obvious on the 24th that the brigade would not be able to get into position by nightfall to mount a two-regiment attack, General Shepherd sent a message to the corps commander stating that in view of the:

. . . delay in the relief of the 4th Marines which was not completed until 1500 today, necessity for moving 4th Marines to assembly areas and relief of 22d Marines in line, reorganization and preparation for attack, strongly recommend assault Orote Peninsula be delayed until 26 July.²

General Geiger quickly concurred in Shepherd's recommendation and re-

¹ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *3d MarDiv SAR*; *3d MarDiv Jnl*; *3d MarDiv D-2 PeriodicRpt No. 72*, dtd 26Jul44; *77th InfDiv OpRpt*; *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*; *1st ProvMarBrig Jnl*; *1st ProvMarBrig URpts*; *3d Mar Jnl*; *1/3 Jnl*; *2/3 Jnl*; *9th Mar Jnl*; *12th Mar Jnl*, 21Jul-15Oct44; *21st Mar URpts*; *3/21 Jnl*; *3d TkBn SAR*; *22d Mar Jnl*; *1/22 Jnl*; *2/22 Jnl*; *1/4 WarD*; *GSGDF Study*; LtCol Robert E. Cushman, "The Fight at Fonte," *Marine Corps Gazette*, v. 31, no. 4 (Apr47), hereafter Cushman, "Fight at Fonte"; Frances, "Battle of Banzai Ridge."

² *1st ProvMarBrig Jnl*, entry of 24Jul44.

vised the order, setting forward the time of the Orote attack to 0700, 26 July. In the day gained, the brigade would attempt to seal the neck of the peninsula from sea to harbor.

After an uneventful night, marked only by harassing artillery and mortar fires falling on the lines of 1/22 and 3/22, Colonel Schneider's regiment prepared to attack at 0830 on the 25th. Moving out behind a 15-minute artillery preparation by brigade 75s, the two assault battalions immediately ran into heavy enemy small arms fire coming from covered emplacements in the low, irregular hills ahead. Again enfilade fire from Neye Island and the cliffs near it raked the front of the advancing Marines. An air strike was called down on Neye, naval gunfire and artillery added their firepower, and 40mm guns of the 9th Defense Battalion pounded the precipitous island shores from positions near Agat. Along the coast, half-tracks of the regimental weapons company moved to positions from which they could fire across the narrow stretch of water at the bend of the peninsula into caves and other likely gun positions which studied the cliffs.

The fury of supporting fires knocked out some but not all of the Japanese weapons. The attacking Marines, particularly those of Lieutenant Colonel Fromhold's 1st Battalion, which was advancing along the coast, were hard

hit. At one point in the morning's bitter fighting, Fromhold committed his last reserve platoon, reinforced by 20 men from the 4th Marines, to back up Company C, which was driving up the Agat-Sumay Road. Just before noon, five Japanese light tanks, accompanied by infantry, were spotted ahead of Company C, and Shermans of the 22d Marines converged on the enemy armor. A short, sharp exchange left the Japanese tanks broken and aflame and scattered the enemy troops. Not long afterwards, bazookas and tanks of the 22d accounted for at least two more Japanese tanks that were attacking Marines on the right of the 1/22 zone.³

Although the 1st Battalion encountered the stiffest enemy resistance during the day's advance, 3/22 was also heavily engaged. As it swung into line and closed on the harbor shore, Lieutenant Colonel Shisler's unit met increasingly stronger Japanese fire. By early afternoon, all evidence indicated that the brigade had run up against the main defenses of Orote.

To bring fresh strength to bear in the attack ordered for 26 July, the 4th Marines began taking over the left of the brigade lines shortly after noon. Lieutenant Colonel Shapley was given oral orders to have his lead battalion, 1/4, mop up any Japanese resistance it encountered moving forward to relieve 1/22. General Shepherd moved his CP closer to the fighting and set up near RJ 5, not far from the bivouac area of the brigade reserve, 2/4. Well before dark, all brigade assault units

were on the day's objective, firmly dug in, and ready to jump off the following morning. (See Map 28.)

Manning the left half of the newly won positions was the 1st Battalion, 4th Marines, with elements of three companies on line and a platoon of regimental tanks guarding the Agat-Sumay Road where it cut through the American defenses. The 3d Battalion, 4th Marines was in position behind 1/4 ready to move into the front line as the peninsula widened and allowed for more maneuver room. On the brigade right was 3/22, occupying a low rise that overlooked an extensive mangrove swamp along the shore of Apra Harbor. Backing the 3d Battalion was 1/22, which had moved after its relief to positions near the regimental boundary in the narrowed zone of the 22d Marines. To augment night defenses on the extreme right flank where the Piti-Sumay Road paralleled the harbor shore, Colonel Schneider attached Company E of 2/22 to the 3d Battalion.

During the day's fighting, the 2d Battalion of the 22d, operating from Atantano, patrolled extensively and mopped up enemy holdouts in the area between the Old Agat Road and the brigade front lines. Firm contact was established with the left flank of the 77th Division, which spent the 25th consolidating its hold on the FBHL and landing more of its supplies and equipment. Patrols from General Bruce's infantry battalions ranged the hills to the northeast, east, and south hunting down Japanese stragglers.

By the 25th, the 77th Division was also probing cautiously toward Mt. Tenjo, sending its patrols to scout approaches to the hill mass. The way

³ Units accounts of the total bag of Japanese tanks vary, but all accord that at least seven were destroyed.

was rugged and the possibility of encountering enemy defenses in the high, broken ground seemed strong. Although the mountain peak was included within the 3d Marine Division FBHL in prelanding plans, the pattern of Japanese resistance indicated that it might fall easier to American troops attacking from the south rather than the north. No significant enemy opposition was developed by the Army patrols as they moved further toward the Asan beachhead. Their negative findings matched the experience of patrols from the 9th Marines and 2/22, which made contact along the harbor shore near Atantano about 1600.

The events of 25 July indicated that Japanese troops were scarce in the area bordering Apra Harbor, but there was ample evidence that the enemy was still plentiful and full of fight everywhere else on the heights confronting the 3d Division. Unknown to the Marines, the eve of the *29th Division* counterattack had arrived, and the bitter resistance met in the day's close combat by the 3d and 21st Marines had been furnished by units that were trying to hold jump-off positions for the night of 25-26 July.

General Takashina's orders to his troops were to concentrate in the general area from Fonte Plateau to "Mt. Mangan." The latter name was given by the Japanese to a 100-foot-high hill about 1,500 yards southwest of Fonte Plateau. Mt. Mangan marked the junction of the Mt. Tenjo Road with a trail that branched off to the head of the Fonte River valley. One principal enemy assembly area faced the positions of the 3d Marines, the other was in front of the lines of the 21st Marines.

The *48th IMB*, with the *10th IMR* attached, was to launch its attack from a line stretching from the east side of Fonte Plateau to the east side of Mt. Mangan. The *18th Infantry* was to move out from a line of departure running west from Mt. Mangan along the Mt. Tenjo Road. The naval troops that had helped hold the approaches to Agana against the 3d Marines were to assemble in the hills east of the Fonte River and attack toward Adelup Point. Reinforcing the naval infantry, who were mainly former construction troops operating under the headquarters of the *54th Keibetai*, would be the two companies of tanks that had remained hidden near Ordote since W-Day. (See Map VIII, Map Section.)

Many of the veteran Japanese infantrymen scheduled to spearhead the counterattack were killed in the bloody fighting on the 25th. The bitterest contest was joined along Mt. Tenjo Road where it crossed Fonte Plateau. Here, the road fell mainly within the zone of action of Lieutenant Colonel Cushman's 2d Battalion, 9th Marines.

Cushman's outfit was attached to the 3d Marines at 0600 on the 25th and ordered to relieve 1/3 on the right of the regimental front line. By 0930, when the 3d Marines moved out in attack, the relief was completed, and 1/3 supported the advance of 2/9 by fire. Once their fire was masked, Major Aplington's badly depleted companies moved back to division reserve positions behind the 21st Marines and about 1,000 yards inland from Asan Point. Again General Turnage had only one understrength infantry battalion to back up the 3d Division front; the regiments, with all battalions com-

mitted, had no more than a company as reserve, the battalions frequently had only a platoon.

To both sides in the battle, the big difference in the fighting on 25 July was the presence of tanks on Fonte Plateau. Assault units of 3/3 and 2/3 blasted and burned their way through a barrier of enemy cave defenses and won control of the road to the heights within an hour after jump-off. Medium tanks of Company C, 3d Tank Battalion rumbled up the road soon after the attack began and joined the infantry in destroying Japanese positions that blocked passage upward. After engineers cleared the roadway of some bomb-mines, which temporarily stopped the Shermans, the advance resumed with infantry spotters equipped with hand-held radios (SCR 536s) pointing out targets to the buttoned-up tank gunners. In midafternoon, General Turnage authorized Colonel Hall to hold up the attack of 2/3 so that the enemy positions bypassed during the day's action could be mopped up prior to nightfall. At the same time, the 2d Battalion, 9th Marines, driving toward Fonte, was ordered to continue its attack.

No tanks reached the high ground where 2/9 was fighting until late afternoon; enemy fire and mines had slowed their arrival. Support for the infantry attacking the Fonte defenses was furnished by naval guns, artillery, and mortars, reinforced by a nearly constant fusilade from light and heavy machine guns. The return fire of the Japanese inflicted severe casualties on the assault troops, but failed to halt the Marine advance into the broken terrain of the plateau. The battalion

battled its way across the Mt. Tenjo Road and drove a salient into the enemy defenses of Fonte. At 1700, the reserve company, G, was committed on the left flank to lessen a gap which had opened between 2/3 and 2/9 during the afternoon's advance.

As darkness approached, there was no letup in the ferocity of the enemy resistance and the close-in fighting continued to be costly to both sides. The situation prompted Lieutenant Colonel Cushman to pull back his forward elements on both flanks to secure better observation and fields of fire for night defense. While Companies E and G dug in close to the road, Company F in the center continued to hold a rocky prominence, about 150-200 yards to the front, that marked the limit of the day's advance. When four tanks finally arrived at 1825, it was too dark to use them effectively so they were placed in supporting positions behind the lines. At this time, as the battalion action report noted: "The enemy was within hand grenade range along the entire line to the front and retained strong positions in caves to the right Co's right rear."⁴

These caves, bypassed during the morning's advance, were left to the attention of a reserve rifle platoon. The resulting mop-up operation was only partially successful, and enemy troops continued to emerge from the caves for several days afterwards. Although these Japanese harassed the command post areas repeatedly, they were not in sufficient strength to have

⁴2/9 SAR, dtd 15Aug44, p. 3, Encl M to 3d MarDiv SAR.

a significant effect on the actions of 2/9.

In the zone of 2/21, which flanked that of 2/9, a similar pocket of enemy holdouts was left behind the lines when the 21st Marines attacked on 25 July. The Japanese, holed up in cave positions in the eastern draw of the Asan River, were wiped out by Company E during a morning's hard fighting; later over 250 enemy bodies were buried in this area, which had been the target of heavy American air strikes on the 24th. Company E, once it had completed the mop-up mission, moved back into the attack with the rest of 2/21. Every foot of ground that fell to Lieutenant Colonel Smoak's Marines was paid for in heavy casualties, and every man available was needed in the assault to maintain the impetus of the advance. When the 2d Battalion dug in just short of the Mt. Tenjo Road about 1730, all units were fully committed to hold a 1,000-yard front. There was no reserve.

Like 2/21, the 1st Battalion, 21st Marines ended its fifth day of battle with all companies manning frontline positions. The trace of the 1,200 yards of foxholes and machine gun emplacements held by 1/21 ran roughly parallel to the Mt. Tenjo Road where it looped south from Fonte to Mt. Mangan. Despite an all-out effort on the 25th, which saw assault elements reach and cross the all-important road at many points, the Marines were not able to hold most of their gains in the face of heavy and accurate enemy fire. In the morning, the attacking units were stopped and then driven back by the enfilade fire of Japanese artillery, well hidden in the brush and irregular ter-

rain at the head of the Fonte River valley. In the afternoon, when tank support was available for the first time, some hill strongpoints were taken in the center of the line near a quarry which was a focal point of Japanese resistance.

The freshly arrived tanks, a welcome sight to the men of 1/21, reached the heights by means of a steep and twisting supply trail, which engineers had constructed through the draw that had been cleared by Company E of 2/21 that morning. Company B of the 3d Tank Battalion reported to Lieutenant Colonel Williams' CP at 1615, and he immediately set one platoon of Shermans to work hammering enemy defenses in the quarry area. A second platoon of the mediums spearheaded a limited objective attack on Mt. Mangan, which was recognized as the launching point for many of the Japanese night counterattacks that had plagued the 21st Marines. When the tanks swung behind the hill, a tremendous outpouring of fire from the reverse slope cut down most of the accompanying infantry. The tanks answered with cannon and machine guns, closing in on the Japanese positions to fire point blank on any targets that showed. When the Shermans returned to the Marine lines, the tank commanders were sure that they had hurt the enemy badly—and they had. Only about 40 men were left of the *321st Independent Infantry Battalion*, which had attempted to defend Mt. Mangan. Many of the luckless survivors of the *38th Regiment*, that had assembled at Mangan to take part in the counterattack, were also killed.

The enemy casualties inflicted by this

tank thrust into the heart of the Japanese defensive complex may well have altered the course of action later that night, for the Japanese were not strong enough to exploit limited penetrations in the 1/21 sector. The Marines holding positions opposite Mt. Mangan were too few in number to form a continuous defensive line. Instead, strongpoints were held—natural terrain features that lent strength to the fire of Marine small arms. Gaps between squad and platoon positions were covered by infantry supporting weapons, and artillery and naval guns were registered on possible enemy assembly areas and routes of approach.

Along the boundary between 1/21 and 3/21 a considerable interval developed during the day because the 1st Battalion was held up by enemy fire, and the 3d Battalion was able to move out to its objective within an hour after the regimental attack started at 0700. In contrast to the rest of the 21st Marines, 3/21 encountered no strong resistance on 25 July. All day long, however, sporadic fire from enemy mortars and machine guns peppered the battalion positions. Patrols scouring the hills in the immediate vicinity of the front line were also fired upon, but in general the Japanese hung back from close contact.

Despite the relative lack of opposition, Lieutenant Colonel Duplantis' situation was precarious, because he had only two companies to hold 800 yards of terrain that seemed to be nothing but ravines and ridges smothered in dense vegetation. Not only was there a gap between 1/21 and 3/21, there was also an 800-yard open stretch between

the right flank of the 21st Marines and the left of the 9th Marines, which had pushed forward well beyond the 21st during the day. Just before dark, Colonel Butler, in an effort to ease the situation on his right flank, released his only reserve, Company L, to Lieutenant Colonel Duplantis. The 3/21 commander placed this company in positions that filled a weak spot in the center of his line and enabled the companies on either flank to tighten up their defenses. As a site for his command post, Duplantis chose the reverse slope of a 460-foot hill which stood squarely on the regimental boundary and in the path of any enemy attempt to exploit the yawning space between the 21st and 9th Marines.⁵

Colonel Craig's regiment made rapid progress on the 25th from the time the two assault battalions jumped off at 0700. By 0845, the regiment was on its day's objective, a line running generally along the course of the Sasa River. At 0915, the division ordered the attack to continue with the aim of seizing the high ground on the north bank of the Aguada River. The Marines encountered very few Japanese and moved out almost as fast as the rugged terrain would permit. In the hills on the extreme left flank, an outpost of 1/9 reported clashing with small groups of the enemy during the day, but the overall intelligence picture in the 9th Marines zone indicated that few Japanese were present. Under the circumstances, Colonel Craig thought that his regiment could have advanced easily and made contact with

⁵ Duplantis ltr.

the brigade "at any time,"⁶ but considered that such a move would have served no useful purpose. By limiting the advance on the division right to a front that could be held by two battalions, General Turnage was able to draw on the 9th Marines for reserves to use in the hard fighting on the left and center of the beachhead.

As night fell, the troublesome gap between 3/21 and 1/9 was partially blocked by small Marine outposts. Lieutenant Colonel Duplantis organized his CP defenses in a small depression on the left rear of Hill 460 and set out a blocking force armed with BARs and bazookas to guard a trail that skirted the hill on the right and led toward the beaches. A 25-man detachment of the 3d Division Reconnaissance Company held a strongpoint in the midst of the 500-yard open stretch between the hill and the shoulder of the ridge defended by the left flank company of the 9th Marines. The reconnaissance unit, composed of elements of two platoons, had been attached to the 9th since W-Day for the express purpose of maintaining contact between regiments, but on the night of 25-26 July it was simply too weak for the task at hand.

The start of the Japanese counter-attack was heralded at 2330 by an artillery forward observer's report that enemy activity was developing in the gap between the 9th and 21st Marines. Very shortly after midnight, the 3d Marines called for artillery and naval gunfire support to silence enemy artillery, mortars, and machine guns that

were hitting the left flank. Soon units all across the center and left of the beachhead perimeter were reporting Japanese probing attacks and patrol action close to the Marine lines. Darkness turned to half light as flares went up all along the front to help spot the Japanese. Cruisers and destroyers increased their rate of fire of 5-inch star shell and followed with 5- and 6-inch high explosive at the call of shore fire control parties. To aid local defenses, 60mm mortars of the rifle companies kept flares overhead wherever the front line was threatened.

The first serious assault on American positions was launched against the isolated Reconnaissance Company outpost. An enemy group, estimated at 50 men, attacked the Marine unit shortly after midnight, and during a brief, hot firefight killed four men and wounded five, over one-third of the American strength. Convinced that his position was untenable in the face of another attack by a superior enemy force that could hit from any direction, the Reconnaissance Company commander withdrew his men to the lines of Company B of 1/9, which held the left flank of the 9th Marines.⁷

Japanese troops that drove in the reconnaissance outpost were men of the *3d Battalion, 18th Infantry*. The enemy unit was assigned an objective of penetrating the Marine lines in the area held by 3/21. Surprisingly, instead of

⁶ LtGen Edward A. Craig ltr to CMC, dtd 30Sep52, hereafter *Craig 30Sept52 ltr*.

⁷ The Reconnaissance Company commander felt that the gap was so wide that the Japanese who hit his perimeter, and lost 35 men in the process, "could have bypassed our position at many points." PhibReconCo SAR, dtd 14Aug44, p. 2, Encl C to Encl Q, *3d MarDiv SAR*.

pouring full strength through the hole that had been left open, most elements of 3/18 continued to feel out the main defenses of Lieutenant Colonel Duplantis' battalion. Despite their superior observation of the American beachhead from positions on the Chachao-Alutom-Tenjo massif,⁸ and the information supplied by their patrols, the Japanese did not really make use of their best opportunity for success.

The pressure of enemy units testing the Marine defenses along the rest of the division front increased as the long night wore on. Both the 1st and 2d Battalions of the 21st Marines were hit repeatedly and in gradually increasing strength. Apparently, the *2d Battalion, 18th Infantry* and the elements of the *48th Brigade* in the Mt. Mangan area were looking for a weak spot that would let them break through to the Asan River draws. The draws in turn would provide a path to the division rear areas. On the Fonte front, most of the Japanese troops pressing 2/9 were part of the *2d Battalion, 10th IMR*; almost all of the *3d Battalion* had been killed during the fighting on the 25th, as had the commander of 2/10. The remainder of the Marine line on the left flank was harried by other elements of the *48th IMB* and by naval troops of the *54th Keibitai*. Throughout the Japanese ranks, the infantry was bol-

stered by service and support troops, by walking wounded that could still handle a weapon, and, in short, by everyone that could be mustered for the assault.

One important aspect of the Japanese counterattack plans went awry in the darkness—enemy tanks never reached the battle line. When night fell, the armored vehicles rumbled from their hiding places near Ordot and headed onto the trails leading to Agana. Inexplicably, the tanks got lost. Unable to find their way to the designated assembly area, the commanders of the *2d Company, 9th Tank Regiment* and the *29th Tank Company* led their units back to the Ordot area before dawn broke. Hidden again at daylight from the eyes of American artillery and air observers, the Japanese tanks bided their time for a more effective role in the fighting.

Undaunted by the absence of expected armored support, the *54th Keibitai* moved forward to attack in the early hours of 26 July. An intensive preparation fired by mortars and artillery crashed down on the positions occupied by 3/3 and 2/3. Led by the senior enemy naval officer, Captain Yutaka Sugimoto, the Japanese sailors launched the first of what proved to be a series of counterattacks. From Adelup Point and Chonito Cliff, Marine small arms fire crackled forth from well-dug-in foxholes and machine gun emplacements. Shells from company and battalion mortars exploded amidst those from the 105mm Howitzers of 3/12, and drove the onrushing enemy back. Captain Sugimoto was killed in the first outburst of defensive fire; later, his executive officer was felled by a shell burst. Despite repeated attempts to break through the

⁸ The Commanding Officer, 9th Marines recalled that when this terrain was finally captured "three huge telescopes of 20 power were found. Looking through these scopes one could almost make out individual features of Marines below us. Practically every part of our lines and rear areas, as well as my own CP, could be seen through these glasses from this high ground." *Craig 30Sept52 ltr.*

Marine lines, the Japanese were unsuccessful and most of the attackers were dead by early morning. As day broke, the weary survivors, many of them wounded, fell back toward the low hills west of Agana.

One of the night's most bitter struggles was waged on Fonte Plateau, where Lieutenant Colonel Cushman's embattled battalion strove to hold its gains of the 25th. Local counterattacks flared all along the front of 2/9 and caused a constant drain of Marine casualties. At 2200, it was necessary to pull Company F back 50 yards from its salient in the center of the line in order to consolidate defenses. Because there was little letup in the pressure that the *10th Independent Mixed Regiment* applied, the expenditure of ammunition by all types of Marine weapons mounted alarmingly. Seven major counterattacks in succession ate away at the American line, but it held, often only by the slimmest of margins. The height of the battle was reached in the early morning hours when the Japanese seemed to come in unending waves and the din of weapons firing all at once mixed with the screams and yells of men caught up in the frenzy of close-quarter combat.

As "the first faint outline of dawn showed," and "ammunition ran dangerously low"⁹ in the American positions, Marine tanks were able to play a significant role in the hard-fought battle. The platoon of Shermans that had spent the night behind the lines now moved to the front, where their cannon and machine guns helped break up the last desperate enemy thrust. Soon after-

wards, another platoon of tanks escorting trucks loaded with ammunition passed through the lines of 3/3 and made its way up the road to Fonte Plateau. While the armor provided covering fire, riflemen and machine gunners grabbed belts and bandoliers of .30 caliber cartridges and mortar crews quickly stacked live rounds near their shell-littered firing sites. With tank support and adequate reserve ammunition, the Marines of 2/9 were solidly established and ready for renewed enemy attacks. Without the shield of darkness, the Japanese held off, however, for only about 100 men of the *10th IMR* had survived the night's fighting.

Not all of the Japanese that died on the night of 25-26 July were killed in front of the American lines. Some infiltrated through the widely spaced strongpoints of the 21st Marines and others found their way through the gap between 3/21 and 1/9. The positions manned by 1/21 and 2/21 lay generally along a low ridge that paralleled and ran north of the Mt. Tenjo Road. From this rise the ground sloped back several hundred yards to the edge of the cliffs. Over much of this area Marines waged a fierce, see-saw battle to contain enemy units that had broken through. In the thick of the fight was Company B of the 3d Tank Battalion, which was bivouacked behind the lines of the 1st Battalion, 21st Marines. Although the tanks were cut off for a time from Marine infantry support, they were able to fend for themselves with their machine guns and 75s. Apparently the Japanese infiltrators were more interested in other and easier targets, for only one tank, which had a track blown and its engine damaged,

⁹ Cushman, "Fight at Fonte," p. 15.

was put out of action during the night's combat.

The coming of daylight brought a quick end to the limited Japanese penetration of the lines of 1/21. Fire from 60mm mortars sealed off the area where the enemy had broken through and ripped apart the groups of Japanese that tried to make a stand. Supported by tank fire, the Marines of Lieutenant Colonel Williams' battalion, reinforced by a company of engineers, counter-attacked to restore their lines.¹⁰ Infiltrators were hunted down relentlessly, and by 0800, the enemy had been cleared from the entire area between the edge of the cliffs and the original front line of 25 July. Along this segment of the embattled 3d Division front, the weary Marines could relax a bit and feel, as one did, that "the fire-works were over."¹¹

Although the fighting on the heights had subsided by early morning, the conflict was far from settled in the division rear areas, particularly in the vicinity of the wooded draws that held the Nidual River and the west branch of the Asan. Most Japanese that found their way through the gap between 3/21

¹⁰ The action of these engineers from Company B, 3d Engineer Battalion was typical of those of many supporting units on 26 July. The Executive Officer of 1/21 stated that he "was particularly impressed with the number of automatic weapons they were able to produce (from organic vehicles). They advanced as a leading company in at least one of our attacks and performed many infantry duties with credit. This is another advantage of basic [infantry] training being given to all Marines." LtCol Ronald R. Van Stockum ltr to Head, HistBr, G-3, dtd 15Oct52.

¹¹ Frances, "The Battle of Banzai Ridge," p. 18.

and 1/9, or infiltrated the fire-swept openings in the Marine front line ended up following these natural terrain corridors toward the sea. Directly in the path of the majority of these enemy troops, the elements of 3/18 that had skirted the right flank of 3/21, was Hill 460 and Lieutenant Colonel Duplantis' command post.

After feeling out the positions held by 3/21, the Japanese attacked in force about 0400 all along the battalion front and drove in a platoon outpost of Company K, which held the right of the line. The intensity and strength of the enemy assault mounted as dawn approached, and the Marines on the front line had all they could do to hold off the attackers. Consequently, Duplantis believed that he could not call on his rifle companies for help when the Japanese began attacking his command post. In fact, a reinforced rifle squad, the only reserve available to the commander of 3/21, was committed soon after the Japanese attacked to defend the area between the ridge positions of Company K and Hill 460. Like the Marines that held the trail block Duplantis had set out earlier that night, the outnumbered squad "went down fighting to a man,"¹² overwhelmed by the enemy troops, who swept around both sides of the hill.

Perhaps nowhere else within the Marine perimeter was the situation so desperate as it was in the 3/21 CP as daylight approached. In most parts of the 3d Division beachhead, dawn gave the Marines a better chance to wipe out the infiltrators; on Hill 460, in contrast, the increasing light furnished the Jap-

¹² Duplantis ltr.



SHERMANS AND RIFLEMEN of the 1st Brigade advance together on Orote Peninsula. (USMC 88152)



FIRING LINE of 3d Division riflemen engage the enemy in the hills above Asan. (USMC 88090)

anese better targets. From positions on the crest of the hill, enemy machine guns raked the rear of Company K and small arms and knee mortar fire poured down on the CP, less than 75 yards away. The deadly hail that swept Duplantis' position took a heavy toll among the corpsmen and communicators, who made up a large part of the defending force. The headquarters group fought doggedly, keeping up a steady fire against the Japanese, who showed no disposition to charge the beleaguered Marines.

The task of eliminating the troublesome enemy strongpoint on Hill 460 fell to the 9th Marines. At 0655, a time when most of the division reserve and support forces were hotly engaged with infiltrators, General Turnage ordered Colonel Craig to shorten his front lines and pull back to the Sasa River and to send troops to recapture Hill 460. Craig, in turn, detailed his regimental reserve, Company L, to take the hill and assigned an officer familiar with the terrain as the temporary commander. Led by Major Harold C. Boehm, executive officer of 1/9, the men of Company L advanced toward the hill along the course of the Masso River. The approach march over difficult terrain was time-consuming, but the Japanese on 460 did not spot Boehm's command until the Marines were about 250 yards away and ready to attack. Aided by covering machine gun fire from Company B, 1/9, shortly before noon Company L launched an assault that carried the enemy position. Twenty-three Japanese were killed on the hill and the remainder were driven toward a firing line set up by Company K of 3/21. The few enemy that survived the

attack fled down the Nidual River draw to annihilation at the hands of the Marine units then mopping up the rear areas.

The clash at Hill 460 was one of a series of hard-fought actions that took place behind the 3d Division front. Japanese infiltrators moving down the stream lines leading to the beaches continually harassed the perimeters of Marine units that stood in their paths. Throughout the night, gunners in artillery and mortar positions had to interrupt their supporting fires to beat off troops.¹³ The neighboring command posts of the 12th Marines and of 3/12 were beset by snipers, who had infested the high ground above the camp areas. By midmorning, artillerymen acting as infantry, aided by two Shermans from the division tank park nearby, had destroyed this nest of enemy.

One of the most serious encounters behind the lines took place at the division hospital. At 0600, about 50-70 enemy troops opened fire on the hospital tents from the high ground on the west bank of the Nidual River. Doctors and corpsmen immediately began evacuating patients to the beach while other hospital personnel and 41 of the walking wounded formed a defensive line and returned the Japanese fire. As soon as word reached General Turnage that the hospital was being attacked, he ordered the division reserve commander, Lieutenant Colonel George O. Van Orden (Division Infantry

¹³ Many of these enemy troops had infiltrated the Marine lines on the previous night and laid in hiding throughout daylight hours on the 25th with the intent of knocking out the artillery when the counterattack started. BGen John S. Letcher ltr to CMC, dtd 12Jun65.

Training Officer), to take two companies of pioneers and eliminate the threat.

Moving quickly, Van Orden's command reached the hospital area and joined the battle. After three hours of fighting, during which the enemy force was eventually surrounded, the pioneers killed 33 Japanese at a cost of three of their own men killed and one wounded. The 3d Medical Battalion had 20 of its men wounded, including two that later died of wounds, but only one patient was hit and he was one of the volunteer defenders. By noon, the hospital was back in operation, caring for the heavy influx of casualties from all parts of the Marine beachhead.

Even before the fighting was over at the hospital and at Hill 460, it was apparent that these two areas held the only sizeable enemy groups left within the perimeter. Any other Japanese still alive behind the lines were the subject of intensive searches by combat patrols of service and support troops. Along the front line, infantry units, often with tank support, scoured the woods and caves in their immediate areas to flush enemy stragglers. The mop-up and consolidation of defensive positions continued through the afternoon as Marine commanders made certain that their men were ready to face whatever the night might bring. While he was inspecting these defensive preparations, Lieutenant Colonel de Zayas, commanding 2/3, was shot and killed; the battalion executive officer, Major William A. Culpepper, immediately took command and continued the defensive buildup.

Conservative intelligence estimates indicated that the Japanese had lost

close to 3,200 men, including 300 behind Marine lines, in the counter-attack.¹⁴ The comparable casualty total for the 3d Division and its attached units was approximately 600 men killed, wounded, and missing in action.¹⁵ It appeared to General Turnage that the enemy was still capable of mounting another strong counterattack, and he directed that all units establish the strongest possible night defense.

Early on the 26th, General Turnage had requested reinforcements from the corps reserve, and during the afternoon, General Geiger dispatched one battalion of the reserve, 3/307, overland to the Piti area to be available immediately in case of need. On its arrival the Army unit was attached to the 9th Marines. As a further safeguard, Turnage directed the organization under Lieutenant Colonel Van Orden of a provisional division reserve composed of 1/3, a platoon of tanks, and elements of eight Marine and Seabee support battalions. Most of these units spent the night of 26-27 July manning defensive perimeters or standing by for employment as infantry reinforcements.

Actually, the Japanese commanders

¹⁴ A careful Japanese accounting of the battle places their casualty total at about "3000 persons." *GSDP Study*, p. 189.

¹⁵ The exact figures are buried somewhere in the casualty statistics for 25-27 July, since many units completed a head count too late on the 26th to be accurately reflected in that day's totals. The cumulative total casualties reported as of 1800 on the three days are: 25 July-315 KIA, 1,760 WIA, 132 MIA; 26 July-333 KIA, 1,869 WIA, 162 MIA; 27 July-481 KIA, 2,405 WIA, 166 MIA. *3d MarDiv Jnl.*

had no further massive counterattack in mind. To an extent not yet realized by American intelligence officers, the fruitless assault had broken the backbone of Japanese resistance on Guam. While there was no disposition to stop fighting on the part of the remnants of the *29th Division*, the ground within, in front of, and behind the Marine lines was littered with the bodies of the men and with the weapons, ammunition, and equipment that General Takashina sorely needed to prolong the battle. Undoubtedly the most damaging losses were those among senior combat unit leaders, whose inspirational example was essential to effective operations in the face of obvious and overwhelming American superiority in men and material. General Shigematsu, the *48th Brigade* commander, was killed on 26 July when tanks supporting the consolidation of Marine frontline positions blasted his CP on Mt. Mangan. The regimental commander of the *18th Infantry* was cut down in the forefront of his counterattacking troops, and both of the battalion commanders were killed after having led their men through the Marine lines. The body of one was discovered in the Asan River draw; the other was found in the Nidual River area.¹⁶

As the senior Japanese officer on Guam, General Obata had the unpleasant duty of reporting the failure of the counterattack to Tokyo. At about 0800 on the 26th, the *Thirty-first Army*

¹⁶ Near the body of the commander of *2/18* was found a map which showed the Japanese plan for the counterattack. This information is included on Map VIII, Map Section.

commander radioed *Imperial General Headquarters*, stating:

On the night of the 25th, the army, with its entire force, launched the general attack from Fonte and Mt. Mangan toward Adelup Point. Commanding officers and all officers and men boldly charged the enemy. The fighting continued until dawn but our force failed to achieve the desired objectives, losing more than 80 percent of the personnel, for which I sincerely apologize. I will defend Mt. Mangan to the last by assembling the remaining strength. I feel deeply sympathetic for the officers and men who fell in action and their bereaved families.¹⁷

The following day Tokyo acknowledged Obata's message and commended the general and his men for their sacrifice, emphasizing that the continued defense of Guam was "a matter of urgency for the defense of Japan."¹⁸ After this, Generals Obata and Takashina and the few surviving members of their staffs concluded that their only practical course of action was to wage a campaign of attrition, whose sole purpose would be, in the words of Lieutenant Colonel Takeda, "to inflict losses on the American forces in the interior of the island." The *29th Division* operations officer explained the factors influencing this decision as:

1. The loss of commanders in the counterattack of 25 July, when up to 95% of the officers (commissioned officers) of the sector defense forces died.
2. The personnel of each counterattacking unit were greatly decreased, and companies were reduced to several men.
3. The large casualties caused a great drop in the morale of the survivors.
4. Over 90% of the weapons were destroyed and combat ability greatly decreased.

¹⁷ Quoted in *GPDF Study*, pp. 188-189.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

5. The rear echelons of the American forces on Agat front landed in successive waves and advanced. There was little strength remaining on that front and the strength for counterattacks became non-existent.

6. The Orote Peninsula defense force perished entirely.

7. There was no expectation of support from Japanese naval and air forces outside the island.¹⁹

Part of the Japanese estimate of the situation was based on a lack of knowledge of the exact situation on Orote. All communication with the Japanese command on the peninsula was lost by the evening of 25 July, but the last messages received indicated that the defenders were going to take part in the general counterattack.²⁰

CAPTURE OF OROTE PENINSULA ²¹

Commander Asaichi Tamai of the *263d Air Group* was the senior officer remaining in the Agat defense sector after W-Day. The death of Colonel Suenaga elevated Tamai, who had been charged with the defense of Orote Peninsula, to the command of all sector defense forces, including the *2d Battalion*, *38th Infantry*. During the period 22–25 July, the Army unit fell back toward Orote, fighting a successful delaying action against the 22d Marines.

When the 1st Brigade closed off the neck of the peninsula on 25 July, it

¹⁹ *Takeda ltr II*.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Unless otherwise noted the material in this section is derived from: *IIIAC SAR*; *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*; *1st ProvMarBrig Jnl*; *1st ProvMarBrig URpts*; *1/4 WarD*; *3/4 WarD*; *1/22 Jnl*; *2/22 Jnl*; *6th TkBn SAR*; *Takeda ltr II*.

sealed the fate of some 2,500 Japanese soldiers and sailors who were determined to die fighting in its defense. Although more than half of Commander Tamai's troops were lightly armed and hastily trained aviation ground crewmen and engineers, he had a strong leavening of experienced ground defense units of the *54th Keibitai*. Even if many of the Japanese were not trained in infantry tactics, they were apparently experts in the use of pick and shovel and well able to man the fixed defenses, which they had helped build. Their handiwork, a formidable belt of field fortifications, stretched across the peninsula just beyond the marsh and swamp area and generally along the 0–3 Line, the initial brigade objective in its attack on 26 July. (See Map 28.)

Before the men of the 1st Brigade could test these hidden defenses—whose presence was suspected but not yet confirmed—they had to deal with the Japanese troops that took part in the general counterattack ordered by the *29th Division*. In contrast, the counterattack on the brigade defenses was made by about 500 men and the action was concentrated in a narrow sector near the regimental boundary. The left flank unit of the 22d Marines, Company L, bore the brunt of the Japanese thrust, helped by the withering fire of the right flank platoon of the 4th Marines from Company A.

The assembly area for the Japanese attack force, principally men of *2/33*, was the mangrove swamp in front of the 22d Marines. In apparent preparation for the assault, *sake* was passed about freely, and the Marines manning forward foxholes could plainly hear the

resulting riotous clamor as the Japanese worked themselves up to fever pitch. Finally, just before midnight, a tumultuous *banzai* charge erupted out of the swamp as a disorganized crowd of yelling, screaming men attacked the positions held by Company L. The resulting carnage was almost unbelievable, as artillery forward observers called down the fire of brigade, 77th Division, and III Corps artillery on the surging enemy troops. At one point, the shells of pack howitzers of the 22d Marines were brought to within 35 yards of the front lines in order to check the Japanese.²² The few scattered groups that won their way through the barrier of exploding shells crisscrossed by machine gun fire were killed in frenzied hand-to-hand fighting with Marines of Company L. By 0200, the action died down, and all supporting weapons resumed normal fires for the night defense.

Daylight revealed a gruesome scene, for the mangled remains of over 400 enemy dead lay sprawled in front of the Marine lines in the impact area where over 26,000 artillery shells had fallen during the counterattack. Marine casualties in Company L were light, despite the close-quarter combat, and the flanking platoon of the 4th Marines did not lose a man, although it counted 256 Japanese bodies in the vicinity of its position. Any information that might reveal the exact cost of the counterattack to the Japanese, who evacuated their wounded during the night, was buried with the Orote gar-

rison. There was no doubt, however, that 2/38 ceased to exist as an effective fighting force. Save for small groups of soldiers that continued to fight on, enemy naval troops now had the main responsibility for the defense of Orote.

The night's counterattack had no effect on General Shepherd's attack plan for 26 July. A thorough air, naval gunfire, and artillery preparation exploded on enemy-held areas, and at 0700, the 4th Marines moved out in a column of battalions, 1st in the lead, supported by the regimental tank company. On the right of the brigade front, the assault elements of 3/22 and 2/22 were heavily shelled as they were preparing to jump off. The Marines were convinced that their own supporting ships and artillery were off target, although subsequent investigation indicated that Japanese artillery was again taking advantage of American preparatory fires to strike some telling blows without detection. Regardless of its source, the effect of the fire was demoralizing to the 22d Marines, and it was 0815 before the assault units were reorganized and ready to move out.

The delay in the attack of the 22d Marines opened a gap between the regiments, which was bridged by Company L of 3/4. Another 3d Battalion company, I, followed in trace of the swiftly advancing tank-infantry spearheads of 1/4 to mop up any bypassed enemy. Major Green's 1st Battalion met only light resistance until it approached the 0-3 Line, where heavy brush on the left and the threat of enemy fire ripping across the more open ground on the right slowed the advance. Anxious to maintain the impetus of the attack and to make more

²² Col Edwin C. Ferguson comments on draft of Lodge, *Recapture of Guam*, dtd 28Nov52.

effective use of the comparatively fresh units of the 4th Marines, General Shepherd at 1145 ordered a change of regimental boundary that would enable Lieutenant Colonel Shapley to employ all his battalions in assault. All terrain east of the road from RJ 15 to Sumay went to the 22d Marines, while the 4th Marines took responsibility for the wider zone to the west.

Initial resistance to the 22d Marines, once its attack was launched, was slight, and 2/22 patrols, wading deep into the mangrove swamp, encountered only snipers. Along the Sumay Road, where there was room to maneuver and firm ground to support their weight, the regimental tanks moved out with 3/22. At 1220, the 3d Battalion reached RJ 15 and discovered that the Japanese had planted an extensive field of aerial bomb-mines across the 200-yard corridor between the swamp and a wide marsh lying west of the road junction. Unable to advance further, the Shermans set up a firing line along the high ground that overlooked the junction and the minefield beyond.

The mined area was covered by a nest of Japanese machine guns, which the assault infantry did not discover until a sudden outburst of automatic weapons fire pinned the lead platoon down in the midst of the mines. Spotting the Japanese strongpoint, a cluster of brush-covered bunkers northwest of the road junction, the tanks fired low over the heads of the ground-hugging infantry to hit gun ports and disrupt the enemy fire. When Japanese mortars opened up from defilade positions behind the bunkers, the tank company commander called down high-angle artillery fire to silence them, which also

set afire an ammunition and a supply dump in the area. With the aid of the tanks, the Marines of 3/22 were able to pull back to relative safety, but too late in the day for any further attempt to force the minefield.

On the left of the brigade line, tanks also played a prominent part in the afternoon's advance. The 4th Marines, maneuvering to get three battalions on line, began to move into heavy vegetation as forward elements approached the 0-3 Line. The Shermans broke paths for accompanying infantry where the going was toughest and helped beat down the scattered opposition encountered. In midafternoon, heavy enemy machine gun and mortar fire hit 2/4 as it was moving into the center of the regimental front. Shortly thereafter, leading elements of the 1st Battalion were raked by intense fire from enemy positions in the dense undergrowth ahead. Japanese gunners had a clear shot at the Marines along well-prepared fire lanes cut through low-hanging branches and thick ground cover, often before the Americans were aware that they were exposed. It was readily apparent that an extensive and gun-studded belt of Japanese defenses had been encountered. At 1730, when brigade passed the order to dig in, both regiments consolidated their positions along 0-3 except on the right, where the 22d Marines set up in the swamp, refusing its flank and covering the resulting gap with artillery and mortar fire.

After a quiet night with no unusual enemy activity, the brigade attacked in the wake of an extensive air, naval gun-fire, and artillery preparation. Neither this fire nor the night-long pro-

gram of harassment and interdiction by American supporting weapons seemed to have much effect on the dug-in Japanese. The 4th Marines had as its attack objective an unimproved trail, about 700 yards forward of 0-3, that stretched completely across the regimental zone. Except along the Sumay Road, the intervening ground was covered with a thick tangle of thorny brush, which effectively concealed a host of mutually supporting enemy pillboxes, trenches, and bunkers well supplied with machine guns, mortars, and artillery pieces.

In the narrow corridor forward of RJ 15, 3/4 faced a low ridge beyond the marsh area, then a grass-choked grove of coconut palms, and beyond that another ridge, which concealed the ground sloping toward the old Marine Barracks rifle range and the airfield. On the 22d Marines side of the Sumay Road, the mangrove swamp effectively limited maneuver room beyond RJ 15 to an open area about 50 yards wide.

The terrain and the enemy dispositions gave special effect to the attack of Major Hoyler's battalion. With Companies I and L in the lead, and a platoon of tanks moving right along with the assault troops, 3/4 broke through the enemy defenses along the first low ridge to its front during a morning of heavy and costly fighting. The tank 75s played the major role in blasting apart the Japanese gun positions. During the afternoon, the tank-infantry teams made their way through the coconut palms at a stiff price to the unprotected riflemen. By the time 3/4 had seized and consolidated a secure position on its objective,

Company L alone had suffered 70 casualties.

On the far left of Lieutenant Colonel Shapley's zone, the enemy resistance was lighter than that encountered by 3/4, and the 1st Battalion was on its part of the objective by 1100. Led by path-making tanks, the 2d Battalion reached the trail about a half hour later. Both units then set up defenses and waited for the 3d Battalion to fight its way up on the right. At about 1500, while he was inspecting dispositions in the 1/4 area, the regimental executive officer, Lieutenant Colonel Samuel D. Puller, was killed by a sniper.

Shortly after this, when tanks supporting Hoyler's battalion ran out of ammunition, Shermans from the platoons that had advanced with the left and center of the Marine line moved over to cover 3/4 while it was digging in. From firing positions ahead of the infantry, these tanks spotted a company of Japanese moving in the open along a road atop a ridge some 300 yards away. Cannon and machine gun fire tore apart the enemy column and scattered the luckless troops. At 1830, their job well done for the day, the tanks returned to their bivouac for maintenance and replenishment.

Armor also played a significant role in the day's action on the 22d Marines front. Supporting tank fire helped Company G, leading the regimental assault in the narrow zone between swamp and road, to thread its way through the minefield that had held up the advance on the 26th. Under cover of smoke shells fired by the Shermans, the regimental bomb disposal officer disarmed enough mines to clear a path

through the field for the tanks to move up with the lead riflemen. Engineers then cleared the rest of the mines while 2/22 continued its advance, meeting the same type of determined opposition that had slowed 3/4 on its left. Fire from the barrier of Japanese positions, which confronted the brigade all across the peninsula, took a heavy toll of Marines, particularly unit leaders. Three of the four company commanders were hit during the day's fighting as was the new battalion commander, Major John F. Schoettel.²³

At 1415, after 2/22 had won some maneuver room east of the road to Sumay, the 3d Battalion moved up on the right to join the battle. Since much of the zone assigned 3/22 was swamp, there was only room for Company L in assault. This company tried unsuccessfully to outflank the enemy defenses by moving along the coast, but was stopped by vicious automatic weapons fire. Despite the determined Japanese defense, the 22d Marines kept inching ahead, utilizing tanks to blast bunker firing ports so that accompanying infantry could move in with flame-throwers and demolitions.

At 1700, the brigade ordered the 22d to dig in on commanding ground for the night. In an effort to seize the most defensible terrain, Colonel Schneider stepped up his attack, calling for increased artillery support and for carrier air to bomb and strafe the Japanese. The response was prompt, sustained, and effective. The wing

²³ Lieutenant Colonel Hart, who was reassigned as brigade liaison officer with IIIAC, was relieved by Major Schoettel at about 1430 on 27 July.

guns of the attacking aircraft sprayed enemy defenses close enough to the American lines for 2/22 to report it as "too close" for safety at 1802, and thankfully as causing "no casualties, but plenty close" at 1810 when the planes drew off.²⁴ Whatever the precipitating cause—bombing, strafing, artillery fire, or steady unrelenting tank-infantry pressure—about 1835 the enemy troops confronting the 22d Marines suddenly bolted from their defenses and ran. Taking swift advantage of the unusual Japanese action, a rout almost unprecedented in Pacific fighting, the Marines surged forward close on the heels of the fleeing enemy.

The approach of darkness stopped the attack as the 22d Marines reached high ground overlooking the Marine Barracks area. The precipitate advance opened a 500-yard gap between 2/22 and 3/4, which Company C of 1/22 closed. Two men of the company were killed and 18 wounded in a flurry of Japanese mortar fire that struck the Marine unit as it set up defenses in the flare-spotted darkness. The remainder of the 1st Battalion, which had moved from Atantano to reserve positions near RJ 15 during late afternoon, was alerted to back up Company C. There was no further significant enemy reaction, however, anywhere along the front that night.

The preparation for the brigade attack on the 28th included 45 minutes of air strikes, 30 minutes of naval gunfire, and a final 30 minutes of artillery fire. Perhaps as a result, when the 22d Marines attacked at 0830, the regiment swept forward against little opposition.

²⁴ 2/22 *Jnl*, entry of 27Jun44.

At 1005, Colonel Schneider reported his troops had reached the 0-4 Line, and General Shepherd ordered the advance to continue, "echeloning units to the left rear as necessary to maintain contact with the 4th Marines."²⁵ Major Schoettel's battalion concentrated its drive on the capture of the Marine Barracks area, while Lieutenant Colonel Shisler's 3d Battalion entered the battered ruins of Sumay. Tanks supported the assault troops of both battalions, but found the litter and rubble in Sumay so minestrewn that support had to be confined to overhead fire until engineers could clear the streets. Before the armor halted, one Sherman and its crew were completely destroyed when it hit a 1,000-pound bomb-mine. In the face of desultory opposition, the 22d Marines was able to seize the barracks ruins, the whole of Sumay, and the cliffs along the harbor shore before dusk. For stronger night defense, 3/22 pulled back to high ground east of the town and dug in at 1750.

In contrast with their weak defense on the 22d Marines front, the Japanese facing the 4th Marines were ready and able to make the Americans pay dearly for every foot of ground they won. The enemy defenses were arrayed in depth, along a 300-yard stretch of ridgeline guarding the approaches to the rifle range and airfield. Beneath the thorn bushes and other varieties of densely-clustered jungle growth lay almost 250 emplacements and bunkers, many of them strong pillboxes constructed of coconut logs, cement, and earth. Minefields were cleverly hid-

²⁵ *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*, p. 12.

den amidst the brush along all approaches to the enemy positions.

Both 2/4 and 3/4 had run up against the outskirts of this defensive complex in the previous day's fighting. The difficulties imposed by the terrain and the pattern of Japanese defending fires and minefields prevented the Marines from outflanking the enemy position, and left Lieutenant Colonel Shapley no choice but to order a frontal assault. The extensive preparatory fires for the attack on 28 July appeared to have made no impression on the Japanese: there was no letup in the volume of enemy fire. When the regiment advanced, a slugging match ensued in which Companies E and I spearheaded the determined assault. Throughout the morning and early afternoon, riflemen working closely with tanks gradually forced their way into the nest of enemy emplacements. At 1545, about 20-30 Japanese charged out of the remaining key strongpoint in a futile attempt to drive the Marines back; every attacker was quickly killed. Shortly thereafter, in an attack that General Shepherd had personally ordered during a visit to the front lines, two platoons of Marine mediums and a platoon of Army light tanks led a 4th Marines advance that smashed the last vestiges of the Japanese defenses and swept forward to positions just short of the rifle range. Tied in solidly with the 22d Marines at the Sumay Road by nightfall, the regiment was ready to carry out the brigade commander's order to seize the rest of the peninsula on the 29th.

Assigned missions for the attack on 29 July gave the 22d Marines responsibility for cleaning the Japanese out of

the barracks area, the town of Sumay, and the cliff caves along the coast. The prime objective of the 4th Marines was Orote airfield. To make sure that the attack would succeed, Shepherd arranged for a preparation that included the fires of eight cruisers and destroyers, six battalions of artillery (including one from the 12th Marines), and the heaviest air strikes since W-Day. To increase direct fire support for the infantry, the Marine commander asked General Bruce for another platoon of Army tanks, which would work with the one already assigned to the brigade, and for a platoon of tank destroyers as well.

When the brigade attacked at 0800, following a thunderous and extended preparation, there were few Japanese left to contest the advance. By 1000, General Shepherd was reporting to General Geiger: "We have crossed our 0-5 Line and are now rapidly advancing up the airstrip meeting meager resistance."²⁶ An hour later, Shepherd ordered the 22d Marines to hold up its attack at the 0-6 Line and directed the 4th Marines to take over there and capture the rest of the peninsula.

In moving toward 0-6, the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines encountered and handily overcame resistance from a strongpoint located near the ruins of the airfield control tower. This proved to be the only significant opposition that developed during the day. The relief of the 22d Marines on 0-6 took place without incident at 1500; and Lieutenant Colonel Shapley held up his advance about 500 yards beyond this

objective line. At 1600, while the infantry dug in, two platoons of riflemen mounted the regimental tanks and a reinforcing platoon of Army lights and made a combat reconnaissance to Orote Point. Only two Japanese were sighted and they were killed. When the tank-infantry patrol reported back, General Shepherd declared the peninsula secured.

Earlier on the 29th, at 1530, a ceremony took place at the ruins of the Marine Barracks that had special significance to all Americans on the island and on the waters offshore. To the accompaniment of "To the Colors" blown on a captured Japanese bugle, the American flag was officially raised on Guam for the first time since 10 December 1941.²⁷ Present to witness this historic event were Admiral Spruance and General Holland Smith, ashore on an inspection trip, and Generals Geiger, Larsen, and Shepherd as well as the brigade regimental commanders and those few officers and men that could be spared from the fighting still going on. Fitting honors for the occasion were rendered by a platoon of

²⁷ This ceremony, which usually took place in the Central Pacific after an objective was secured, came as a surprise to the naval officers attending. One officer not present who was particularly disappointed at this early flagraising was Captain Charles J. Moore, Admiral Spruance's executive officer. His father, Lieutenant Charles B. T. Moore, USN, had raised the flag over Guam on 23 January 1899 on the occasion of the take-over of the island government by the Navy Department. It had been Admiral Spruance's intention to suggest to General Geiger that Captain Moore be accorded the privilege of raising the first official flag over Guam. RAdm Charles J. Moore emts on draft MS, dtd 6July65.

²⁶ *1st ProvMarBrig Jnl*, entry of 28Jul44.

the men that had repossessed the barracks for the Marine Corps. In a brief address, General Shepherd caught the spirit of the event, saying:

On this hallowed ground, you officers and men of the First Marine Brigade have avenged the loss of our comrades who were overcome by a numerically superior enemy three days after Pearl Harbor. Under our flag this island again stands ready to fulfill its destiny as an American fortress in the Pacific.²⁸

Last-gasp resistance by the scattered enemy survivors was confined to sniping and bitter-end defense of caves and dugout hideaways, principally in the cliffs that bordered Apra Harbor. Many Japanese committed suicide when American troops approached; others tried to escape the peninsula by swimming to the low-lying ruins of Ft. Santa Cruz in the middle of harbor.²⁹ The swimmers were shot, captured, or turned back by a watchdog platoon of LVT(A)s. On the opposite side of the peninsula, Neye Island, long a source of galling enemy fire, was scouted by an LVT-borne patrol of the 9th Defense Battalion and found deserted. Brigade intelligence officers conservatively estimated that at least 1,633 enemy troops had been killed on Orote by 30 July. The cost of those deaths to the brigade was 115 Marines killed, 721 wounded, and 38 missing in action.

The end of the battle for possession of the peninsula coincided with a realignment of the IIIAC battle line.

²⁸ Quoted in Kaufman, "Attack on Guam," p. 63.

²⁹ On 21 June 1898, the first American flag was raised over Guam at Ft. Santa Cruz; this ceremony signified the bloodless capture of the island from the Spanish garrison.

While the brigade had been clearing the Japanese from Orote, the 3d Division had fought its way to complete control of the Fonte heights, and the 77th Division had patrolled all of southern Guam looking for enemy troops. While the two divisions prepared to drive north in line abreast and wipe out the remaining Japanese, the brigade was to take an active role in reserve, guarding the corps rear area, mopping up the peninsula, and hunting down enemy stragglers in the southern mountains.

Nothing signified the change of ownership of Orote Peninsula better than the landing on its airfield of a Navy TBF from the *Chenango* on 30 July. Touching down first to test the surface of a 2,000-foot-long strip cleared by six hours of feverish engineer activity, the plane circled and came down again at 1650.³⁰ Once the field proved ready, the escort carriers USS *Sangamon* and *Suwanee* each launched two VMO-1 observation planes to become the first elements of what was eventually to

³⁰ This test landing by a Navy plane spoiled the plans of several Marine officers to have the first American plane to land on Guam be one from VMO-1, whose craft were poised on the escort carriers offshore. Col Frederick P. Henderson ltr to CMC, dtd 21Nov52. Actually, the officer that called down the TBF to land was a Marine, Colonel Peter F. Schrider, commanding MAG-21, who was present on the strip with an advance detachment of his air group. Sherrod, *Marine Air History*, p. 253. As it happened, the first American plane to operate from Guam was an Army liaison aircraft assigned to the 77th Division Artillery. This plane took off from an improvised airstrip at 1310 on the 30th. 77th InfDiv Arty AAR, 21Jul-10Aug44 (WW II RecsDiv, FRC, Alexandria, Va.)

become a powerful American aerial task force based on Guam.³¹

*FONTE SECURED*³²

When the 3d Marine Division reopened a full-scale attack to secure the Fonte heights on 27 July, there was little evidence of the Japanese decision to withdraw to the northern sector of Guam. The enemy seemed as determined as ever to hold his ground, and the day's fighting, focused on the left center of the division front, cost the Marines over a hundred casualties. Holding out, often to the last man, Japanese defenders made effective use of the broken terrain which was honeycombed with bunkers, caves, and trenches.

The twisted and broken remnants of a powerline, which cut across Fonte Plateau and ran in front of Mt. Mangan, became the initial objective of 2/3, 2/9, and 2/21, which bore the brunt of the assault. (See Map VIII, Map Section.) The battalions flanking the plateau fought their way forward to the line shortly before noon and then held up awaiting the advance of 2/9. Lieutenant Colonel Cushman's unit had been strafed and hit by bombs falling short during the aerial preparation for the morning's attack, and the resulting

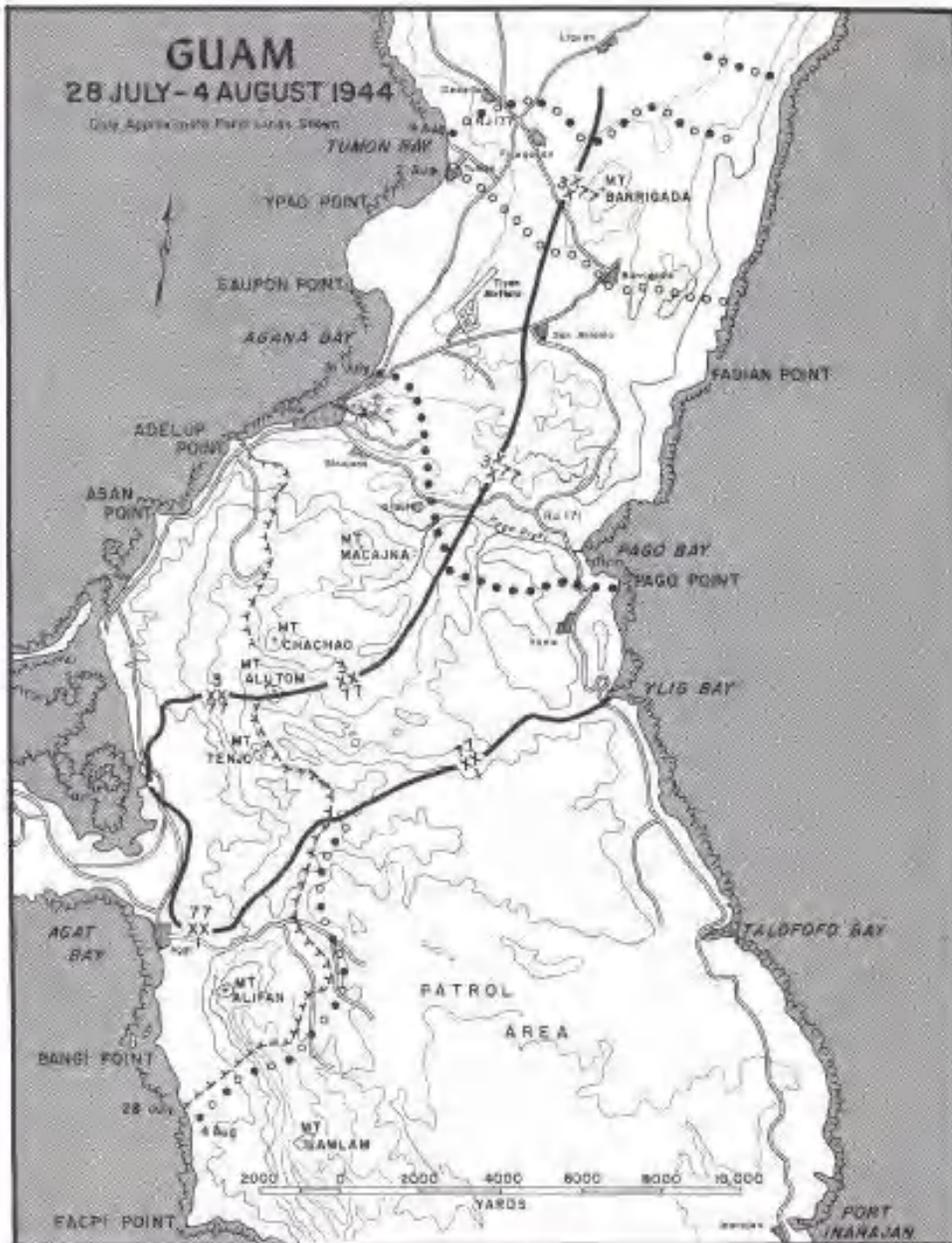
reorganization had held up the assault companies for 80 minutes. About 1300, just after it finally came up on line with 2/3 and 2/21, 2/9 was hit hard by a surging counterattack, which boiled up out of the thick brush that blanketed the plateau. Company G, on the left of the battalion front, met most of this thrust by 150-200 Japanese troops. The tanks working with the infantry played a large part in the repulse of the attack, which finally subsided after almost two hours of hot, close-quarter action.

Shortly after this fight died down, Cushman recommended that his battalion stop its advance and dig in strongly for the night. A formidable strongpoint, a large cave-rimmed depression, which appeared to be the key to the remaining Japanese defensive system, lay just ahead in the path of 2/9. When division authorized a halt for the night, Cushman sent out scouts to find the best way to attack the strongpoint, issued replenishment supplies, and built up reserve ammunition stocks for the next day's drive.

While the fighting on the flanks of 2/9 was not so frenzied as it was on the plateau itself, there was ample evidence here too that the Japanese had not lost their will to fight. Neither 2/3 nor 2/21 could advance much beyond the powerline without being exposed to enemy flanking attacks. Toward the center of the division line, tank-infantry teams of 1/21 were heavily engaged all day in cleaning out enemy troops holed up in caves and dugouts in the vicinity of some demolished radio towers. Some Japanese still manned defenses in the quarry area near the center of the battalion zone, even after three days of

³¹ CTU 53.7 (ComCarDiv 22) Rpt of Marianas Ops, 12Jun-1Aug44, ser. 0047 of 3Aug44, p. 10 (OAB, NHD).

³² Unless otherwise noted the material in this section is derived from *3d MarDiv SAR*; *3d MarDiv Jul44 WarD*; *3d MarDiv Jnl*; *3d MarDiv D-2 and D-3 PeriodicRpts*, 26-31Jul44; *77th InfDiv OpRpt*; *77th InfDiv Jnl*; *9th Mar Jnl*; *2/3 Jnl*; *GSGDF Study*; *Craig 30Sep52 ltr*; Cushman, "Fight at Fonte."



MAP 29

R.F. STIBIL

constant attacks with explosives, gunfire, and flame. Despite the spirited enemy resistance, both here and on the plateau, the heavy Japanese losses foretold the end. The 3d Division attack order for 28 July called for all three regiments to seize the FBHL in their zone.

The 9th Marines was to have the difficult task of driving south up the rugged slopes of Mts. Chachao and Alutom and along the ridge approaches to Mt. Tenjo. The crest of Tenjo was made an objective of the 77th Infantry Division, and the boundary between divisions was altered to show this change from the original landing plan. (See Map 29.) The axis of the Marine attack was plotted in the zone of 3/21, and, on the 27th, 3/9 moved into positions behind Lieutenant Colonel Duplantis' battalion, ready to pass through on the 28th. The 3d Battalion, 307th Infantry, attached to Colonel Craig's regiment, relieved 3/9 on the right of the Marine line so that Major Hubbard's men could spearhead the regimental assault on the peaks that loomed ahead.

The III Corps attack on the 28th was successful on all fronts, and the day ended with the Final Beachhead Line from Adelup to Magpo Point in American hands. At 0800, in a bloodless advance which culminated a week of patrol and mopping-up action in the hills between the two beachheads, a company of 1/305 seized the peak of Mt. Tenjo. The 2d Battalion of the 307th Infantry then moved up to occupy the mountain and extend its lines north toward the new division boundary. Patrols of the 9th Marines made contact

with 2/307 on the heights during the afternoon.

The 3d Battalion, 9th Marines relieved 3/21 on position at 0800, and at 0910 began moving forward behind tightly controlled artillery and machine gun support. The 21st Marines battalion was attached to the 9th Marines to guard the open left flank behind Major Hubbard's assault companies. Inside of a half hour, 3/9 was on its initial objective and abreast of 1/9 and 3/307. An hour later, Colonel Craig ordered a general advance of the three battalions toward the Chachao-Alutom massif. Although Craig had not received the IIIAC map overlay showing the new division boundary, he could plainly see the Army infantrymen on Mt. Tenjo's slopes, so he contacted the commander of 2/307, while both officers were checking the flank positions of their units, and arranged a mutually satisfactory boundary.³³ When the corps overlay arrived, its boundary was found to coincide with that worked out by the two commanders.

The only serious resistance encountered by the 9th Marines was centered on a strongpoint located on Mt. Chachao. Manned by a company of Japanese troops, presumably remnants of the *18th Infantry*, this complex of machine gun nests and trenches guarded the trail along the ridge leading to Mt. Tenjo. Once 3/9 had developed this position, Major Hubbard called down artillery fire on the defenders to cover the infantry approach and conceal the movement of tanks to the rear to cut off the enemy escape route. When the artillery fire lifted, Companies I and K,

³³ Craig 22Jun65 ltr.

rushing the Japanese, drove steadily forward along the ridge, destroyed everything in their path, and charged the last emplacements with bayonets behind a shower of hand grenades. When the battle was over, 3/9 counted 135 Japanese dead in its zone. The victory enabled the 9th Marines to secure its objective from Apra Harbor to the 21st Marines boundary near Mt. Mangan.

In its drive to the FBHL, Colonel Butler's regiment overran the *29th Division* headquarters caves, located near the head of the Fonte River valley close to the wrecked radio towers, and wiped out the last defenders of Mt. Mangan as well. In both actions, tanks were in the forefront of the fighting and the Japanese tried desperately to knock them out with grenades and hand-carried antitank mines. Well covered by riflemen of 1/21 and 2/21 and their own machine gun fire, the tanks escaped unscathed from numerous fanatic attacks by individuals and small groups. By the time the 21st Marines were ready to dig in at dusk, all was quiet around the radio towers. The reverse slope defenses of Mt. Mangan were finally silenced.

The only other area of enemy opposition to the 3d Division advance on 28 July was located in the depression on Fonte Plateau. Here, Lieutenant Colonel Cushman's careful preparations paid off in a smoothly executed attack. Utilizing tank, machine gun, and bazooka firing positions that had been pinpointed by reconnaissance the previous afternoon, 2/9 cut loose with a deadly crossfire which blanketed every cave entrance in the pit. Under cover of this fire, a picked assault group with

flamethrowers and demolitions worked its way down from the rim and methodically destroyed every enemy position without losing a man. Once this strongpoint was reduced, 2/9, working with 2/3 and 2/21, was able to clear the rest of the plateau area and secure its share of the FBHL. Cushman's battalion, in four hectic and wearying days of hard fighting for control of Fonte had lost 62 men killed and 179 wounded, but it had captured the anchor position of the enemy defenses.

As night fell across the island on the 28th, reports came in from all along the new Marine positions that scattered Japanese holdouts, who had purposely or unknowingly been bypassed during the day's advance, were trying to infiltrate the lines heading north. This attempted exodus from the Marine beachhead by a relative handful of enemy survivors reflected the orders that had been passed by the *29th Division* following the unsuccessful counterattack of 26 July.

The able-bodied fighting men were directed to disengage on the night of the 28th and withdraw through Ordot to prepared positions near Barrigada and Finegayan, there "to engage in delaying action in the jungle in northern Guam to hold the island as long as possible."³⁴ All sick and wounded combatants and Japanese civilians not attached to fighting units were started north on the night of the 27th, the division hospital and its patients to a position behind Mt. Santa Rosa and the civilians to "a safe area further north."³⁵ Accompanying this first

³⁴ *GSDF Study*, p. 193.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

echelon was the *Thirty-first Army* commander, General Obata, and three of his staff officers, who left the Fonte headquarters at midnight on the 27th to move to Ordot. At the same time, one of General Takashina's staff was also sent to Ordot to marshal all available motor transport and move rations and supplies to storage areas in the jungle north of Mt. Santa Rosa.

General Takashina and Lieutenant Colonel Takeda remained behind at the Fonte headquarters when the withdrawal began, and as a result were directly involved in the fighting on the 28th, when Marine tanks attacked the *29th Division* cave CP area. At about 1100, as it became increasingly apparent that the dwindling number of Japanese defenders could not stop the rampaging tanks, General Takashina decided to make a break while there was still a chance to escape north. Then, as Takedo recalled the events, the two Japanese officers:

. . . stole out of the headquarters cave and ran straight between some enemy tanks and jumped from a cliff. The U. S. tanks, sighting the two persons, fired volleys of tracer bullets. Fortunately for the two, they managed to escape into a dead angle of the tank guns. About 1400 hours they reached a small stream at the northern foot of Mt. Macajna when the division commander was shot by machine gun fire from a U. S. tank, and died a heroic death, his heart having been penetrated by a bullet.³⁶

With Takashina's death in battle, the tactical command of all Japanese forces remaining on Guam was assumed by General Obata. He had only a few senior officers remaining to rally the

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 195-196.

surviving defenders and organize cohesive units from the shattered remnants of the battalions that had fought to hold the heights above the Asan-Adelup beaches. All through the night of 28 July, Japanese troops trudged along the paths that led from Fonte to Ordot, finding their way at times by the light of American flares. At Ordot, two traffic control points guided men toward Barrigada, where three composite infantry companies were forming, or toward Finegayan, where a force of five composite companies was to man blocking positions. As he fully expected the Americans to conduct an aggressive pursuit on the 29th, General Obata ordered Lieutenant Colonel Takada to organize a delaying force that would hold back the Marines until the withdrawal could be effected.

Contrary to the Japanese commander's expectations, General Geiger had decided to rest his battle-weary assault troops before launching a full-scale attack to the north. The substance of his orders to the 3d and 77th Divisions on 29 July was to eliminate the last vestiges of Japanese resistance within the FBHL, to organize the line of defense, and to patrol in strength to the front. All during the day, small but sharp fights flared up wherever 3d Division Marines strove to wipe out the isolated pockets of enemy defenders that still held out within the beachhead perimeter. A very few Japanese surrendered, and most of these men were dazed, wounded, and unable to resist further. Almost all the enemy died fighting instead.

Although they made few contacts with retreating Japanese, Marine and Army patrols began to encounter in-

creasing numbers of Guamanians, who started to move toward the American lines as the enemy relaxed his watch. Intelligence provided by the natives confirmed patrol and aerial observer reports that the Japanese were headed for northern Guam. There was no strong defensive position within 2,000 yards of the FBHL, and there were ample signs of a hasty withdrawal. Patrols found a wealth of weapons, ammunition dumps, and caves crammed with supplies of all types in the area ringing the III Corps position. The discoveries emphasized the sorry plight of the ill-equipped and ill-fed men, who were struggling north through the jungle, punished by constant harassing and interdiction fires by Corps Artillery and the machine guns and bombs of carrier air.

The 2d Battalion, 9th Marines was relieved on line by 1/3 on the 29th and was placed in division reserve for a short and well-earned rest. As the 3d Marines was readied for a new phase in the battle, the regiment received a new commander, Colonel James A. Stuart, who had been the D-3. As a part of a division-wide shift in individual command and staff responsibilities, Colonel Hall was reassigned duties as the D-4.³⁷ The changes seemed to be

³⁷ As a result of the same order, Lieutenant Colonel Ellsworth N. Murray (D-4) replaced the D-2, Lieutenant Colonel Howard J. Turton, who became D-3. Colonel Robert G. Hunt (Division Inspector) was given the additional duties of Liaison Officer to IIIAC and Lieutenant Colonel Ralph M. King (Assistant D-3) was assigned as executive officer of the 9th Marines to replace Lieutenant Colonel Jaime Sabater, wounded on 21 July. The order also confirmed the appointment of Major Irving R. Kriendler as D-1 on 22 July, following the

in keeping with the aura of preparation and reorientation that was prevalent throughout the IIIAC positions. Everywhere the assault troops and the service and support units were refurbishing equipment and stockpiling ammunition and supplies for the drive into the northern jungle.

Although the Japanese were no longer in close contact with the Americans, the patrols sent out on the 30th ran into scattered enemy fire as soon as they began to move up from the belt of lowland between Agana and Pago Bays and onto the northern plateau. All reconnaissance and other intelligence indicated that the Japanese were ready to defend the road that forked north of Agana, one branch leading to Finegayan and the other to Barrigada. (See Map 29.)

A BASE OF OPERATIONS ³⁸

Before General Geiger was ready to launch a drive north on an island-wide front, he needed assurance that his rear was secure from attack. Equally as well, he had to be certain that he possessed the supplies and support forces necessary to sustain an advance by two divisions through extremely difficult country against an opponent that was battered but by no means beaten.

To answer one requirement, knowl-

death of Lieutenant Colonel Chevy S. White in a shelling of the division message center.

³⁸ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *IIIAC SAR*; *IIIAC C-4 PeriodicRpts* Nos. 1-44 to 23-44, dtd 21Jul-14Aug44, hereafter *IIIAC C-4 Rpts*; LtCol F. Clay Bridgewater, USA, "Reconnaissance on Guam," *The Cavalry Journal*, v. LIV, no. 3 (May-Jun45).



PONTOON BARGE loaded with fuel drums at the reef transfer line off Guam. (USA SC210553)



GUAMANIAN WOMEN wash their clothes in a shell hole in the midst of a refugee tent city behind American lines. (USMC 92233)

edge of the enemy situation in southern Guam, the 77th Division sent infantry patrols deep into the mountains and jungle in the vicinity of the FBHL. On the 27th, General Bruce ordered the 77th Reconnaissance Troop to investigate reports that the Japanese might still be present in strength, particularly in the center of the island near Mt. Lamlam. Five small patrols set out, two for objectives on the east coast, two to the southeast, and one down the southwest coast. Although the sickness of one member forced the patrol to Ylig and Pago Bays to turn back after it had covered 8,000 yards, the others stayed out three days checking all signs of the Japanese. Scattered opposition was encountered from snipers and small units by the patrols when they moved south along the mountainous spine of the island, but there was no evidence of enemy resistance in strength. As the mission of the patrols was reconnaissance not combat, the soldiers evaded most of the enemy troops they spotted, noting that the Japanese were all headed north. Other patrols sent out on the 29th and 30th travelled along the 77th Division proposed route of advance to Pago Bay. They gained valuable terrain intelligence to aid General Bruce in planning the difficult movement of his regiments east and then north through the jungle to come up on line with the 3d Marine Division.

Once General Geiger knew that no significant Japanese force was present in southern Guam, he assigned responsibility for its control and pacification to his smallest major tactical unit, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade. Plans were formulated for General Shepherd's regiments to relieve elements of the

77th Division when the fighting on Orote ended.

In many ways, the assault phase of the Guam operation was partially over when IIIAC was ready to launch its northern offensive. Apra Harbor, the key objective of the dual landing operation, had been secured and was being converted into a major anchorage. Seabees and engineers had cleared beaches that had been battlegrounds and had rebuilt and replaced roads and bridges to handle heavy vehicular traffic. Extensive supply dumps, repair facilities, and other service installations had begun to take on the appearance of order and permanence.

On 26 July at 1300, General Geiger had opened his headquarters ashore near Agat, and on the following day, the Corps Service Group under Lieutenant Colonel Francis M. McAlister had begun operations by taking over control of the 5th Field Depot, 53d Naval Construction Battalion, and the Corps Medical Battalion. At the same time, the success of combat operations enabled the Corps Shore Party to begin unloading garrison force supplies over Dadi Beach near the foot of Orote Peninsula. On the eve of the second phase of the Guam operation, the Corps Service Group had grown in size and complexity to include many of the Seabee, engineer, pioneer, amphibian tractor, motor transport, and service units that had originally been part of the brigade and division shore parties. On hand and ready to issue in 5th Field Depot and 3d and 77th Division dumps were an average of 13 days' supply of rations, 15 days' gasoline and other petroleum products, and at least 3 units of

fire for all weapons. Facilities were being prepared at Piti for the unloading of ships; the first vessel, a cargo type carrying 3,000-man resupply blocks of all classes, was slated to start discharging on the 31st.

The cost of the fight thus far had been heavy. From H-Hour until midnight on 30 July, the III Amphibious Corps had lost 989 men killed in action and had had 4,836 wounded; in addition, 302 men were missing and unaccounted for. On the Japanese side of

the grim tally sheet, 6,205 dead had been counted. Several thousand more were estimated to have been killed, their bodies lying sealed in caves or hidden by folds of ground and thick brush in the battle area. Only 50 prisoners had been taken despite the desperate, hopeless nature of the Japanese situation. The rugged terrain to the north, coupled with the discipline and tenacity of the defenders, promised further heavy casualties to both sides before the battle for Guam would end.

Seizure of Northern Guam

*TIYAN AND BARRIGADA*¹

From their hard-won positions on the Fonte heights and from the slopes of the mountain ridges that marked the trace of the FBHL, the assault troops of III Corps could easily see the broad expanse of jungle, which covered the northern plateau. Just forward of the 3d Marine Division positions, the ground fell away sharply to a brush-covered lowland studded with small hills where the Agana River flowed into a large swamp southeast of the capital. The terrain in front of the 77th Infantry Division left flank was badly cut up by ravines formed by stream tributaries of the Pago River. Most of the rest of General Bruce's zone of advance was also high ground, trackless and dotted with barriers of thick vegetation, which gradually grew denser on the approaches to Pago Bay. (See Map 29.)

The IIIAC scheme of maneuver for the 31 July attack called for the 77th Division to move northeast from its FBHL positions, pivoting on left flank

¹ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *IIIAC SAR*; *3d MarDiv SAR*; *3d MarDiv Jnl*; *3d MarDiv D-2 and D-3 Periodic Rpts, 31Jul-3Aug44*; *77th InfDiv OpRpt*; *77th InfDiv Jnl*; *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*; *GSDF Study*; MajGen Andrew D. Bruce, USA, "Administration, Supply, and Evacuation of the 77th Infantry Division on Guam," *Military Review*, vol. 24, no. 10 (Dec44).

units to come abreast of the 3d Division on a cross-island objective line, which ran just north of Agana, turned south through the Ordot area, and then headed east to the coast at Pago Point. General Bruce's plan directed an advance in regimental columns to effect the quickest possible passage of the 10 miles of hill country that separated Mt. Tenjo from the objective. Thorough reconnaissance had indicated that no significant enemy opposition would be encountered—and none was.

On schedule at 0630 on the 31st, the 77th Division moved out from the FBHL with the 307th Infantry in the lead. At first the soldiers were able to follow a fresh-cut road that led along the axis of advance, but the head of the column soon passed the sweating engineers and their bulldozers, which were engaged in a running battle with the rain-sodden ground. Striking out cross-country, the long, snaking line trudged over the rugged terrain in a march that seemed at times to involve more up and down movement than it did forward progress. One marcher later described his experiences graphically:

The distance across the island is not far, as the crow flies, but unluckily we can't fly. The nearest I came to flying was while descending the slippery side of a mountain in a sitting position. . . . After advancing a few yards you find that the handle of the machine gun on your shoul-



COLUMN OF SOLDIERS of the 305th Infantry advances cross-island on 31 July at the start of the attack on northern Guam. (USA SC272338)



JUNGLE TRAIL is scouted by Marine tanks with covering infantry during the advance in northern Guam. (USMC 91166)

der, your pack and shovel, canteens, knife, and machete all stick out at right angles and are as tenacious in their grip on the surrounding underbrush as a dozen grappling hooks. Straining, sweating, and swearing avails you nothing so you decide on a full-bodied lunge—success crowns your efforts as all the entangling encumbrances decided to give up the struggle simultaneously. Just before you hit the ground a low swinging vine breaks your fall by looping itself under your chin, almost decapitating you and snapping your helmet fifteen yards to the rear. . . . You untangle your equipment, retrieve your helmet, and move on. The flies and mosquitos have discovered your route of march and have called up the reinforcements including the underfed and undernourished who regard us as walking blood banks. We continue to push on. . . .²

Despite the difficult terrain, the 307th kept up a good pace and reached the Pago River early in the afternoon. Patrols discovered an unguarded concentration camp on the banks of the river and released a group of about 2,000 happy Guamanians. As the natives started moving back toward Agat along the column of soldiers, the Americans shared their rations, cigarettes, and whatever else they could spare with the hungry men, women, and children.

The lead unit of Colonel Tanzola's regimental column, the 3d Battalion, 305th Infantry, moving to the right rear of the 307th, met the only opposition that was offered to the advance of the 77th Division. As scouts of 3/5 approached the village of Yona late in the afternoon of the 31st, a number of Japanese hidden amidst the buildings

opened fire. Deploying quickly, the leading company attacked and overran the village, killing 5 enemy and scattering the remainder of a force estimated at 50 men. Moving on, the 3d Battalion reached Pago Point before nightfall and set up on a hill there in all-around defense. Companies of the other battalions of the 305th established blocking positions along the division southern boundary from that point to the FBHL, where the 4th Marines had relieved the regiment earlier in the day. With the advance of the 77th Division to the east coast, the 1st Brigade, temporarily reinforced by the 306th Infantry, assumed responsibility for pacifying the southern half of Guam.

Like the 77th Division, the 3d Marine Division encountered little opposition on 31 July. General Turnage attacked with three regiments abreast at 0630, and by nightfall, when the advancing units held up, they had seized 4,000–5,000 yards of important terrain, including 4,000 yards of the crucial Agana-Pago Bay Road. The capital of the island was once again in American hands, and in the town plaza, amidst the shattered remnants of houses and government buildings, an advance division supply dump was operating at a brisk pace.

The honor of liberating Agana fell to 3/3, which advanced up the coastal road. At 1030, scouts of its assault platoons entered the town cautiously, threading their way through the rubble and the mines, which were strewn everywhere. Within 15 minutes, the battalion had reached the central plaza, and by noon was through the ruins and had set up in the northern outskirts on the regi-

² Quoted in HistDiv, WD, *Guam, Operations of the 77th Division (21 July–10 August 1944)* (Washington, 1946), p. 65, hereafter HistDiv, WD, *77th Div on Guam*.

mental objective. The rest of the 3d Marines was soon up on line with the 3d Battalion. At the start of the day's advance, 1/3 had held positions along the northern lip of the Fonte River valley, where its lines were soon masked by the forward movement of 2/21. Temporarily in reserve, 1/3 then followed up the assault units of 2/3, which reached and secured its portion of the Agana-Pago Bay Road by noon.

The road was also the initial objective of the 21st Marines, but the lead elements of 2/21 and 3/21, with a longer distance and more rugged terrain to travel, did not reach their goal until 1350. Moving along the right boundary, 3/21 tangled with a small force of Japanese holding a pillbox near Ordot and wiped out the defenders, one of the few such clashes during the day's advance. In the same vicinity, the 3/21 command post group, moving to a new forward position, scattered a force of 15-20 Japanese it encountered behind the lines. The enemy were evidently unaware that the Marine advance had passed them by, a tribute to the nature of the terrain.

On the right of the division zone of action, the 9th Marines had the farthest distance to go on 31 July over ground as bad as that any unit encountered. Like 3/21 on its left flank, 1/9 met and overcame resistance from a small outpost of enemy troops left behind to impede movement through the Ordot supply area. Then, at 1415, two enemy light tanks appeared out of the brush, spraying the advancing Marines with machine gun fire, killing one man and wounding three others. An alert bazooka team took care of both tanks, and the advance resumed. At 1510,

the 9th Marines had reached its objective, which was partially along the cross-island road. A platoon of the division tank battalion was able to join the regiment and add strength to the antitank defenses.

Earlier in the afternoon, General Geiger had authorized the 3d Division to continue moving forward as long as firm contact was maintained across the front. Although General Turnage alerted all units for a possible further advance, only the 3d Marines actually moved out. The 21st Marines committing 1/21 on the left, was engaged in shifting its frontline units to the right, in order to maintain contact with the 9th Marines, while the 9th was consolidating its link with the 307th Infantry along the division boundary.

Major Bastian's 3/3 had little difficulty in advancing from Agana once it jumped off at 1545. Before dusk, it had seized 1,200-1,500 yards of the roads northeast of the capital, one of which led to Finegayan and the other to Barrigada through the road junction village of San Antonio. On the right, 1/3 passed through the lines of the 2d Battalion and almost immediately entered an extensive swamp, which was the source of the Agana River. The going was slow and rough, and it was dark before the lead elements could dig in on dry land. The assault battalions set up perimeter defenses for the night about a mile and a half apart, with 2/3 in reserve positions blocking the gap.

As 3/3 was digging in, two small jeep-mounted patrols of Reconnaissance Company cleared the forward positions of the battalion and moved along the road to San Antonio. Their mission was to check the trail network

leading to Tumon Bay and Tiyan airfield. Both patrols sighted small groups of Japanese, hiding out in houses along the routes followed, and exchanged fire with them before turning back to the outskirts of Agana. As a combined patrol, the group then drove along the shore road until it was stopped by a tangle of trees blown across the path. In the gathering darkness, the reconnaissance force turned back again with little more to report to General Turnage than that some Japanese were located forward of the Marine lines. At the division CP, plans were laid for new motorized patrols the following day, this time bolstered by half-tracks and tanks.³

After a quiet night with no enemy activity, the 3d Division attacked at 0700 on the 1st with a scheme of maneuver calculated to pinch the 21st Marines out of the front line of a narrowing division zone. General Turnage ordered the 3d Marines to hold its positions once the 1st Battalion moved out of the swamp area and came abreast of 3/3. In advancing, 1/3 extended toward its right, closing in front of 1/21. The 21st Marines moved out with the 2d and 3d Battalions abreast, but 2/21 soon halted and withdrew to reserve positions when it was covered by 3/21. At 0910, the 3d Battalion was ordered to pivot on its right and occupy the boundary between the 3d and 9th Marines until its position was masked by the advance of the 9th. By 1400, Colonel Craig's regiment had completed this maneuver, after moving with difficulty

³ The original patrol makeup on 31 July had included two half-tracks, but both broke down en route to the objective.

through heavy brush and irregular terrain to seize the remaining portion of the Agana-Pago Bay Road in its zone. The 21st Marines, less 3/21, which was attached to the 3d Marines, was ordered into division reserve during the day, replacing 2/9, which reverted to regimental control.

With the readjustment of lines completed, the division resumed its general advance at 1500. Forward progress was steady and enemy resistance negligible. By 1745, when General Turnage called a halt, the center of the division was just short of the airfield dispersal area and the right was within easy striking distance of San Antonio.

The greatest problem facing the 3d Division on 1 August was the hundreds of mines that the Japanese had planted on all roads leading north. The bomb-disposal teams of the 19th Marines were hard put to find, let alone remove or destroy, all the lethal explosives the enemy had buried. Inevitably, several vehicles were blown apart and their passengers killed or wounded during the day. When an armored reconnaissance patrol was attempted at 1745, its nine tanks and a half-track were turned back by a profusion of mines on the coastal road to Finegayan. The armored vehicles were able to drive along the entire western side of Tiyan airfield, where it ran along a low cliff, but they could find no usable roads that led down toward the coast. Near the far end of the airstrip, an undetermined number of Japanese opened fire on the tanks from concealed positions in the brush, but the patrol avoided a fire fight in order to return to friendly positions before dark. Like the motorized reconnaissance on the previous

afternoon, this patrol on 1 August developed little vital information on Japanese dispositions or strength in the 3d Division zone.

Undoubtedly, the most significant accomplishment of the day was the seizure of the Agana-Pago Bay Road along its entire length. This feat provided the solution to formidable logistical problems, which would otherwise have plagued the 77th Division. The Army assault regiments, the 307th and 305th Infantry, had jumped off at 0700 on the 1st and had crossed the Pago River soon after. Inexplicably, the Japanese had failed to destroy the main bridge over the river, and 3/305 seized it without incident at 0800. Within two hours, both regiments had secured the cross-island road in their zones, a stretch including RJ 171, where an intersecting road curved north through the jungle to San Antonio. The soldiers, keeping their direction by compass bearings, pushed on through the dense vegetation, taking advantage of trails wherever they occurred and blazing new paths where there were none. All assault units were short of rations and water, but were well supplied with small arms ammunition; the Japanese had provided scant opportunity to do much firing. By nightfall, the 305th Infantry was located in perimeter defenses one and a half miles northeast of RJ 171, and the 307th was generally on line with it and in contact with the 9th Marines near San Antonio. The 306th Infantry, less 2/306 in corps reserve, was set up near RJ 171, having marched there during the day after being relieved on the FBHL by the 22d Marines.

The 77th Division began to use the

Agana-Pago Bay Road as its main supply route (MSR) almost as soon as it was captured. In planning the IIIAC drive to seize northern Guam, General Geiger had counted on the 77th Division to cut a new road from the Agat beachhead to the east coast road near Yona. Terrain difficulties, compounded by frequent rains, and the time factors involved forced abandonment of the road-building project late on the 31st. The only practical alternative to construction of a new MSR was for both divisions to use the same road, a solution that General Bruce has noted was unorthodox enough for "the books [to] say it can't be done, but on Guam it was done—it had to be."⁴ At 1620 on the 1st, General Geiger issued an order assigning the 77th Division priority over all traffic on the west coast road between Agat and a turn-around north of Adelup Point and equal priority with the 3d Division on the road beyond Adelup as far as the division boundary.

Moving throughout the afternoon and on through the night (with headlights as far as Agana and blackout lights beyond), a steady procession of 77th Division trucks, jeeps, and trailers moved supplies and equipment across the 3d Division zone. Three battalions of artillery and the light tank company of the 706th Tank Battalion also travelled the route on the 1st. General Bruce ordered the medium tank companies that were attached to his RCTs, the division artillery headquarters, and the remaining 155mm howitzer battalion to make the move as early as possible on the morning of the 2d. The

⁴ Bruce, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

general wanted as much support available as he could get, for intelligence sources all indicated that the Japanese were present in force in the Barrigada area, the next 77th Division objective.

In order to pinpoint the suspected enemy positions, the division commander ordered an armored reconnaissance made. Fourteen light tanks moved out along the road to San Antonio at 0630 on 2 August, a half-hour prior to the general division attack. About 800 yards beyond San Antonio on the road to Barrigada, the tanks were fired on by enemy troops concealed in the thick bordering jungle. After replying to this opposition with machine gun and cannon fire, the tanks returned to the American lines at 0730. They were soon sent out again, but this time got as far as Barrigada without meeting any resistance.

At the road fork in the village, the tanks at first turned left to move toward Mt. Barrigada on the road to Finegayan. Opposite the mountain the tanks encountered a trio of trucks, backed by enemy riflemen, blocking the way. The tank gunners made short work of both trucks and defenders, killing an estimated 35 Japanese. Returning to Barrigada, the armored column moved northeast along a road that appeared to swing around the other side of the mountain. Within 1,000 yards of the village, the track had dwindled to the size of a foot trail, and the lead tank got hung up on a stump. At this moment, Japanese troops began firing from all sides with rifles, machine guns, and 20mm guns. Some enemy soldiers tried to rush the tanks, but they were swept away by heavy fire from bow and turret guns. Once the

stranded tank was able to work itself loose, the armored patrol withdrew without having suffered any losses.

As the day wore on, this morning tank action proved to be the sparring session before the main event. The 307th Infantry, after pausing along the road to San Antonio to distribute badly needed water and rations, moved out again at 1030 and ran head on into a bristling enemy defensive position covering approaches to the mountain and the village. The day's plan of attack called for 1/307 on the left to move through the jungle, cross the road to Finegayan north of Barrigada, and seize the western slopes of the mountain; 3/307 was to move through the village and attack the southern slopes. Both units met increasingly steady resistance from Japanese manning prepared positions in the jungle and amidst the scattered village houses. Companies that had been assigned wide attack zones were crowded together as withering defensive fire channelized the assault. The regimental reserve, 2/307, was committed to the fight, and both light and medium tanks were called up to support the advance. Tank fire-support, particularly the destruction wrought by the 75s of the Shermans, helped smash an opening in the defensive barrier; tank armor shielded wounded infantrymen being evacuated under Japanese fire. When the 307th dug in for the night, it held positions in Barrigada just beyond the road junction.

On the right of the division zone, the 305th Infantry ran up against the eastern extension of the enemy position at Barrigada. Hidden in the jungle, well camouflaged and dug in, the Japanese

held their fire until the assault platoons of 3/305 and 1/305 were almost upon them and then shot with deadly accuracy. This tactic frustrated all attempts to outflank the enemy covering the open ground near Barrigada, and the battle resolved itself into a grinding tank-infantry action where gains of a few yards often took hours to win. Like the 307th, the 305th was finally able to fight its way past the Barrigada road junction and into the midst of the Japanese defenses when the approach of darkness forced a halt. The 77th Division, its combat experience thus far limited to minor patrol and defensive clashes, had had a rough introduction to the offensive in jungle warfare. In fighting often confused and frustrating, 29 men had been killed and 98 wounded, but the soldiers had proved their mettle.⁵

One unfortunate result of the day's action was that a gap developed between the 3d and 77th Divisions. In the wild tangle of trees and undergrowth along the boundary, the Marines and soldiers lost sight of each other after the morning attack began. The company of the 307th charged with maintaining contact spent most of its time out of touch with its own regiment as well as with the 9th Marines. General Turnage attached 2/21 to the 9th for the night to guard the open flank, and Lieutenant Colonel Smoak disposed his men along an unimproved trail that stretched from San Antonio to the positions that 3/9 had reached opposite Mt. Barrigada.

⁵ This fight, covered in full and interesting detail in HistDiv, WD, *77th Div on Guam*, pp. 75-102, furnishes an excellent study of small unit action.

The 3d Marine Division did not encounter any significant opposition on 2 August for the third day in a row. As a result, the 9th Marines overran its objective, Tiyan airfield, by 0910. On order from division, Colonel Craig held his troops up at the north end of the field until the 3d Marines could come up on line.

During this lull, a Japanese tank caused quite a bit of excitement when it broke through the extended 9th Marines lines and raced through the airfield dispersal area toward the rear of the 3d Marines. As the tank roared by the CP of 1/3, one of the crew, scorning the main armament "opened the turret and began to shoot wildly with a pistol" ⁶ at the Marines, who were scurrying to take cover. When the tank careened into a ditch several hundred yards farther on, the crew abandoned it and escaped into the brush. Marine mediums came up later in the afternoon and destroyed the enemy vehicle.

About the time the Shermans were blasting the hulk of the enemy tank, the 3d Marines was striving to take as much ground as it could before dark. Colonel Stuart's regiment had been slowed all day by dense vegetation and mines along the few roads and trails in its zone. It was 1400 before the 3d came abreast of the 9th. At that time all division assault units continued the attack with the Japanese offering only sporadic and ineffectual resistance. As the 3d Marines wrestled its way through the jungle along the road to Finegayan, 3/21 covered the left flank of the regiment, reconnoitering the

⁶ Maj Henry Aplington II ltr to CMC, dtd 9Apr47.

bulging cape formed by Saupon and Ypao Points. Where the division zone narrowed at Tumon Bay, 3/21 was pinched out of line and reverted to control of the 21st Marines as part of the reserve. So difficult was the problem of contact in the jungle that the 3d Marines continued advancing after dusk until it could reach a favorable open area to hold up for the night. There, Colonel Stuart and his executive officer, Colonel James Snedeker, personally helped tie in the positions of assault units by the light of a full moon.

An armored reconnaissance patrol cleared the front lines of the 3d Marines at 1815, its mission the same as that of the similar group sent out the previous evening—find the Japanese. After moving about 1,200 yards toward Finegayan, the patrol spotted several groups of the enemy, but did not engage them, turning back instead on order at 1845. This sighting confirmed previous intelligence that the Japanese were located in the vicinity of Finegayan, but there was still no strong evidence of their numbers or dispositions.

No one at III Corps or 3d Division headquarters doubted that the lull in the battle was temporary. The Japanese already were defending bitterly one road that led to Finegayan in the 77th Division zone, and the 3d Division was advancing astride the other main artery, which led to the junction near the village. Beyond Finegayan, the principal roads led to Ritidian Point and Mt. Santa Rosa. While there was no indication that the Japanese would defend the northernmost point of the island, aerial reconnaissance, captured documents, prisoner interrogations,

and information supplied by Guamanians all pointed to Mt. Santa Rosa as the center of resistance.

Concerned though he was with the immediate struggle to break through the outpost defenses at Barrigada and Finegayan, General Geiger was also looking ahead to the capture of Mt. Santa Rosa. Once it had driven past the coastal indentation of Tumon Bay, IIIAC would be operating in a wider zone, one just as choked with jungle growth and as hard to traverse as any area yet encountered. Geiger planned to use the 77th Division to reduce enemy positions in the vicinity of Santa Rosa, leaving the capture of most of Guam north of the mountain to the 3d Division. Under the circumstances, the corps commander believed that he could make good use of the 1st Brigade in the final clean-up drive, which would narrow the zones of attack and enable Generals Bruce, Turnage, and Shepherd to employ their men to best advantage in the difficult terrain.

Oral instructions were issued on the morning of 2 August for the brigade to be prepared to move to the vicinity of Tiyan airfield in corps reserve. General Shepherd in turn issued an operation order at 1030 directing the 4th Marines (less two companies on distant patrol) to assemble at Maanot Pass ready to move north by 0800 on the 3d. The 22d Marines (less 1/22) was ordered to continue patrolling and to prepare to move on 5 August.⁷ Corps planned to shift responsibility for the

⁷ Adding an amphibious note to the reconnaissance along the west coast were several long patrols mounted by elements of the 1st Armored Amphibian Battalion. *Metzger memo.*

security of southern Guam from the brigade to a task force composed in the main of 1/22, the 9th Defense Battalion, and the 7th Antiaircraft Artillery (Automatic Weapons) Battalion, all under the defense battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel O'Neil.

Following its relief of the 77th Division, the brigade had sent out deep, far-ranging patrols to continue the hunt for Japanese stragglers and to locate and encourage Guamanians to enter friendly lines. The patrols were made strong enough—all were at least reinforced platoons—to handle any potential opposition. Although the Marines found a considerable number of defensive positions wherever units of the 38th Infantry and 10th IMR had been stationed prior to W-Day, only a few enemy troops were discovered and these were swiftly eliminated. On 2 August, a 4th Marines patrol moving toward Talofofa Bay ran across a group of about 2,000 natives, who were directed to report in to the corps compound near Agat. Civil affairs officers there were already caring for approximately 5,000 Guamanians, most of whom had filtered into American lines since 31 July. In the 3d Division zone, an additional 530 civilians were being fed and housed in a temporary camp, and the number coming in increased sharply as the Japanese retreated to the north.

The problems involved in handling thousands of civilians were new to Marines in the Pacific, but they were anticipated. Whenever prelanding civil affairs plans went awry, there was a will to find and apply alternate solutions. Much improvisation was necessary, the corps C-1 recalled, because the supplies intended for the Guamani-

ans, which "were loaded on a ship with a low unloading priority . . . reached the beach after fifteen thousand civilians were within our lines."⁸ As a result of this situation, effective emergency measures were taken. As soon as the first natives were contacted:

. . . every piece of canvas which could be spared by units of Corps, was turned over to the Civil Affairs Section and a camp was established south of Agat. 350 shelter tents were borrowed from the 3d Marine Division. The Army loaned tentage for a 100-bed hospital which the Corps Surgeon borrowed from the Navy. The Corps Medical Battalion made 250 beds available for civilians. A Marine officer was assigned to build the Agat camp. 36 military police from the Corps military police were assigned to guard the camp. Badly needed trucks were borrowed from the motor pool and from two to six trucks worked constantly at hauling captured enemy food supplies and materials salvaged from bombed buildings, including the Marine Barracks. All this was immediately put to use for civilian relief.⁹

The Agat Camp was soon crowded, but no one went hungry; everyone had at least a piece of canvas overhead, and adequate medical attention was assured. On 2 August, as it became increasingly apparent that there was no organized enemy activity in southern Guam, corps issued an order stating that all Guamanians living south of a line from Agat to Pago Bay would be encouraged to remain at their homes, resume their normal pursuits with emphasis on agriculture, and obtain food and medical attention as necessary

⁸ IIIAC SAR, Encl E (Personnel), p. 3.

⁹ *Ibid.*

from the Agat camp.¹⁰ As soon as priority camp shelter construction was well started, the Corps Service Group began to employ some Guamanians as laborers. Plans were laid to organize a native police and patrol force. The rough terrain of Guam offered ample hiding places for individuals and small groups of the enemy. It was believed that native familiarity with the mountains and jungle would be of great value in hunting down any holdouts.

OBJECTIVE: FINEGAYAN-YIGO ROAD¹¹

General Obata, after surveying the positions his men had prepared at Barrigada, determined that they were unsuitable for a sustained defensive effort. Although he considered that the jungle maze around the village would be an aid to ambush and outpost action, he also believed that the dense growth would hinder the establishment of effective firing positions and would work as well to bar counterattacks. The army commander's instructions to Major General Tamura, his chief of staff, were to fight a delaying action at Barrigada to gain time for the construction of final defensive positions in the Mt. Mataguac-Mt. Santa Rosa area. The hard fighting at Barrigada on 2 August showed how well the Japanese troops could carry out their orders to

hold up the advance of the 77th Division in the eastern sector of the outpost defenses. On the 3d, the disposition of American forces, the terrain, and the roadnet combined to bring the 3d Marine Division into a head-on clash with the enemy deployed near Finegayan, guarding the western approaches to the final Japanese stronghold.

Ten days of hard-won experience had demonstrated that even the heaviest caliber guns had a difficult time making any impression on Japanese defenses dug into the rugged terrain of Guam. Where thick jungle cover added its mantle, the task of blasting out the enemy was doubly difficult. Impressed by the need to employ every available supporting weapon to maximum effectiveness, both Admiral Conolly and General Geiger took steps to muster a formidable array of ships, artillery, and aircraft to aid the advance to the north.

On 2 August, CTF 53 reorganized his gunfire support ships to cover operations along both coasts. Admiral Ainsworth, his flag in the light cruiser *Honolulu*, took station on the east side of the island with a battleship, another cruiser, and five destroyers. On the west, Rear Admiral C. Turner Joy in the heavy cruiser *Wichita* commanded a similar task unit, which was augmented by a third cruiser and four gunboats.¹² All the 155mm guns and howitzers of General del Valle's Corps Artillery were displaced forward by the morning of 3 August to positions where they could reinforce the fires of seven

¹⁰ STLF GO No. 5, dtd 2Aug44, in 3d MarDiv D-1, 21Jul-10Aug44.

¹¹ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *IIIAC SAR*; *3d MarDiv SAR*; *3d MarDiv Jnl*; 3d MarDiv D-2 and D-3 PeriodicRpts, 3-6Aug44; *77th InfDiv OpRpt*; *77th InfDiv Jnl*; *1st Prov-MarBrig SAR*; *3d TkBn SAR*; *GSDF Study*.

¹² The two battleships, *Pennsylvania* and *Colorado*, were detached on 3 August and returned to Eniwetok.

battalions of 75mm and 105mm and one of 155mm howitzers. Plans were laid to increase the aerial fire support available by supplementing carrier aircraft strikes with sorties by Seventh Air Force planes. The first deep support missions flown by Saipan-based B-25s and P-47s were directed against RJ 460 during the afternoon of the 3d. (See Map 30.)

There was heavy fighting in the 3d Marine Division zone on 3 August at RJ 177 where the roads from Agana and Barrigada crossed. Lieutenant Colonel Randall's 1/9 bore the brunt of the day's action as it advanced astride the road from Agana. At 0910, when the lead company (B) was about 500 yards from the junction, its men were driven to cover by a sudden burst of fire from Japanese dug in on both sides of the route. In a rough, close-quarter battle, two Marine tanks, an assault platoon of infantry, and plentiful supporting fire from all available weapons finished off the Japanese defenders at a cost of three men killed and seven wounded. Moving through the shambles of the enemy position, which was littered with 105 dead, 1/9 continued its advance on RJ 177. Continued opposition from Japanese troops hidden in the brush and ditches along the road was steady but light. By 1300, the battalion had driven past the junction. Shortly thereafter, as fresh assault troops relieved Company B, Lieutenant Colonel Randall received orders to dig in for the night.

On both flanks of 1/9, Marine units made good progress marked by clashes with small enemy delaying forces. The jungle and the constant problems it posed to movement and contact con-

tinued to be the most formidable obstacle. When it ended its advance along the coast, 3/3 was nearly 3,000 yards forward of the positions of the 9th Marines on the division boundary. There 3/9, now commanded by Major Jess P. Ferrill, Jr.,¹³ held up when it reached the Finegayán-Barrigada road because the battalion had no contact with the Army units on its right. At 1615, in order to plug the gap between divisions, General Turnage attached 3/21 to the 9th Marines; the battalion moved to blocking positions along the boundary to the right rear of 3/9.

As the Marines were digging in near RJ 177 late in the afternoon, an armored reconnaissance in force was attempted. Organized earlier in the day under the 3d Tank Battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Hartnoll J. Withers, the patrol group consisted of the Shermans of Company A reinforced by battalion staff tanks, two half-tracks from Reconnaissance Company, four radio jeeps, and mounted in trucks, Company I, 3/21 and a mine-clearing detachment of the 19th Marines.

Originally, the motorized patrol was scheduled to clear American lines shortly after 1200, but it was held up by the fighting at RJ 177. When the patrol commander finally got the word to proceed at 1525, it was already too late to reach its original objective, Ritidian Point, and return during daylight. Lieutenant Colonel Withers was ordered instead to try to reach RJ 460

¹³ On 1 August, Major Ferrill, who had commanded the Regimental Weapons Company, replaced Major Hubbard, who was wounded in the day's fighting.

before turning back and to complete his mission on the following day.

Shortly after 1600, the buttoned-up half-track leading the patrol point reached RJ 177 and veered right instead of left, heading east toward Ligan and Yigo. Approximately 400 yards past the junction, Japanese forces on both sides of the road opened up on the point vehicles. For nearly two hours the small Marine force was caught up in a fire fight and partially cut off from aid. The jungle terrain limited the maneuvering of American tanks and infantry and gave the advantage to well-emplaced enemy field guns and small arms. Eventually, covering fire from Shermans with the point was able to break loose the ambushed force. When the Marines pulled back to RJ 177, they left behind a destroyed half-track and a damaged truck and took with them 15 casualties.¹⁴ Marine tank gunners reported that they had knocked out one Japanese tank, two 75mm guns, and several machine guns.

The wrong-way turn at RJ 177 furnished ample evidence that the Japanese would dispute strongly any attempt to use the road to Ligan. The ambush also effectively killed the idea of a reconnaissance of the roads to Ritidian Point for the time being, as the enemy could be defending them as well. The risk was too great. Lieutenant Colonel Wither's force was disbanded after it reentered American lines and its elements returned to par-

¹⁴ From his examination of the enemy defenses which his regiment later reduced, General Craig concluded that "if the patrol had not pulled back when it did it would have been annihilated." *Craig 22Jun65 ltr.*

ent units to take part in the general attack on 4 August.

Plenty of action after dark on 3 August underscored the resurgence of enemy activity in the 3d Marine Division zone. At 2200, two Japanese medium tanks roared down the Ligan road, crashed through the defenses set up by 1/9, firing steadily all the while, wheeled to the right at RJ 177, and sped west up the road toward Dededo. As they clattered through the positions held by 1/3, the enemy tanks continued to fire their 57mm guns and machine guns at any target that showed. Despite all the return fire directed at them, the enemy armor escaped. This incident was the dramatic highlight of a series of clashes, which occurred all across the Marine front in the several hours before midnight. Then at 2300, American artillery fire, "placed perfectly"¹⁵ in an enemy assembly area forward of the regimental boundary, was responsible for breaking up a counterattack. After this, Japanese activity died away for the rest of the night.

In contrast with the situation in the 3d Division zone on 3 August, where resistance was steady all day long, the advance of the 77th Division was marked by sporadic clashes with the Japanese. When the 307th and 305th Infantry Regiments moved out from their hard-won foxholes and emplacements at 0730, the enemy units that had fought so doggedly to hold Barigada the previous afternoon had disappeared. In their stead, scattered through the jungle were lone snipers and small automatic weapons groups

¹⁵ *3d MarDiv Jnl*, entry of 2326, 3Aug44.

which were a constant irritant but no real threat to a steady advance. By 0930, the Army regiments had secured Barrigada and with it an all-important well, which could supply the 77th Division with 30,000 gallons of fresh water daily. After a pause to reorganize and regroup, the advance continued at 1330 behind a rolling barrage fired by all four battalions of division artillery. The 307th, with tanks breaking trail, struggled through the jungle, meeting little enemy opposition on its way to the crest of Mt. Barrigada. By 1500, 3/307 had secured the summit, and shortly thereafter it began consolidating positions for night defense.

The difficulties imposed by dense vegetation and a sparse trail network kept down the pace and extent of the advance. In an effort to speed the progress of the 305th Infantry through the lush jungle, Colonel Tanzola narrowed his zone of attack and covered much of the area between Mt. Barrigada and the coast with patrols. Complicating the problems of contact and control, the Japanese fought what the regiment reported was a "good delaying action."¹⁶ They staged a series of ambushes, which forced the Americans to deploy and maneuver against a foe that vanished as often as he stayed to fight.

The heavy opposition encountered at Barrigada on 2 August had caused the left flank units of the 77th Division to fall behind the Marines. Although some of the ground was regained on the 3d, when the 3d Division too was slowed by enemy resistance, at night-fall the corps line still slanted back

¹⁶ *77th InfDiv Jnl*, entry of 3Aug44.

from RJ 177 to Mt. Barrigada. Despite persistent efforts by the 307th Infantry, the combination of jungle and Japanese had defeated all efforts to make contact. In late afternoon, a tank-infantry patrol that tried to reach Marine lines using the road to Finegayan was stopped by a roadblock and then a barrier of mines, both well covered by enemy fire. One tank was disabled and had to be abandoned and destroyed when the outnumbered patrol withdrew.

This encounter with the Japanese on the Finegayan Road had an unfortunate sequel on 4 August. General Bruce, anxious to re-establish contact with the Marines as soon as possible after the attack opened that day, issued orders for another force of tanks and infantry to push through to the Marine lines. This patrol, spearheaded by Shermans, blasted its way through two roadblocks and opened fire on a third about 1045. This time, however, Company G of 2/9 held the position, not the Japanese; seven Marines were wounded before the company commander succeeded in stopping the fire poured out by the tank guns.¹⁷ Even after this unhappy incident, which was caused by a misunderstanding regarding recognition signals, there was still no contact between Army and Marine front lines. On both sides of the division boundary, assault units had already moved well

¹⁷ The Army force was told that Marine units would identify themselves with red smoke grenades; the Marines, who were unaware of the significance of this signal, recognized the Army patrol when it began firing and hence held their own fire. *Craig 22Jun65 ltr.*

beyond the Finegayan road into the jungle.

In the 77th Division zone of action, where there were no roads and few trails paralleling the axis of advance, the main struggle on 4 August was with the rugged terrain. Shermans broke trail for the assault platoons of the 305th Infantry, and tank dozers cut roads behind the plodding forward companies. On the northern slopes of Mt. Barrigada, the soldiers of the 307th, cutting their way through the mass of brush, vines, and trees, could make no use of the crushing power of the tanks. Progress was agonizingly slow, despite the absence of any strong Japanese opposition. At noon, General Bruce ordered both assault regiments to concentrate their men in one or two battalion columns in order to speed passage through the jungle. If any mopping up had to be done, reserve units would handle the task. As if to emphasize the need for this decision, General Geiger informed Bruce about an hour later that III Corps was going to have to hold up the advance of the 3d Division until the 77th could come abreast. By 1710, when the 307th reported that all of Mt. Barrigada was within its lines, the forward positions of the two divisions were more closely aligned. Soon afterwards, corps headquarters ordered a vigorous advance all along the front for 5 August.

A factor contributing to General Geiger's order that held up the advance of the 3d Division on the 4th was the stubborn resistance of the Japanese defending the road leading to Ligan and Yigo. Assault units of the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines hammered at the enemy strongpoints but made little

headway in the face of interlocking fire from machine guns and cannon hidden in the brush. Again the lay of the land prevented the Marines from outflanking the Japanese or from bringing the full power of supporting weapons to bear. There was only enough maneuver room for about one infantry company to take part in the fight to seize the vital road.

Elsewhere in the 3d Division zone on 4 August, the 3d Marines was able to secure its portion of the day's objective with little trouble. The 2d Battalion stood fast in its positions near the coast, and the 1st Battalion moved along the road through Dededo to seize a fork where the branches continued north in two trails about a mile apart. (See Maps 29 and 30). Both units sent strong patrols forward of their lines to range ahead in the jungle as far as 1,000-1,200 yards. The reconnaissance uncovered a formidable array of abandoned enemy defenses facing toward Tumon Bay, but discovered few Japanese.

On the afternoon of the 4th, in a move calculated to take advantage of the widening division zone of attack, the 21st Marines (less 3/21) reentered the front lines. Elements of the 1st and 2d Battalions replaced the left flank and center companies of 1/9 by 1730 in the area between the Dededo and Ligan roads. While the 3d Division was thus redeploying its units for an attack on a three-regiment front, the 1st Brigade was completing its move to northern Guam. General Shepherd's CP opened near San Antonio at 1200, and the 22d Marines (less 1/22) completed its move into a bivouac area near Tiyán airfield by 1530.

On 5 August, the focal point of battle in the 3d Marine Division zone continued to be the Japanese positions along the Liguán road. Again the 9th Marines bore the brunt of the fighting in jungle so thick that at one point an American tank passed within 15 yards of a Japanese medium and failed to spot it. Throughout the day, small arms fire stemming from many mutually supporting dugouts and trenches whipped the Marine riflemen, and well-sited antitank guns slowed the advance of vital supporting armor. The steady attrition of three days' fighting had taken its toll of the enemy, however. By dusk, when a Marine half-track knocked out the last Japanese 75mm gun, 1/9 was firmly in possession of the ground that it had fought so hard to win. On the right of the 1st Battalion, 2/9, which had passed through 3/9 during the morning's attack, was also astride the Liguán road, having fought its way forward through the jungle against moderate resistance.

Neither the 3d nor the 21st Marines faced anything like the organized opposition encountered by the 9th on 5 August. In the center and on the left of the division zone, small groups of the enemy that attempted to halt the advance of the infantry were quickly overrun. When 2/21, moving along the road to RJ 460, was pinned down by automatic weapons fire, a platoon of tanks made short work of the enemy defenders, the crews of two machine guns. It became increasingly apparent during the day's advance that the Japanese did not intend to hold the western sector of the island in any appreciable strength. Reconnaissance by Marine and Army light planes spot-

ting for artillery and naval guns and sightings by carrier planes and the B-25s and P-47s attacking from Saipan pinpointed the Mt. Santa Rosa area as the center of enemy activity.

Although the assault units of the 77th Division found few Japanese during their arduous trek through the jungle on 5 August, there was no doubt that the final enemy bastion lay ahead of the soldiers. The flood of natives that entered American lines, the few prisoners that had been taken, and the supporting evidence of captured documents reinforced the reports of aerial observers. Much of the division effort on the 5th was directed toward moving troops into position to make a concerted drive on the Japanese forces known to be holding Mt. Santa Rosa and its outworks.

Committing the 306th Infantry at 0700, General Bruce ordered it to pass around the right flank of the 307th and attack in the zone formerly assigned to that regiment. Pinched out of the front lines by the advance of the 306th, the 307th Infantry was to replenish supplies and ammunition in preparation for a move to the center of the division zone of action and a drive against Yigo and Mt. Santa Rosa when ordered by division. The 306th, its attack formation a column of battalions, completed much of its planned maneuver on 5 August despite problems posed by the jungle, a lack of useful trails, and the maddening fact that available maps proved to be unreliable guides to terrain. With General Bruce's permission, the regiment held up for the night about 2,000 yards short of the division boundary after 1/306 and 3/306 had both secured



R. F. STIBIL

MAP 30

portions of the road to Yigo near the village of Ipapao. (See Map 30.)

For the 305th Infantry, the pattern of attack on 5 August had a monotonous sameness with the actions of the previous day. Deeply enmeshed in the jungle, the two assault battalions of the regiment hacked their way forward behind trail-breaking tanks and half-tracks. Direction was maintained by compass bearings, and when 2/305, in the lead, reached what it thought was the day's objective about 1400, it had to cut a trail to the sea in order to verify its position. The 1st Battalion of the 305th set up about 1,000 yards to the rear of the 2d, and both units, lashed by a driving rain in the forest gloom, dug in as best they could for all-around defense. In the area occupied by 1/305, the coral subsurface was only six to nine inches below ground level; no satisfactory weapons emplacements or foxholes could be constructed.¹⁸

At 0200 on 6 August, two Japanese medium tanks, accompanied by a platoon of infantry, came clattering out of the darkness and attacked south down the trail that led into the 1/305 perimeter. A swift outpouring of small arms fire scattered the enemy riflemen, but the tanks ignored the bullets and broke through the American defenses, continuing down the trail and firing at targets on both sides. Much of the heavy return fire ricocheted off the armor and added to the lethal shower of lead and steel that lashed the surrounding brush. After one of the tanks collided with a Sherman parked

on the trail, then backed off and crushed a jeep, both enemy vehicles turned and raced back the way they had come, firing steadily all the while. Behind them the Japanese tankers left 15 Americans dead and 46 wounded; many of the men were casualties because they had been unable to dig in and therefore lacked effective cover from both tank and antitank fire.

The grim saga of the Japanese tanks was not over when they broke out of the 1/305 perimeter. At 0630, scouts of 2/305 ran into them, too. In search of a better route of advance, the Army battalion was retracing its steps along the trail it had blazed on 5 August. Cannon and machine gun fire from the two tanks, which were protected by a small rise of ground, quickly swept the path clear of infantrymen. American mediums worked forward along the narrow and congested trail to join the fight, but the advantage was with the enemy armor in hull defilade. Tree bursts from the Japanese tank shells scattered deadly fragments about, pinning the American infantry to the ground. Eventually, an 81mm mortar crew was able to get its tube in action, find a clear path through the trees for its line of fire, and lob shells into the Japanese position. This silenced the enemy armor, and assault units that outflanked the tanks and came upon them from the rear found both abandoned. Three bodies were the only evidence of the defenders' strength. The cost to 2/305 of the sharp and unexpected clash was 4 dead and at least 14 wounded.

These two tank-infantry battles were the highlights of 77th Division action on 6 August. Enemy opposition was

¹⁸ Col James E. Landrum, Jr., USA, ltr to CMC, dtd 22Oct52.

light and scattered otherwise, and all units spent the daylight hours getting into position for the attack on Mt. Santa Rosa. The basic scheme of maneuver planned by General Bruce's staff called for the 306th Infantry to make a wide sweep on the left of the division zone, advancing as rapidly as possible in column to reach the vicinity of Lulog village north of the mountain. The regiment would patrol to the division boundary to keep contact with the Marines. The 307th Infantry, with most of the 706th Tank Battalion attached, would make the main effort, attacking to seize Yigo and RJ 415, before turning eastward to take the mountain itself. The 305th Infantry (less 3/305 in corps reserve) would continue its attack toward the mountain with the objective of seizing the high ground south of it.

A map overlay outlining this operation plan and projecting a new division boundary beyond Liguán was distributed to all 77th Division units on 5 August. On the same date, the corps operation plan, incorporating the basic scheme proposed by the 77th Division, was also distributed. There was no overlay with the corps plan, but its language clearly stated that there was a change in the division boundary, and gave its map coordinates. Unfortunately, the new boundary and that shown on the 77th Division overlay did not coincide from the vicinity of Mt. Mataguac to the village of Salisbury. The result was that "the zone of action of the 306th Infantry, making its sweep around Mt. Santa Rosa on the division left was . . . partially within the

3d Marine Division's operational area."¹⁹

As part of its move into attack position, 1/306 closed to the division boundary northwest of Ipapao during 6 August and made contact with 2/9. The 3d Battalion of the 306th advanced to within 2,000 yards of Yigo, securing a large section of the road, which was to be the axis of the attack by the 307th Infantry. Behind the assault units of the 306th, the road was cleared of the enemy back to RJ 177. General Geiger authorized the 77th Division to use those portions within the zone of the 3d Division in order to move supplies and equipment from Barrigada dumps to the new forward area.

In late afternoon, while he was reconnoitering the site of a new CP near Ipapao, the 77th Division chief of staff, Colonel Douglas C. McNair, was killed by a sniper.²⁰ This incident grimly demonstrated the ease with which individuals and small groups of the enemy could avoid detection by mop-up forces.

The fact that many Japanese could hide out in areas supposedly secured by Army and Marine units was in part a result of enemy defensive tactics and American measures taken to combat them. Since *29th Division* forces were concentrated along key roads and trails, 3d and 77th Division attack plans were adapted to meet this situation. As a result, the approach of the 77th to Mt. Santa Rosa was made by means of a few strong battalion and

¹⁹ Crowl, *Marianas Campaign*, p. 422.

²⁰ Colonel McNair's father, Lieutenant General Leslie J. McNair, had been killed 12 days before by a misdirected American bomb, while he was observing an infantry battalion attack in France.

regimental columns, which smashed their way north through the jungle whenever trails were not available. On 6 August at 0900, General Turnage issued orders for the 3d Division to advance in column along the roads and trails leading north, patrolling and mopping up for 200 yards on either side in dense vegetation, and to the edge of first growth in more open country. As was the case in the Army zone of action, contact between Marine assault units would be made at designated objectives, usually lateral trails or road junctions. The attack formations ordered by Generals Bruce and Turnage and approved by General Geiger were designed to keep maximum pressure on the Japanese and to deny the enemy any more time to build up his defenses.

Early on 6 August, before the 3d Division altered its attack formation for a more rapid advance, the assault regiments made local attacks to straighten the front lines and reach a predesignated line of departure. The 9th Marines killed the few Japanese that were still alive in the ruins of the defenses along the Liguán road. On the division boundary, a tank-infantry patrol of Company G, 2/9 moved out to destroy an enemy roadblock on a trail leading into the 77th Division zone. Part of the defending force was a Japanese tank, which scored three hits on a Marine medium before being knocked out by return fire. Enemy infantry fled the roadblock and was hunted down by the Marine force, which killed 15 men before it turned back after reaching a point about 1,000 yards inside the Army zone.

At 1045, the 3d Division moved out all across the front in what was essen-

tially a series of parallel battalion columns. No longer deployed in skirmish line, the Marine units made great strides forward against minimal opposition. The 3d Marines, with 3/3 in assault, moved ahead 5,000 yards, along the road to Ritidian Point. When Major Bastian's lead units reached the day's objective, the 2d Battalion came up and extended to the left, while 3/3 moved to the right to contact the 21st Marines. After the new front line was occupied, 1/3 relieved the 3d Battalion in position so that 3/3 could shift to the right and pass through 2/21 on 7 August. This realignment was a preliminary maneuver to the entry of the 1st Brigade into the attack to the north.

The 21st Marines, like the 3d, shifted to a column of battalions when the new attack formation was ordered. With 2/21 in the van, the regiment moved 4,000 yards and reached its objective, a trail junction on the road to RJ 460 by 1300. Then the 1st Battalion moved up and extended to the right in rugged jungle terrain, while 2/21 contacted the 3d Marines to the left. The 9th Marines, with 1/9 preceding 2/9, followed a small trail that was the trace of the division boundary to the point where the boundary veered sharply northeast toward the coast between Pati Point and Anao Point. At this turning, 1/9 moved to the northwest along a trail that angled in the direction of the positions held by the 21st Marines. The battalion set up for the night without having made contact with 1/21. For the first time in three days, however, the right flank battalion of the 3d Division (2/9) was in visual contact with the left flank battalion

(1/306) of the 77th Division when the frontline units established their night defensive perimeters.

During the afternoon's advance, corps headquarters passed the word that its operation plan for the attack against Mt. Santa Rosa would be effective at 0730, 7 August. General Shepherd was notified that his brigade would pass through the positions held by 2/3 and 1/3 and assume responsibility for an attack zone that included the western part of the island and the northern end from Ritidian Point to the village of Tarague. (See Map 30.) Shepherd alerted the 4th Marines to make the relief of the 3d Marines battalions and to move out in assault the following morning.

In its narrowed zone of action in the center of the island, the 3d Marine Division was directed to continue its attack and to assist the 77th Division, which would be making the principal corps effort to destroy the remaining Japanese. Priority of fires of corps artillery and naval support ships was given the Army division. Targets assigned for morning strikes by Seventh Air Force planes were all picked with the aim of softening up the defenses of the key Santa Rosa heights. The heavy bombing and shelling of areas behind the enemy lines in northern Guam had been going on for days. As one Japanese survivor recalled the period, the bombardment was nerve-racking and destructive, and often seemed all too thorough to the individual, since American aircraft:

. . . seeking our units during daylight hours in the forest, bombed and strafed even a single soldier. During the night, the enemy naval units attempting to cut

our communications were shelling our position from all points of the perimeter of the island, thus impeding our operation activities to a great extent.²¹

*THE FINAL DRIVE*²²

Before the 77th Division launched its final drive on 7 August, assault units of the 306th and 307th Infantry advanced to occupy a line of departure closer to the attack objectives. Twenty P-47s from Saipan strafed and bombed Mt. Santa Rosa as the infantrymen were moving out. The 306th Infantry plunged into the jungle, following trails that would skirt Yigo on the west, while the 307th guided on the road to the village and reached the last control point on its approach march by 0900. As the leading company of 3/307 was nearing this area, 600 yards from the road junction at Yigo, its men were harassed by small arms fire. The Americans deployed and poured a heavy volume of return fire into the thick brush ahead. Within an hour all opposition had faded away.

Once all units were in position on the designated line of departure, General Bruce issued orders for the general attack to begin at noon. In preparation, 10 B-25s roared in over the mountain dropping 120 100-pound bombs on the south slopes and firing 75 rounds at Japanese positions from nose-mounted

²¹ *Takeda ltr I.*

²² Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *IIIAC SAR; 3d MarDiv SAR; 3d MarDiv Jnl; 77th InfDiv OpRpt; 77th InfDiv Jnl; 1st ProvMarBrig SAR; 1st ProvMarBrig Jnl; GSDF Study; Takeda ltr I; Takeda ltr II.*

75mm cannon.²³ For an hour before H-Hour, support ships pounded the heights and possible enemy assembly areas, and then in the final 20 minutes before jump-off, seven battalions of artillery fired a preparation on defenses in the vicinity of Yigo. As the fire lifted on schedule and the assault troops warily advanced, supporting tanks had not yet made their way through the barrier of troops, trucks, and jeeps on the narrow, crowded road. At 1215, the light tanks caught up with the leading elements of 3/307 about 400 yards from the village and passed through the infantry front lines.

Overrunning and crushing several enemy machine gun positions, the lights topped a small rise where the ground was sparsely covered with brush. A seeming hurricane of enemy fire struck the armor from hidden positions ahead, and a radio call for help went out to the mediums. When the heavier tanks came up, a raging duel of armor and antitank guns ensued. With their freedom of action hampered by the jungle, the tanks were channeled into the fire lanes of enemy guns. Two lights were knocked out, one medium was destroyed and another damaged, and 15 tank crewmen were casualties before the short, furious battle was over. Infantrymen that tried to out-flank the Japanese strongpoint by moving through the jungle, which crowded the road, were driven to cover by deadly and accurate machine gun fire.

Suddenly, the fight ended almost as

²³ AAF in the Marianas Campaign, Operation Forager, Mar-Aug44, listing of 48th BombSqn(M) sorties. (USAF 105.1-3, USAF Archives, Maxwell AFB, Ala.)

quickly as it began, when the enemy force, 100-200 men, was soundly beaten by elements of 3/306. Moving from his position on the left flank toward the sound of the firing, and keying his location to the distinctive chatter of the enemy machine guns, the battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Gordon T. Kimbrell, led a platoon of Company K through the jungle and rushed the Japanese position from the rear. Surprise was complete and the defenders were killed or routed. Other elements of 3/306 wiped out enemy infantry holding out closer to the village road junction. With the welcome aid of this flanking attack, which accounted for 105 Japanese, the 307th and its supporting tanks were able to sweep through the shell-pocked ruins of Yigo. As the 307th turned toward the mountain, 3/306 moved out up the road toward Salisbury. (See Map 30.)

The fighting near RJ 415 did not end until midafternoon, and when the two assault battalions of the 307th had moved into position to attack east, the day was already spent. On General Bruce's orders, the 307th dug in about a half mile beyond Yigo and made preparations to renew the attack at 0730 on the 8th.

On the right of the division zone of action, the 305th Infantry spent another hard day cutting its way through the trackless jungle toward the mountain. Enemy opposition to both assault battalion columns was light, but the rate of advance was maddeningly slowed by the difficult terrain. The troops ended the day close enough to their objective, however, to get caught in the fringe of an afternoon bombing attack; 2/305 suffered several casual-

ties from a misdirected bomb. The 3d Battalion of the 307th, strafed at about the same time, luckily escaped injury.

In an unexpected twist of fate, 3/305, in division reserve but under corps control, had one of the day's hardest fights. It was ordered to clean out the area near the new 77th Division CP, where Colonel McNair had been killed on the 6th. A platoon uncovered an enemy strongpoint deftly hidden in the jungle about 500 yards from the headquarters camp. A fierce fire fight broke out. Elements of two rifle companies and a platoon of mediums were called up to surround the Japanese, estimated at company strength. Six hours of desperate close-quarter fighting followed before the defenders were wiped out at a cost of 12 Americans killed and 21 wounded.²⁴

The column of 1/306, which advanced on the division left on 7 August, made good progress after the noon jump-off time. When its leading platoons reached a trail junction near the division boundary about 1500, they ran into a strongpoint built around two machine guns and manned by 40-50 Japanese. The fight to eliminate this opposition took much of the rest of the afternoon, with the result that the 1st Battalion set up for the night just on the edge of the area that corps maps showed as part of the 3d Marine Division territory. If 1/306 had continued its advance, it would have encountered elements of the 9th Marines.

The 3d Division assault troops met little enemy resistance on 7 August. With bulldozers and tanks breaking

trail where none existed and attack formations narrowed to battalion columns, all three regiments reached and secured their objectives by midafternoon. They held up along a trail from RJ 460 to the boundary near the village of Chaguian, generally 5,000 yards forward of their line of departure.

On the right, 1/9 and 2/9 moved out in attack with the 1st Battalion in the fore. A few isolated enemy stragglers were killed, and signs of fresh tank tracks were found by patrols that scouted toward the 21st Marines, advancing in the center of the division zone. The 21st, with 3/21 in the van, found no fresh evidence of the enemy as it struggled forward along the scant tract of meandering trails. On the far left, 3/3 led the 3d Marines attack along the road to RJ 460. At 0850, a few enemy artillery shells exploded among the advancing troops but with little effect. About two hours later, the Marines discovered the source of this fire when the tank-infantry point found a 75mm gun posted to hold a roadblock. After a brief flurry of fire, the defenders fled to the north and the advance continued at a good pace. When it dug in for the night, the regiment was in contact with the 4th Marines on the left and the 21st Marines on the right. The favorable reports by the 3d Marines of the day's action added to an already optimistic picture at the 3d Division CP. General Turnage ordered all assault units to continue their advance to the sea in the morning.

The situation in the 1st Brigade zone proved equally promising after the results of the advance on 7 August were evaluated. When the 4th Marines attacked along the roads to Ritidian

²⁴ 305th Inf AAR, 18Jun-9Aug44 (WW II ReesDiv, FRC, Alexandria, Va.)



ARMY TANKS hit and aflame during the attack the Yigo village road junction near Mt. Santa Rosa. (USMC 92083)



JUNGLE FOLIAGE almost hides a Marine patrol from view as it nears Tarague on 9 August. (USMC 93894)

Point, its progress was so rapid that General Shepherd alerted the 22d Marines to move forward behind the 4th, ready to join the assault as the zone widened to the north. At a trail junction about 2,000 yards short of RJ 460, Company L of 3/4, was fired upon by an enemy 75mm gun, which wounded the company commander and two men. A supporting platoon of mediums quickly demolished the gun and a mortar position nearby, and blew apart the roadblock they had covered. Inexplicably, the Japanese gunner had fired three ineffectual rounds of high explosive at the tanks, although over 100 armor-piercing projectiles lay nearby.²⁵ Aside from this brief encounter, little opposition developed. The 22d Marines reached a position behind 1/4 on the left of the brigade zone in late afternoon, ready to move into the attack on order.

The capstone to the good news of 7 August was furnished by planes of MAG-21.²⁶ During the day VMF-225 began flying routine combat air patrols from Orote, relieving Navy planes of this responsibility. At the same time, the Seventh Air Force command on Saipan was notified that Marine night fighters would take over all night air patrol duties. Although the Marine Corsairs and Hellcats were not slated to provide close support for ground troops, they could be called upon in that role if needed. With its own air defense garrison in operation, Guam was

²⁵ *6th TankBn SAR*, entry of 7Aug44.

²⁶ On 4 August, the night fighters of VMF(N)-534 had led the flight echelons of VMF-216, -217, and -225 from the *CVE Santee* into Orote airfield. Sherrod, *Marine Air History*, p. 253.

a long step forward in its development as a major Allied base for further moves against Japan.

Despite the cheering events of 7 August, none of the American commanders had any idea that the fight for the island was over. On the night of 7-8 August, it was the Japanese tanks, as it had been so often in the past few days, that added a fresh reminder of the enemy spirit. Harried by air attacks, artillery, and naval guns, the Japanese could not move any armor in daylight along major roads and trails, but at night, after the flock of Marine and Army observation planes had landed, the tanks could shift into attack position.

About 0300 on 8 August, the soldiers holding the northern sector of the 3/306 perimeter heard tanks rumbling down the road from Salisbury toward them. Three Japanese mediums with an undetermined force of accompanying infantry loomed out of the darkness, all guns blazing away. Alerted by the unmistakable clatter, the men of the 306th were ready and replied to the attack with every weapon they could muster. The enemy infantry was quickly driven off, one tank was knocked out by a rifle grenade and a second was stalled by heavy machine gun fire. The remaining medium abandoned the fight and towed the cripple away. Morning's light showed the Japanese losses to have been 18 men, including 3 officers, and the cost to 3/306 for holding its ground, 6 men dead and 18 wounded.

Unshaken by this attack, the 3d Battalion led the advance of the 306th on 8 August, heading cross-country by a narrow trail for Lulog. The few Jap-

anese encountered appeared to be dazed and shocked by the downpour of bombs and shells that had preceded the attack. By 1040, the battalion reached the village, and patrols headed for the coast on General Bruce's order. In view of the slight opposition, the 77th Division commander had revised his plan for encircling Mt. Santa Rosa to include not only the movement of 1/306 along what was believed to be the division boundary to a blocking position at Salisbury, but also the advance of 2/306 through that village and on to the coast near Pati Point. As the 2d Battalion, following its orders, approached Salisbury, Marine artillery shells hit along the column and wounded several soldiers, an unfortunate incident attributable to the confusion of boundary overlays in the hands of the two divisions. The swift protest of the violation of his supposed zone of action by Colonel Aubrey D. Smith of the 306th brought an equally prompt and sure reply from the neighboring 9th Marines. This exchange led to the discovery of the cause of the boundary confusion and its resolution by Colonels Smith and Craig.

Before the 306th proceeded further with General Bruce's plan, the division commander saw a POW report—which later proved false—placing 3,000 Japanese in the area just north of Mt. Santa Rosa. A cautious view of this intelligence prompted Bruce to order 1/306 to close on the 3d Battalion at Lulog and 2/306 to stand fast in reserve 1,200 yards northeast of Yigo, ready to close any gap between the 306th and 307th Infantry.

A strong reason for believing that major Japanese forces were located in

the zone of the 306th lay in the results of the 8 August attack by the other regiments of the 77th Division. No significant enemy opposition was developed by the 305th Infantry as it neared its objective; the 307th eliminated 35 bombardment-dazed Japanese on the lower slopes of Mt. Santa Rosa, but found no one manning defenses on the bare upper reaches. Patrols to the sea by the 305th and 307th uncovered few signs of the enemy.

Under the circumstances, Colonel Smith ordered 2/306 to fill a gap between the 307th on the mountain and the rest of his regiment dug in near Lulog. In the course of this move, designed to block possible Japanese escape routes through dense jungle, elements of the 306th and 307th mistook each other for the enemy troops and exchanged artillery and tank fire. Ten casualties were incurred before the mistake was discovered. After this unfortunate mishap, the night was quiet.

Less than 600 enemy dead had been counted in the two-day fight for Yigo and Mt. Santa Rosa. Since intelligence officers had estimated a tentative garrison strength of 1,500 soldiers, 1,000 sailors, and 2,500 laborers in the 77th Division zone, it seemed probable that many Japanese had slipped away into the jungle. Although all 7 of the enemy artillery pieces thought to be part of the defense had been accounted for, only 5 of the 13 tanks reported in the vicinity had been knocked out.

Some enemy elements, which might have been units fleeing the Mt. Santa Rosa action, cropped up in the zone of the 9th Marines on 8 August as 3/9, moving along the trail from Salisbury

to the coast, met and overcame successive small pockets of resistance. By the time orders were passed to dig in, Major Bastian's men had reached a point about 800-1,000 yards beyond Salisbury. At that village, 2/9, which was following the path taken by the 3d Battalion, held up and established a strong blocking position. The 1st Battalion, in reserve, patrolled in the vicinity of Mt. Mataguac and killed 25 Japanese in scattered encounters. Colonel Craig, whose CP was located in the 1/9 patrol area close to the division boundary, notified the nearest Army unit that his men had sighted considerable enemy activity near a brush-covered hill just within the Army zone of action.²⁷ Available intelligence indicated that the enemy headquarters might well be located in this area.

In the center of the 3d Division zone, the 21st Marines passed into reserve at the start of the 8 August attack. Redrawn regimental boundaries pinched the 21st out of the front line, but gave it a large triangular patrol area, about 3,000 yards along each leg, to clear of Japanese. One patrol of the many threading their ways through the jungle discovered a truck, which contained the bodies of 30 Guamanians, who had been beheaded; in the same area, near Chaguian, 21 more bodies of natives, who had been as brutally murdered, were found the next day. Subsequent intensive investigation revealed that these victims had been impressed at the concentration camp near Yona to work on the defenses at Yigo. These gruesome discoveries spurred the Marines to a grim determination in

their task of hunting down and eliminating the Japanese.

Although there were signs of recent Japanese activity throughout the jungled interior, particularly along the trails, relatively few enemy were found by the 3d Marines moving northeast on the left flank of the division. The 3d Battalion, which could follow a trail along the boundary, was able to make rapid progress. It reached RJ 460 and moved 1,500 yards further to the northeast before holding up for night defense. Patrols found their way to the cliffs overlooking the sea before returning to the perimeter for the night.

The 2d Battalion was not so fortunate as the 3d, for the trail it followed in the morning attack soon ended in a wall of jungle. A second trail which was supposed to intersect the first, a narrow pathway leading from Salisbury to the coastal village of Tarague, proved to be 1,300 yards away through the brush. Major Culpepper had no choice but to plunge ahead into the tangle, with relays of men cutting their way through the mass of vegetation, in order to reach his objective. All heavy weapons were left behind to come up with the bulldozers and tanks that followed the trace of the infantry column, building a wider trail, which could be used by trucks and jeeps. When 2/3 broke through to the Salisbury-Tarague trail, a patrol headed south to contact the 9th Marines. Not far from the new trail junction, an enemy blocking force was encountered and a fire fight broke out. When the last shots died away, 19 dead Japanese were found in the remnants of the enemy position, but it was too late to continue any further south. The patrol retraced its steps

²⁷ Craig 22Jun65 ltr.

and rejoined the battalion, which had moved north on the trail toward the coast. On Colonel Stuart's order, 2/3, still minus its supporting weapons, dug in along the trail at a point roughly two miles north of Salisbury. (See Map 31.)

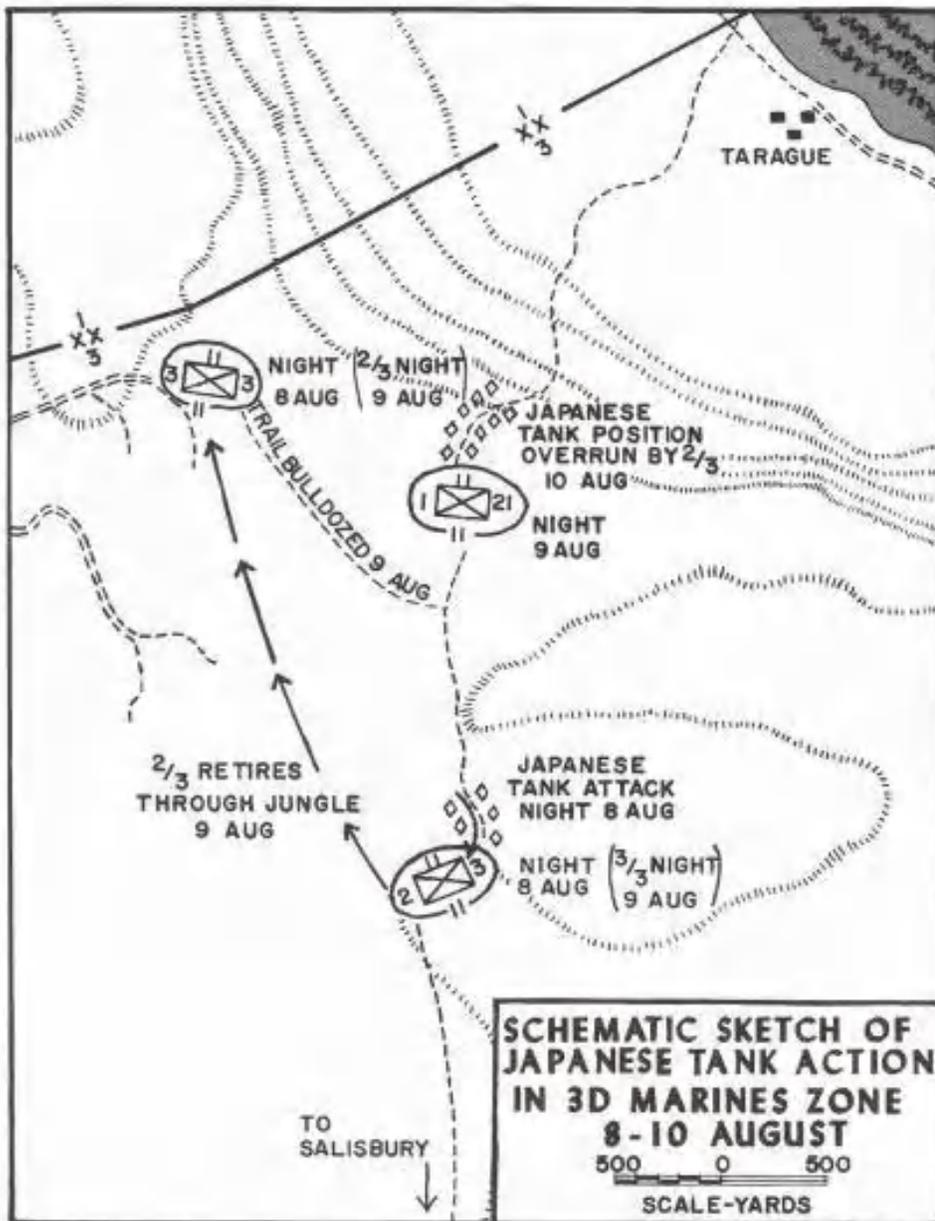
Helped by good trails that paralleled its direction of attack, the 1st Brigade reached the northern tip of Guam on 8 August. On General Shepherd's order, the 22d Marines moved into the line on the left at the start of the morning's attack, relieving elements of 1/4. As the battalion columns advanced in approach march formation, there was little enemy resistance. Shepherd ordered 2/22 to send a patrol to Ritidian Point lighthouse, where air observers had reported Japanese activity. Company F drew the mission and advanced rapidly while carrier aircraft hit each successive road and trail junction to the front. By 1500, the company had reached Ritidian Point and had begun to work a patrol down a twisting cliff trail to the beach. A small force of Japanese tried to ambush the Marines but was easily eliminated. Following Company F, the remainder of 2/22 set up a defensive perimeter near Mt. Machanao. The 3d Battalion dug in on the road about halfway between RJ 530 and RJ 460.

The 4th Marines, experiencing little difficulty in seizing the day's objectives, set up night defenses in a series of perimeters, which stretched from the position held by 3/22 back down the road to RJ 460 and thence along the trail to Tarague as far as the defenses established by 3/3. Vigorous patrolling during the day had located few Japanese in the brigade zone of action.

That night in a surprisingly honest broadcast, that might almost have been a IIIAC situation report, Radio Tokyo announced that American forces had seized 90 percent of Guam and were patrolling the remaining area still held by the Japanese.

Emphasizing the closeness of the end on Guam, IIIAC had placed restrictions on the use of supporting fires since 7 August. On that day, corps headquarters cancelled all deep support naval gunfire missions except those specifically requested by the brigade and divisions. Those headquarters could continue call fire on point and area targets, but had to coordinate closely and control each mission precisely. The last strike by Saipan-based P-47s was flown on the afternoon of the 7th. B-25s made their final bombing and strafing runs on Ritidian Point targets the next morning.²⁸ After the strikes in support of 2/22 approaching the northern tip of the island, carrier planes were placed on standby for possible supporting strikes but never called. For the last stages of the campaign, artillery was the primary supporting weapon, and battalions of brigade and division howitzers displaced forward on the 8th in order to reach firing positions that would cover the stretches of jungle that remained

²⁸ During 24 missions flown against targets on Guam between 3 and 8 August, Seventh Air Force squadrons lost one plane, a B-25, which crashed in the jungle on 5 August, killing the six-man crew and one observer. It is not known whether the ship was shot down or had an operational failure. AAF in the Marianas, *op. cit.*; 48th BombSqn(M) Org-Hist, 1-31Aug44, pp. 1-2. (USAF Archives, Maxwell AFB, Ala.)



MAP 31

T.L. RUSSELL

in Japanese hands.

On the night of 8/9 August, the center of action was the position occupied by 2/3 on the Salisbury-Tarague trail. At 0130, enemy mortar fire crashed down in the perimeter, heralding a tank-infantry attack launched from the direction of Tarague. The Marines immediately took cover off the trail and opened fire with every weapon they had. The fury of defending fire succeeded in annihilating the Japanese riflemen. The tanks continued firing and edged forward without infantry support when bazooka rockets and antitank rifle grenades, both in poor condition from exposure to the frequent rains, proved ineffective against the Japanese armor.

At 0300, when three enemy mediums had advanced into the midst of his position, Major Culpepper ordered his company commanders to pull their men back into the jungle and to reassemble and reorganize in the woods behind his CP.²⁹ Miraculously, a head count taken 45 minutes later when the companies had found their ways through the dark jungle showed that there were no American casualties despite the prolonged firefight. Culpepper radioed Colonel Stuart of his actions, and as dawn broke, 2/3 struck out cross-country, cutting a trail toward the positions held by 3/3. (See Map 31.)

As his 2d Battalion fought its way through the jungle, Colonel Stuart, whose CP was located in the 3/3 perimeter, bent every effort toward getting heavy weapons onto the trail where the Japanese tanks were last reported. Bulldozers plowed their heavy blades

through the thick growth and tanks followed, crushing or knocking down all but the biggest trees. By noon, a rugged track usable by tanks and anti-tank guns was cut through to the Salisbury-Tarague trail. Leaving a blocking force at this junction, 3/3 moved south with tank support toward the scene of the night's action. The enemy mediums had disappeared, however, and 3/3 set up where 2/3 had dug in the night before. At 1500, 1/21, which had been attached to the 3d Marines the night before, was ordered to move up to the trail and advance toward Tarague. When the battalion received the word to set up for the night, it was 1,500 yards from the coast. At the other end of the trail, 3/21, operating under regimental control, set up a blocking position at Salisbury. Completing the picture of a day of maneuvering to trap the enemy tanks, 2/3 reached the division boundary road after a hard trek through the jungle and established a night perimeter where 3/3 had been located on 8 August. (See Map 31.)

While the 3d Marines concentrated its efforts on destroying the Japanese armor, the 9th Marines advanced to Pati Point. With 2/9 leading, followed by 1/9, the regiment attacked along a trail on the division boundary and patrolled every intersecting path. The 3d Battalion in reserve sought the Japanese as aggressively as the assault units. About 1030, one of 3/9 patrols fought the day's major action when it discovered a trailblock built around a light tank and two trucks. A sharp, brief battle eliminated all opposition and accounted for 18 Japanese.

Colonel Craig was directed to hold up

²⁹ 2/3 *Jnl*, entry of 8Aug44.

the advance of 2/9 in midmorning,³⁰ when a native reported that 2,000–3,000 Japanese were located in the vicinity of Savana Grande, a large, fairly open stretch of dwarf jungle growth, coconut trees, and tall grasses. Division artillery poured 2,280 rounds of 75mm and 105mm shells into the area, and the 7th 155mm Gun Battalion, the only Corps Artillery unit that could reach the target, added 1,000 of its heavier rounds in 2½ hours of concentrated firing. When the 9th Marines moved out in attack again, this time with the 1st and 2d Battalions abreast, it found few signs of the enemy. Those Japanese encountered were quickly killed. Patrols from both battalions reached the cliffs along the coast by 1800 and scouted Pati Point and Savana Grande without results. When Colonel Craig ordered all units to set up night defenses, the regiment had made contact with elements of the 306th Infantry patrolling to the south.

General Bruce was satisfied that his zone was free of organized Japanese opposition on 9 August. Feeling that there was no necessity for three regiments in the forward area, he ordered the 305th Infantry (less 3/305 in corps reserve) back to Barrigada. This action lessened the strain on supply agencies, which were forced to use the road through Finegayan in the 3d Division zone or the rugged bulldozer trail that marked the route of advance of the 305th. The 307th Infantry sent out patrols from its positions on Mt. Santa Rosa, but the bulk of the task of eliminating the remaining Japanese was given to the 306th. While there was

little evidence of organized resistance, there were frequent clashes with small groups of Japanese throughout the jungle. Of particular interest were several ambushes that patrols from the 77th Reconnaissance Troop ran into when they approached Mt. Mataguac from the east and fire that 1/306 encountered moving in from the west. For the most part, the enemy troops there stayed hidden in caves and waited.

The northernmost part of Guam, that most lightly defended by the Japanese, was aggressively patrolled on 9 August. Brigade units met scattered opposition from small groups and snipers, but it was insignificant and easily overcome. The 2d Battalion, 22d Marines climbed down the cliffs at Ritidian Point and searched for the enemy along the beaches. The 4th Marines reached the north coast at Mengagan Point, sent patrols to contact the 22d along the cliffs and beaches, and scouted toward Tarague in the other direction. The patrol reports reaching General Shepherd from both assault and reserve units, and a personal visit to the regimental CPs in late afternoon, convinced him that his area of responsibility was secure. At 1800, he announced that all organized resistance had ceased in the brigade zone of action.

On the evening of 9 August, it appeared that the last strong pocket of Japanese lay in the 3d Marine Division zone. Plans were laid to make sure that it was eliminated early on the 10th. Once the troublesome Japanese tanks were accounted for, General Geiger was ready to declare the island secure, an announcement which would happily coincide with a visit of Ad-

³⁰ Craig 22June65 ltr.

miral Nimitz to inspect Guam and to discuss future operations.³¹

All night long howitzers of the 12th Marines fired on the probable tank bivouac area along the trail to Tarague and other paths leading into Marine defenses. Colonel Stuart gave 2/3 the job of tangling with the Japanese armor, this time with the support of the heavy weapons it had lacked on the night of 8–9 August. At 0730, Major Culpepper's assault platoons passed through the positions held by 1/21 and attacked toward the sea. About 400 yards up the trail, two enemy medium tanks opened fire on the point. A platoon of Shermans moving with the infantrymen returned the fire and destroyed the tanks. The advance continued past the pair of smoking hulks, which proved to be the last operational enemy tanks on Guam. Seven more enemy mediums, abandoned, were captured by 1030.³² The Marines continued on to the coast against negligible opposition with 1/21 trailing 2/3. When the cliffs were reached in the afternoon, patrols from both units worked their way down to the beach, where they quickly disposed of about a platoon of the enemy.

At 1131, shortly after receiving re-

ports that the Japanese tanks were accounted for, General Geiger announced that all organized resistance on Guam had ended. At 1423, a IIIAC operation order was issued, effective on receipt, establishing an enemy straggler line across the island from Fadian Point to the coast just north of Tumon Bay. All Japanese were to be contained north of that line and the brigade and the two divisions were directed to continue mopping up action in their respective zones against "numerous enemy remnants" estimated to be present in northern Guam.³³ The 77th Division was given a special mission of maintaining three motorized patrols ready on an hour's notice to reduce points of resistance south of the straggler line.

One final battle remained to be fought on Guam. On 10 August, when patrols of 1/306 checked the Japanese strongpoint near Mt. Mataguac first spotted by the 9th Marines, they encountered heavy fire from hidden cave positions. An earlier probing attack by Army troops, supported by mortars set up in Colonel Craig's CP area,³⁴ had been unsuccessful in penetrating the Japanese defenses. In a full-scale bat-

³¹ Unit journals show that all corps commanding officers were well aware of the pending visit of CinCPac and his official party, as typified by General Geiger's message to General Bruce: "Admiral Nimitz and other officials arrive from Pearl Harbor 10 August. Push all Japs from Guam." *77th InfDiv Jnl*, entry of 9Aug44.

³² The Commanding Officer, *24th Tank Company* reported that these tanks were "scuttled" because of lack of fuel or mechanical failure. 3d MarDiv POW Interrogation Rpt No. 396, Capt Hideo Sato, IJA, dtd 7Oct44.

³³ *3d MarDiv Jnl*, entry of 10Aug44.

³⁴ *Craig 22Jun65 ltr.* General Craig, vividly recalling the details of this action, noted that the Army battalion attacked soon after he notified them of the enemy activity on 8 August. The bulk of the fighting for the Japanese headquarters caves did not take place until 10–11 August, however, on the evidence of 1/306 records and contemporary Japanese accounts. Surprisingly enough, this hot action is very scantily covered in the records of higher headquarters. 306th InfRegt URpts, 23Jul–10Aug44 (WW II RecsDiv, FRC, Alexandria, Va.)

tle on the 10th, 1/306 lost 8 men killed and 17 wounded before it withdrew for the night.

Once his headquarters was discovered, General Obata knew that the end was at hand. Only three officers survived the day's fighting and a renewed attack in increased strength was certain. During the morning of the 10th, the *Thirty-first Army* commander composed his last messages to Japan. To the Emperor he sent personal thanks, not only for past special favors of the Imperial family since he had entered the military profession, but also his apologies for what he considered his personal responsibility in the loss of the Marianas. To *Imperial General Headquarters* he reported:

I accepted the important post of the army commander and although I exerted all-out effort, the fortune of war has not been with me. The fighting has not been in our favor since the loss of Saipan. We are continuing a desperate battle on Guam. Officers and men have been lost, weapons have been destroyed, and ammunition has been expended. We have only our bare hands to fight with. The holding of Guam has become hopeless. I will engage the enemy in the last battle with the remaining strength at Mt. Mataguac tomorrow, the 11th. My only

fear is that report of death with honor (annihilation) at Guam might shock the Japanese people at home. Our souls will defend the island to the very end; we pray for the security of the Empire.

I am overwhelmed with sorrow for the families of the many fallen officers and men. I request that measures be taken for government assistance to them. The remaining officers and men have high morale. Communications with the home land have been disrupted today, the 10th, after 1200 hours. I pray for the prosperity of the Empire.³⁵

On the morning of the 11th, 1/306 attacked with tank support behind a heavy mortar preparation. Although the few remaining enemy troops fought back with rifles and machine guns, the overwhelming weight of American firepower gradually silenced them. Working their way down into the hollow behind a shower of white phosphorus grenades, and under the cover of direct tank fire, assault-demolition squads used pole charges and TNT to seal the caves. Sometime during the morning's battle, General Obata, true to the code of *Bushido*, took his own life in atonement for failure to fulfill his mission.

³⁵ Quoted in *GSDF Study*, p. 208.

Finish in the Marianas

By any rational standard, the most devastating cost of war is the lives of the men it kills and maims. In these terms, the price of Guam came high. In 21 days of battle Marine units of the Southern Troops and Landing Force lost 1,190 men killed and 377 died of wounds and suffered 5,308 wounded in action; the 77th Infantry Division casualties were 177 men killed and 662 wounded.¹ In the same period, 10,971 Japanese bodies were counted.² Sealed in caves and bunkers by shellfire and demolitions lay hundreds more of the enemy dead.

Perhaps as many as 10,000 Japanese were still alive in the jungles of Guam on 10 August. Except for the doomed group defending the enemy headquarters at Mt. Mataguac, there was little cohesion among the men that survived. In the months to come, when American troops in training for combat sharpened their skills in a perpetual mopping-up action, all Japanese efforts at counterattacks and guerrilla warfare floundered in a bitter struggle for sur-

vival. Starvation was a constant spectre to the men hidden in the vast stretches of jungle, and many of those that were later captured or killed were too weak to fight or hide any longer. For these survivors of the *Thirty-first Army*, Guam became a nightmare.

CHANGE OF COMMAND ³

On 8 August, Admiral Nimitz informed Admiral Spruance of the future plans for the troops and commanders involved in the fighting on Guam. General Geiger and his staff were needed as soon as the campaign was ended to take charge of the landing force preparations for the operations pending against the Palau Islands. General Holland Smith was to be relieved as Commanding General, Expeditionary Troops and returned to Pearl Harbor to assume his duties as Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific. General Schmidt and his VAC headquarters were to assume command of all assault troops remaining in the Marianas. In discharging this responsibility, Schmidt was to report to Admiral Spruance and later when directed, to the Commander, Forward Area, Central Pacific, Vice Admiral John H. Hoover.

¹ Army figures are derived from contemporary unit reports and those for Marine units from Headquarters Marine Corps postwar casualty statistics. A detailed unit casualty breakdown for STLF is contained in Lodge, *The Recapture of Guam*, pp. 178-180. Final official casualty totals for Marine units are listed in Appendix H.

² CTF 53 disp to ComFifthFlt, dtd 10Aug44 in *IIIAC Jnl*, entry of 10Aug44.

³ Unless otherwise noted the material in this section is derived from ComFifthFlt WarD, Aug44 (OAB, NHD).

For the time being, the assault troops of IIIAC were to remain on Guam, but the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was to depart soon for Guadalcanal, where it would join the 29th Marines and other reinforcing units to become the 6th Marine Division. Corps troops were scheduled to load out for training and staging areas in the South Pacific as shipping became available. The 77th Infantry Division, now blooded in combat and veteran in outlook, was to reorganize and refit as quickly as possible at Guam and prepare for early employment in another operation. Only the 3d Marine Division was due to remain for an extended period on the island it helped capture, but this unit, too, would be in battle again before seven months went by.

At 1030 on 10 August, shortly after the 2d Battalion, 3d Marines had accounted for the Japanese armor near Tarague, the *Indianapolis* arrived at Guam and dropped anchor in Apra Harbor. In the afternoon at 1635, Admiral Nimitz and his party, including the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Lieutenant General Alexander A. Vandegrift, landed at Orote airfield and immediately boarded the Fifth Fleet flagship for the first of a series of conferences among senior officers concerning future operations in the Pacific. On the 11th, Nimitz and Vandegrift inspected combat troops and supply installations, and before returning to Pearl, conferred with General Larsen regarding base development plans for the island.

Most of the ships that had taken part in FORAGER had already departed by the time Guam was declared secure. At noon on the 10th, Admiral Conolly

turned over his responsibilities as CTF 53 and Senior Officer Present Afloat (SOPA) to Admiral Reifsnider. Conolly then flew to Pearl Harbor with key staff members to begin again the intricate task of planning an amphibious operation. Ten days later, Reifsnider in turn relinquished SOPA duties to a deputy of Admiral Hoover and sailed in the *George Clymer* for Hawaii. On his departure, Task Force 53 was dissolved.

General Geiger and his staff flew to Guadalcanal early on 12 August, turning temporary command of STLF over to General Turnage. On the same day, General Schmidt, at sea en route to Guam, reported by dispatch to assume command of all assault troops on the island. The VAC CP opened near Agana at 1430 on the 13th.

On 15 August, Admiral Nimitz' defense and development plan for the Central Pacific became effective at Guam. Admiral Turner's Joint Expeditionary Force was dissolved, and Admiral Hoover was assigned responsibility for operations at Guam as he had been for Saipan and Tinian on the 12th. On the 15th, as part of the change over, General Larsen assumed his duties as island commander.

One more step remained to be taken before the campaign for the capture of the southern Marianas became a matter of history. On 26 August, Admiral Spruance was relieved of responsibility for the Forward Area, Central Pacific and all forces under his command by Admiral William F. Halsey. For a time, Halsey's Third Fleet, using most of the ships and many of the men that had fought under Spruance, would carry on fleet operations against Japan.

As Halsey characterized the change: "Instead of using the stagecoach system of keeping the drivers and changing the horses, we changed the drivers and kept the horses. It was hard on the horses, but it was effective."⁴ Spruance and his veteran staff and senior commanders would resume direction of the planning and preparations for the major amphibious campaigns aimed at the inner circle of Japanese defenses.

ISLAND COMMAND ACTIVITIES⁵

As the assault phase on Guam drew to a close, General Larsen assumed increasing responsibility for operations on the island. On 2 August, control of Orote Peninsula and Cabras Island passed to Island Command, and on the 7th, Larsen took over the operation of all extended radio circuits and a joint communications center. Supervision of all unloading activities was assigned to Island Command on 9 August. As garrison shipping arrived, the number and complexity of troops reporting to the island commander increased steadily.

General Larsen's initial task organization for base development included an advance naval base force, Lion 6, which was hard at work developing Apra Harbor as the center of a vast naval operating base. Airfield and

road construction and stevedoring duties were the principal assignments of elements of the 5th Naval Construction Brigade, which included 12 Seabee battalions and 1 Marine and 4 Army battalions of aviation engineers. Supply activities were concentrated in the dumps and salvage and repair facilities developed and manned by the 5th Field Depot. For air defense, Larsen had MAG-21 and four anti-aircraft battalions. V Amphibious Corps assigned him the 3d Marine Division for ground defense.

To this myriad of responsibilities for building Guam into a major staging, supply, and training base for future Pacific operations, General Larsen added the mantle of *de facto* governor of the Guamanians. The civil affairs section of Island Command had approximately 21,000 men, women, and children to care for, and to start back on the road to self-sufficiency. The cultivation of native gardens and the revival of native industries were actively fostered, and hundreds of men and women were employed as laborers and clerical workers in the burgeoning port, airfield, and supply facilities.

To protect and supervise the Guamanians, Admiral Nimitz authorized the formation of an island police, successor to the prewar Insular Patrol Force. Formed from a nucleus of former members plus military policemen from Island Command, all under a Marine officer, the new Local Security Patrol Force performed normal civilian police functions. In addition, however, these men, and many other Guamanians who volunteered as guides to American patrols, took an active part in hunting the Japanese. Isolated native villages and

⁴ FAdm William F. Halsey and LCdr J. Bryan, III, USN, *Admiral Halsey's Story* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1947), p. 197.

⁵ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: VAC WarD, Aug44; Island Comd WarD, 1Apr-15Aug44, 15-31Aug44, and Sep45; *3d MarDiv Jnl*; *GSDF Study*.

farms were particularly vulnerable to foraging raids by the harried enemy troops, who were trying to keep alive in the jungle.

Soon after assuming responsibility for the assault troops on Guam, General Schmidt directed that the 3d and 77th Divisions each maintain an infantry regiment and an artillery battalion in the northern part of the island with a mission of killing or capturing the remaining Japanese. The 21st Marines and the 306th Infantry, which drew the initial patrol assignments, accounted for an average of 80 enemy a day between them in the last two weeks of August. On the 22d, the 3d Division passed to Island Command control for garrison duty and took over sole responsibility for the conduct of mopping-up operations; the 306th Infantry was relieved on 26 August to return to the 77th Division base camp.

While the patrol operations continued without letup, the majority of the assault troops under VAC command either shipped out from the island or settled into a rehabilitation and training routine with the emphasis on readying the men for early employment in combat again. The III Corps Headquarters and Service Battalion and the Signal Battalion left for Guadalcanal on 15 August. On the 21st, elements of the 1st Brigade began loading ship, and the veteran troops destined to form the new 6th Division sailed for the South Pacific on the 31st. In areas assigned by Island Command, the 3d Marine Division established its unit camps along the east coast road between Pago Bay and Ylig Bay, and the 77th Division encamped in the hills above Agat along Harmon Road.

The preparations of the 3d and 77th Divisions for further combat highlighted the role that Guam was to play during the remainder of the war. In addition to its development as a major troop training area, the island was transformed into a vast supply depot and a major naval base, and was eventually the site of Admiral Nimitz' advance fleet headquarters. On the plateau of northern Guam, where the final pitched battles had been fought, two huge airfields and a sprawling air depot were wrested from the jungle to house and service B-29s of the Twentieth Air Force, which struck repeatedly at Japan. A little over a year after the date that General Geiger had declared the island secure, it housed 201,718 American troops: 65,095 Army and Army Air Forces; 77,911 Navy; and 58,712 Marine Corps. Reunited on Guam for operations against the Japanese home islands were the 3d and 6th Marine Divisions, the former returned from the fighting on Iwo Jima and the latter from the battle for Okinawa.

During the period when the American forces on Guam were settling into a bustling routine of preparation for future operations, the situation of the Japanese hold-outs steadily deteriorated. Many of the men that hid out in the jungle were weaponless, few of those that were armed had much ammunition, and virtually none that had the means to fight showed any disposition to engage the Marine patrols. The overwhelming obsession of the enemy troops was food, and starvation forced many of them to risk their lives in attempts to steal rations. Gradually, as the months wore on, two

officers among the survivors, Lieutenant Colonel Takeda and Major Sato, were able to establish a semblance of organization, but for the most part, the Japanese that lived did so as individuals and small groups, fending for themselves and avoiding all contact with the Americans.

In the latter stages of the war, psychological warfare teams of Island Command were increasingly successful in overcoming the Japanese reluctance to surrender. On 11 June 1945, Major Sato, convinced of the futility of holding out any longer, turned himself in and brought with him 34 men. By the end of August, records showed that 18,377 dead had been counted since W-Day and that 1,250 men had surrendered. After the Emperor had ordered all his troops to lay down their arms, the Americans were successful in convincing Lieutenant Colonel Takeda that he should come in. On 4 September, Takeda marched out of the jungle near Tarague, bringing with him 67 men. A week later he was able to persuade another group of 46 men to surrender, the last unified element of the garrison that had defended Guam. Individual Japanese continued to hide out in the jungle for years after the war was over, despite repeated efforts to convince them that Japan had surrendered.

LESSONS OF GUAM⁶

The operations leading to the recapture of Guam, as an integral part of the

⁶ Unless otherwise noted, the material in this section is derived from: *IIIAC SAR*; *3d MarDiv SAR*; *77th InfDiv OpRpt*; *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*.

overall Marianas campaign, suffered and profited as did those at Saipan and Tinian from the state of progress in amphibious warfare when FORAGER was launched. In one respect, the extent of the prelanding naval bombardment, a standard was set that was never again reached during the war. In the Palaus and the Philippines, at Iwo Jima and Okinawa, gunfire support ships never again had the opportunity for prolonged, systematic fire that Admiral Conolly exploited so successfully.⁷ The destruction of Japanese positions led the IIIAC naval gunfire officer to observe:

The extended period for bombardment plus a system for keeping target damage reports accounted for practically every known Japanese gun that could seriously endanger our landings. When the morning of the landing arrived, it was known that the assault troops would meet little resistance [from enemy artillery or naval guns.]⁸

Although a few coast defense artillery pieces and antiboat guns did manage to weather this shelling and the accompanying carrier air strikes, most were knocked out as soon as they revealed themselves. The devastation wrought among the 1st Brigade assault waves by one undetected 75mm gun at Gaan Point illustrated the probable re-

⁷ Admiral Spruance noted, however, that both bombers and bombardment ships began hitting Iwo Jima at the time of the attack on Saipan, a program which was kept up "whenever we could" until the actual landing in February 1945. He stated that the time schedule between Iwo Jima and Okinawa was too short for an extended bombardment program. Adm Raymond A. Spruance ltr to ACofs, G-3, HQMC, dtd 16Jun65.

⁸ *IIIAC SAR*, NGF Rpt, p. 3.

sult of a less comprehensive target destruction plan. Where the enemy guns had not been destroyed, as was the case with a pair of 6-inch naval guns in the 3d Division landing zone, the murderous effect of area neutralization fires prompted crews to abandon their exposed emplacements.

The 1st Brigade, in its comments on naval gunfire, summed up the case for the assault troops—the more preparation, the better. General Shepherd recommended:

... in future operations the amount of naval gunfire placed on a well-defended beach upon which troops are to be landed be no less than that fired in the Agat area of Guam. If possible, a greater amount of ammunition should be fired. The same amount of ammunition fired over a longer period of time seems to be more effective than that amount fired in a short period.⁹

Once the III Corps had landed, the use of naval fire support was continuous and generally effective. In particular, every assault unit was high in praise of the system of providing front-line battalions a ship to fire and illuminate throughout the night. Star shells were as popular with American combat troops as they were hated by the Japanese. Marine ground commanders were impressed with the need for a greater supply of illumination ammunition; General Turnage asked that “more stars be made available for future operation,”¹⁰ and General Shepherd stated that it would be necessary to have “at least ten times the number of star shells in a future operation cov-

ering the same period of time as was allowed for the Guam operation.”¹¹

Carrier aircraft were equal partners with gunfire support ships in the pre-landing bombardment; they shared with land-based planes flying from Saipan the deep support missions delivered for the troops once ashore. During the operation, IIIAC noted that at least 6,432 sorties were flown, with 3,316 strafing runs made and 2,410 tons of bombs dropped. The scout, torpedo, and fighter bombers were most effective against targets that could not be reached by the flat trajectory fire of naval guns, such as the defiladed areas of Fonte Plateau from which Japanese artillery and mortars fired on the beaches and where enemy troops assembled for counterattacks. When the target area was close to the front line, opinions on the effectiveness of air support were varied and frequently critical. Admiral Turner characterized close air support at Guam as “not very good.”¹²

General Shepherd noted that because most vehicular radios, the only ones capable of operating on the Support Air Direction (SAD) net, were damaged by salt water, the brigade air liaison parties directed relatively few air strikes. Those that did take place were kept beyond a bomb safety line, 1,000 yards from the Marine front lines, because of “rather severe casualties to our troops from bombing by our supporting air-

⁹ *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*, p. 19. Out of a total of 106,110 shells (8,429.6 tons) fired during STEVEDORE, 5,039 were star shells. *CTF 56 OpRpt*, NGF Rpt, Anx II, App A.

¹² Adm Richmond K. Turner ltr to Maj Carl W. Hoffman, dtd 13Mar52.

⁹ *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*, p. 19.

¹⁰ *3d MarDiv SAR*, D-3 SAR, Anx. C.

craft.”¹³ The 77th Division had only one air strike directed by its air liaison parties, but the 3d Division made frequent use of ground-controlled strikes within 500 yards or less of its assault troops. On four occasions division troops were the target of misdirected bombing and strafing, and General Turnage recommended more accurate briefing of pilots to prevent repetition of such incidents.

The most crucial area of air support operations was communications. The SAD net was crowded at all times, and General Turnage observed that very few close support strikes were carried out on time or within limits set by requesting agencies. The method of operation worked out by Commander, Support Aircraft of TF 53 called for all requests from battalion air liaison to clear through regiments. He also frequently checked with divisions “since frontline reports from battalions were not sufficient to establish the whole front line near the target area.”¹⁴ Once the air liaison officer had shifted to the SAD frequency, he adjusted the dummy runs made by the flight leader or air coordinator until the plane was on target. Then a single bomb was dropped and if it was accurate, the entire flight would follow and attack. The time consumed in request, processing, approval, and final execution was generally 45 minutes to an hour or more. Although the Commander, Support Aircraft considered the time spent justified by the success of the missions,

¹³ *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*, p. 15.

¹⁴ ComSptAirPac Rpt of Ops in Spt of the Capture of the Marianas, dtd 11Sep44 (OAB, NHD), p. 30.

ground units generally asked for more immediate control of planes by air liaison officers and for a method of operations and system of communications that would ensure a faster response to the needs of assault troops. In this conclusion, that air liaison parties should have more direct contact with supporting planes, the infantrymen got firm backing from the Commander, Support Aircraft, Pacific Fleet, in his comments on air operations in the Marianas.¹⁵ He also pointed out there was a need for greater understanding “on the one hand by the Ground Forces of the capabilities and limitations of aircraft, and on the other hand by the pilots of what they are supposed to accomplish.”¹⁶ There was undoubtedly generous room for improvement in air support techniques, and this need was sorely felt, because when planes were properly used they proved themselves invaluable in close support.

To General Geiger and many other Marines, a partial solution to air support problems lay in increased use of Marine aviation. The IIIAC air officer pointed out that Marine bombing squadrons had clearly demonstrated their capability in providing close (100 to 500 yards) support to ground troops (notably at Bougainville while working with the 3d Marine Division). He commented “that troop commanders, whether justifiably so or not, have repeatedly expressed a desire that Marine Bombing Squadrons be used for close support of their troops.”¹⁷ In reinforcing this finding with a recommendation

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁷ *IIIAC SAR*, Air Rpt, p. 4.

that specially trained Marine air support groups be placed on CVEs, the Expeditionary Troops air officer concluded:

The troop experience of senior Marine pilots combined with the indoctrination of new pilots in infantry tactics should insure greater cooperation and coordination between air and ground units.¹⁸

In assessing the operations of another supporting weapon, armor working directly with the infantry, both the 3d Division and the 1st Brigade were unanimous in praising the medium tank as the most effective weapon for destroying enemy emplacements. Point-blank fire by the 75mm guns collapsed embrasures, cave defenses, and bunkers even after enemy fire drove supporting infantry to cover. The 3d Tank Battalion, which employed flamethrower tanks for the first time, was well satisfied with the new weapon, but found that attempts to mount infantry flamethrowers on tanks were generally unsatisfactory. The 3d Division recommended that in the future one tank of each platoon be equipped to spew flame. Although the brigade had no flame tanks, it did successfully employ borrowed Army tank destroyers armed with a 3-inch gun which showed great penetrating power in attacking cave positions. Operations in northern Guam demonstrated that armor and dozer blades were an effective combination against the jungle. The Marines frequently employed tanks working in conjunction with bulldozers in breaking trails; the 77th Division found that a dozer with an armored cab was the

most effective vehicle for penetrating the heavy brush.

In general, infantry weapons proved reliable despite the weather and prolonged rough usage in the clutching jungle, but flamethrowers were easily damaged, with the firing mechanism a particularly sore spot. General Shepherd recommended that sufficient replacement flamethrowers be carried to the target to maintain initial allowances.

During the Guam operation, 3d Division and 1st Brigade experiments with the use of war dogs produced varied results. The dogs proved effective on night security watch and generally reliable on patrol, although they failed to alert Marines to hidden enemy troops on several occasions. Little need was found for the messenger dogs, for the SCR-300 radio provided reliable communications for isolated units. Patrols of the 3d Division found a new use for the dogs, though—investigating caves for hidden enemy before Marines entered; this technique proved best suited to the more vicious and aggressive animals.

Marine infantry battalions on Guam operated under a new table of organization, one that included in each rifle company the machine guns and mortars that had formerly been part of separate battalion weapons companies. The change worked well, gave closer support to the riflemen when needed, provided both company and battalion commanders with better control of supporting weapons, and simplified frontline supply channels. Since machine guns were prime targets for enemy fire, casualties among the crews were heavy, but replacements were found more eas-

¹⁸ CTF 56 *OpRpt*, Air Rpt, p. 6.

ily among rifle company personnel. The other important change in infantry organization, the 13-man rifle squad with its three 4-man fire teams, proved to be a harder-hitting and more flexible fighting unit than its 11-man predecessor.

Brigade and division artillery, closely trained with the troops they supported, were an integral part of a tank-infantry-artillery team. Most ground commanders echoed General Shepherd's comment that "artillery was the most effective weapon employed during the operation."¹⁹ Firing batteries quickly landed, promptly registered, and thundered into action early on W-Day. Whenever the front lines advanced appreciably, the artillery followed. The 12th Marines displaced five times between 1-10 August, the 77th Division artillery battalions made four moves to remain in direct support, and in northern Guam, one of the 75mm battalions of the brigade moved forward five times and the other four. In all displacements, artillery units were handicapped by the 50 percent reduction in motor transport imposed by reduced shipping space; vehicles were frequently pooled to effect rapid movement and keep the

howitzers within supporting distance.

In the initial stages of the assault, the DUKW proved invaluable to the artillery units.²⁰ Not only did the amphibian trucks keep an adequate supply of ammunition close to the firing batteries, they also provided a satisfactory means of getting the 105mm howitzers ashore early in the fighting. Prior to the FORAGER Operation, the lack of a suitable vehicle to land the 105s in the assault had prompted the retention of the lighter and more maneuverable 75mm in the Marine artillery regiment. Colonel John B. Wilson, commanding the 12th Marines, now recommended that the remaining 75mm pack howitzer units be replaced by 105mm battalions. This exchange would give the division more firepower and simplify ammunition handling and supply.

The key to effective fire support was rapid and efficient communications between forward observers and fire direction centers. Radios were used when necessary, but wire was employed to carry most of the traffic. The 12th Marines found the use of a forward switching central to be "extremely advantageous."²¹ Artillery liaison party wire teams were required to maintain lines back only to a switching central in the vicinity of an infantry regimental CP; from there artillery battalion wiremen took care of the trunks to the fire direction center (FDC).

Centralized fire coordination was a feature of the Guam operation. The

¹⁹ *1st ProvMarBrig SAR*, p. 18. Ammunition expended by artillery units during the campaign totaled:

Unit	75mm	105mm	155mm
III Corps Arty	.....	.....	25,346
1st ProvMarBrig	42,810	.....	.....
3d MarDiv	45,235	36,827	.....
77th InfDiv	.....	20,197	4,617
Total	88,045	57,024	29,963

²⁰ Infantry regiments also used DUKWs to land their 37mm guns and key command radio jeeps in the early waves, prior to the landing of artillery. *Craig 22Jun65 ltr.*

²¹ *12th Mar SAR*, p. 2.

corps air and naval gunfire officers worked closely with the Corps Artillery FDC. Once his CP was functioning ashore, the Corps Artillery commander, General del Valle, was assigned operational control of all artillery on the island. This system enabled him to mass fires quickly and assign reinforcing missions as the situation required. In addition, he was able, in the light of the overall campaign picture, to make effective assignment of ammunition priorities, transportation, and firing positions.

General del Valle was not satisfied with the procedures used to get his own corps units ashore. He reported that his battalions were "prevented from entering the action ashore at an early stage with sufficient ammunition and suitable communications to render the desired support to the attack of the Corps during its critical stages."²² In particular, he noted that the unloading was out of his control and at variance with the planned scheme of unloading and entry into action. He wrote that "as long as this control is vested in other officers, not especially concerned with, nor interested in, the operations of Corps [Artillery] satisfactory results will not be achieved."²³

Ammunition supply was a particularly pressing problem in the first days of the operation when the heavy 155mm shells and powder began to come ashore in large quantities. Shore parties were hard put to handle the multiple transfers from boat to amphibian, vehicle to truck, and truck to dump. Large working parties of artillerymen

were needed to handle their own ammunition on the beaches and in dumps ashore. The general recommended that an ammunition company and a DUKW company be assigned to Corps Artillery in the future to move ammunition directly from ship to battalion and battery dumps ashore.

Since no Japanese aircraft visited the air space over Guam, the anti-aircraft batteries of Corps Artillery were not used in their primary function. The versatility of the guns and the destruction wrought by their firepower was clearly demonstrated, however, by their frequent use in support of ground troops. General del Valle drew particular attention to the employment of the 9th Defense Battalion in perimeter defense and in the patrolling in southern Guam as an illustration of the range of usefulness of anti-aircraft units.

Many problems in landing troops and supplies at Guam were anticipated; others, as they occurred, were solved by combat team, brigade, division, and Corps Service Group shore parties. The effort to keep the assault troops supplied adequately required thousands of men, a force greater in strength than the 1st Brigade. The 3d Division had ship unloading details of approximately 1,200 men and shore working parties that numbered 3,300; the 1st Brigade left 1,070 men on board ship and used 1,800 on beach and reef; and the 77th Division, employing three battalions of shore party engineers plus some 270 garrison troops with low landing priorities, had 583 soldiers unloading ships and 1,828 working ashore. Almost one-fifth of the total strength of IIIAC

²² IIIAC Arty SAR, Encl B.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

was engaged in the initial shore party effort.²⁴

In allotting troops for the shore parties, General Geiger assigned the brigade assault forces a replacement unit. This organization, the 1st Provisional Replacement Company (11 officers, 383 enlisted men) was employed as shore party labor when the need was greatest. After the first flood of supplies was manhandled ashore, a fast-paced but orderly routine was established to unload assault and resupply shipping. The manpower requirements of the shore parties lessened, and the replacements were then fed into combat units as required. This use of replacements proved a sound concept, for it cut demands on assault troops for shore party labor and provided a ready source of trained men to fill the gaps caused by casualties. In later Marine operations in the Pacific, replacement battalions moved to the target with the assault echelon for use both as part of the shore party and as fillers in combat units.

Once the round-the-clock labor of the first 48 hours of unloading ended, the major portion of the task of handling supplies from ship to beach dumps fell to the specialists, the Army shore party engineers and the Marine pioneers. The Marine units proved adept at improvisation and in making-do with what they had plus what they could borrow, but they needed more heavy equipment.

²⁴ Total engaged strength of IIIAC was 54,901, divided as follows: 3d Marine Division (20,338); 77th Infantry Division (17,958); 1st Provisional Marine Brigade (9,886); Corps Troops (6,719). *CTF 56 OpRpt*, Encl F.

Corps reported that the pioneers:

. . . are grossly ill-equipped when there are any beach difficulties or obstacles to overcome. The organizations attached to Corps for this operation had insufficient equipment for reef transfer of cargo, clearing beaches, and building access roads thereto. Even though an additional 25 Trackson cranes were provided, these were insufficient for reef transfer, beach, and dumps. A large number of lifts were beyond the capacity of any cranes belonging to the organizations mentioned. Some organizations totally lacked lighting equipment, others had antiquated equipment with run-down batteries which could not be used when beach operations were put on a 24-hour basis. Fortunately, Army Shore Party Battalions had sufficient equipment to meet minimum requirements for all Corps beaches.²⁵

A good part of the construction work that was necessary to maintain and improve the beach areas and dumps fell to the Seabees, who operated as part of the shore parties in both beachheads. Division and brigade engineers were primarily concerned with direct support of the combat teams. Road and trail construction in forward areas, mine clearance, demolitions of obstacles and enemy defenses, and the operation of water points were all part of combat engineering tasks.

One responsibility shared by Seabees, engineers, and pioneers was the maintenance of an adequate network of roads. Under the impact of heavy traffic, the existing roads disintegrated. There was a constant struggle to repair the main arteries and to build new roads required by combat operations. The restriction on cargo space had hit the engineer units as hard as any or-

²⁵ *IIIAC SAR*, ServGruRpt, Encl C, p. 5.

ganizations on the island, for much needed equipment had been left behind in the Solomon and Hawaiian Islands. Even when Corps Artillery prime movers equipped with angle dozer blades were borrowed, there were insufficient bulldozers and roadgraders to handle the tremendous road-building task. Frequent rains complicated all road operations, for mud prevented coral surfacing from binding and drainage problems caused an epidemic of floods.

Provident but temporary help was provided in this situation by the garrison force Seabee and engineer battalions, whose main mission was airfield construction. The profusion of difficulties faced by equipment-short assault units prompted the corps engineer to recommend that in future operations:

. . . a minimum of one engineer battalion with heavy grading equipment (a Naval Construction Battalion, a Marine Separate Engineer Battalion, or an Army Aviation Engineer Battalion) be included in the assault echelon of each Marine or Army division, or fraction thereof, in the assault forces.²⁷

The limitations posed by the lack of good roads and the chronic shortage of transportation hampered supply operations to some extent. Nowhere, however, was the course of combat endangered by this situation. When assault troops started moving north, units attempted to maintain a 5-day level of stocks in forward supply dumps, but there were never enough trucks available to meet this goal. The 5th Field Depot was able to supply all units and build up reserve stocks to 20-day levels in most categories. The necessity of

feeding thousands of natives ate into the resupply rations, however, and the depot was never able to attain much more than a 10-day level of reserve food. Considered as a whole, logistics problems were competently handled and "the supply system on Guam worked smoothly and efficiently."²⁷

One of the most heartening aspects of the operation, as indeed it was of other American assault landings, was the effectiveness of the medical treatment of casualties. If a man was hit, he knew that a Navy corpsman or an Army aidman would be at his side as soon as possible. Whatever the difficulties, evacuation was prompt; in the assault phase, the system of routing casualties from forward aid stations through beach and shore party medical sections to ships offshore brought wounded men on board specially equipped LSTs and APAs within an hour after the first wave landed.²⁸ Once field hospitals were set up ashore, many of the less seriously sick and wounded were treated on the island, but there was a steady flow of casualties via ship to base hospitals. Transports with specially augmented medical staffs and facilities for casualty care evacuated 2,552 men from Guam, and the hospital ships *Solace* and *Bountiful* carried 1,632 more.

The risks taken by the corpsmen, aidmen, and doctors in their concern for the wounded were great. The frequent

²⁷ Isely and Crowl, *Marines and Amphibious War*, p. 384.

²⁸ As the transport casualty berths began to fill up on W-plus one, however, some landing craft had to search for a ship which could take their wounded. BGen John S. Letcher ltr to CMC, dtd 12Jun65.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, Encl B, p. 5.

flurries of activity around aid stations, which were usually located on the natural routes of approach to the front lines, often drew Japanese mortar and artillery fire. Enemy small arms fire often seemed to be centered on the men that were trying to save the lives of assault troop casualties. In the course of the Guam campaign, the 3d Division had 3 medical officers and 27 corpsmen killed in action and 12 officers and 118 corpsmen wounded; the 1st Brigade had 1 officer and 9 corpsmen killed and 1 officer and 35 corpsmen wounded. The 77th Division lost 10 medical aidmen killed and had 35 wounded in action.

An analysis of the lessons learned by Americans at Guam seems incomplete without the viewpoint of the Japanese on their own operations. A postwar study of their role concludes with the judgement:

. . . that Japanese troops on Guam took charge of the most extensive front as a division under the absolute command of sea and air by the enemy and checked the enemy from securing beachheads by organized resistance in the coastal area for the longest period, in spite of heavy enemy bombing and shelling for the longest time. In view of this, it is no exaggeration to say that this result was the best in the history of the war.²⁰

A further comment based on this study by a present-day Japanese general, writing in an article authored jointly with a Marine veteran of the Guam operation, points out a principle by which the defense might have been even more effective:

With no attempt to distract from the ability of the Japanese commanders, they

²⁰ *GSDF Study*, p. 215.

were forced by Imperial General Headquarters policy to 'defeat-the-enemy-on-the-beach,' and accepted battle on two widely separated, and not mutually supporting, fronts. Their fighting strength was sapped by Col Suenaga's, and subsequent, counterattacks. These attacks, launched piecemeal, could only be indecisive. If Gen Takashina had defended the vital area of Guam, Apra Harbor, he would have seriously delayed subsequent U. S. operations. By so doing he could have delayed the devastating B-29 raids on his homeland. Instead he located his forces behind the landing areas and thus violated the cardinal rule of island defense—*defend the vital area*.²⁰

CENTRAL PACIFIC PROVING GROUND

In a little more than nine months, November 1943 to August 1944, the art and science of amphibious warfare made enormous progress. The knowledge gained had been dearly won by the thousands of Americans killed and the many wounded between D-Day at Tarawa and the end of organized resistance at Guam. Each step of the way revealed weaknesses which required correction and problems which required answers. This crucial period of the war was a time when the officers and men of the Pacific Fleet and the Pacific Ocean Areas discovered—by trial and error—the most effective means of wresting a stubbornly-defended island from enemy hands.

Tarawa was the primer, and from the analytical reports of the commanders there and from their critical evalu-

²⁰ MajGen Haruo Umezawa, JGSDF and Col Louis Metzger, "The Defense of Guam," *Marine Corps Gazette*, vol. 48, no. 8 (Aug64), p. 43.



CORSAIRS OF MAG-21 taxi down the airstrip on Orote Peninsula, 10 days after the island was secured. (USMC 92396)



B-29s returning from a strike on Japan approach North Field, which was wrested from the jungle battleground of northern Guam. (USAF 59056AC)

ation of what went wrong, of what needed improvement, and of what techniques and equipment proved out in combat, came a tremendous outpouring of lessons learned. The development of the LVT(A) was expedited to provide close-in fire support for assault waves, and the value of the LVT was emphasized and its role expanded in future operations. Deficiencies in naval gunfire and aerial bombardment were pinpointed, and measures were taken to improve the delivery and effectiveness of both prelanding bombardment and fire support once the assault troops were ashore. The shortcomings of communications between ship and shore and air and ground drew particular attention, and the training and equipment of air and naval gunfire liaison teams was improved and intensified.

The performance of the fast carrier task forces in the Gilberts campaign clearly demonstrated that Americans had the power to isolate a target area, protect the amphibious forces, and permit a longer and more thorough softening-up of the objective. The carriers provided the means to keep the enemy off-balance, and with the voracious submarines that ranged the Japanese shipping lanes, choked off reinforcements and defensive supplies. From Tarawa onward, as one Japanese admiral said: "Everywhere, I think, you attacked before the defense was ready. You came more quickly than we expected."³¹

The carrier attack on Truk convinced the enemy that its vaunted naval base was vulnerable and therefore useless, and the fact that Truk was of no value

to the Japanese meant "that its seizure was abandoned as a U. S. objective."³² The momentum generated by the drive into the Marshalls at Kwajalein and the quickly planned and executed capture of Eniwetok was rewarding. The time of the attack on the Marianas was advanced by months. The swiftly rising power of Admiral Nimitz' forces, born as much of experience as of new strength, gave meaning to the principle formulated by the foremost naval historian of the war, Rear Admiral Samuel Eliot Morison, who stated that "the closer that one offensive steps on another's heels, the greater will be the enemy's loss and confusion, and the less one's own."³³

Problems of coordination and control in the ship-to-shore movement and in operations ashore cropped up in the Marshalls as they had in the Gilberts, but the difficulties had less effect and pointed the way to better solutions. Naval gunfire was measurably more effective, artillery was used to good account from offshore islands at most objectives, and prelanding aerial strikes were better briefed and executed. Air support techniques and communications procedures remained a worrisome trouble spot in need of improvement. As the LVT had starred at Tarawa, the DUKW shone at Kwajalein, where its performance marked the growth of a family of amphibious vehicles which eased the problems posed by Pacific reefs.

A floating service squadron based in the Marshalls, which could replenish

³¹ *USSBS Interrogation No. 429, Adm Kishisaburo Nomura, IJN, II, p. 387.*

³² *Moore ltr.*

³³ *Morison, New Guinea and the Marianas, p. 341.*

and repair fleet units, vastly extended the range and duration of fast carrier operations and justified the decision to expedite the decisive thrust into the Marianas. Amphibious planners, sparked by Admirals Spruance and Turner, merged assault and base development plans into a unified whole which ensured a continued rapid advance to the ultimate objective, Japan. The spring and summer of 1944 saw the flowering of a vital skill, logistics planning, whose incredible complexity met the need to sustain massive assaults and at the same time provided a continuous flow of men, supplies, and equipment for a host of existing and future requirements.

The attack on Saipan and the following operations at Tinian and Guam demonstrated the ability of a Marine headquarters to operate above corps level and to prosecute successfully a variety of land campaigns on objectives larger than the fortress atolls. Admiral Spruance's plan, like all Fifth Fleet operations plans in amphibious campaigns, provided for action to be taken in case of attack by a major enemy naval force.³⁴ This foresight was in good part responsible for the favorable result of the Battle of the Philippine Sea, which Admiral King noted:

. . . crippled Japanese naval aviation for the remainder of the war. Planes could be replaced, pilots could not, and,

³⁴ Admiral Spruance did not expect "the Japanese fleet would come out to attack us, primarily because I thought the enemy would want shore based air support; and I knew that the first thing we would do in the Marianas would be to take out all of the enemy aircraft, and thereafter keep them out." Spruance 16Jun65 ltr, *op. cit.*

as was discovered later in the year at the Battle for Leyte Gulf, the Japanese no longer had the trained and seasoned aviators that were necessary for successful operations against our fleet.³⁵

The fact that the attack on Saipan lured the Japanese carriers to defeat might alone be enough to call it the decisive operation of the Central Pacific campaign. The capture of the island, however, meant far more. It toppled the war party government of Premier Tojo in Japan, ensured the success of operations against Tinian and Guam, and secured the prime objective—the very long range bomber fields from which B-29s could ravage Japan.

A new pattern of Japanese defense, made possible by room to maneuver, emerged on Saipan. After beach positions fell, the enemy withdrew fighting to final defenses with the sole aim of making the battle as costly as possible to the Americans. The losses suffered by VAC were heavy but unavoidable against a determined foe. When the turn of Tinian came, every effort was bent towards improving the fire support from air and naval gunfire to limit American casualties. Artillery pounded the smaller island for days, and, under the cover of intensive supporting fires, a masterful shore-to-shore assault hit the Japanese defenses from an unexpected front. The result was a quick ending to a battle that might well have claimed the lives of many more Marines than those that did fall.

Intelligence gained at Saipan of the strength and probable defensive tactics of the *29th Division* on Guam was instrumental in lengthening and increas-

³⁵ King and Whitehill, *Naval Record*, p. 559.

ing the effectiveness of preliminary air and naval gunfire bombardment against the largest of the three Marianas target islands. Contemporary Japanese testimony amply supports the conclusion that this fire severely disrupted defensive preparations. Although the dual landings and subsequent operations in the rugged terrain ashore posed difficult problems of coordination and control, IIIAC units readily adapted their tactics to meet the enemy defense. The seizure of this island gave the Navy a base that by the end of the war was capable of supporting one-third of the Pacific fleet and provided the Army Air Forces additional B-29 bases for the aerial campaign against Japan.

In the Marianas as well as in the Gilberts and Marshalls, one aspect of the operations remained unsatisfactory—air support of ground troops. The complex and crowded communications setup caused multiple problems, inadequate pilot briefing led to inaccuracy, and, most important from the point of view of ground commanders, slow response to strike requests made air a far less effective supporting weapon than it might have been. The recognition of the need for improvement was not confined to the men that were supported, for a veteran Navy bombing squadron commander reported to CinCPac:

In the Guam and Saipan operations, *close support* was actually almost nonexistent. Beyond tactical support by bombing before the troops landed, and some strategical bombing of rear areas and communications during the battles, little help was actually given the troops on the front lines. It is believed that the entire system must be changed and streamlined to make possible the real

Close Support that we are capable of giving the troops.³⁰

Marine commanders pressed hard for increased use of Marine air in close support. They wanted pilots, planes, and a control system oriented to ground needs and quickly responsive to strike requests. The winds of change were in the air in the summer of 1944 and refinements in close support techniques were coming. Operations later in the year saw planes bombing and strafing closer to frontline positions and evidenced a steady increase in the employment of Marine squadrons in this task as well as in air-to-air operations. Admiral Nimitz, in his comments on operations in the Marianas, noted:

Four CVE's have been designated for close (troop) support and will embark Marine aircraft squadrons. It is not anticipated that Marine squadrons will furnish all close air support but they will be used with Marine divisions when the situation permits. In addition a certain number of Marine aviators are being assigned to the various amphibious force flagships to assist in the control of support aircraft.³¹

³⁰ CO VB-14 ltr to CinCPac, dtd 31Jul44, Encl I to CO USS *Wasp AR*, 6-30Jul44, dtd 31Jul44 (OAB, NHD). In contrast to this comment, General Shoup, chief of staff of the 2d Marine Division on Saipan, stated on 21 February 1963: "I might say openly that the finest close air support for ground troops that I experienced in World War II came from Navy squadrons at Saipan." 88th Congress, 1st Session, *Department of Defense Appropriations 1964, Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives* (Washington, 1963), pt. 2, p. 383.

³¹ CominCh, *The Marianas*, p. 2-8. The operations of Marine squadrons on board CVEs and fast carriers will be covered in the fifth volume of this series.

At the conclusion of the Marianas campaign, senior commanders were generally satisfied that their forces were experts in the techniques of the amphibious assault and veterans in the flexibility of response it required. The admirals and generals were far from complacent, however, for the operations ahead promised to be even more demanding, bigger in scope, and perhaps tougher and more costly. In joint operations, despite occasional and human friction, forces of the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps had worked well together and learned from each other. There was a will to win that overrode every disagreement and setback, a pervading spirit of "let's get on with the job."

In assessing the performance of the Marines in this period, General Vandegrift, writing as Commandant to

his predecessor, General Thomas Holcomb, summarized an inspection trip in the Pacific, pointing out that he had:

. . . covered 22,000 miles in eighteen days, saw all the force, corps, and division commanders and practically all the regimental and battalion commanders in the field. I went to Saipan, Tinian, and Guam, getting to Guam just before the show was over. Our people did a superb job on all three of those islands. . . .³⁸

That comment could as well apply to every man, of whatever service, that played a part in the success of GALVANIC, FLINTLOCK, CATCHPOLE, and FORAGER. Our people did a superb job.

³⁸ LtGen Alexander A. Vandegrift Itr to Gen Thomas Holcomb, dtd 5Sep44 (Vandegrift Correspondence File).

Bibliographical Notes

This history is based principally upon official Marine Corps records: the reports, diaries, journals, orders, plans, etc., of the units and commands involved in the operations described. Records of the other armed services have been consulted where they were pertinent. On matters pertaining to activities at high strategic levels, the authors consulted the records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

In order to cover the inevitable gaps and inadequacies that occur in the sources consulted, extensive use has been made of the knowledge of key participants in the actions described. These men, representing all services, have been generous with their time in answering specific queries, in making themselves available for interviews, and in commenting critically on draft manuscripts, not only of this volume but also of preliminary monographs. The historical offices of the Army, Navy, and Air Force have made detailed reviews of draft chapters and furnished much material of value to the history. The War History Office of the Defense Agency of Japan has read and commented upon the passages bearing on Japanese operations and provided worthwhile information that has been incorporated into the narrative.

Because this volume deals with the whole of the naval campaign in the Central Pacific, many of the records used relate to more than one of the operations. This is particularly true of the material concerning FORAGER. Such sources have been fully cited in the text and are discussed in relation to the particular operation where they have the most pertinency. All records cited, unless otherwise noted, are on file at, or obtainable through, the Archives of the Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps.

A number of published works of general interest have been consulted frequently in the writing of this volume. The more important of these are listed below.

Books

Wesley Frank Craven and James Lee Cate, eds. *The Pacific: Guadalcanal to Saipan, August 1942 to July 1944—The Army Air Forces in World War II*, v. 4. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950. The Air Force official history covering the period of the Central Pacific campaign. Well documented, the book is a reliable source for the actions of the Seventh Air Force and the attitudes and decisions of its commanders.

Philip A. Crowl. *Campaign in the Marianas—The War in The Pacific—United States Army in World War II*. Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1960. The Army official history of the operations in the Marianas with considerable detail of the actions of the 27th and 77th Infantry Divisions. It provides a well-reasoned analysis of the Smith against Smith controversy and is particularly useful for its sections on strategic background and planning.

Philip A. Crowl and Edmund G. Love. *Seizure of the Gilberts and Marshalls—The War in the Pacific—United States Army in World War II*. Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1955. This official Army history necessarily deals with Marine and Navy actions to a large extent with emphasis on the lessons of amphibious warfare learned in the early Central Pacific operations. It provides a good small unit narrative of Army participation in the Makin, Kwajalein, and Eniwetok fighting.

Jeter A. Isely and Philip A. Crowl. *The U. S. Marines and Amphibious War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951. An essential source for the study of the development of amphibious tactics and techniques and their application in the Pacific in World War II.

Takushiro Hattori. *Dai Toa Senso Zenshi* [The Complete History of the Greater East

Asia War]. Tokyo: Matsu Publishing Company, 1955. A manuscript translation of this excellent study is available at the Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army. The author, a ranking staff officer during the war and an historian afterwards, has written a comprehensive history which contains enough detail to provide a useful strategic review from the Japanese viewpoint of every major campaign of the war.

Samuel Eliot Morison. *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*. v. VII, VIII. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1951, 1953. These two volumes by Rear Admiral Morison, *Aleutians, Gilberts and Marshalls, June 1942–April 1944* and *New Guinea and the Marianas, March 1944–August 1944*, comprise a highly readable account of Navy operations in the Central Pacific. Written with considerable assistance and cooperation from the Navy, the histories are, however, very much the personalized work of the author and are most effective in their descriptions of naval actions and of Japanese operations.

Robert Sherrod. *History of Marine Corps Aviation in World War II*. Washington: Combat Forces Press, 1952. Although this is an unofficial history, it was written with substantial Marine Corps research support and contains valuable aviation unit historical data unavailable elsewhere. Much of the very readable text is based upon interviews and eyewitness accounts that were not retained for later study.

United States Strategic Bombing Survey (Pacific), Naval Analysis Division. *The Campaigns of the Pacific War and Interrogations of Japanese Officials*, 2 vols. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1946. Together these three volumes give an interesting account of the Japanese side of the war; however, they were prepared too soon after the event and contain many inaccuracies. The books are most useful in providing an understanding of Japanese military thinking through interviews and translations of relevant documents.

The War Reports of General of the Army George C. Marshall. Chief of Staff, General of the Army H. H. Arnold, Commanding General, Army Air Forces, Fleet Admiral Ernest J. King, Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet and Chief of Naval Operations. Phila-

delphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1947. A convenient compilation of the official reports of the chiefs of the armed services issued during and just after the war, which provides an excellent overall review of operations.

PART I

LAUNCHING THE CENTRAL PACIFIC OFFENSIVE

Official Documents

Fairly complete sets of the earlier ORANGE plans have been retained by the Operational Archives Branch, Naval Historical Division, Department of the Navy. Included in this collection are many studies and lectures which aid in tracing the development of Pacific strategy. At the Federal Records Center, Alexandria, Virginia, the World War II Records Division holds the files of the War Plans Division, War Department, which contain an accumulation of drafts of ORANGE Plans submitted between 1923 and 1928. Aside from Major Earl H. Ellis' Operation Plan 712, his "Security of Advanced Bases and Advanced Base Operations," and a collection of tactical plans drawn up during the 1930s, the Archives of the Marine Corps Historical Branch contain little material on the evolution of American strategy.

Copies of the various reports and minutes that show the development of Anglo-American wartime strategy are available in the ABC Files in the World War II Records Division in the Alexandria Federal Record Center. The more important material contained in these files, and similar ones of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has been published and analysed in both official and unofficial histories and is more readily obtainable from these sources by private researchers.

Information regarding the status of Marine Corps units and personnel, particularly officers, during the period covered is contained in various tables of organization, station lists, and status sheets for air and ground units held in the Archives of the Historical Branch. Registers of Navy and Marine Corps regular officers and combined lineal lists of Marine Corps officers on active duty, both issued periodically during the war years, are useful sources for personal statistics. Major depository libraries

should hold copies of the registers, which were printed by the Government Printing Office; the Marine Corps Archives has a complete set of the lineal lists which were printed at the Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, Virginia.

Japanese Sources

In the years immediately following the end of the war, former Japanese officials working under the auspices of General MacArthur's headquarters prepared a series of monographs detailing Japanese actions in many Pacific and Asian campaigns and at the various headquarters in the home islands. In the mid-1950s, a number of these original studies were revised and expanded, again by knowledgeable Japanese. The monographs vary considerably in their value, but, on the whole, they are honestly presented and useful in gaining an insight of Japanese planning and operations. The Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, which has a complete file of these studies, has prepared an annotated guide and index, *Guide to Japanese Monographs and Japanese Studies on Manchuria 1945-1960* (Washington, 1961), which is an excellent aid in evaluating the individual items.

Since much of the work done on these studies was in response to requests for information on campaigns in which the Army was principally involved, there is less available on the Central Pacific operations than there is on those in the South and Southwest Pacific. Almost all of the monographs of general scope, however, provide useful background information on Japanese war plans as they concerned the Central Pacific.

Books and Periodicals

The first two volumes of this series, *Pearl Harbor to Guadalcanal* and *Isolation of Rabaul*, were useful in reviewing the role of the Marine Corps in the development of amphibious doctrine and in the opening stages of the war. Among a number of books and articles concerning Pacific strategy, the following were the most useful.

FAdm Ernest J. King and Cdr Walter Muir Whitehill. *Fleet Admiral King: A Naval Record*. New York: W. W. Norton Inc., 1949. Admiral King's autobiography covers his en-

tire naval career and gives revealing insights into the character of the man and his contributions to American strategy.

Maurice Matloff and Edwin M. Snell. *Strategic Planning for Coalition Warfare 1941-1942—The War Department—United States Army in World War II*. Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1953. An excellent background study of the formative stages of Allied strategy in the war.

John Miller, Jr. *CARTWHEEL: The Reduction of Rabaul—The War in the Pacific—United States Army in World War II*. Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1959. The book provides a companion account to operations in the Central Pacific with particular emphasis on MacArthur's planning.

John Miller, Jr. "The Casablanca Conference and Pacific Strategy," *Military Affairs*, v. 13, no. 4 (Winter 49). A concise account of the happenings at Casablanca and their effects.

Louis Morton. *Strategy and Command: The First Two Years—The War in the Pacific—United States Army in World War II*. Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1962. Perhaps the best account of American strategy in the Pacific with considerable coverage of its developmental stages.

Louis Morton. "American and Allied Strategy in the Far East," *Military Review*, v. 29, no. 9 (Dec49). This article contains much of the information on the ORANGE plans that was later developed in the official history cited above.

United States Army, War Department. *Handbook on Japanese Military Forces*. TM-E 30-480. Washington, 1Oct44. A basic source on the organization and equipment of Japanese land forces with useful detail on weapons characteristics and textbook tactics.

Adm Raymond A. Spruance. "The Victory in the Pacific," *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution*, v. 91, no. 564 (Nov46). An interesting but brief survey of the Pacific war with emphasis upon planning and strategy.

PART II

THE GILBERTS OPERATION

Official Documents

Although adequate material is available on the planning of Operation GALVANIC, the action reports of the units involved in the fighting both on Tarawa and Makin set forth only the general progress of the two battles. The message files and unit journals are very helpful in adding necessary detail.

All officers involved in the campaign devoted a great deal of effort to assessing the merits and defects of weapons, tactics, and amphibious techniques. The recommendations of battalion and regimental commanders have been, for the most part, condensed and included in the VAC Action Report and its many enclosures. Other important recommendations concerning naval elements appear in the reports originated by V Amphibious Force and Task Force 53.

As the Gilberts were a testing ground for many amphibious developments, comments comparing actions in later operations with those during GALVANIC occur frequently in Navy and Marine Corps reports. Any study of this operation should include reference to the action reports of higher commanders during subsequent campaigns in the Central Pacific.

Unofficial Documents

While writing the monograph used so extensively in preparing this account of the battle for Tarawa, Captain Stockman sent copies of his preliminary draft to various individuals who had taken part in the operation. Many of these men replied and their comments have been cited throughout this section. Similarly, the draft manuscript of this volume was sent to key participants and to the historical agencies of the other services, and the replies received have been used as applicable in revising the narrative. All such comments are retained in the files of the Marine Corps Historical Archives.

Of particular assistance in writing this section were extensive interviews by the authors with General Shoup, Admiral Hill, and General Julian Smith, who supplemented in this way their written comments on the draft.

Admiral Spruance, and his former chief of staff, Admiral Moore, were quite helpful in developing the story of the planning background of the operation.

By no means all of the material uncovered by draft comments and interviews has been used in this book or in the Stockman monograph. The files contain much unpublished information that is of value to the student of the operation, particularly in regard to details of small unit action and the assessment of the accomplishments and character of individuals.

Japanese Sources

In addition to the Hattori manuscript mentioned previously, two of the Japanese monographs in the series held by the Office of the Chief of Military History have been useful. No. 48, *Central Pacific Operations Record, Volume I* (Dec41-Aug45), provided some data on the defensive preparations in the area and brief coverage of the operations in the Marianas, and No. 161, *Inner South Sea Islands Area Naval Operations, Part I, Gilbert Islands* (Nov41-Nov43), concerns the seizure of the Gilberts and Marshalls and provides a general review of naval operations in the Central Pacific.

In terms of pertinent captured documents, the Gilberts provided far less material than was the case in many other operations. Few knowledgeable prisoners were taken. As a consequence, it is quite difficult to reconstruct the action from the Japanese viewpoint. Much of the information available on the conduct of the Japanese defense was provided by American intelligence officers who made exhaustive investigations of the ruins of the defensive works on both Makin and Tarawa.

Books and Periodicals

In addition to the works of general interest cited above, the following have been most useful in shedding light on the Gilberts campaign.

Richard W. Johnston. *Follow Me! The Story of the Second Marine Division in World War II*. New York: Random House, 1948. This work contains some vivid impressions of the fighting on Betio and considerable information on the organization of the division.

Robert Sherrod. *Tarawa: The Story of a Battle*. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce,

1944. Considering the handicaps imposed by wartime security, this is perhaps the best account of the battle to be written by a journalist.

LtGen Julian C. Smith. "Tarawa," *U. S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, v. 79, no. 11 (Nov53). This story of the 2d Marine Division at Tarawa written by its commanding general is a valuable source for command decisions.

Capt James R. Stockman. *The Battle for Tarawa*. Washington: Historical Section, Division of Public Information, HQMC, 1947. The official monograph dealing with the Marine Corps role in GALVANIC, this booklet concentrates most of its narrative on the combat action ashore on Betio.

Capt Earl J. Wilson, et al. *Betio Beachhead: U. S. Marines' Own Story of the Battle for Tarawa*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1945. The combined efforts of several Marine Corps combat correspondents have produced an uneven, though at times colorful, book.

PART III

THE MARSHALLS: QUICKENING THE PACE

Official Documents

In general, coverage of the FLINTLOCK operation is more than adequate, but fewer official reports of CATCHPOLE have survived. VAC prepared a detailed account of the Kwajalein landings as did the other major commands that participated in this phase of the Marshalls action. Tactical Group 1 and Task Group 51.11 submitted lengthy accounts of the Eniwetok venture, but the Marine battalions that did the bulk of the fighting provided reports that do not measure up in quality. Unit journals of the 4th Marine Division and Tactical Group 1 are an invaluable source of hourly and daily action and include the substance of most important orders and periodic situation reports.

Piecing together a narrative of the battles for the islands of Eniwetok Atoll is somewhat difficult, for journals and reports of the fighting often do not agree in detail with the reminiscences of those who fought there. Such disagreements have been resolved in this volume in favor of the official records. Where journals and reports are incomplete, inter-

views and correspondence with participants have provided the information necessary to fill the gaps.

Unofficial Documents

The numerous letters and transcripts of interviews which originated when the draft manuscript of *The Marshalls: Increasing the Tempo* was distributed for review were extremely valuable in the preparation of this account of FLINTLOCK and CATCHPOLE. In general, the monograph comment file has more detail on small unit action than the similar collection of letters and interviews gathered in the review of the draft of this section. Most of the participants queried during the writing of this volume were senior commanders and staff officers who could provide an informed and critical commentary on the treatment of the overall aspects of the campaign. Of particular use in this review were interviews and correspondence with General Schmidt and Admirals Hill and Moore.

The Office of the Chief of Military History assisted the writing of this section by making available the voluminous notes taken by Lieutenant Colonel S. L. A. Marshall during and immediately after the conquest of the southern part of Kwajalein Atoll. These notes, together with similar material gathered concerning the Makin operation, provide a significant body of detailed information regarding Army actions in the early Central Pacific landings.

Japanese Sources

Japanese strategy is set forth in the Hattori manuscript and the two monographs, Nos. 48 and 161, previously cited. Another monograph, No. 173, *Inner South Seas Islands Area Naval Operations, Part II, Marshall Islands (Dec41-Feb44)*, describes the efforts to defend the Marshalls against American air attacks and contains a journal with entries from 23 November 1943 to 1 March 1944.

During the course of the fighting, JICPOA received many captured documents, most of them diaries and orders originated in the *1st Amphibious Brigade*. This material provides a revealing insight into life on a beleaguered atoll as well as a knowledge of Japanese tactics. Unlike the story of the Gilberts battles, an account of the operations in the Marshalls can

be fleshed out to become two-sided in terms of men who actually did the fighting.

Books

Once again Isely and Crowl, *Marines and Amphibious War*, Crowl and Love, *Gilberts and Marshalls*, and Morison, *Aleutians, Gilberts, and Marshalls* were invaluable sources. Among the other works which provided useful information were:

LtCol Robert D. Heinl, Jr. and LtCol John A. Crown. *The Marshalls: Increasing the Tempo*. Washington: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, HQMC, 1954. This official monograph, which covers the operations in small unit detail, served as the framework for the account presented here.

LtCol S. L. A. Marshall, AUS. *Island Victory*. Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1944. This book gives a vivid and detailed account of the capture of Kwajalein Island by the 7th Infantry Division.

Carl W. Proehl, ed. *The Fourth Marine Division in World War II*. Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1946. Like most division histories, this book concentrates on personalities and highlights of action and training and gives the reader a good grasp of the character of the unit and its men.

PART IV

SAIPAN: THE DECISIVE BATTLE

Official Records

By this stage in the war, action reports had become quite detailed and informative. The basic accounts of higher headquarters, such as Task Force 51 and Northern Troops and Landing Force, bulge large with appendices and annexes which include reports of general and special staff officers as well as important orders and journals. The records of smaller units are also more comprehensive and uniform and journals of personnel, intelligence, operations, and logistics sections provide far more information than any single volume can use, let alone a portion of such a volume. Saipan records are voluminous and sometimes contradictory, but on the whole furnish an excellent basis for an operational narrative. Where conflicts have occurred between the accounts

of different reporting levels, the version presented by the unit closest to the action described has generally been the one accepted.

A valuable source of information on the Saipan fighting and the Smith against Smith controversy is the report of the Buckner Board. Included in its many annexes, designated exhibits, are firsthand accounts of the fighting by Army commanders and revealing descriptions of the combat readiness of various elements of the 27th Infantry Division. A copy of this report is available in the files of the World War II Records Division of the Alexandria Federal Record Center.

Unofficial Documents

Unfortunately, almost all of the letters and interview transcripts gathered by Major Hoffman in the preparation of his monograph have been lost. A diligent search of every possible depository where they might have strayed turned up nothing. Since the monograph contains much material based on the missing papers, and many quotes from them, it has been used frequently as a source for the information they contained. Wherever this has occurred, the footnotes clearly indicate it.

The circulation of the draft of this section produced a fair amount of comments from key participants which have been used as appropriate. Admirals Hill and Moore again furnished most useful reviews and added considerably to the authors' understanding of the naval aspects of the campaign. Many officers of the several services addressed themselves in one form or another to a discussion of the relief of General Ralph Smith; none objected to the account in this volume, which has been written after careful examination of both partisan and objective versions occurring in other works.

An interesting source of informal review of General Holland Smith's accounting of the relief is provided in his correspondence with General Vandegrift at that time. These letters, part of a file of personal correspondence with general and flag officers sent and received by the Commandant, are held in Archives of the Historical Branch. General Smith's letters and his public reports concerning the relief are consistent in all important details.

Japanese Sources

Thousands of documents were captured on Saipan: many were roughly translated there and others were later abstracted by JICPOA. A considerable body of Japanese information in fragmented form is contained in the journals and reports of unit intelligence agencies. Prisoner of war interrogations are also useful, although the majority of the information gained in this way must be checked and rechecked because the prisoner accounts conflict sharply in many instances. The JICPOA translations, and those issued by Admiral Nimitz' headquarters as CinCPac-CinCPOA documents, contain a wealth of military and human interest data which must be researched carefully since the titles of the documents often do not give an accurate clue to the contents. A complete file of these intelligence papers is held by the Operational Archives Branch of the Naval History Division.

Among the Japanese monographs in the series mentioned previously, several give coverage to the Marianas though none particularly concerns Saipan. The most useful include: No. 45, *History of the Imperial General Headquarters, Army Section (1941-1945)*, which gives an overall review of the Pacific War and contains appendices of Army orders and unit designations; No. 49, *Central Pacific Operations Record (April-November 1944)*, which is concerned primarily with operations in the Palau Islands, but discusses activities in the other areas and gives contemporary estimates of the enemy (Allied) situation; and No. 90, *The "A-GO" Operations (May-June 1944)*, which details the buildup of the *Combined Fleet* and naval air arm prior to the Battle of the Philippine Sea.

Books and Periodicals

In addition to the overall sources, particularly the Crowl Army history and the Morison Navy account, the histories of the 2d and 4th Marine Divisions have been helpful in developing the narrative. Other works of value are listed below.

Gen Henry H. Arnold, USAF. *Global Mission*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949. The memoirs of the wartime leader of the Army Air Forces provide interesting back-

ground on the planning for the Marianas and the establishment of B-29 bases there.

Maj James A. Donovan. "Saipan Tank Battle," *Marine Corps Gazette*, v. 32, no. 10 (Oct48). The author, executive officer of 1/6 during the battle, gives a highly readable description of the Japanese tank attack.

Maj Carl W. Hoffman. *Saipan: The Beginning of the End*. Washington: Historical Division, HQMC, 1950. This official monograph is written in good style and considerable detail and gives adequate coverage to Navy and Army actions.

Gen George C. Kenney, USAF. *General Kenney Reports: A Personal History of the Pacific War*. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1949. MacArthur's air commander gives an inside report of the controversy over Pacific strategy from the Southwest Pacific Area standpoint.

Edmund G. Love. *The 27th Infantry Division in World War II*. Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1949. Longer and far more detailed than the usual division history, this book gives a good insight of the emotional jolt caused by the relief of the division commander and the disparaging remarks published about the unit in the United States.

Robert Sherrod. *On to the Westward, War in the Central Pacific*. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1945. Carrying on from his narrative of Tarawa, the author gives a news correspondent's view of the Marianas fighting.

Gen Holland M. Smith and Percy Finch. *Coral and Brass*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949. Reliable for the personal opinions and actions of General Smith, these memoirs are not too accurate concerning details of unit combat action.

Capt James R. Stockman. "The Taking of Mount Topatchou," *Marine Corps Gazette*, v. 32, no. 10 (Oct48). Written by an officer of 1/29, this article gives a concise and clear account of the maneuvers and fighting involved in seizing the mountain.

Tadao Yanihara. *Pacific Islands Under Japanese Mandate*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1940. A mixture of scholarship and propaganda, the book is useful in reviewing the history of Japanese presence in the islands.

PART V

THE INEVITABLE CAMPAIGN: TINIAN

Official Records

Since the command structure for Tinian was basically the same as that for Saipan, although the commanders changed in some cases, many of the reports of higher headquarters cover both operations. Much of this material is contained in separate documents, however, as these reports, particularly that of Task Force 56, were issued in multiple volumes. Like the operation itself, the records of it are models. Following the general practice of the Historical Branch in all of its histories, discrepancies between unit reports were resolved in this volume in favor of the lowest reporting unit. All commands were impressed with the unique features of the operation, particularly the landing across the White Beaches and the logistical setup, and there is much discussion of these in the various reports.

At the end of December 1944, Admiral King's headquarters issued a booklet, CominCh P-007, *Amphibious Operations: Invasion of the Marianas*, that is a valuable synthesis of reports received from major subordinate commands regarding their part in FORAGER. Equally useful for its account of all three operations, the compilation furnishes an excellent review of the unusual aspects of the assault on Tinian.

Unofficial Documents

The file of comments gathered by Major Hoffman during the writing of the monograph on Tinian have not, like those covering Saipan, disappeared. They are available in the Archives of the Historical Branch for further reference. Senior officers concerned in the planning of the operation made extensive comments on the draft manuscript so that the author could give an accurate picture of discussions leading to the selection of the beaches and also emphasize other features of the operation that elicited the almost universal praise it received. In comments on the draft of this section, many of the same men called attention to their earlier detailed remarks regarding the monograph and limited their review to a discussion of the overall aspects of the campaign as presented here. Many of the veterans of the amphibious

development stages of the 1930s evaluated Tinian as a classic or a textbook example for the conduct of an amphibious operation.

Japanese Sources

The Hattori manuscript and the Japanese monographs previously cited are as useful as background information for Tinian as they are for Saipan and Guam. Many of the documents captured on Saipan furnish considerable information on the troops, weapons, and defensive dispositions on the smaller island. The 4th Marine Division published a file of representative translations of material gathered on Tinian that is an excellent source of information on Japanese operations. JICPOA and CinCPAC-CinCPOA publications of similar material keyed to the island on which it was recovered add another useful source to the body of intelligence available.

Books

Almost all the published sources listed under the Saipan section also concern themselves with Tinian. Admiral Morison's unofficial Navy history is helpful for its account of the naval aspects of the campaign, and Isely and Crowl have a good discussion of amphibious warfare developments. Among the few additional sources consulted were:

Lt John C. Chapin. *The Fourth Marine Division in World War II*. Washington: Historical Division, HQMC, Aug45. A pamphlet history, this small book highlights the actions of the division which made the assault landing on Tinian.

Major Carl W. Hoffman. *The Seizure of Tinian*. Washington: Historical Division, 1951. This official monograph drew unsolicited praise from several of officers who commented on the more generalized version of the campaign in this volume. The book provides excellent coverage of the planning phase and small unit detail, sparked by participants' comments, of the fighting ashore.

PART VI

VICTORY AT GUAM

Official Records

Although the Guam operation was a cohesive part of FORAGER, it is not particularly

well represented in the reports of the Joint Expeditionary Force and Expeditionary Troops. These records of higher headquarters concern themselves largely with the campaign in the northern islands. As a result, the prime sources for a higher headquarters view of the campaign are the reports of Task Force 53 and the III Amphibious Corps. Both of these are useful but not as detailed as similar accounts by attack force and landing force headquarters at Saipan and Tinian. The 3d Marine Division action report includes concise reports of subordinate units as appendices, but the 1st Brigade report is largely a narrative at brigade level with a journal and file of orders issued attached. Only scattered examples of the war diaries and other records originated by the smaller Marine units on Guam have survived, and the reconstruction of narrative of action draws from dissimilar sources for like units, as the footnotes indicate. On the whole, however, there is enough material available to reconstruct an accurate account.

Unofficial Documents

The circulation of the draft manuscript of the monograph on Guam by Major Lodge, who made a special effort to elicit comment from officers of supporting arms and services, drew a number of detailed replies. Gaps in the small unit reports were readily filled by the information supplied by reviewers. From their comments, it was obvious that many of these men had retained copies of records that they had once originated or prepared. A file of comments concerning the Stockman-Carleton booklet on the Marianas campaign was used freely in the preparation of both the monograph and this section. Perhaps the most useful letters among the many that were received were those from the former commanding officer of the 9th Marines, General Craig, who provided detailed and extensive reviews on several occasions. The comments received on the draft manuscript of this section from senior commanders and staff officers are filed with those occasioned by earlier accounts.

Japanese Sources

The translations and interrogations of higher intelligence agencies and of the major commands on Guam were primary sources of Jap-

anese information, but the body of information of this type was not as large as it was on Saipan and Tinian. In order to supplement this information, Lieutenant Colonel Takeda, the senior surviving member of the Guam garrison, was queried by the Historical Branch regarding many puzzling gaps in the story of the Japanese defense. His reply to these questions, together with an earlier and briefer account of the activities of the *29th Division* which he prepared after his surrender, were used frequently in the preparation of the monograph and this section. Another useful document, filed like the Takeda letters in the Historical Branch Archives, was an extensive history of the campaign prepared by officers of the Japanese Ground Self Defense Force and published in their staff school journal in a series of three articles. A translation of the text of this history written in 1962, was made available to the Historical Branch and it has been used throughout the preparation of this section.

Books and Periodicals

All the overall secondary sources relating to the Marianas campaign and to the assessment of the operations in the Central Pacific were consulted again in writing this account of Guam. In addition, the following were the most useful publications directly related to the operation.

Lt Robert A. Aurthur and Lt Kenneth Cohlma. *The Third Marine Division*. Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1948. More compact in format than most division histories, this book is a good source for unit background.

LtCol F. Clay Bridgewater, USA. "Reconnaissance on Guam," *The Cavalry Journal*, v. LIV, no. 3 (May-Jun45). The commanding officer of the 77th Division Reconnaissance Troop tells the story of its training and action.

MajGen Andrew D. Bruce, USA. "Administration, Supply, and Evacuation of the 77th Infantry Division on Guam," *Military Review*, v. 24, no. 10 (Dec44). The division commander reviews the combat support activities of his unit on Guam with useful comments on the reasons for various command decisions.

Bevan G. Cass, ed. *History of the Sixth Marine Division*. Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1948. As the predecessor of the

division, the 1st Brigade action is covered in some detail in this volume, but the majority of the book is devoted to the Okinawa campaign.

Kenneth W. Condit and Edwin T. Turnbladh. *Hold High the Torch, A History of the 4th Marines*. Washington: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, HQMC, 1960. An official account of the history of one of the regiments of the 1st Brigade with some detail of its actions on Guam.

1stLt Anthony A. Frances. "The Battle for Banzai Ridge," *Marine Corps Gazette*, v. 29, no. 6 (Jun45). A vivid story of the 21st Marines in the fighting for the ridges in the 3d Division beachhead.

Historical Division, War Department. *Guam, Operations of the 77th Division (21 July-10 August 1944)*. Washington, 1946. A monograph covering the Army division action in considerable detail written by the division historian.

Capt Lucius W. Johnson, MC, USN. "Guam—Before December 1941," *U. S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, v. 72, no. 3 (Mar46). These recollections by a member of the prewar Navy garrison provide an interesting picture of island life from the American viewpoint.

1stLt Millard Kaufman. "Attack on Guam," *Marine Corps Gazette*, v. 29, no. 4 (Apr45). This article is a generalized account of the battle by a former member of the 1st Brigade.

Capt Edwin H. Klein. "The Handling of Supplies on Guam," *Marine Corps Gazette*, v. 29, no. 2 (Feb45). A review of supply operations on the island, the article concerns itself with shore party and field depot operations.

Maj Orlan R. Lodge. *The Recapture of Guam*. Washington: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, HQMC, 1954. This official monograph devotes a chapter to supporting arms and services and is particularly useful for the development of the Japanese side of the campaign.

LtCol Max Myers, USA, ed. *Ours to Hold it High: The History of the 77th Infantry Division in World War II*. Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1947. The story of the Statue of Liberty Division provides a good overall view of the fighting on Guam and helpful information on its training and personnel.

Cdr H. E. Smith, CEC, USN. "I Saw the Morning Break," *U. S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, v. 72, no. 3 (Mar46). An eyewitness account of the Guam landing, this article contains vivid descriptive passages.

Laura Thompson. *Guam and its People*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1947. This book is primarily a sociological history of Guam with emphasis on the prewar years.

Charles O. West, et. al., eds. *Second to None! The Story of the 305th Infantry in World War II*. Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1949. This history is a useful account of the background and actions of the Army regiment that was initially attached to the 1st Brigade.

MajGen Haruo Umezawa, JGSDF, and Col Louis Metzger. "The Defense of Guam," *Marine Corps Gazette*, v. 48, no. 8 (Aug64). This article is a summary of the Japanese defense of Guam based in large part on the GSDF study used in the writing of this section.

Guide to Abbreviations

AA	Antiaircraft	C-2	Corps Intelligence Office(r)
AAF	Army Air Forces	C-3	Corps Operations and Training Office(r)
AAR	After Action Report	C-4	Corps Logistics Office(r)
ABC	American-British-Canadian	C-47	Army twin-engine transport, the Douglas Skytrain
ACofS	Assistant Chief of Staff	Capt	Captain
ADC	Assistant Division Commander	Cbt	Combat
Admin	Administrative	CCS	Combined Chiefs of Staff
AF	Air Force	Cdr	Commander
AFB	Air Force Base	CEC	Civil Engineer Corps
AFFE	Army Forces in the Far East	Gen	Central
AFPOA	Army Forces, Pacific Ocean Areas	CG	Commanding General
AGC	Amphibious Command Ship	Chap	Chapter
AKA	Cargo ship, attack	CinC	Commander in Chief
Altn	Alternate	CMC	Commandant of the Marine Corps
Amtrac	Amphibious Tractor	Cmt	Comment
Anx	Annex	CNO	Chief of Naval Operations
APA	Transport, attack	CO	Commanding Officer
APD	Transport, high speed	Co	Company
App	Appendix	CofS	Chief of Staff
AR	Action Report	Col	Colonel
Ar	Army	Com	Command
Arty	Artillery	Comd	Commander (units)
Atk	Attack	CominCh	Commander in Chief
AUS	Army of the United States	Con	Conversation
B-24	Army four-engine bomber, the Consolidated Liberator	CP	Command Post
B-25	Army two-engine bomber, the North American Mitchell	CT	Combat Team
B-29	Army four-engine bomber, the Boeing Super-Fortress	Cor	Corps
Bat	Battle	CVE	Escort carrier
BGen	Brigadier General	D-1	Division Personnel Office(r)
Bn	Battalion	D-2	Division Intelligence Office(r)
Bomb	Bombardment	D-3	Division Operations and Training Office(r)
Br	Branch	D-4	Division Logistics Office(r)
Brig	Brigade	DA	Department of the Army
Btry	Battery	DE	Destroyer Escort
Bu	Bureau	Def	Defense
Bul	Bulletin	Dep	Depot
C	Commander (units)	Dept	Department
C-1	Corps Personnel Office(r)	Disp	Dispatch
		Div	Division

DMS	Destroyer Minesweeper	Intel	Intelligence
Ed	Dated	JASCO	Joint Assault Signal Company
DUKW	Amphibious truck	JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
Ech	Echelon	JICPOA	Joint Intelligence Center, Pacific Ocean Areas
Ed	Editor	Jnl	Journal
Est	Estimate	Jnt	Joint
Evac	Evacuation	JPS	Joint Planning Staff
Expc	Experience	KIA	Killed in Action
F4U	Navy-Marine single engine fighter, the Chance-Vought Corsair	LCdr	Lieutenant Commander
FAdm	Fleet Admiral	LCC	Landing Craft, Control
FBHL	Final Beachhead Line	LCI	Landing Craft, Infantry
FE	Far East	LCI(G)	Landing Craft, Infantry (Gunboat)
Fld	Field	LCM	Landing Craft, Mechanized
Flt	Fleet	LCT	Landing Craft, Tank
FMF	Fleet Marine Force	LCVP	Landing Craft, Vehicle and Personnel
FO	Field Order	Ldg	Landing
For	Force	Log	Logistics; Logistical
FRC	Federal Record Center	LSD	Landing Ship, Dock
Ftr	Fighter	LST	Landing Ship, Tank
Fwd	Forward	LT	Landing Team
G-1	Division (or larger unit) Personnel Office(r)	Lt	Lieutenant
G-2	Division (or larger unit) Intelligence Office(r)	Ltr	Letter
G-3	Division (or larger unit) Operations and Training Office(r)	LVT	Landing Vehicle, Tracked
G-4	Division (or larger unit) Logistics Office(r)	LVT(A)	Landing Vehicle, Tracked (Armored)
Gar	Garrison	M4	Medium tank
Gen	General	M5	Light tank
GHQ	General Headquarters	Maj	Major
GO	General Order	MAG	Marine Aircraft Group
GPO	Government Printing Office	Mar	Marine
Gnd	Ground	MAW	Marine Aircraft Wing
Gru	Group	MAWG	Marine Air Warning Group
Hist	History; Historical	MBG	Marine Bomber Group
Hq	Headquarters	MBDAW	Marine Base Defense Aircraft Wing
HQMC	Headquarters, United States Marine Corps	MIA	Missing in Action
H&S	Headquarters and Service	Mil	Military
IIIAC	III Amphibious Corps	MIS	Military Intelligence Service
IJA	Imperial Japanese Army	Mm	Millimeter
IJN	Imperial Japanese Navy	MNFG	Marine Night Fighter Group
IMAC	I Marine Amphibious Corps	MS	Manuscript
Inf	Infantry	Msg	Message
Incl	Including	Mtg	Meeting
Info	Information	Nav	Navy; Naval
Instl	Installation	NCO	Noncommissioned Officer
Instn	Instruction	ND	Navy Department
		NGF	Naval Gunfire
		NHD	Naval History Division

No -----	Number	SCR -----	Signal Corps Radio
NTLF -----	Northern Troops and Land- ing Force	Sct -----	Scout
O -----	Order; Officer	Sec -----	Section
OAB -----	Operational Archives Branch	Ser -----	Serial
O/B -----	Order of Battle	Serv -----	Service
Occ -----	Occupation	Ship -----	Shipping
OCMH -----	Office of the Chief of Military History	Sho -----	Shore
Off -----	Office	Sig -----	Signal
ONI -----	Office of Naval Intelligence	Sit -----	Situation
Op -----	Operation	Sked -----	Schedule
OPD -----	Operations Division	SMS -----	Supply and Maintenance Squadron
OPlan -----	Operation Plan	SNLF -----	Special Naval Landing Force
Org -----	Organization	SP -----	Shore Party
OY -----	Navy-Marine single-engine observation plane, the Con- solidated-Vultee Sentinel	Spl -----	Special
P-47 -----	Army single-engine fighter, the Republic Thunderbolt	Spt -----	Support
Pac -----	Pacific; Pacific Fleet	Sqn -----	Squadron
PB4Y -----	Navy-Marine four-engine bomber, the Consolidated Liberator	Sta -----	Status
Pers -----	Personnel	Stf -----	Staff
Phib -----	Amphibious	STLF -----	Southern Troops and Land- ing Force
POA -----	Pacific Ocean Areas	Strat -----	Strategic
POW -----	Prisoner of War	Subj -----	Subject
P(p) -----	Page(s)	Subor -----	Subordinate
Prelim -----	Preliminary	Sum -----	Summary
Pt -----	Party	Sup -----	Supply
Pub -----	Public	Suppl -----	Supplement
R4D -----	Navy-Marine twin-engine transport, the Douglas Skytrain	TBS -----	Talk Between Ships radio
RAdm -----	Rear Admiral	TBX -----	Semi-portable low-power field radio
RCT -----	Regimental Combat Team	TBY -----	Portable low-power field ra- dio
Rec -----	Record	Tel -----	Telephone
Recom -----	Recommendation	Tg -----	Telegraph
Recon -----	Reconnaissance	TF -----	Task Force
Regt -----	Regiment	TG -----	Task Group
Rel -----	Relations	Tk -----	Tank
Rep -----	Representative	TM -----	Technical Manual
rev -----	Revised	TO -----	Theater of Operations
RJ -----	Road Junction	T/O -----	Table of Organization
Rpt -----	Report	TQM -----	Transport Quartermaster
S-3 -----	Battalion or Regimental Op- erations and Training Of- fice(r)	Tr -----	Translated; Translator
Salv -----	Salvage	Trac -----	Tractor
SAR -----	Special Action Report	Trans -----	Transport
SC -----	Submarine Chaser	Trng -----	Training
		Trp -----	Troop
		U -----	Unit
		UDT -----	Underwater Demolition Team
		USA -----	United States Army
		USAF -----	United States Air Force
		USAFCPA -----	United States Army Forces, Central Pacific Area

USAFPOA	---	United States Army Forces, Pacific Ocean Areas	Vic	-----	Vicinity
USMC	-----	United States Marine Corps	VMF	-----	Marine fighter squadron
USN	-----	United States Navy	VMF(N)	-----	Marine night fighter squad- ron
USS	-----	United States Ship	VMO	-----	Marine observation squadron
USSBS	-----	United States Strategic Bombing Survey	WarD	-----	War Diary
V	-----	Volume	WD	-----	War Department
VAC	-----	V Amphibious Corps	WIA	-----	Wounded in Action
VB	-----	Navy dive bomber squadron	WO	-----	Warrant Officer
Veh	-----	Vehicle	Wpn	-----	Weapons
VHF	-----	Very High Frequency	WW	-----	World War

Military Map Symbols

UNIT SIZE		UNIT SYMBOLS	
•••	Platoon		Motor Transport
I	Company		RCN
II	Battalion		Recon
III	Regiment		} Reconnaissance
X	Brigade			Service
XX	Division		Tank
UNIT SYMBOLS		EXAMPLES	
	Basic Unit	4	4th Platoon, VAC Reconnaissance Company
	USMC Unit (When units of other services shown)	2	2d Company, 9th Tank Regiment (Japanese)
	Enemy Unit	2	2d Battalion, 12th Marines
	Antiaircraft Artillery		305th Infantry Regiment (Reinforced)
	Artillery		1st Provisional Marine Brigade
	Engineer/Pioneer		27th Infantry Division Artillery
	Infantry		
	Medical		

T.L. RUSSELL

Chronology

The following listing of events is limited to those coming within the scope of this book, and those forecasting events to be treated in the volumes to follow.

- 1941*
- 9Dec ----- Japanese occupy Tarawa and Makin Islands in Gilberts.
- 10Dec ----- Guam surrenders to Japanese landing force.
- 23Dec ----- Wake Island surrenders to Japanese.
- 1942*
- 1Feb ----- U. S. carrier task forces raid Japanese positions in Gilberts and Marshalls.
- 30Mar ----- Pacific Ocean divided into Pacific Ocean Areas under Adm Nimitz, and Southwest Pacific Area under Gen MacArthur.
- 4-8May ----- Battle of the Coral Sea.
- 4-6Jun ----- Japanese are decisively defeated in main Battle of Midway.
- 7Aug ----- 1st MarDiv lands on Guadalcanal and Tulagi to launch first U. S. offensive of the war.
- 17Aug ----- 2d RdrBn lands from submarines at Makin Island. Raid is completed following day.
- 20Aug ----- First Marine aircraft arrive on Henderson Field, Guadalcanal.
- 20Oct ----- 5th DefBn occupies Funafuti, Ellice Islands.
- 1943*
- 14-23Jan ----- Casablanca Conference to determine strategy for 1943. Agreement reached to advance toward Philippines through Central and Southwest Pacific, and to terminate hostilities only upon "unconditional surrender" of the enemy.
- 8Feb ----- Japanese complete evacuation of over 11,000 troops from Guadalcanal.
- 9Feb ----- Organized resistance on Guadalcanal ceases.
- 21Feb ----- Army troops, reinforced by Marine raiders and anti-aircraft units, seize Russell Islands without opposition.
- 2-5Mar ----- Battle of Bismarck Sea. U.S. and Australian aircraft bomb Japanese destroyers and troop transports en route to Lae, New Guinea.
- 15Mar ----- Central Pacific Force redesignated Fifth Fleet; South Pacific Force becomes Third Fleet.
- 26Apr ----- General MacArthur issues ELKTON III, superseding previous ELKTON plans. Plan calls for mutually supporting advances in South Pacific and Southwest Pacific Area toward Rabaul, Operation CARTWHEEL.
- 12-25May ----- TRIDENT Conference held in Washington. General approval given to "U. S. Strategic Plan for the Defeat of Japan" calling for drive on Japan through Central Pacific.
- 21Jun ----- Elements of 4th RdrBn open Central Solomons campaign with landing at Segi Point, New Georgia.
- 14-24Aug ----- QUADRANT Conference in Quebec. CCS decide to at-

- tack Japan along both Central and Southwest Pacific routes.
- 4Sep ----- VAC formed under command of MajGen Holland M. Smith to train and control troops for amphibious landings in Central Pacific.
- 15Sep ----- 2d MarDiv is formally assigned to VAC.
- 19Sep ----- TF 15 and Seventh Air Force launch coordinated attacks against Tarawa.
- 20Sep ----- 4th MarDiv assigned to VAC.
- 24Sep ----- VAdm Raymond A. Spruance recommends an amphibious operation against Makin.
- 5Oct ----- CinCPac-CinCPOA issues plan for offensive in Central Pacific. D-Day for landings in Gilberts set for 19Nov43, later postponed to 20Nov.
- 13Oct ----- Photographic coverage of Makin Atoll obtained.
- 20Oct ----- Photographic coverage of Tarawa obtained.
- 25Oct ----- VAdm Spruance issues operation plan for GALVANIC, Gilberts Operation.
- 31Oct-7Nov --- Northern Attack Force (TF 52) rehearses for GALVANIC off Hawaii. Southern Attack Force (TF 53) rehearses at Efate, New Hebrides.
- 1Nov ----- IMAC lands on Bougainville with 3d and 9th Marines and 2d RdrRegt in assault.
- 10Nov ----- Main body of Northern Attack Force for GALVANIC leaves Pearl Harbor.
- 12Nov ----- Southern Attack Force completes rehearsal and departs from New Hebrides.
- 19Nov ----- Final air bombardment of Gilberts, Marshalls, and Nauru in preparation for Gilberts invasion.
- 20Nov ----- VAC assault troops, 2d MarDiv at Tarawa and elements of 27th InfDiv at Makin, make landings in the Gilberts. Tarawa landings successful despite heavy casualties.
- 21Nov ----- Marines on Tarawa strengthen their hold on island. VAC ReconCo lands on Apamama Atoll.
- 22Nov ----- MajGen Julian Smith establishes CP on Tarawa.
- 22Nov-7Dec -- SEXTANT Conference held at Cairo. Tentative timetable for offensive against Japan established.
- 23Nov ----- End of organized resistance on Tarawa and Makin.
- 1944*
- 3Jan ----- Joint Expeditionary Force (TF 51 under RAdm Turner) issues operation plan for FLINTLOCK, assault on Marshalls.
- 13Jan ----- CinCPac-CinCPOA Campaign Plan GRANITE outlines tentative operations and timetable for Central Pacific offensive. Main body of TF 53 departs San Diego.
- 22Jan ----- Main body of FLINTLOCK attack force sail from Hawaii for Marshalls.
- 23Jan ----- Attack force reserve for FLINTLOCK and Majuro Attack Group sail for target.
- 29-30Jan ----- Carrier planes and naval vessels join in final neutralization of Marshalls.
- 31Jan ----- VAC assault troops seize small islands of Kwajalein Atoll as artillery positions for main landing support. VAC ReconCo secures Majuro Atoll.
- 1Feb ----- 4th MarDiv lands at Roi-Namur and 7th InfDiv at Kwajalein Island.
- 2Feb ----- 7th InfDiv troops meet increased resistance. 4th MarDiv completes mopup of Roi and capture of Namur.

	MajGen Harry Schmidt announces end of organized resistance on Namur.	29-30May ----	Portion of the Northern Troops and Landing Force not embarked in LSTs departs Pearl Harbor.
4Feb -----	7th InfDiv completes capture of Kwajalein Island. RAdm Harry W. Hill given command of Task Group 51.11 with the mission of seizing Eniwetok Atoll.	11Jun -----	Carrier planes of TF 58 begin preinvasion softening of Marianas. Northern Attack Force departs Eniwetok for Saipan.
7Feb -----	4th MarDiv concludes uneventful search of islands of northern Kwajalein Atoll.	13Jun -----	TF 58 continues aerial bombardment of Marianas and begins naval bombardment.
15Feb -----	Eniwetok Expeditionary Group (TG 51.11 under RAdm Hill) leaves Kwajalein for Eniwetok.	14Jun -----	VAC assault troops approach Saipan. Underwater demolition and minesweeping operations conducted along coast.
17Feb -----	Tactical Group 1, VAC, begins landing in Eniwetok Atoll (Operation CATCH-POLE).	15Jun -----	2d and 4th MarDivs land on Saipan.
18Feb -----	22d Marines (reinforced) secure Engebi.	16Jun -----	VAdm Spruance postpones landing on Guam because major naval battle appears imminent. Naval surface forces begin preinvasion bombardment of Guam. Elements of 27th InfDiv land on Saipan during night 16-17Jun44. Japanese launch strong, unsuccessful, tank-infantry night attack against 6th Marines.
19Feb -----	Elements of 27th InfDiv and 22d Marines land on Eniwetok Island.	18Jun -----	4th MarDiv drives to east coast of Saipan, cutting island in two. 27th InfDiv captures Aslito airfield.
21Feb -----	Capture of Eniwetok Island completed.	19Jun -----	4th MarDiv begins clearing northern part of Saipan. 27th InfDiv troops to clear Nafutan Point and south coast of Saipan.
22Feb -----	22d Marines assault and secure Parry.	19-20Jun ----	Battle of the Philippine Sea. Carrier aircraft of TF 58 engage planes from enemy carriers and inflict crippling losses.
12Mar -----	JCS direct seizure of Southern Marianas, target date 15Jun44.	22Jun -----	VAC attacks northward on Saipan.
20Mar -----	4th Marines seize Emirau in the Bismarcks. Adm Nimitz issues FORAGER Joint Staff Study setting forth the purpose of the Marianas operation.	24Jun -----	2d Marines reach outskirts of Garapan.
26Apr -----	Expeditionary Troops operation order states mission ". . . to capture, occupy, and defend Saipan, Tinian, and Guam. . ."	30Jun -----	Commanders' conference on Saipan decides landings on
17-19May ----	Northern Troops and Landing Force maneuvers and rehearses at Maui and Kahoolawe, Hawaiian Islands.		
25May -----	LSTs carrying assault elements of the 2d and 4th MarDivs depart Pearl Harbor.		

	ing toward Okinawa are intercepted by planes of TF 58.	6Aug -----	Tinian-based B-29 drops atomic bomb on Hiroshima.
25May -----	JCS direct invasion of Japan, scheduled for 1Nov45.	9Aug -----	Tinian-based B-29 drops atomic bomb on Nagasaki.
14Jun -----	JCS order commanders in Pacific to prepare plans for immediate occupation of Japan.		Russia invades Manchuria.
		12Aug -----	Soviet troops move into Korea.
		15Aug -----	Offensive action against Japan halted.
22Jun -----	End of organized resistance on Okinawa.	30Aug -----	4th Marines go ashore at Yokosuka. Army troops land at Atsugi airfield.
16Jul -----	Atomic bomb successfully tested at Los Alamos, New Mexico.	2Sep -----	Japanese sign instrument of surrender in Tokyo Bay.

Fleet Marine Force Status-31 October 1943¹

Unit and location	Strength			
	USMC		USN	
	Off	Enl	Off	Enl
<i>Outside U.S.A.</i>				
<i>Central Pacific Area</i>				
<i>Oahu</i>				
Headquarters & Service Battalion, VAC.....	78	435	10	20
Signal Battalion, VAC.....	66	670	26	7
Reconnaissance Company, VAC.....	6	93	1	
Transient Center, VAC.....	3	18		
Rear Echelon, Transient Center, VAC*.....	31	289	14	73
Corps Motor Transport Company, VAC*.....	5	105		
Headquarters & Service Company, Marine Forces, 14th Naval District.....	31	289	2	4
6th Base Depot.....	23	324		2
1st Defense Battalion.....	63	1,460	3	27
15th Defense Battalion.....	61	1,284	4	21
4th Marine Division*.....	1,002	17,132	129	1,588
4th Radio Intelligence Platoon*.....	1	29		
1st Armored Amphibian Battalion*.....	36	855	1	9
1st Amphibian Tractor Detachment*.....	1	20		
1st Joint Assault Signal Company*.....	25	347		
1st Ammunition Company*.....	9	272		
12th Marine Depot Company*.....	4	173		
25th Replacement Battalion*.....	39	1,141	7	76
30th Replacement Battalion*.....	51	1,205	8	125
33d Replacement Battalion*.....	169	2,412	8	104
Headquarters Squadron, MAW, Pac.....	20	64	1	
Marine Fighter Squadron-114.....	44	189	1	8
Marine Fighter Squadron-225.....	56	245	1	8
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-245.....	48	280		
Marine Utility Squadron-252.....	32	336		
Headquarters Squadron-23, MAG-23.....	63	692	10	16
Service Squadron-23, MAG-23.....	15	249		
Marine Fighter Squadron-113, MAG-23.....	47	242	1	8
Area Sub-Total.....	2,029	30,850	227	2,096

See footnote at end of table.

Unit and location	Strength			
	USMC		USN	
	Off	Enl	Off	Enl
<i>Midway</i>				
6th Defense Battalion.....	49	1,925	5	32
Headquarters Squadron-22, MAG-22.....	10	133	3	12
Service Squadron-22, MAG-22.....	6	139		
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-231, MAG-22.....	58	280	1	8
Marine Fighter Squadron-422, MAG-22.....	47	238	1	8
Area Sub-Total.....	170	2,715	10	60
<i>Johnston</i>				
16th Defense Battalion.....	49	913	4	19
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-133.....	33	184	1	4
Area Sub-Total.....	82	1,097	5	23
<i>Palmyra</i>				
Scout Bombing Detachment-1.....	14	100	1	4
<i>Samoan Area</i>				
<i>Samoa</i>				
Headquarters Squadron-31, MAG-31.....	26	400	9	16
Service Squadron-31, MAG-31.....	10	247		
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-341, MAG-31.....	45	278		
Area Sub-Total.....	81	925	9	16
<i>Tutuila</i>				
Headquarters, Defense Force, Samoa.....	31	172	6	4
Signal Company, Defense Force, Samoa.....	10	165		
Harbor Defense Group.....	23	277	2	28
Base Depot, FMF.....	43	763	10	19
5th Separate Medical Company.....		24	5	98
7th & 8th Marine Depot Companies.....	6	220		
2d Defense Battalion.....	57	957	5	29
22d Marines (Reinforced).....	175	3,229	20	437
8th Garrison Replacement Detachment*.....	8	250	2	50
9th Garrison Replacement Detachment*.....	8	250	2	50
Headquarters Squadron-4, 4th MBDAW.....	39	248	8	
Marine Utility Squadron-353, 4th MBDAW.....	28	283	1	8
Headquarters Squadron-13, MAG-13.....	44	415	7	20

See footnote at end of table.

Unit and location	Strength			
	USMC		USN	
	Off	Enl	Off	Enl
Service Squadron-13, MAG-13.....	13	250		
Marine Fighter Squadron-224, MAG-13.....	45	242	1	8
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-241, MAG-13.....	32	276	1	6
Headquarters Squadron-14, MAG-14.....	39	472	5	15
Area Sub-Total.....	601	8,493	75	772
<i>Upolu-Savaii</i>				
3d Marine Brigade.....	76	1,098	15	126
<i>Wallis</i>				
Headquarters Company, 8th Defense Battalion (Reinforced)	5	50		
8th Defense Battalion.....	75	1,100	5	35
3d Separate Medical Company.....		13	6	76
Marine Fighter Squadron-311, MAG-31.....	45	235		
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-331, MAG-31.....	46	280		8
Area Sub-Total.....	171	1,678	11	119
<i>Funafuti</i>				
5th Defense Battalion.....	54	1,284	47	636
Marine Fighter Squadron-111, MAG-13.....	45	234	1	6
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-151, MAG-13.....	44	285	1	8
Area Sub-Total.....	143	1,803	49	650
<i>Nanomea</i>				
7th Defense Battalion.....	49	1,104	9	26
Marine Fighter Squadron-441, MAG-13.....	33	235	1	8
Area Sub-Total.....	82	1,339	10	34
<i>Nukufetau</i>				
2d Airdrome Battalion (17th Defense Battalion).....	35	885	5	63
<i>South Pacific Area</i>				
<i>Enroute or Ordered to the Area</i>				
Marine Fighter Squadron-216*.....	47	242	1	8
Marine Fighter Squadron-223*.....	38	237	1	7

See footnote at end of table.

Unit and location	Strength			
	USMC		USN	
	Off	Enl	Off	Enl
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-243*.....	40	282	1	9
Marine Photographic Squadron-254*.....	40	399	1	8
Marine Fighter Squadron-321*.....	44	232		8
Area Sub-Total.....	209	1,392	4	40
<i>Guadalcanal</i>				
Headquarters & Service Battalion, IMAC.....	153	875	15	23
1st Corps Motor Transport Battalion.....	26	615	1	9
1st Corps Medical Battalion.....	1	124	40	356
1st Corps Naval Construction Battalion.....			27	806
1st Corps Signal Battalion.....	53	714	5	22
1st Corps Tank Battalion (Medium).....	35	696	1	13
3d Marine Division.....	953	17,002	140	1,664
1st 155mm Artillery Battalion.....	36	554	1	10
2d 155mm Artillery Battalion.....	28	511	1	9
1st Parachute Regiment.....	105	2,079	17	78
2d Marine Raider Regiment.....	88	1,923	12	74
3d Defense Battalion.....	53	1,241	4	19
Marine Air Base Squadron-1, 1st MAW.....	13	384	1	8
Service Squadron-14, MAG-14.....	13	144		5
Repair & Salvage Squadron-1, MAG-14.....	10	244	1	8
Area Sub-Total.....	1,567	27,106	266	3,104
<i>New Caledonia</i>				
Headquarters Company, Supply Service, IMAC.....	60	247	1	3
Transient Center, IMAC.....	99	1,527	34	228
14th Defense Battalion.....	60	809	5	20
1st Base Depot.....	81	1,728	1	23
1st Marine Raider Regiment.....	77	1,732	19	59
Barrage Balloon Group, IMAC.....	28	469	5	8
Marine Beach Jumper Unit No. 1.....	9	71		
4th, 5th, & 6th Separate Wire Platoons*.....	3	135		
9th & 10th Marine Depot Companies*.....	8	318		
11th Marine Depot Company*.....	4	173		
29th Replacement Battalion*.....	55	1,387	8	118
31st Replacement Battalion*.....	50	1,245	7	75
32d Replacement Battalion*.....	36	773		
37th Replacement Battalion*.....	1	7		
Marine Air Depot Squadron-1, 1st MAW.....	21	291	5	10
Headquarters Squadron-25, MAG-25.....	50	413	32	105

See footnote at end of table.

Unit and location	Strength			
	USMC		USN	
	Off	Enl	Off	Enl
Service Squadron-25, MAG-25.....	20	402		
Marine Utility Squadron-152, MAG-25.....	44	212		
Marine Utility Squadron-153, MAG-25.....	47	209		
Marine Utility Squadron-253, MAG-25.....	44	198		
Area Sub-Total.....	797	12,346	117	649
<i>Espiritu Santo</i>				
Headquarters Squadron-1, 1st MAW.....	128	916	9	24
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-134, 1st MAW*.....	49	296	1	8
Marine Photographic Squadron-154, 1st MAW.....	32	393	3	8
Headquarters Squadron-11, MAG-11.....	59	580	9	16
Service Squadron-11, MAG-11.....	22	374		6
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-143, MAG-11.....	33	329	1	8
Marine Fighter Squadron-213, MAG-11.....	31	342	1	4
Marine Fighter Squadron-214, MAG-11.....	61	243	1	7
Marine Fighter Squadron-222, MAG-14.....	33	234	1	8
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-233, MAG-21.....	44	308	1	5
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-236, MAG-21.....	44	289	1	8
Area Sub-Total.....	536	4,304	28	102
<i>Russells</i>				
10th Defense Battalion.....	60	1,130	4	26
4th Base Depot.....	53	1,200	9	18
Marine Fighter Squadron-211, MAG-11.....	34	235	1	8
Headquarters Squadron-21, MAG-21.....	19	361	7	30
Service Squadron-21, MAG-21.....	10	218		
Marine Night Fighter Squadron-531 (Forward Echelon), MAG-21.....	17	179	1	6
Area Sub-Total.....	193	3,323	22	88
<i>Efate</i>				
Marine Fighter Squadron-123, MAG-21.....	33	258	1	4
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-234, MAG-21.....	41	291	1	8
Headquarters Squadron-24, MAG-24.....	20	252	6	6
Service Squadron-24, MAG-24.....	10	216		
Headquarters Squadron-2, 2d MAW.....	65	348	10	15
Headquarters Squadron-12, MAG-12.....	16	305	6	25

See footnote at end of table.

Unit and location	Strength			
	USMC		USN	
	Off	Enl	Off	Enl
Service Squadron-12, MAG-12.....	10	233		
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-144, MAG-21.....	33	295	1	4
Area Sub-Total.....	228	2,198	25	62
<i>New Zealand</i>				
2d Marine Division.....	978	18,821	150	1,743
1st Aviation Engineer Battalion.....	34	347	6	19
2d Antitank Battalion.....	26	372	1	12
2d Base Depot.....	28	500	1	14
3d Base Depot.....	35	347	6	19
Area Sub-Total.....	1,101	20,387	164	1,807
<i>Southwest Pacific Area</i>				
<i>Goodenough</i>				
1st Marine Division.....	956	17,468	135	1,561
27th Replacement Battalion*.....	60	1,360	8	124
Area Sub-Total.....	1,016	18,828	143	1,685
<i>New Georgia</i>				
9th Defense Battalion.....	60	1,210	3	21
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-232, MAG-11.....	36	326	1	7
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-244, MAG-11.....	45	260	1	7
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-144, MAG-24.....	43	279	1	4
Area Sub-Total.....	184	2,075	6	39
<i>Rendova</i>				
11th Defense Battalion.....	61	1,061	4	22
<i>Vella Lavella</i>				
4th Defense Battalion.....	59	1,148	4	22
4th Base Depot, Branch No. 3.....	45	591	4	15
Marine Fighter Squadron-212, MAG-11.....	34	234	1	8
Marine Fighter Squadron-215, MAG-14.....	30	242	1	8
Marine Fighter Squadron-221, MAG-24.....	33	251	1	8
Area Sub-Total.....	201	2,466	11	61

See footnote at end of table.

Unit and location	Strength			
	USMC		USN	
	Off	Enl	Off	Enl
<i>Woodlark</i>				
12th Defense Battalion.....	44	1,064	4	22
<i>Carribbean Area</i>				
<i>Guantanamo Bay</i>				
13th Defense Battalion.....	49	683	3	15
<i>St. Thomas, Virgin Islands</i>				
Marine Scouting Squadron-3.....	34	106		
<i>West Coast, U.S.A.</i>				
<i>San Diego</i>				
Headquarters Squadron, Marine Fleet Air, West Coast.....	41	229		
Supply Squadron-5.....	19	202		
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-132*.....	4	275	1	8
Area Sub-Total.....	64	706	1	8
<i>El Centro</i>				
Headquarters Squadron-43, MBDAG-43.....	76	922	4	10
Service Squadron-43, MBDAG-43.....	10	215		
Marine Fighter Squadron-122, MBDAG-43.....	48	172		
Marine Observation Squadron-155, MBDAG-43.....	43	279	1	
Marine Fighter Squadron-217, MBDAG-43.....	49	251		7
Marine Torpedo Bomber Squadron-243, MBDAG-43.....	49	316	1	8
Area Sub-Total.....	275	2,155	6	25
<i>El Toro</i>				
Headquarters Squadron-41, MBDAG-41.....	23	1,505		
Service Squadron-41, MBDAG-41.....	13	254		
Marine Torpedo-Bomber Squadron-131, MBDAG-41.....	62	306	2	
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-141, MBDAG-41.....	53	258	2	13
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-142, MBDAG-41.....	8	48		
Area Sub-Total.....	159	2,371	4	13

See footnote at end of table.

Unit and location	Strength			
	USMC		USN	
	Off	Enl	Off	Enl
<i>Camp Elliott</i>				
Headquarters Company, FMF, San Diego Area.....	75	330	6	7
Headquarters Battalion, Training Center.....	50	657	30	25
Infantry Battalion, Training Center.....	307	3,420	-----	-----
School Battalion, Training Center.....	54	609	-----	-----
Tank Battalion, Training Center.....	74	724	-----	-----
Field Medical School Battalion, Training Center.....	5	25	51	773
Base Depot, FMF.....	30	459	2	15
Women's Reserve Battalion, FMF, San Diego Area.....	25	454	-----	-----
Area Sub-Total.....	620	6,678	89	820
<i>Camp Gillespie</i>				
Parachute Training School.....	56	689	6	32
<i>Camp Kearney</i>				
Headquarters Squadron-15, MAG-15.....	276	624	6	26
Service Squadron-15, MAG-15.....	13	345	-----	-----
Marine Utility Squadron-952, MAG-15.....	30	214	-----	-----
Area Sub-Total.....	319	1,183	6	26
<i>Camp Pendleton</i>				
Headquarters Battalion, Training Center.....	66	383	9	69
Artillery Battalion, Training Center.....	87	762	-----	-----
Amphibian Tractor Battalion, Training Center.....	39	315	3	-----
Engineer Battalion, Training Center.....	74	708	-----	-----
Naval Construction Battalion, Training Center.....	-----	-----	19	641
Field Signal Battalion, Training Center.....	17	1,029	-----	-----
Raider Battalion, Training Center.....	24	422	-----	1
4th Parachute Battalion.....	27	637	5	26
Area Sub-Total.....	334	4,256	36	737
<i>Miramar</i>				
Headquarters & Service Squadron, 2d MAWG.....	3	28	-----	-----
Headquarters Squadron, Personnel Group.....	20	102	1	16
Air Regulating Squadron-1.....	6	906	-----	1
Air Regulating Squadron-2.....	7	651	-----	123

See footnote at end of table.

Unit and location	Strength			
	USMC		USN	
	Off	Enl	Off	Enl
Air Regulating Squadron-3	270	841	15	.....
Air Regulating Squadron-4	7	674	.....	.....
Area Sub-Total	313	3,202	16	140
<i>Mojave</i>				
Headquarters Squadron-44, MBDAG-44	34	457	3	6
Service Squadron-44, MBDAG-44	10	247	.....	.....
Marine Fighter Squadron-121, MBDAG-44	14	125	1	.....
Marine Fighter Squadron-124, MBDAG-44	6	35	.....	.....
Marine Fighter Squadron-218, MBDAG-44	50	268	.....	9
Marine Observation Squadron-251, MBDAG-44	50	297	.....	.....
Area Sub-Total	164	1,429	4	15
<i>East Coast, U.S.A.</i>				
<i>Camp Lejeune</i>				
Headquarters Company, Training Center	6	4	.....	.....
War Dog Training Company, Training Center	7	157	.....	.....
Amphibian Base Battalion, Training Center	23	226	86	755
Artillery Battalion, Training Center	162	1,465	.....	.....
Engineer Battalion, Training Center	143	1,019	.....	.....
Infantry Battalion, Training Center	145	622	50	573
Parachute Battalion, Training Center	2	17	.....	.....
Quartermaster Battalion, Training Center	72	882	.....	.....
Range Battalion, Training Center	5	278	.....	6
Signal Battalion, Training Center	189	3,409	.....	163
Naval Construction Battalion, Training Center .....	.....	.....	35	1,202
18th Defense Battalion	43	648	3	23
51st Defense Battalion	71	1,654	6	38
7th Separate Infantry Battalion	8	37	1	19
7th Separate Pack Howitzer Battery	5	62	.....	.....
2d Battalion, 13th Marines	15	65	.....	.....
Area Sub-Total	896	10,545	181	2,779
<i>Norfolk</i>				
Base Depot, FMF	32	460	.....	6

See footnote at end of table.

Unit and location	Strength			
	USMC		USN	
	Off	Enl	Off	Enl
<i>Cherry Point</i>				
Headquarters Squadron-3, 3d MAW.....	57	496	20	51
Headquarters Squadron-1, MAWG-1.....	47	313	1	18
Air Warning Squadron-1, MAWG-1.....	14	178		7
Air Warning Squadron-2 MAWG-1.....	14	179		5
Air Warning Squadron-4, MAWG-1.....	1	60		
Headquarters Squadron-35, MAG-35.....	16	237		
Service Squadron-35, MAG-35.....	10	203		
Marine Observation Squadron-351, MAG-35.....	22	144		
Marine Utility Squadron-352, MAG-35.....	38	179		
Marine Photographic Squadron-354, MAG-35.....	34	254		
Headquarters Squadron-53, MNFG-53.....	33	61	3	21
Service Squadron-53, MNFG-53.....	10	410		
Marine Night Fighter Squadron-531 (Rear Echelon), MNFG-53.....	16	119		
Marine Night Fighter Squadron-532, MNFG-53.....	25	253		
Marine Night Fighter Squadron-555, MNFG-53.....	3	4		
Marine Night Fighter Squadron-534, MNFG-53.....	2	5		
Headquarters Squadron-61, MBG-61.....	327	493	3	20
Marine Bomber Squadron-611, MBG-61.....	1	2		
Marine Bomber Squadron-612, MBG-61.....	1	2		
Marine Bomber Squadron-613, MBG-61.....	1	1		
Marine Bomber Squadron-614, MBG-61.....	1	1		
Area Sub-Total.....	683	3,594	27	122
<i>Oak Grove</i>				
Air Warning Squadron-3, MAWG-1.....	11	120		6
Headquarters Squadron-32, MAG-32.....	23	273	5	41
Service Squadron-32, MAG-32.....	11	204		
Marine Fighter Squadron-314, MAG-32.....	20	48		
Marine Fighter Squadron-323, MAG-32.....	41	227		
Marine Fighter Squadron-324, MAG-32.....	15	44		
Area Sub-Total.....	121	916	5	47
<i>Parris Island</i>				
Marine Fighter Squadron, MAG-32.....	44	220	2	7
Marine Fighter Squadron-322, MAG-32.....	43	205	1	
Area Sub-Total.....	87	425	3	7

See footnote at end of table.

Unit and location	Strength			
	USMC		USN	
	Off	Enl	Off	Enl
<i>New Bern</i>				
Marine Fighter Squadron-313, MAG-32.....	32	167		
<i>Bogue</i>				
Headquarters Squadron-33, MAG-33.....	16	202	6	39
Service Squadron-33, MAG-33.....	9	156		
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-332, MAG-33.....	43	201		
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-333, MAG-33.....	43	210		
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-334, MAG-33.....	42	202		
Area Sub-Total.....	153	971	6	39
<i>Atlantic</i>				
Headquarters Squadron-34, MAG-34.....	13	271	5	39
Service Squadron-34, MAG-34.....	4	175		
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-342, MAG-34.....	44	221		
Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron-343, MAG-34.....	43	206		
Area Sub-Total.....	104	873	5	39
Total FMF (Ground) Overseas.....	5,583	99,789	808	9,095
Total FMF (Air) Overseas.....	2,591	20,833	167	613
Total FMF (Ground) in U.S.A.....	3,185	45,919	444	6,426
Total FMF (Air) in U.S.A.....	3,095	20,830	95	531
Total FMF Overseas.....	8,174	120,622	975	9,708
Total FMF in U.S.A.....	6,280	66,749	539	6,957
Total FMF.....	14,454	187,371	1,514	16,665

¹Strength figures and unit designations were abstracted from the FMF Status Reports, Ground and Air, for October 1943 held in the Archives of the Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters Marine Corps. Units en route or ordered to the indicated areas (indicated by an asterisk *) are listed under those areas regardless of their temporary location.

Table of Organization F-100-Marine Division

5 May 1944 ¹

Unit	USMC		USN		Totals	
	Off	Enl	Off	Enl	Off	Enl
Division Headquarters	(66)	(186)	(4)	(1)	(70)	(187)
Headquarters Battalion	101	883	7	13	108	896
Headquarters Company	(73)	(394)	(7)	(9)	(80)	(403)
Signal Company	(17)	(275)			(17)	(275)
Military Police Company	(6)	(96)			(6)	(96)
Reconnaissance Company	(5)	(118)		(4)	(5)	(122)
Tank Battalion	35	585	1	9	36	594
Headquarters & Service Company	(14)	(99)	(1)	(9)	(15)	(108)
3 Tank Companies (each)	(7)	(162)			(7)	(162)
Service Troops	58	1,343	66	422	124	1,765
Service Battalion	(29)	(702)	(2)	(18)	(31)	(720)
Headquarters Company	(9)	(48)	(2)	(9)	(11)	(57)
Service & Supply Company	(13)	(483)		(9)	(13)	(492)
Ordnance Company	(7)	(171)			(7)	(171)
Motor Transport Battalion	(28)	(501)	(1)	(9)	(29)	(510)
Headquarters & Service Company	(13)	(171)	(1)	(9)	(14)	(180)
3 Transport Companies (each)	(5)	(110)			(5)	(110)
Medical Battalion	(1)	(140)	(63)	(395)	(64)	(535)
Headquarters & Service Company	(1)	(15)	(28)	(45)	(29)	(60)
5 Medical Companies (each)		(25)	(7)	(70)	(7)	(95)
Engineer Battalion	41	842	1	20	42	862
Headquarters & Service Company	(23)	(263)	(1)	(20)	(24)	(283)
3 Engineer Companies (each)	(6)	(193)			(6)	(193)
Pioneer Battalion	38	672	3	32	41	704
Headquarters & Service Company	(11)	(81)	(3)	(32)	(14)	(113)
3 Pioneer Companies (each)	(9)	(197)			(9)	(197)
Artillery Regiment	159	2,415	8	57	167	2,472
Headquarters & Service Battery	(23)	(193)	(4)	(9)	(27)	(202)
2 105mm Howitzer Battalions (each)	(33)	(556)	(1)	(12)	(34)	(568)
Headquarters & Service Battery	(15)	(133)	(1)	(12)	(16)	(145)
3 Howitzer Batteries (each)	(6)	(141)			(6)	(141)
2 75mm Pack Howitzer Battalions (each)	(35)	(555)	(1)	(12)	(36)	(567)
Headquarters & Service Battery	(14)	(132)	(1)	(12)	(15)	(144)
3 Pack Howitzer Batteries (each)	(7)	(141)			(7)	(141)
3 Infantry Regiments (each)	137	2,936	11	134	148	3,070
Headquarters & Service Company	(24)	(218)	(5)	(14)	(29)	(232)
Weapons Company	(8)	(195)			(8)	(195)
3 Infantry Battalions (each)	(35)	(841)	(2)	(40)	(37)	(881)
Headquarters Company	(14)	(157)	(2)	(40)	(16)	(197)
3 Rifle Companies (each)	(7)	(228)			(7)	(228)
Division Totals	843	15,548	119	955	962	16,503

¹ All unit strength figures enclosed in parentheses are included in strength totals of parent units.

MAJOR WEAPONS AND TRANSPORTATION—MARINE DIVISION

Weapons	Number	Transportation	Number
Carbine, .30 cal., M-1	10,953	Ambulance:	
Flamethrower, portable, M2-2	243	1/4-ton, 4 x 4	52
Flamethrower, mechanized, E4-5	24	1/2-ton, 4 x 4	12
Gun:		Car, 5-passenger	3
37mm, M3, antitank	36	Station wagon, 4 x 4	3
75mm, motor carriage, M-3, w/armament, radio-equipped (TCS)	12	Tractor:	
Gun, Machine:		miscellaneous	71
.30 cal., M1919A4	302	Trailer:	
.30 cal., M1917A1	162	1/4-ton, cargo	135
.50 cal., M2	161	1/2-ton, dump	19
Gun, submachine, .45 cal.	49	1-ton, cargo	155
Howitzer:		1-ton, water	74
75mm pack	24	miscellaneous	110
105mm	24	Truck:	
Launcher, rocket, antitank, M1A1	172	1/4-ton, 4 x 4	323
Mortar:		1/4-ton, 4 x 4, with radio	85
60mm	117	1-ton, 4 x 4, cargo	224
81mm	36	1-ton, 4 x 4, reconnaissance	11
Pistol, .45 cal.	399	2 1/2-ton, 6 x 6, cargo	150
Rifle, .30 cal., M-1	5,436	2 1/2-ton, 6 x 6, dump	53
Rifle, Browning, automatic	853	miscellaneous	68
Shotgun, 12 gauge	306		
Tank, Army medium, with armament	46		
Vehicle, recovery, M32B2	3		

Marine Task Organization and Command List¹

MARINE GROUND UNITS

A. GILBERT ISLANDS²
(13 November-8 December 1943)

V Amphibious Corps (20-25Nov43)

CG ----- MajGen Holland M. Smith
CofS ----- BGen Graves B. Erskine
C-1 ----- LtCol Albert F. Metz
C-2 ----- LtCol St. Julien R. Marshall
C-3 ----- Col Peter P. Schrider
C-4 ----- Col Raymond E. Knapp
V Corps Headquarters and Service Battalion
(20-25Nov43)
CO ----- Maj Thomas R. Wert

V Corps Reconnaissance Company (18Nov-3Dec43)

CO ----- Capt James L. Jones

2d Airdrome Battalion (21Aug-8Dec43)

CO ----- LtCol Thomas G. McFarland

¹ Unless otherwise noted, names, positions held, organization titles, and periods of service were taken from the muster rolls of the units concerned, held in the Diary Unit, Files Section, Records Branch, Personnel Department, Headquarters Marine Corps. Units are listed only for those periods, indicated by the dates below parent unit designation, for which they are entitled to campaign participation credit. This information is derived from muster rolls and U.S. Bureau of Naval Personnel, Navy and Marine Corps Awards Manual-NAVPERS 15,790 (Rev. 1953) with changes (Washington, 1953-1958). The muster rolls have been the final authority when there is a conflict in dates of unit entitlement within the overall campaign period as cited by the Awards Manual. In the case of Marine air units, many of which participated in the campaigns as flight or advance echelons only, the unit commander who was actually in the combat area is shown where muster rolls reveal this information. In order to conserve space, only units of battalion and squadron size, or larger, and sizeable separate detachments are listed for each operation, although smaller organizations may have participated also.

² Operations within the Gilberts include the capture of Tarawa, Makin and Apamama.

2d Defense Battalion

(24Nov-8Dec43)
CO ----- Col Norman E. True

5th Defense Battalion

(20Oct42-8Dec43)
CO ----- Col George F. Good, Jr.

8th Defense Battalion

(28Nov-8Dec43)
CO ----- Col Lloyd L. Leech

25th Replacement Battalion

(13Nov-8Dec43)
CO ----- Maj John H. McMillan

Headquarters, 2d Marine Division (20Nov-4Dec43)

CG ----- MajGen Julian C. Smith
ADC ----- BGen Leo D. Hermle
CofS ----- Col Merritt A. Edson
D-1 ----- LtCol Cornelius P. Van Ness
D-2 ----- LtCol Thomas J. Colley
D-3 ----- LtCol James P. Riseley
D-4 ----- LtCol Jesse S. Cook, Jr.

Division Headquarters and Service Battalion (20Nov-4Dec43)

CO ----- LtCol Lyman G. Miller

Division Special and Service Troops (20-24Nov43)

CO ----- Col Robert C. Thaxton

2d Amphibian Tractor Battalion

(20Nov-5Dec43)
CO ----- Maj Henry C. Drewes (KIA 20-Nov43)

Maj Henry G. Lawrence, Jr.
(from 20Nov43) (WIA 20Nov-43)

	<i>2d Antitank Battalion</i> (20-30Nov43)		<i>8th Marines</i> (20-24Nov43)
CO	----- Capt Saul Glassman	CO	----- Col Elmer E. Hall
	<i>2d Medical Battalion</i> (20-24Nov43)	ExO	----- LtCol Paul D. Sherman
CO	----- LCdr Justin J. Stein, MC, USN	R-3	----- Maj Hewitt D. Adams
	<i>2d Service Battalion</i> (20-24Nov43)		<i>1st Battalion, 8th Marines</i>
CO	----- Col Clarence H. Baldwin	CO	----- Maj Lawrence C. Hays, Jr. (WIA 22Nov43)
	<i>2d Special Weapons Battalion</i> (20-24Nov43)		<i>2d Battalion, 8th Marines</i>
CO	----- Maj Guy E. Tannyhill	CO	----- Maj Henry P. Crowe
	<i>2d Tank Battalion</i> (20-24Nov43)		<i>3d Battalion, 8th Marines</i>
CO	----- LtCol Alexander B. Swenceski (WIA 20Nov43)	CO	----- Maj Robert H. Ruud
	<i>2d Marines</i> (20-24Nov43)		<i>10th Marines</i> (20Nov-1Dec43)
CO	----- Col David M. Shoup	CO	----- BGen Thomas E. Bourke ³
ExO	----- LtCol Dixon Goen	ExO	----- LtCol Ralph E. Forsyth
R-3	----- Maj Thomas A. Culhane, Jr.	R-3	----- LtCol Marvin H. Floom
	<i>1st Battalion, 2d Marines</i>		<i>1st Battalion, 10th Marines</i>
CO	----- Maj Wood B. Kyle	CO	----- LtCol Presley M. Rixey
	<i>2d Battalion, 2d Marines</i>		<i>2d Battalion, 10th Marines</i>
CO	----- LtCol Herbert R. Amey, Jr. (KIA 20Nov43)	CO	----- LtCol George R. E. Shell
	<i>3d Battalion, 2d Marines</i>		<i>3d Battalion, 10th Marines</i>
CO	----- Maj John F. Schoettel	CO	----- LtCol Manly L. Curry
	<i>6th Marines</i> (20Nov-8Dec43)		<i>4th Battalion, 10th Marines</i>
CO	----- Col Maurice G. Holmes	CO	----- LtCol Kenneth A. Jorgensen
ExO	----- LtCol Russell Lloyd		<i>5th Battalion, 10th Marines</i>
R-3	----- Maj Loren E. Haffner	CO	----- Maj Howard V. Hiett
	<i>1st Battalion, 6th Marines</i>		<i>18th Marines</i> (20-24Nov43)
CO	----- Maj William K. Jones	CO	----- Col Cyril W. Martyr
	<i>2d Battalion, 6th Marines</i>	ExO	----- LtCol Kenneth P. Corson
CO	----- LtCol Raymond L. Murray	R-3	----- LtCol Ewart S. Laue
	<i>3d Battalion, 6th Marines</i>		<i>1st Battalion, 18th Marines (Engineer)</i>
CO	----- LtCol Kenneth F. McLeod	CO	----- Maj August L. Vogt
			<i>2d Battalion, 18th Marines (Pioneer)</i>
		CO	----- LtCol Chester J. Salazar

³ No replacement colonel was available for the artillery regiment when Bourke was promoted to brigadier general, therefore he remained in command for the Tarawa operation.

3d Battalion, 18th Marines
(18th U. S. Naval Construction Battalion)
CO ----- Cdr Lawrence Emerson Tull,
CEC, USN

B. MARSHALL ISLANDS OPERATIONS⁴
(29 January-2 March 1944)

1. Kwajalein-Majuro (29Jan-8Feb44)

V Amphibious Corps⁵
(1-7Feb44)

CG ----- MajGen Holland M. Smith
Cofs ----- BGen Graves B. Erskine
C-1 ----- LtCol Albert F. Metzke
C-2 ----- LtCol St. Julien R. Marshall
C-3 ----- Col John C. McQueen
C-4 ----- Col Raymond E. Knapp
C-5 ----- Col Joseph T. Smith

V Corps Headquarters and Service Battalion
(1-7Feb44)

CO ----- Maj Thomas R. Wert

V Corps Signal Battalion
(1-7Feb44)

CO ----- LtCol James H. N. Hudnall

V Corps Reconnaissance Company
(30Jan-2Feb44)
(17-23Feb44)

CO ----- Capt James L. Jones

4th Amphibian Tractor Battalion
(1-6Feb44)

CO ----- LtCol Clovis C. Coffman

10th Amphibian Tractor Battalion
(1-8Feb44)

CO ----- Maj Victor J. Croizat

1st Armored Amphibian Battalion
(1-6Feb44)

CO ----- Maj Louis Metzger

1st Defense Battalion
(1-8Feb44)

CO ----- Col Lewis A. Hohn

⁴Includes: Kwajalein-Majuro Occupation, 29Jan-8Feb44; Eniwetok Occupation, 17Feb-2Mar44.

⁵Tactical Group I, V Amphibious Corps, consisting of headquarters staff and the 22d Marines (Reinforced), as well as other supporting units, represented the Fleet Reserve during the Kwajalein-Majuro operation and is shown in detail under Eniwetok, 17Feb-2Mar44.

15th Defense Battalion

(2-8Feb44)

CO ----- LtCol Francis B. Loomis, Jr.

Headquarters, 4th Marine Division
(1-8Feb44)

CG ----- MajGen Harry Schmidt
ADC ----- BGen James L. Underhill
CofS ----- Col William W. Rogers
D-1 ----- Col Merton J. Batchelder
D-2 ----- Maj Gooderham L. McCormick
D-3 ----- Col Walter W. Wensinger
D-4 ----- Col William F. Brown

Division Headquarters and Service Battalion
(1-8Feb44)

CO ----- LtCol Melvin L. Krulewitch

Division Special and Service Troops
(1-8Feb44)

CO ----- Col Emmett W. Skinner

4th Medical Battalion
(1-8Feb44)

CO ----- LCdr Stewart W. Shimonek,
MC, USN

4th Motor Transport Battalion
(1-8Feb44)

CO ----- LtCol Ralph L. Schiesswohl

4th Service Battalion
(1-8Feb44)

CO ----- Maj John L. Lamprey, Jr.

4th Special Weapons Battalion
(1-8Feb44)

CO ----- LtCol Alexander A. Vandegrift,
Jr.

4th Tank Battalion
(1-8Feb44)

CO ----- Maj Richard K. Schmidt

14th Marines
(1-8Feb44)

CO ----- Col Louis G. DeHaven
ExO ----- LtCol Randall M. Victory
R-3 ----- Maj Frederick J. Karch

1st Battalion, 14th Marines

CO ----- LtCol Harry J. Zimmer

2d Battalion, 14th Marines

CO ----- LtCol George B. Wilson, Jr.

3d Battalion, 14th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Robert E. MacFarlane

4th Battalion, 14th Marines
CO ----- Maj Carl A. Youngdale

20th Marines
(1-8Feb44)
CO ----- Col Lucian W. Burnham
ExO ----- LtCol Nelson K. Brown
R-3 ----- Maj Melvin D. Henderson

1st Battalion, 20th Marines (Engineer)
CO ----- Maj Richard G. Ruby

2d Battalion, 20th Marines (Pioneer)
CO ----- LtCol Otto Lessing

3d Battalion, 20th Marines
(121st U. S. Naval Construction Battalion)
CO ----- LCdr William G. Byrne, CEC,
USN

23d Marines
(1-8Feb44)
CO ----- Col Louis R. Jones
ExO ----- LtCol John R. Lanigan
R-3 ----- Maj Edward W. Wells

1st Battalion, 23d Marines
CO ----- LtCol Hewin O. Hammond

2d Battalion, 23d Marines
CO ----- LtCol Edward J. Dillon

3d Battalion, 23d Marines
CO ----- LtCol John J. Cosgrove, Jr.

24th Marines
(1-8Feb44)
CO ----- Col Franklin A. Hart
ExO ----- LtCol Homer L. Litzenberg, Jr.
R-3 ----- LtCol Charles D. Roberts

1st Battalion, 24th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Aquilla J. Dyess (KIA
2Feb44)
Maj Maynard C. Schultz (from
2Feb44)

2d Battalion, 24th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Francis H. Brink

3d Battalion, 24th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Austin R. Brunelli

25th Marines
31Jan-8Feb44)
CO ----- Col Samuel C. Cumming
ExO ----- LtCol Walter I. Jordan
R-3 ----- LtCol William F. Thyson, Jr.

1st Battalion, 25th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Clarence J. O'Donnell

2d Battalion, 25th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Lewis C. Hudson, Jr.

3d Battalion, 25th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Justice M. Chambers

2. Eniwetok (17Feb-2Mar44)
Tactical Group 1, V Amphibious Corps
(17Feb-2Mar44)
CG ----- BGen Thomas E. Watson
S-1 ----- (none shown)
S-2 ----- Maj Robert W. Shaw
S-3 ----- LtCol Wallace M. Greene, Jr.
S-4 ----- LtCol Robert J. Straub

10th Defense Battalion
(21Feb-2Mar44)
CO ----- LtCol Wallace O. Thompson

22d Marines (Reinforced)
(17-25Feb44)
CO ----- Col John T. Walker
ExO ----- Col Merlin F. Schneider
R-3 ----- LtCol Floyd R. Moore

1st Battalion, 22d Marines
CO ----- LtCol Walfried H. Fromhold

2d Battalion, 22d Marines
CO ----- LtCol Donn C. Hart

3d Battalion, 22d Marines
CO ----- Maj Clair W. Shisler

2d Separate Pack Howitzer Battalion
(17-25Feb44)
CO ----- LtCol Edwin C. Ferguson (WIA
18Feb44)

C. SAIPAN (11 June-10 August 1944)

Expeditionary Troops
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CG ----- LtGen Holland M. Smith
CofS ----- BGen Graves B. Erskine
G-1 ----- LtCol Albert F. Metzke
G-2 ----- LtCol Thomas R. Yancey, USA
G-3 ----- Col Robert E. Hogaboom
G-4 ----- LtCol Joseph C. Anderson, USA

V Amphibious Corps—Northern Troops and Landing Force
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CG ----- LtGen Holland M. Smith (to 11Jul44)
MajGen Harry Schmidt (from 12Jul44)

CofS ----- BGen Graves B. Erskine
C-1 ----- LtCol Albert F. Metzke
C-2 ----- Col St. Julien R. Marshall
C-3 ----- Col John C. McQueen
C-4 ----- Col Raymond E. Knapp
C-5 ----- Col Joseph T. Smith

V Corps Headquarters and Service Battalion
CO ----- Maj Thomas R. Wert
(15Jun-24Jul44)

V Corps Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CO ----- Capt James L. Jones

V Corps Medical Battalion
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CO ----- LCdr William B. Clapp, MC, USN

V Corps Signal Battalion
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CO ----- Col James H. N. Hudnall

2d Amphibian Tractor Battalion
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CO ----- Maj Henry G. Lawrence, Jr. (to 2Jul44)
Maj Fenlon A. Durand (from 3Jul44)

5th Amphibian Tractor Battalion
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CO ----- Capt George L. Shead

10th Amphibian Tractor Battalion
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CO ----- Maj Victor J. Croizat

11th Amphibian Tractor Battalion
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CO ----- Maj Walter S. Haskell, Jr.

2d Armored Amphibian Battalion
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CO ----- LtCol Reed M. Fawell, Jr.

2d 155mm Howitzer Battalion
(15Jun-16Jul44)

CO ----- LtCol Marvin H. Floom

4th 105mm Howitzer Battalion
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CO ----- LtCol Douglas E. Reeve

2d Separate Engineer Battalion
(12Jul-10Aug44)

CO ----- LtCol Charles O. Clark

7th Field Depot
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CO ----- LtCol Edwin D. Partridge (to 25Jun44)
Col Earl H. Phillips (from 26Jun44)

Headquarters, 2d Marine Division
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CG ----- MajGen Thomas E. Watson
ADC ----- BGen Merritt A. Edson
CofS ----- Col David M. Shoup
D-1 ----- LtCol James T. Wilbur
D-2 ----- LtCol Thomas J. Colley
D-3 ----- LtCol Wallace M. Greene, Jr.
D-4 ----- Col Robert J. Straub

Division Headquarters and Service Battalion
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CO ----- Maj Melvin A. Smith

Division Special Troops
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CO ----- (none shown)

2d Medical Battalion
(15Jun-16Jul44)

CO ----- LCdr Claude R. Bruner, MC, USN

2d Motor Transport Battalion
(15Jun-24Jul44)

CO ----- Maj Milton J. Green

	<i>2d Service Battalion</i> (15Jun-24Jul44)		Maj John E. Rentsch (from 16Jun44)
CO -----	Maj Edward V. Dozier		LtCol John W. Easley (from 3Jul44)
	<i>2d Tank Battalion</i> (15Jun-24Jul44)		<i>8th Marines</i> (15Jun-24Jul44)
CO -----	Maj Charles W. McCoy	CO -----	Col Clarence R. Wallace
	<i>2d Marines</i> (15Jun-24Jul44)	ExO -----	LtCol Jack P. Juhan
CO -----	Col Walter J. Stuart	R-3 -----	Maj William H. Souder, Jr.
ExO -----	LtCol John H. Griebel		<i>1st Battalion, 8th Marines</i>
R-3 -----	Maj Samuel D. Mandeville, Jr.	CO -----	LtCol Lawrence C. Hays, Jr. (WIA 15Jun44)
	<i>1st Battalion, 2d Marines</i>		<i>2d Battalion, 8th Marines</i>
CO -----	LtCol Wood B. Kyle	CO -----	LtCol Henry P. Crowe (WIA 15Jun44)
	<i>2d Battalion, 2d Marines</i>		<i>3d Battalion, 6th Marines</i>
CO -----	LtCol Richard C. Nutting	CO -----	LtCol John C. Miller (WIA 15Jun44)
	<i>3d Battalion, 2d Marines</i>		Maj Stanley E. Larsen (WIA 15Jun44)
CO -----	LtCol Arnold F. Johnston (WIA 16 and 21Jun44)		LtCol Gavin C. Humphrey (from 10Jul44)
	Maj Harold "K" Throneson (from 21Jun44)		<i>10th Marines</i> (15Jun-24Jul44)
	LtCol Arnold F. Johnston (from 5Jul44)	CO -----	Col Raphael Griffin
	LtCol Walter F. Layer (from 11Jul44)	ExO -----	LtCol Ralph E. Forsyth (KIA 23Jun44)
	<i>6th Marines</i> (15Jun-26Jul44)		Col Presley M. Rixey (from 24Jun44)
CO -----	Col James P. Riseley	R-3 -----	LtCol Howard V. Hiett (WIA 17Jun44)
ExO -----	LtCol Kenneth F. McLeod (KIA 25Jun44)		Maj Richard B. Church (WIA 24Jun44)
	LtCol Russell Lloyd (from 25 Jun44)		Maj Wade H. Hitt (from 24Jun44)
R-3 -----	Maj Loren E. Haffner		<i>1st Battalion, 10th Marines</i>
	<i>1st Battalion, 6th Marines</i>	CO -----	Col Presley M. Rixey (to 24Jun44)
CO -----	LtCol William K. Jones		Maj Wendell H. Best (from 25Jun44)
	<i>2d Battalion, 6th Marines</i>		LtCol Donovan D. Sult (from 16Jul44)
CO -----	LtCol Raymond L. Murray (WIA 15Jun44)	CO -----	LtCol George R. E. Shell (WIA 16Jun44)
	Maj LeRoy P. Hunt, Jr. (from 15Jun44)		<i>2d Battalion, 10th Marines</i>
	LtCol Edmund B. Games (from 11Jul44)	CO -----	LtCol George R. E. Shell (WIA 16Jun44)
	<i>3d Battalion, 6th Marines</i>		
CO -----	LtCol John W. Easley (WIA 15Jun44)		

Maj Kenneth C. Houston (from
 16Jun44)
 Maj David L. Henderson (from
 16Jul44)
3d Battalion, 10th Marines
 CO ----- Maj William L. Crouch (KIA
 7Jul44)
 Maj James O. Appleyard (from
 8Jul44)
 LtCol William C. Capehart (from
 16Jul44)
4th Battalion, 10th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Kenneth A. Jorgensen
18th Marines
 (15Jun-24Jul44)
 CO ----- LtCol Russell Lloyd (to 24Jun44)
 Col Cyril W. Martyr (from
 25Jun44)
 ExO ----- LtCol Ewart S. Laue
 R-3 ----- Capt Murdoch J. McLeod
1st Battalion, 18th Marines (Engineer)
 CO ----- LtCol August L. Vogt
2d Battalion, 18th Marines (Pioneer)
 CO ----- LtCol Chester J. Salazar
18th U.S. Naval Construction Battalion
 CO ----- Cdr Lawrence Emerson Tull,
 CEC, USN
Headquarters, 4th Marine Division
 (15Jun-24Jul44)
 CG ----- MajGen Harry Schmidt (to
 11Jul44)
 MajGen Clifton B. Cates (from
 12Jul44)
 ADC ----- BGen Samuel C. Cumming
 CofS ----- Col William W. Rogers
 D-1 ----- Col Walter I. Jordan
 D-2 ----- LtCol Gooderham L. McCormick
 D-3 ----- Col Walter W. Wensinger
 D-4 ----- Col William F. Brown
Division Headquarters and Service Battalion
 (15Jun-24Jul44)
 CO ----- LtCol Melvin L. Krulewitch
Division Special and Service Troops
 (15Jun-24Jul44)
 CO ----- Col Orin H. Wheeler
4th Medical Battalion
 (15Jun-24Jul44)
 CO ----- LCdr George W. Mast, MC, USN
4th Motor Transport Battalion
 (15Jun-24Jul44)
 CO ----- LtCol Ralph L. Schiesswohl
4th Service Battalion
 (15Jun-24Jul44)
 CO ----- Col Richard H. Schubert
4th Tank Battalion
 (15Jun-24Jul44)
 CO ----- Maj Richard K. Schmidt
14th Marines
 (15Jun-24Jul44)
 CO ----- Col Louis G. DeHaven
 ExO ----- LtCol Randall M. Victory
 R-3 ----- Maj Frederick J. Karch
1st Battalion, 14th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Harry J. Zimmer
2d Battalion, 14th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol George B. Wilson, Jr.
3d Battalion, 14th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Robert E. MacFarlane
4th Battalion, 14th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Carl A. Youngdale
20th Marines
 (15Jun-24Jul44)
 CO ----- LtCol Nelson K. Brown
 ExO ----- Capt William M. Anderson
 R-3 ----- Maj Melvin D. Henderson
1st Battalion, 20th Marines (Engineer)
 CO ----- Maj Richard G. Ruby
2d Battalion, 20th Marines (Pioneer)
 CO ----- Maj John H. Partridge
121st U. S. Naval Construction Battalion
 CO ----- LCdr William G. Byrne, CEC,
 USN
23d Marines
 (15Jun-24Jul44)
 CO ----- Col Louis R. Jones

ExO ----- LtCol John R. Lanigan (WIA
12Jul44)
R-3 ----- Maj Edward W. Wells (to
16Jul44)
Capt William E. Buron (from
17Jul44)

1st Battalion, 23d Marines
CO ----- LtCol Ralph Haas

2d Battalion, 23d Marines
CO ----- LtCol Edward J. Dillon (WIA 6
and 9Jul44)

3d Battalion, 23d Marines
CO ----- LtCol John J. Cosgrove, Jr. (WIA
19Jun44)
Maj Paul S. Treitel (from
19Jun44)

24th Marines
(15Jun-24Jul44)
CO ----- Col Franklin A. Hart
ExO ----- LtCol Austin R. Brunelli
R-3 ----- LtCol Charles D. Roberts

1st Battalion, 24th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Maynard C. Schultz (KIA
16Jun44)
Maj Robert N. Fricke (16-
27Jun44)
LtCol Otto Lessing (from
28Jun44)

2d Battalion, 24th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Richard Rothwell

3d Battalion, 24th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Alexander A. Vandegrift,
Jr. (WIA 29Jun44)

25th Marines
(15Jun-24Jul44)
CO ----- Col Merton J. Batchelder
ExO ----- LtCol Clarence J. O'Donnell
R-3 ----- LtCol William F. Thyson, Jr.

1st Battalion, 25th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Hollis U. Mustain

2d Battalion, 25th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Lewis C. Hudson, Jr.

3d Battalion, 25th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Justice M. Chambers (WIA
22Jun44)
Maj James Taul (22-23Jun44)
LtCol Justice M. Chambers (from
24Jun44)

1st Battalion, 29th Marines
(15Jun-24Jul44)
CO ----- LtCol Guy E. Tannyhill (WIA
17Jun44)
LtCol Rathvon McC. Tompkins
(WIA 2Jul44)
Maj William W. McKinley (4-
15Jul44)
LtCol John K. Pressley (from
16Jul44)

D. TINIAN (24 July-1 August 1944)

Expeditionary Troops
(24Jul-10Aug44)
CG ----- MajGen Harry Schmidt
CofS ----- BGen Graves B. Erskine
C-1 ----- LtCol Albert F. Metze
C-2 ----- Col St. Julien R. Marshall
C-3 ----- Col John C. McQueen
C-4 ----- LtCol Raymond E. Knapp
C-5 ----- Col Joseph T. Smith

*V Amphibious Corps—Northern Troops and
Landing Force*
(24Jul-10Aug44)
CG ----- MajGen Harry Schmidt
CofS ----- BGen Graves B. Erskine
G-1 ----- LtCol Albert F. Metze
G-2 ----- LtCol Thomas R. Yancey, USA
G-3 ----- Col Robert E. Hogaboom
G-4 ----- LtCol Joseph C. Anderson, USA

V Corps Headquarters and Service Battalion
(24Jul-7Aug44)
CO ----- Maj Thomas R. Wert

V Corps Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion
(24Jul-10Aug44)
CO ----- Capt James L. Jones

V Corps Medical Battalion
(24Jul-7Aug44)
CO ----- LCdr William B. Clapp, MC,
USN

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>V Corps Signal Battalion</i> (24Jul-7Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- Col James H. N. Hudnall</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>2d Amphibian Tractor Battalion</i> (24Jul-10Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- Maj Fenlon A. Durand</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>5th Amphibian Tractor Battalion</i> (24Jul-10Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- Maj George L. Shead</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>10th Amphibian Tractor Battalion</i> (Less Company A) (24Jul-7Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- Maj Victor J. Croizat</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>2d Armored Amphibian Battalion</i> (24Jul-10Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- LtCol Reed M. Fawell, Jr.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>4th 105mm Howitzer Battalion</i> (24Jul-7Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- LtCol Douglas E. Reeve</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>7th Field Depot</i> (24Jul-10Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- Col Earl H. Phillips</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Headquarters, 2d Marine Division</i> (24Jul-10Aug44)</p> <p>CG ----- MajGen Thomas E. Watson</p> <p>ADC ----- BGen Merritt A. Edson</p> <p>CofS ----- Col David M. Shoup</p> <p>D-1 ----- LtCol James T. Wilbur</p> <p>D-2 ----- LtCol Thomas J. Colley</p> <p>D-3 ----- LtCol Wallace M. Greene, Jr.</p> <p>D-4 ----- Col Robert J. Straub</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Division Headquarters and Service Battalion</i> (24Jul-10Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- Maj Melvin A. Smith</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Division Special Troops</i></p> <p>CO ----- (none shown)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>2d Medical Battalion</i> (24Jul-10Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- LCdr Claude R. Bruner, MC, USN</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>2d Motor Transport Battalion</i> (24Jul-10Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- Maj Milton J. Green</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>2d Service Battalion</i> (24Jul-10Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- Maj Edward V. Dozier</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>2d Tank Battalion</i> (24Jul-10Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- Maj Charles W. McCoy</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>2d Marines</i> (24Jul-10Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- Col Walter J. Stuart</p> <p>ExO ----- LtCol John H. Griebel</p> <p>R-3 ----- Maj Samuel D. Mandeville, Jr.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>1st Battalion, 2d Marines</i></p> <p>CO ----- LtCol Wood B. Kyle</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>2d Battalion, 2d Marines</i></p> <p>CO ----- LtCol Richard C. Nutting</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>3d Battalion, 2d Marines</i></p> <p>CO ----- LtCol Walter F. Layer</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>6th Marines</i> (26Jul-10Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- Col James P. Riseley</p> <p>ExO ----- LtCol Russell Lloyd</p> <p>R-3 ----- Maj Loren E. Haffner</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>1st Battalion, 6th Marines</i></p> <p>CO ----- LtCol William K. Jones</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>2d Battalion, 6th Marines</i> (24Jul-8Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- LtCol Edmund B. Games</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>3d Battalion, 6th Marines</i></p> <p>CO ----- LtCol John W. Easley (KIA 2Aug44) Maj John E. Rentsch (from 2Aug44)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>8th Marines</i> (24Jul-10Aug44)</p> <p>CO ----- Col Clarence R. Wallace</p> <p>ExO ----- LtCol Jack P. Juhan</p> <p>R-3 ----- Maj William H. Souder, Jr.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>1st Battalion, 8th Marines</i></p> <p>CO ----- LtCol Lawrence C. Hays, Jr.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>2d Battalion, 8th Marines</i></p> <p>CO ----- LtCol Lane C. Kendall</p>
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3d Battalion, 8th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Gavin C. Humphrey

10th Marines
 (24Jul-10Aug44)
 CO ----- Col Raphael Griffin
 ExO ----- Col Presley M. Rixey
 R-3 ----- Maj Wade H. Hitt

1st Battalion, 10th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Donovan D. Sult

2d Battalion, 10th Marines
 CO ----- Maj David L. Henderson

3d Battalion, 10th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol William C. Capehart

4th Battalion, 10th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Kenneth A. Jorgensen

18th Marines
 (24Jul-10Aug44)
 CO ----- Col Cyril W. Martyr
 ExO ----- LtCol Ewart S. Laue
 R-3 ----- Capt Murdoch J. McLeod

1st Battalion, 18th Marines (Engineer)
 CO ----- Col August L. Vogt

2d Battalion, 18th Marines (Pioneer)
 CO ----- LtCol Chester J. Salazar

18th U. S. Naval Construction Battalion
 CO ----- Cdr Lawrence Emerson Tull,
 CEC, USN

Headquarters, 4th Marine Division
 (24Jul-7Aug44)
 CG ----- MajGen Clifton B. Cates
 ADC ----- BGen Samuel C. Cumming
 CofS ----- Col William W. Rogers
 D-1 ----- Col Walter I. Jordan
 D-2 ----- LtCol Gooderham L. McCormick
 D-3 ----- Col Walter W. Wensinger
 D-4 ----- Col William F. Brown

Division Headquarters and Service Battalion
 (24Jul-7Aug44)
 CO ----- LtCol Melvin L. Krulewitch

Division Special and Service Troops
 (24Jul-7Aug44)
 CO ----- Col Orin H. Wheeler

4th Medical Battalion
 (24Jul-7Aug44)
 CO ----- LCdr George W. Mast, MC, USN

4th Motor Transport Battalion
 (24Jul-7Aug44)
 CO ----- LtCol Ralph L. Schiesswohl

4th Service Battalion
 (24Jul-7Aug44)
 CO ----- Col Richard H. Schubert

4th Tank Battalion
 (24Jul-7Aug44)
 CO ----- Maj Richard K. Schmidt

14th Marines
 (24Jul-7Aug44)
 CO ----- Col Louis G. DeHaven
 ExO ----- LtCol Randall M. Victory
 R-3 ----- Maj Frederick J. Karch

1st Battalion, 14th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Harry J. Zimmer (KIA
 25Jul44)
 Maj Clifford B. Drake (from
 26Jul44)

2d Battalion, 14th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol George B. Wilson, Jr.

3d Battalion, 14th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Robert E. MacFarlane

4th Battalion, 14th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Carl A. Youngdale

20th Marines
 (24Jul-10Aug44)
 CO ----- LtCol Nelson K. Brown
 ExO ----- Maj Richard G. Ruby
 R-3 ----- Maj Melvin D. Henderson (to
 2Aug44)
 LtCol Otto Lessing (from
 3Aug44)

1st Battalion, 20th Marines (Engineer)
 CO ----- Maj Richard G. Ruby

2d Battalion, 20th Marines (Pioneer)
 CO ----- Maj John H. Partridge

121st U. S. Naval Construction Battalion
CO ----- LCdr William G. Byrne, CEC,
USN

23d Marines
(24Jul-10Aug44)
CO ----- Col Louis R. Jones
ExO ----- LtCol John R. Lanigan
R-3 ----- Capt William E. Buron

1st Battalion, 23d Marines
CO ----- LtCol Ralph Haas

2d Battalion, 23d Marines
CO ----- LtCol Edward J. Dillon

3d Battalion, 23d Marines
CO ----- Maj Paul S. Treitel

24th Marines
(24Jul-10Aug44)
CO ----- Col Franklin A. Hart
ExO ----- LtCol Austin R. Brunelli
R-3 ----- LtCol Charles D. Roberts

1st Battalion, 24th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Otto Lessing

2d Battalion, 24th Marines
CO ----- Maj Frank E. Garretson (to
27Jul)
LtCol Richard Rothwell (from
27Jul)

3d Battalion, 24th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Alexander A. Vandegrift,
Jr.

25th Marines
(24Jul-7Aug44)
CO ----- Col Merton J. Batchelder
ExO ----- LtCol Clarence J. O'Donnell
R-3 ----- LtCol William F. Thyson, Jr.

1st Battalion, 25th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Hollis U. Mustain

2d Battalion, 25th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Lewis C. Hudson, Jr.

3d Battalion, 25th Marines
CO ----- LtCol Justice M. Chambers

1st Battalion, 29th Marines
(24Jul-10Aug44)
CO ----- LtCol Orin K. Pressley
E. GUAM (12 July-August 1944)

Expeditionary Troops
(21Jul-15Aug44)
CG ----- MajGen Harry Schmidt
CofS ----- BGen Graves B. Erskine
C-1 ----- LtCol Albert F. Metze
C-2 ----- Col St. Julien R. Marshall
C-3 ----- Col John C. McQueen
C-4 ----- LtCol Raymond E. Knapp
C-5 ----- Col Joseph T. Smith

*III Amphibious Corps--Southern Troops
and Landing Force*
(21Jul-15Aug44)

CG ----- MajGen Roy S. Geiger
CofS ----- Col Merwin H. Silverthorn
C-1 ----- Col William J. Scheyer
C-2 ----- LtCol William F. Coleman
C-3 ----- Col Walter A. Wachtler
C-4 ----- LtCol Frederick L. Wieseman
C-5 ----- Col Dudley S. Brown

III Corps Headquarters and Service Battalion
(21Jul-15Aug44)
CO ----- LtCol Floyd A. Stephenson

III Corps Medical Battalion
(21Jul-15Aug44)
CO ----- LCdr William H. Rambo, MC,
USN

III Corps Motor Transport Battalion
(21Jul-15Aug44)
CO ----- Maj Franklin H. Hayner (to
1Aug44)
Maj Kenneth E. Murphy (from
1-3Aug44)
Maj Franklin H. Hayner (from
4Aug44)

III Corps Signal Battalion
(21Jul-15Aug44)
CO ----- LtCol Robert L. Peterson

3d Amphibian Tractor Battalion
(21Jul-15Aug44)
CO ----- LtCol Sylvester L. Stephan

4th Amphibian Tractor Battalion
(21Jul-15Aug44)
CO ----- LtCol Clovis C. Coffman

1st Armored Amphibian Battalion
 (21Jul-13Aug44)
 CO ----- Maj Louis Metzger

1st Separate Engineer Battalion
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- LtCol Orin C. Bjornsrud

2d Separate Engineer Battalion
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- LtCol Charles O. Clark

III Corps Artillery
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CG ----- BGen Pedro A. del Valle
 CofS ----- Col John Bemis
 A-1 ----- Maj James H. Tatsch
 A-2 ----- WO David G. Garnett
 A-3 ----- LtCol Frederick P. Henderson
 (FA)
 LtCol Edgar O. Price (AA)
 A-4 ----- Maj Frederick W. Miller

1st 155mm Howitzer Battalion
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- Col James J. Keating

2d 155mm Howitzer Battalion
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- LtCol Marvin H. Floom

7th 155mm Gun Battalion
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- LtCol John S. Twitchell

9th Defense Battalion
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- LtCol Archie E. O'Neil

14th Defense Battalion
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- LtCol William F. Parks

Headquarters, 3d Marine Division
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CG ----- MajGen Allen H. Turnage
 ADC ----- BGen Alfred H. Noble
 CofS ----- Col Ray A. Robinson
 D-1 ----- LtCol Chevey S. White (KIA
 22Jul44)
 Maj Irving R. Kriendler (from
 22Jul44)

D-2 ----- LtCol Howard J. Turton (to
 28Jul44)
 LtCol Ellsworth N. Murray (from
 29Jul44)

D-3 ----- Col James A. Stuart (to
 28Jul44)
 LtCol Howard J. Turton (from
 29Jul44)

D-4 ----- LtCol Ellsworth N. Murray (to
 28Jul44)
 Col William C. Hall (from
 29Jul44)

Division Headquarters and Service Battalion
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- LtCol Newton B. Barkley

3d Medical Battalion
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- Cdr Raymond R. Callaway, MC,
 USN

3d Motor Transport Battalion
 21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- LtCol Thomas R. Stokes

3d Service Battalion
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- LtCol Durant S. Buchanan

3d Tank Battalion
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- LtCol Hartnoll J. Withers

3d Marines
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- Col William C. Hall (to 28Jul44)
 Col James A. Stuart (from
 29Jul44)
 ExO ----- Col James Snedeker
 R-3 ----- Maj John A. Scott

1st Battalion, 3d Marines
 CO ----- Maj Henry Aplington II

2d Battalion, 3d Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Hector de Zayas (KIA
 26Jul44)
 Maj William A. Culpepper (from
 26Jul44)

3d Battalion, 3d Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Ralph L. Houser (WIA
 22Jul44)

Maj Royal R. Bastian, Jr. (from
 24Jul44)

9th Marines
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- Col Edward A. Craig
 ExO ----- LtCol Jaime Sabater (WIA
 21Jul44)
 LtCol Ralph M. King (from
 30Jul44)
 (none shown 11-15Aug44)
 R-3 ----- Capt Evan E. Lips

1st Battalion, 9th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Carey A. Randall

2d Battalion, 9th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Robert E. Cushman, Jr.

3d Battalion, 9th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Walter Asmuth, Jr. (WIA
 21Jul44)
 Maj Donald B. Hubbard (WIA
 1Aug44)
 Maj Jess P. Ferrill, Jr. (from)
 2Aug44)

12th Marines
 CO ----- Col John B. Wilson
 ExO ----- LtCol John S. Letcher
 R-3 ----- LtCol William T. Fairbourn (to
 13Aug44)
 Maj Thomas R. Belzer (from 14-
 Aug44)

1st Battalion, 12th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Raymond F. Crist, Jr.

2d Battalion, 12th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Donald M. Weller (to 13-
 Aug44)
 LtCol William T. Fairbourn
 (from 14Aug44)

3d Battalion, 12th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Alpha L. Bowser, Jr.

4th Battalion, 12th Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Bernard H. Kirk (WIA
 21Jul44)

19th Marines
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- LtCol Robert E. Fojt

ExO ----- LtCol Edmund M. Williams
 R-3 ----- Maj George D. Flood, Jr.

1st Battalion, 19th Marines (Engineer)
 CO ----- LtCol Walter S. Campbell

2d Battalion, 19th Marines (Pioneer)
 CO ----- Maj Victor J. Simpson

25th U. S. Naval Construction Battalion
 CO ----- LCdr George J. Whelan, CEC,
 USN

21st Marines
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- Col Arthur H. Butler
 ExO ----- LtCol Ernest W. Fry, Jr.
 R-3 ----- Maj James H. Tinsley

1st Battalion, 21st Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Ronald R. Van Stockum

2d Battalion, 21st Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Eustace R. Smoak

3d Battalion, 21st Marines
 CO ----- LtCol Wendell H. Duplantis

1st Provisional Marine Brigade
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CG ----- BGen Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr.
 CofS ----- Col John T. Walker
 B-1 ----- Maj Addison B. Overstreet
 B-2 ----- Maj Robert W. Shaw
 B-3 ----- LtCol Thomas A. Culhane, Jr.
 B-4 ----- LtCol August Larson

4th Marines (Reinforced)
 (21Jul-15Aug44)
 CO ----- LtCol Alan Shapley
 ExO ----- LtCol Samuel D. Puller (KIA
 27Jul44)
 Capt Charles T. Lamb (from 27-
 Jul44)
 R-3 ----- Maj Orville V. Bergren

1st Battalion, 4th Marines
 CO ----- Maj Bernard W. Green

2d Battalion, 4th Marines
 CO ----- Maj John S. Messer

3d Battalion, 4th Marines
 CO ----- Maj Hamilton M. Hoyler

22d Marines
(21Jul-15Aug44)
CO ----- Col Merlin F. Schneider
ExO ----- LtCol William J. Wise
R-3 ----- LtCol Horatio C. Woodhouse, Jr.

1st Battalion, 22d Marines
CO ----- LtCol Walfried H. Fromhold (to
31Jul44)
Maj Crawford B. Lawton (from
1Aug44)

2d Battalion, 22d Marines
CO ----- LtCol Donn C. Hart (to 27Jul44)
Maj John F. Schoettel (from 28-
Jul44)

3d Battalion, 22d Marines
CO ----- LtCol Clair W. Shisler

1st Marine Brigade Artillery Group
(21Jul-15Aug44)
CO ----- LtCol Edwin C. Ferguson

Pack Howitzer Battalion, 4th Marines
(21Jul-15Aug44)
CO ----- Maj Robert Armstrong

Pack Howitzer Battalion, 22d Marines
(21Jul-15Aug44)
CO ----- Maj Alfred M. Mahoney

53d U. S. Naval Construction Battalion
CO ----- LCdr Edward M. Denbo, CEC,
USN

*1st Provisional Base Headquarters,
Island Command, Guam*
(26Jul-15Aug44)
CG ----- MajGen Henry L. Larsen
CofS ----- Col Robert Blake
A-1 ----- Col Lee N. Utz
A-2 ----- Col Francis H. Brink
A-3 ----- Col Benjamin W. Atkinson (to
8Aug44)
LtCol Shelton C. Zern (from 9-
Aug44)
A-4 ----- Col James A. Mixson
A-5 ----- Col Charles L. Murray

*Headquarters and Service Battalion, 1st
Provisional Base Headquarters,
Island Command, Guam*
(26Jul-15Aug44)
CO ----- LtCol Victor A. Barraco

5th Field Depot
(21Jul-15Aug44)
CO ----- LtCol Walter A. Churchill

MARINE AIR UNITS

*Headquarters and Detachments, 4th Marine
Base Defense Aircraft Wing*

(C-17Jun-10Aug44)
(E-17Jun-15Aug44) °
CG ----- BGen Thomas J. Cushman
CofS ----- Col Frank H. Lamson-Scribner
W-1 ----- Maj Theodore Brewster
W-2 ----- Capt Charles J. Greene, Jr.
W-3 ----- LtCol Lee C. Merrell, Jr.
W-4 ----- LtCol Harrison Brent, Jr. (to
26Jul44)
LtCol John B. Jacob (from 26-
Jul44)

CO,
HqSqn-4 Maj Melchior B. Trelfall

Forward Echelon, Marine Aircraft Group 21
(E-27Jul-15Aug44)

CO ----- Col Peter P. Schrider
ExO ----- Col James A. Booth, Jr.
GruOpsO - LtCol Robert W. Clark
CO,
HqSqn-21 Maj Robert F. Higley
CO,
SMS-21 Maj Charleton B. Ivey

Marine Aircraft Group 22
(B2-20Feb-2Mar44)
CO ----- Col James M. Daly
ExO ----- LtCol Richard D. Hughes
GruOpsO - LtCol Julian F. Walters
CO,
HqSqn-22 1stLt John W. Hackner
CO,
SMS-22 Capt John A. Hood

° Under each unit listed there will appear a letter designation for each operation in which the unit participated, and dates of involvement. Following are the campaigns and dates of entitlements:

A. Gilbert Islands ----- 13Nov-8Dec43
B. Marshall Islands
1. Kwajalein-Majuro ----- 29Jan-8Feb44
2. Eniwetok ----- 17Feb-2Mar44
C. Saipan ----- 11Jun-10Aug44
D. Tinian ----- 24Jul-1Aug44
E. Guam ----- 12Jul-15Aug44

Marine Aircraft Group 31
(B1—7-8Feb44)
CO ----- Col Calvin R. Freeman
ExO ----- Col Edward B. Carney
GruOpsO - LtCol Ralph K. Rottet
CO,
HqSqn-31 Capt Warren S. Adams, II
CO,
SMS-31 Capt Neil A. Vestal

Marine Air Warning Squadron 1
(B2—20Feb-2Mar44)
CO ----- Capt William D. Felder, Jr.

Marine Observation Squadron 1
(E—21Jul-15Aug44)
CO ----- Maj Gordon W. Heritage

Marine Air Warning Squadron 2
(E—21Jul-15Aug44)
CO ----- Capt George T. C. Fry

Marine Observation Squadron 2
(C—17Jun-10Aug44)
CO ----- Maj Robert W. Edmondson (to
26Jun44)
Capt John A. Ambler (from 27-
Jun44)

Marine Observation Squadron 4
(C—15Jun-10Aug44)
CO ----- Capt Nathan D. Blaha (to 26-
Jun44)
1stLt Thomas Rozga (from 26-
Jun44)

Marine Air Warning Squadron 5
(redesignated Marine Assault Air Warning
Squadron 5, effective 10Jul44)
(C—15Jun-10Aug44)
CO ----- Capt Donald D. O'Neill

Ground Echelon, Marine Fighter Squadron 111
(B1—7-8Feb44)
CO ----- Maj "J" Frank Cole

Marine Fighter Squadron 112
(B1,B2—2Feb-2Mar44)
CO ----- Maj Herman Hansen, Jr.

Marine Fighter Squadron 114
(C-2-7May44)
CO ----- Capt Robert F. Stout

Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron 151
(B1,B2-29Feb-2Mar44)
CO ----- Maj Gordon H. Knott

Marine Fighter Squadron 216
Detachment, Ground Echelon
(E—30Jul-15Aug44)
Remainder Squadron (E-4-15Aug44)
CO ----- Maj John Fitting, Jr.

Marine Fighter Squadron 217
Detachment, Ground Echelon
(E—30Jul-15Aug44)
Remainder Squadron (E-4-15Aug44)
CO ----- Maj Max R. Read, Jr.

*Forward Echelon, Marine Fighter
Squadron 224*
(B1—7-8Feb44)
CO ----- Maj Darrell D. Irwin

Marine Fighter Squadron 225
(E—30Jul-27Aug44)
CO ----- LtCol James A. Embry, Jr.

Marine Scout-Bomber Squadron 231
Ground Echelon (B1—3Feb-2Mar44)
Flight Echelon (B1—21Feb-2Mar44)
CO ----- Maj Elmer G. Glidden, Jr.

Marine Utility Squadron 252
Detachment, Flight Echelon
(C—20Jun-10Aug44)
(E—20Jun-15Aug44)
(D—24Jul-1Aug44)
CO ----- LtCol Neil R. MacIntyre (to 20-
Jul44)
Maj Robert B. Meyersburg (21-
Jul-1Aug44)
LtCol John V. Kipp (from 2Aug-
44)

Marine Fighter Squadron 311
(B1—7-8Feb44)
CO ----- Maj Harry B. Hooper, Jr.

*Detachment, Flight Echelon, Marine Scout-
Bomber Squadron 331*
(A—30Nov-8Dec43)
CO ----- Maj Paul R. Byrum, Jr.

<p><i>Detachment, Flight Echelon, Marine Utility Squadron 353</i> (A—26Nov—8Dec43) (C—3—10Aug44) (E—3—10Aug44) CO ----- LtCol Edmund L. Zonne</p> <p><i>Marine Fighter Squadron 422</i> (B1,B2—2Feb—2Mar44) CO ----- Maj Elmer A. Wrenn</p> <p><i>Marine Night Fighter Squadron 532</i> Advance Echelon (C—6Jul—10Aug44) Rear Echelon (C—12Jul—10Aug44)</p>	<p>Advance Echelon (E—6Jul—10Aug44) Rear Echelon (E—12Jul—10Aug44) CO ----- Maj Everette H. Vaughan</p> <p><i>Marine Night Fighter Squadron 534</i> Advance Echelon (E—29Jul—15Aug44) Flight Echelon (E—4—15Aug44) CO ----- Maj Ross S. Mickey</p> <p><i>Detachment, Flight Echelon, Marine Utility Squadron 952</i> (C—2—5Jul44) CO ----- LtCol Malcolm S. Mackay</p>
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Marine Casualties¹

Location and Date	KIA		DOW		WIA		MIA PD		Total	
	Officer	Enlisted								
Marines										
Tarawa ² (20Nov-8Dec43)	51	853	9	84	109	2,124		88	169	3,149
Kwajalein/Majuro..... (29Jan-8Feb44)	13	162	1	30	41	590		181	55	963
Eniwetok..... (17Feb-2Mar44)	4	177	1	37	27	541	2	37	34	792
Saipan..... (11Jun-10Jul44)	137	1,940	18	349	493	8,082		708	648	11,079
Guam..... (21Jul-15Aug44)	80	1,076	15	380	288	5,077		17	383	6,550
Tinian..... (24Jul-1Aug44)	22	278	4	61	97	1,824	1	2	124	2,165
Aviation ³	19	18		6	30	90	7	15	56	129
Sea-duty ³		13		2	1	57		4	1	76
Total Marines.....	326	4,517	48	949	1,086	18,385	10	1,052	1,470	24,903

Naval Medical Personnel
Organic to Marine Units⁴

Tarawa.....	2	28			2	57			4	85
Marshalls ⁵		5		1	2	34			2	40
Saipan.....	1	70		6	7	330			8	406
Guam.....	3	43	1	4	11	195			15	242
Tinian.....	1	23		2		40			1	65
Marine Aviation.....		5			1	4			1	9
Total Navy.....	7	174	1	13	23	660			31	847
Grand Total.....	333	4,691	49	962	1,109	19,045	10	1,052	1,501	25,750

See footnote at end of table.

¹ These final Marine casualty figures were compiled from records furnished by Statistics Unit, Personnel Accounting Section, Records Branch, Personnel Department, HQMC. They are audited to include 26 August 1952. Naval casualties were taken from NavMed P-5021, *The History of the Medical Department of the Navy in World War II*, 2 vols (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1953), II, pp. 1-84. The key to the abbreviations used at the head of columns in the table follows: KIA, Killed in Action; DOW, Died of Wounds; WIA, Wounded in Action; MIAPD, Missing in Action, Presumed Dead. Because of the casualty reporting method used during World War II, a substantial number of DOW figures are also included in the WIA column.

² Includes Apamama.

³ Includes operations in Gilberts, Marshalls, and Marianas during periods indicated above.

⁴ See Footnote (1) above.

⁵ Includes Kwajalein/Majuro and Eniwetok during periods indicated above.

Unit Commendations

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,
Washington.

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION to the

SECOND MARINE DIVISION (REINFORCED)

consisting of

Division Headquarters, Special Troops (including Company C, 1st Corps Medium Tank Battalion), Service Troops, 2nd, 6th, 8th, 10th and 18th Marine Regiments in the Battle of Tarawa, as set for in the following

CITATION:

"For outstanding performance in combat during the seizure and occupation of the Japanese-held Atoll of Tarawa, Gilbert Islands, November 20 to 24, 1943. Forced by treacherous coral reefs to disembark from their landing craft hundreds of yards off the beach, the Second Marine Division (Reinforced) became a highly vulnerable target for devastating Japanese fire. Dauntlessly advancing in spite of rapidly mounting losses, the Marines fought a gallant battle against crushing odds, clearing the limited beachheads of snipers and machine guns, reducing powerfully fortified enemy positions and completely annihilating the fanatically determined and strongly entrenched Japanese forces. By the successful occupation of Tarawa, the Second Marine Division (Reinforced) has provided our forces with highly strategic and important air and land bases from which to continue future operations against the enemy; by the valiant fighting spirit of these men, their heroic fortitude under punishing fire and their relentless perseverance in waging this epic battle in the Central Pacific, they have upheld the finest tradition of the United States Naval Service."

For the President.

JAMES FORRESTAL,
Secretary of the Navy.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,
Washington.

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION to the

FOURTH MARINE DIVISION, REINFORCED

consisting of

Division Headquarters; Division Special Troops; Division Service Troops; 23rd, 24th, 25th Marines; 20th Marines (Engineers); 1st JASCO; 534th and 773rd Amphibian Tractor Battalions (Army); 10th Amphibian Tractor Battalion; Company "C" 11th Amphibian Tractor Battalion; 708th Amphibian Tank Battalion (Army); VMO-4; 2nd Amphibian Truck Company; 14th Marines (Artillery); 311th and 539th Port Companies (Army); Detachment 7th Field Depot; 1st Provisional Rocket Detachment, V Amphibious Corps; Detachment, Air Warning Squadron #5; 4th 105mm (Howitzer) Corps Artillery, V Amphibious Corps; 14th Marines (Artillery), (less 3rd and 4th Battalions); Headquarters, Provisional LVT Groups, V Amphibious Corps; 2nd Armored Amphibian Battalion; 2nd and 5th Amphibian Tractor Battalions; 715th Amphibian Tractor Battalion (Army); 1341st Engineer Battalion (Army); 1st Amphibian Truck Company; 2nd Tank Battalion; 1st and 2nd Battalions, 10th Marines (Artillery) and the 1st Provisional Rocket Detachment, for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For outstanding performance in combat during the seizure of the Japanese-held islands of Saipan and Tinian in the Marianas from June 15 to August 1, 1944. Valiantly storming the mighty fortifications of Saipan on June 15, the Fourth Division, Reinforced, blasted the stubborn defenses of the enemy in an undeviating advance over the perilously rugged terrain. Unflinching despite heavy casualties, this gallant group pursued the Japanese relentlessly across the entire length of the island, pressing on against bitter opposition for twenty-five days to crush all resistance in their zone of action. With but a brief rest period in which to reorganize and re-equip, the Division hurled its full fighting power against the dangerously narrow beaches of Tinian on July 24 and rapidly expanded the beachheads for the continued landing of troops, supplies and artillery. Unchecked by either natural obstacles or hostile fire, these indomitable men spearheaded a merciless attack which swept Japanese forces before it and ravaged all opposition within eight days to add Tinian to our record of conquests in these strategically vital islands."

For the President.

JAMES FORRESTAL,
Secretary of the Navy.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,
Washington.

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the **PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION** to the

THIRD MARINES, REINFORCED,
serving as the **THIRD COMBAT TEAM, THIRD MARINE DIVISION,**

consisting of

Third Marine Regiment; Second Battalion, Ninth Regiment; Company "C", Third Tank Battalion; Company "C", Nineteenth Marine Regiment (Combat Engineers), and Third Band Section

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For extraordinary heroism in action against enemy Japanese forces during the invasion and recapture of Guam, Marianas Islands, from July 21 to August 10, 1944. Crossing a 400-yard reef under frontal and flanking fire from strongly defended positions on dominating terrain, the **THIRD** Marine Regiment (Reinforced), serving as the **THIRD** Combat Team, assaulted the steep slopes of the objectives and by evening had captured Adelup Point and Chonito Cliff. With no reserve available to be committed in their zone of action during the ensuing eight days, the gallant officers and men of this team fought their way forward through a maze of hostile caves and pill-boxes and over rugged terrain to secure Fonte Canyon and the northeastern slopes of Fonte Ridge despite constant mortar, machine-gun, small-arms and artillery fire which blasted all echelons, shore party and lines of communication and supply. Seriously depleted by heavy casualties, including two battalion commanders, the **THIRD** Combat Team was continually in action as the left assault regiment until the cessation of organized resistance and the securing of the island on August 10, after twenty-one days of furious combat. By their effective teamwork, aggressive fighting spirit and individual acts of heroism and daring, the men of the **THIRD** Combat Team achieved an illustrious record of courage and skill, in keeping the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

For the President.

JAMES FORRESTAL,
Secretary of the Navy.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,
Washington.

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the
FIRST PROVISIONAL MARINE BRIGADE

for service as follows:

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

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

JAMES FORRESTAL,
Secretary of the Navy.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,
Washington.

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the
TWELFTH MARINES, THIRD MARINE DIVISION

for service as follows:

"For outstanding heroism in action against enemy Japanese forces in the Empress Augusta Bay Beachhead, Bougainville, Solomon Islands, from November 1, 1943, to January 12, 1944; and in the invasion and seizure of Guam, Marianas, July 21 to August 10, 1944. Divided for landing into small elements dispersed over 5000 yards of beach at Empress Augusta Bay, the TWELFTH Marines overcame perilous surf and beach conditions and an almost impenetrable wall of jungle and swampy terrain to land their pack howitzers, initial ammunition and equipment by hand, to occupy firing positions, emplace guns, set up all control facilities and deliver effective fire in support of the THIRD Marine Division beachhead by afternoon of D-Day. In action for 73 days while under continual Japanese air attacks, the TWELFTH Marines aided in smashing an enemy counterattack on November 7-8, silenced all hostile fire in the Battle of Cocoanut Grove on November 13, and delivered continuous effective fire in defense of the vital beachhead position. At Guam, they landed in the face of enemy mortar and artillery fire through treacherous surf and, despite extreme difficulties of communication, supply and transportation, and the necessity of shifting from one type of fire to another, rendered valuable fire support in night and day harassing fires, counterbattery fires and defensive barrages, including the disruption of an organized counterattack by seven Japanese battalions on the night of July 26-27. By their individual heroic actions and their skilled teamwork, the officers and men of the TWELFTH Marines served with courage and distinction during the THIRD Marine Division's missions to secure the Empress Augusta Bay Beachhead and to aid in the recapture of Guam, thereby enhancing the finest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

All personnel attached to and serving with the TWELFTH Marines during these periods are hereby authorized to wear the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION Ribbon.

JAMES FORRESTAL,
Secretary of the Navy.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,
Washington.

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the

TWENTY-FIRST MARINES, REINFORCED, serving as the TWENTY-FIRST
REGIMENTAL COMBAT TEAM, THIRD MARINE DIVISION

consisting of

the Twenty-First Marines; Company "B", Nineteenth Marines (Combat Engineers);
Company "B", Third Tank Battalion; Second Band Section,

for service as follows:

"For outstanding heroism in action against enemy Japanese forces during the assault, seizure and occupation of Guam, Marianas Islands, from July 21 to August 10, 1944. Landing as the center Regimental Combat Team of the Division at Asan, the Twenty-First Marine Regiment, Reinforced, serving as the Twenty-First Regimental Combat Team, swept rapidly over enemy beach defenses toward a strategic high ridge which afforded the enemy observation of the Division landing area and enabled him to deliver accurate mortar and artillery fire on the beaches. Under heavy mortar and small-arms fire as they stormed the two narrow defiles which constituted the only approach to the vertical cliffs, these gallant Marines established two bridgeheads covering the defiles and, by midafternoon, had consolidated the Combat Team's position atop the cliffs, thus materially reducing the volume and accuracy of hostile fire and facilitating establishment of the Division artillery ashore and the landing of supplies and equipment. Halted by direct, short-range enfilade artillery fire from commanding terrain in an adjacent zone, they held tenaciously to their vital position in the face of continuous mortar fire by day, sharp nightly counterattacks and mounting casualties. When the enemy launched a full-scale counterattack with his remaining organized forces in the pre-dawn hours of July 26, wiping out one company of the Combat Team and penetrating the front lines, these officers and men waged a furious battle in the darkness; they annihilated approximately 2,000 Japanese troops in front of and within their position; and, by their individual heroism and gallant fighting spirit, dealt a crushing blow to organized enemy resistance on Guam, thereby upholding the finest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

All personnel attached to and serving with the Twenty-First Regimental Combat Team on Guam from July 21 to August 10, 1944, are authorized to wear the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION Ribbon.

JOHN L. SULLIVAN,
Secretary of the Navy.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,
Washington.

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the

TWENTY-SECOND MARINES, REINFORCED, TACTICAL GROUP ONE,
FIFTH AMPHIBIOUS CORPS

consisting of

Twenty-second Marines, Second Separate Pack Howitzer Company; Second Separate Tank Company; Second Separate Engineer Company; Second Separate Medical Company; Second Separate Motor Transport Company; Fifth Amphibious Corps Reconnaissance Company; Company D, Fourth Tank Battalion, Fourth Marine Division; 104th Field Artillery Battalion, U. S. Army; Company C, 766th Tank Battalion; U. S. Army; Company D, 708th Provisional Amphibian Tractor Battalion, U. S. Army; and the Provisional DUKW Battery, Seventh Infantry Division, U. S. Army.

for service as follows:

"For outstanding heroism in action against enemy Japanese forces during the assault and capture of Eniwetok Atoll, Marshall Islands, from February 17 to 22, 1944. As a unit of a Task Force, assembled only two days prior to departure for Eniwetok Atoll, the Twenty-second Marines, Reinforced, landed in whole or in part on Engebi, Eniwetok and Parry Islands in rapid succession and launched aggressive attacks in the face of heavy machine-gun and mortar fire from well camouflaged enemy dugouts and foxholes. With simultaneous landings and reconnaissance missions on numerous other small islands, they overcame all resistance within six days, destroying a known 2,665 of the Japanese and capturing 66 prisoners. By their courage and determination, despite the difficulties and hardships involved in repeated reembarkations and landings from day to day, these gallant officers and men made available to our forces in the Pacific Area an advanced base with large anchorage facilities and an established airfield, thereby contributing materially to the successful conduct of the war. Their sustained endurance, fortitude and fighting spirit throughout this operation reflect the highest credit on the Twenty-second Marines, Reinforced, and on the United States Naval Service."

All personnel attached to and serving with any of the above units during the period February 17 to 22, 1944, are authorized to wear the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION Ribbon.

JOHN L. SULLIVAN,
Secretary of the Navy.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,
Washington.

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the

AMPHIBIOUS RECONNAISSANCE BATTALION
FLEET MARINE FORCE, PACIFIC

for service as follows:

"For outstanding heroism in action against enemy Japanese forces in the Gilbert Islands, from November 19 to 26, 1943; the Marshall Islands, from January 30 to February 23, 1944; Marianas Islands, from June 15 to August 4, 1944; and Ryukyu Islands, from March 26 to July 24, 1945. The only unit of its kind in the Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, the Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion rendered unique service in executing secret reconnaissance missions on enemy-held islands. Frequently landing at night from submarines and other vessels prior to the assault, the small unit entered areas where friendly aircraft, Naval gunfire and other forms of support were unavailable and, under cover of darkness, moved about in hostile territory virtually in the presence of enemy troops. Despite hazards incident to passage through dark and unfamiliar hostile waters, often through heavy surf onto rocky shores, the Battalion persevered in its mission to reconnoiter enemy islands and obtain information vital to our assault forces and, on several occasions, succeeded in overcoming all enemy resistance without the aid of regular troops. Carrying out its difficult tasks with courage and determination, the Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion contributed materially to the success of our offensive operations throughout four major campaigns and achieved a gallant record of service which reflects the highest credit upon its officers and men and the United States Naval Service."

All personnel attached to and serving with the Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion during one or more of the above-mentioned periods are authorized to wear the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION Ribbon.

JAMES FORRESTAL,
Secretary of the Navy.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,
Washington.

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the

FIRST SEPARATE ENGINEER BATTALION

for service as follows:

"For exceptionally meritorious service in support of military operations on Guadalcanal, December 10, 1942, to February 27, 1943; Tinian from August 20, 1944, to March 24, 1945; and Okinawa from April 14 to September 2, 1945. Faced with numerous and difficult problems in engineering throughout two major campaigns, the First Separate Engineer Battalion initiated new techniques and procedures in construction, repair and maintenance, executing its mission under adverse conditions of weather and terrain and in spite of Japanese shellings, artillery fire, bombing raids, sickness and tropical storms. Technically skilled, aggressive and unmindful of great personal danger, the officers and men of this gallant Battalion constructed, developed and maintained vital routes of communication, airfields and camp facilities; they served as combat engineer units in performing demolitions, mine detection and disposal and bomb disposal tasks in support of various units of the Fleet Marine Force; and they built bridges and repaired air-bombed air strips toward the uninterrupted operations of Allied ground and aerial forces. Undeterred by both mechanical and natural limitations, the First Separate Engineer Battalion completed with dispatch and effectiveness assigned and unanticipated duties which contributed immeasurably to the ultimate defeat of Japan and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

All personnel attached to the First Separate Engineer Battalion during any of the above mentioned periods are hereby authorized to wear the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION Ribbon.

JAMES FORRESTAL,
Secretary of the Navy.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,
Washington.

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the

III AMPHIBIOUS CORPS SIGNAL BATTALION

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For extremely meritorious service in support of military operations, while attached to the I Marines Amphibious Corps during the amphibious assault on Bougainville, and attached to the III Amphibious Corps during operations at Guam, Palau and Okinawa, during the period from November 1, 1943 to June 21, 1945. The first American Signal Battalion to engage in amphibious landings in the Pacific Ocean Areas, the III Amphibious Corps Signal Battalion pioneered and developed techniques and procedures without benefit of established precedent, operating with limited and inadequate equipment, particularly in the earlier phase of these offensive actions, and providing its own security while participating in jungle fighting, atoll invasions and occupation of large island masses. Becoming rapidly experienced in guerrilla warfare and the handling of swiftly changing situations, this valiant group of men successfully surmounted the most difficult conditions of terrain and weather as well as unfamiliar technical problems and, working tirelessly without consideration for safety, comfort or convenience, provided the Corps with uninterrupted ship-shore and bivouac communication service continuously throughout this period. This splendid record of achievement, made possible only by the combined efforts, loyalty and courageous devotion to duty of each individual, was a decisive factor in the success of the hazardous Bougainville, Guam, Palau and Okinawa Campaigns and reflects the highest credit upon the III Amphibious Corps Signal Battalion and the United States Naval Service."

All personnel attached to the III Amphibious Corps Signal Battalion who actually participated in one or more of the Bougainville, Guam, Palau and Okinawa operations are hereby authorized to wear the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION Ribbon.

JAMES FORRESTAL,
Secretary of the Navy.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,
Washington.

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the

THIRD BATTALION, TENTH MARINES, SECOND MARINE DIVISION
FLEET MARINE FORCE

for service as follows:

"For outstanding heroism while serving with the 2nd Marine Division in action against enemy Japanese forces on the Island of Saipan in the Marianas, July 7, 1944. When Japanese forces initiated a final concerted attack down the west coast of the island before dawn of July 7, the 3rd Battalion, 10th Marines, was occupying a newly won position astride the railway along the west coast road, with two batteries disposed on the left of the railroad and the remaining two on the right and echeloned to the rear. The mounting enemy attack penetrated the extreme left flank of our lines and moved between the coast road and the railway. Security elements to the front of the forward batteries recognized and gave batt'e to the oncoming force of approximately 600 Japanese supported by tanks. Battalion howitzers opened up at point-blank range, firing shells with cut fuzes; gunners employed ricochet fire when the fanatic banzai troops over-ran the forward section; and the cannoneers, command post and supply personnel in the rear positions united as one to engage the infiltrating Japanese soldiery. Under the forceful direction of skilled officers, this artillery battalion functioned effectively as an infantry unit despite the lack of specific training, the four batteries waging a furious and prolonged battle from quickly organized strongpoints and holding the line indomitably until relieved several hours later. Strengthened by fresh troops, the defending garrison continued its counter-and-thrust tactics and, recapturing the heavy guns which had fallen into hostile hands, knocked out three of the enemy tanks and annihilated approximately three hundred Japanese troops. By their valor, determination and sustained fighting spirit, the intrepid officers and men of the 3rd Battalion, 10th Marines, had succeeded in breaking the enemy's last desperate effort to oppose the seizure of Saipan, thereby hastening the conquest of this strategically important base. Their gallant defense of a vulnerable position in the face of overwhelming disparity adds new luster to the traditions of the United States Naval Service."

All personnel attached to the 3rd Battalion, 10th Marines, 2nd Marine Division, on July 7, 1944 are hereby authorized to wear the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION Ribbon.

JAMES FORRESTAL,
Secretary of the Navy.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY,
Washington.

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the

NINTH MARINE DEFENSE BATTALION

for service as follows:

"For outstanding heroism in action against enemy Japanese forces at Guadalcanal, November 30, 1942, to May 20, 1943; Rendova-New Georgia Area, June 30 to November 7, 1943; and at Guam, Marianas, July 21 to August 20, 1944. One of the first units of its kind to operate in the South Pacific Area, the NINTH Defense Battalion established strong seacoast and beach positions which destroyed 12 hostile planes attempting to bomb Guadalcanal, and further engaged in extensive patrolling activities. In a 21-day-and-night training period prior to the Rendova-New Georgia assault, this group calibrated and learned to handle new weapons and readily effected the conversion from a seacoast unit to a unit capable of executing field artillery missions. Joining Army Artillery units, special groups of this battalion aided in launching an attack which drove the enemy from the beaches, downed 13 of a 16-bomber plane formation during the first night ashore and denied the use of the Munda airfield to the Japanese. The NINTH Defense Battalion aided in spearheading the attack of the Army Corps operating on New Georgia and, despite heavy losses, remained in action until the enemy was routed from the island. Elements of the Battalion landed at Guam under intense fire, established beach defenses, installed anti-aircraft guns and later, contributed to the rescue of civilians and to the capture or destruction of thousands of Japanese. By their skill, courage and aggressive fighting spirit, the officers and men of the NINTH Defense Battalion upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

All personnel attached to and serving with the NINTH Defense Battalion during the above mentioned periods are authorized to wear the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION Ribbon.

JOHN L. SULLIVAN
Secretary of the Navy.

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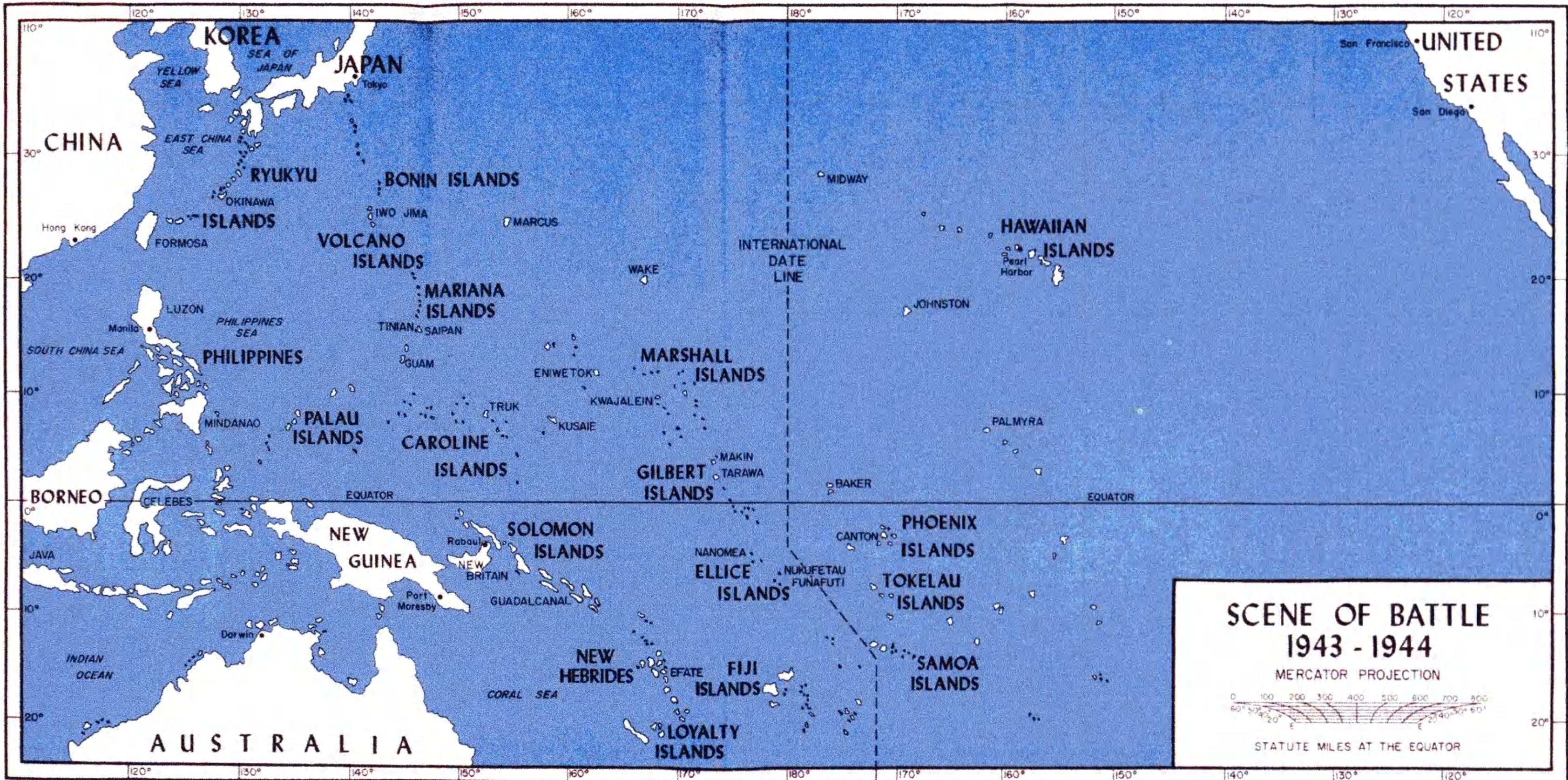
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**SCENE OF BATTLE
1943 - 1944**

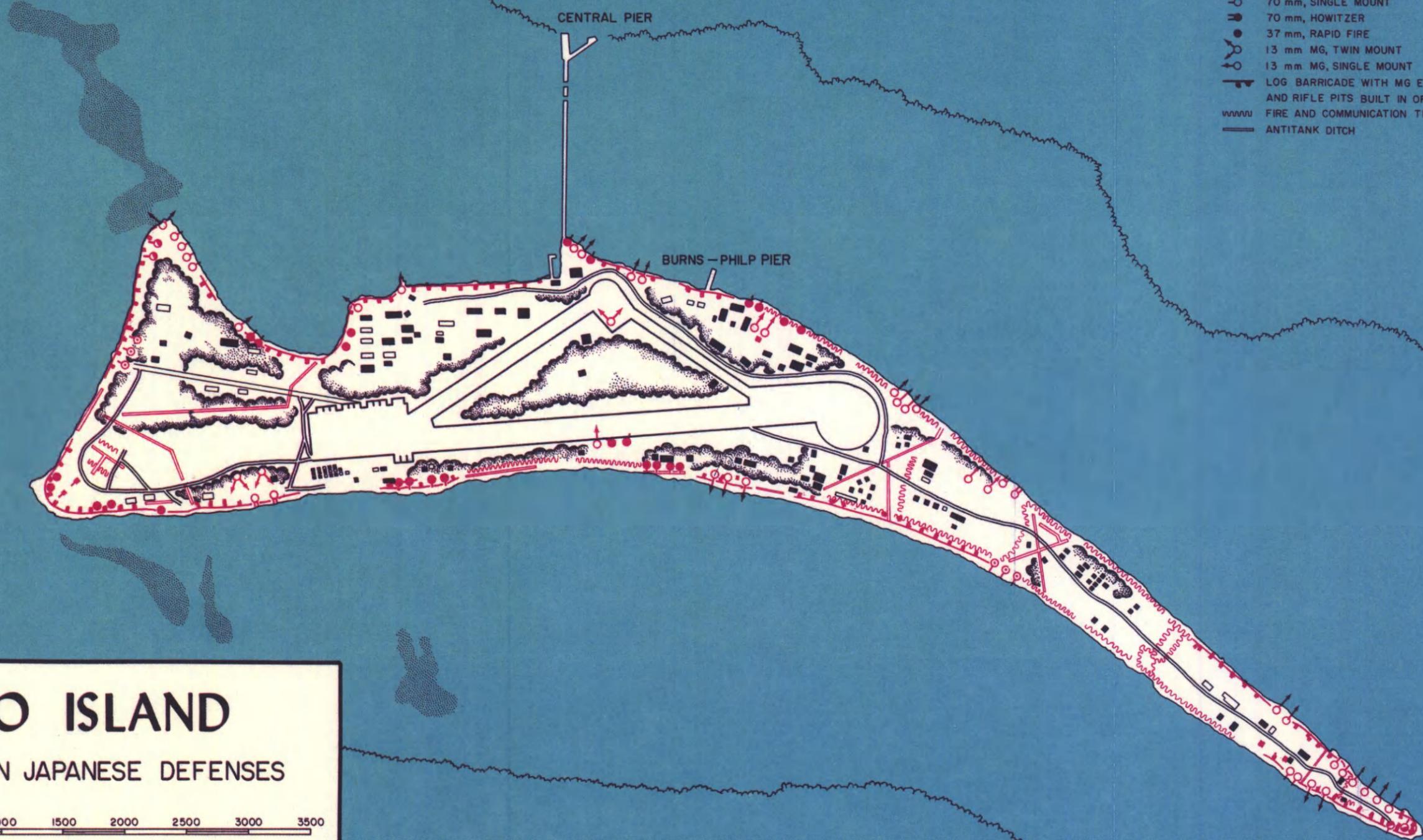
MERCATOR PROJECTION



STATUTE MILES AT THE EQUATOR

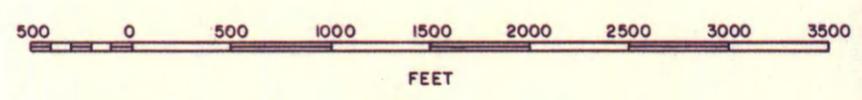
LEGEND

- 8" NAVAL TYPE
- ⊙ 140 mm, GUN
- ⊙ 127 mm, TWIN MOUNT
- ⊙ 80 mm, GUN
- ⊙ 75 mm, MOUNTAIN GUN
- ⊙ 70 mm, SINGLE MOUNT
- ⊙ 70 mm, HOWITZER
- ⊙ 37 mm, RAPID FIRE
- ⊙ 13 mm MG, TWIN MOUNT
- ⊙ 13 mm MG, SINGLE MOUNT
- ⊙ LOG BARRICADE WITH MG EMPLACEMENTS AND RIFLE PITS BUILT IN OR BEHIND IT
- www FIRE AND COMMUNICATION TRENCH
- ANTITANK DITCH



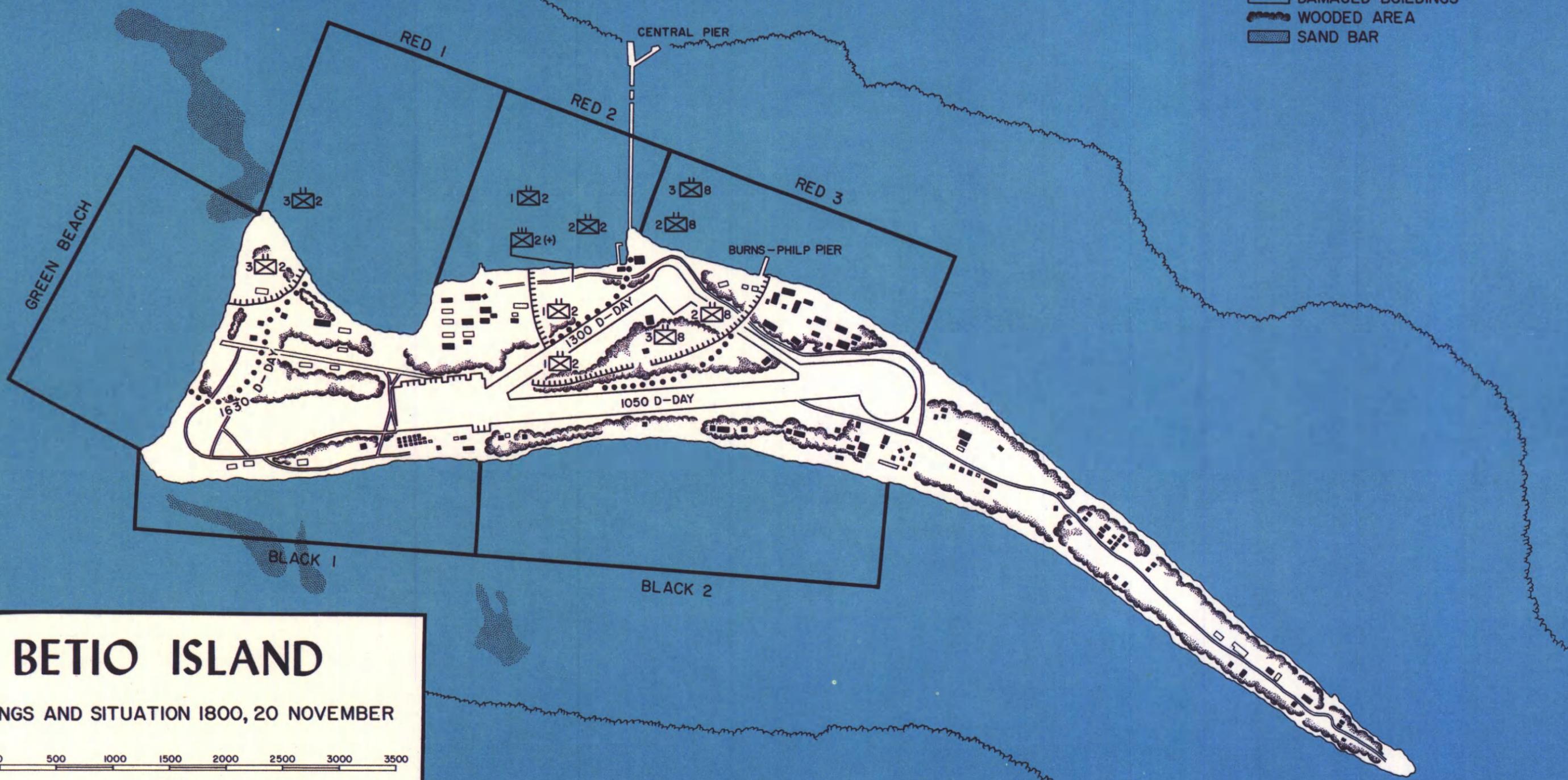
BETIO ISLAND

SHOWING MAIN JAPANESE DEFENSES



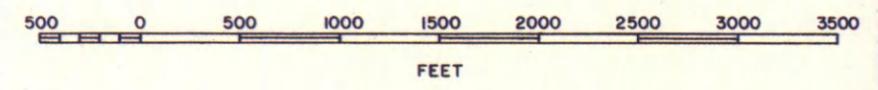
LEGEND

- ADVANCES DURING DAY
- ▄▄▄▄ POSITIONS AT SUNSET
- BUILDINGS
- DAMAGED BUILDINGS
- ▨ WOODED AREA
- ▨ SAND BAR

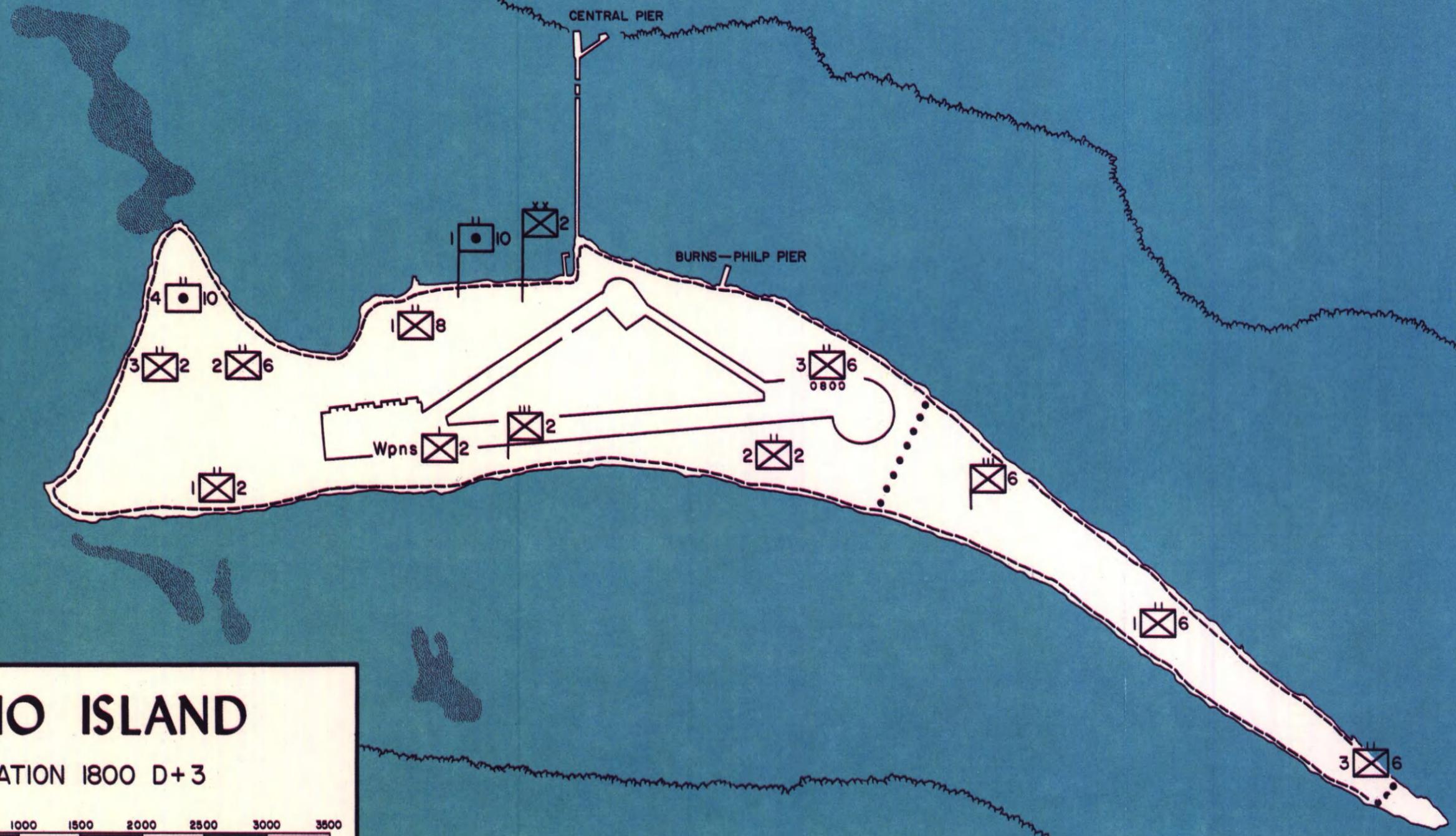


BETIO ISLAND

LANDINGS AND SITUATION 1800, 20 NOVEMBER

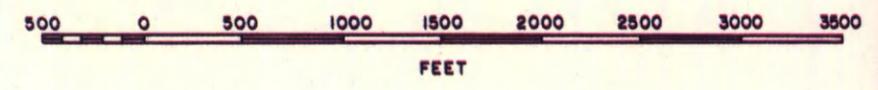


..... ADVANCES DURING DAY
----- POSITIONS AT SUNSET



BETIO ISLAND

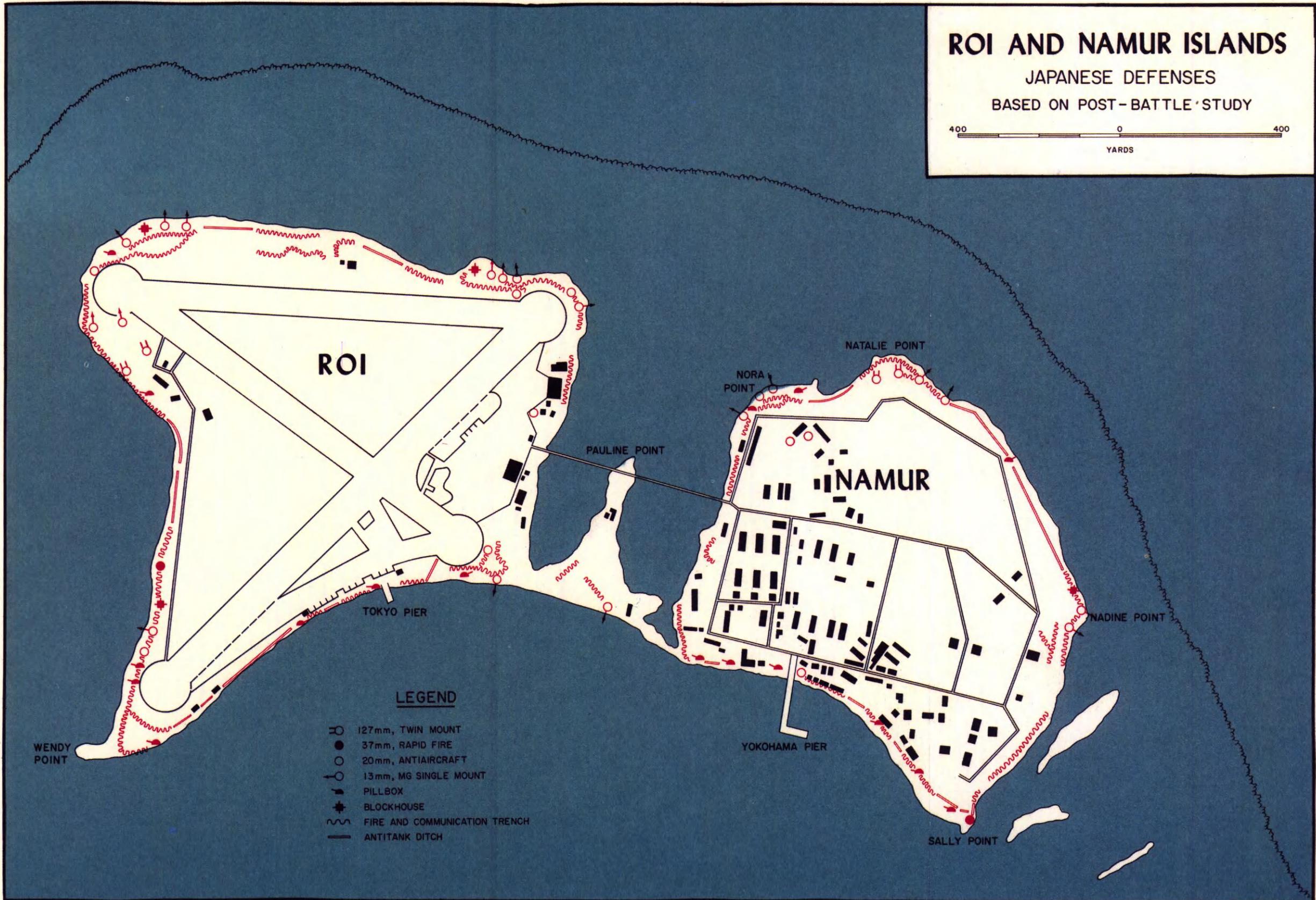
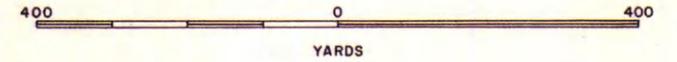
SITUATION 1800 D+3



ROI AND NAMUR ISLANDS

JAPANESE DEFENSES

BASED ON POST-BATTLE STUDY



BANZAI ATTACK

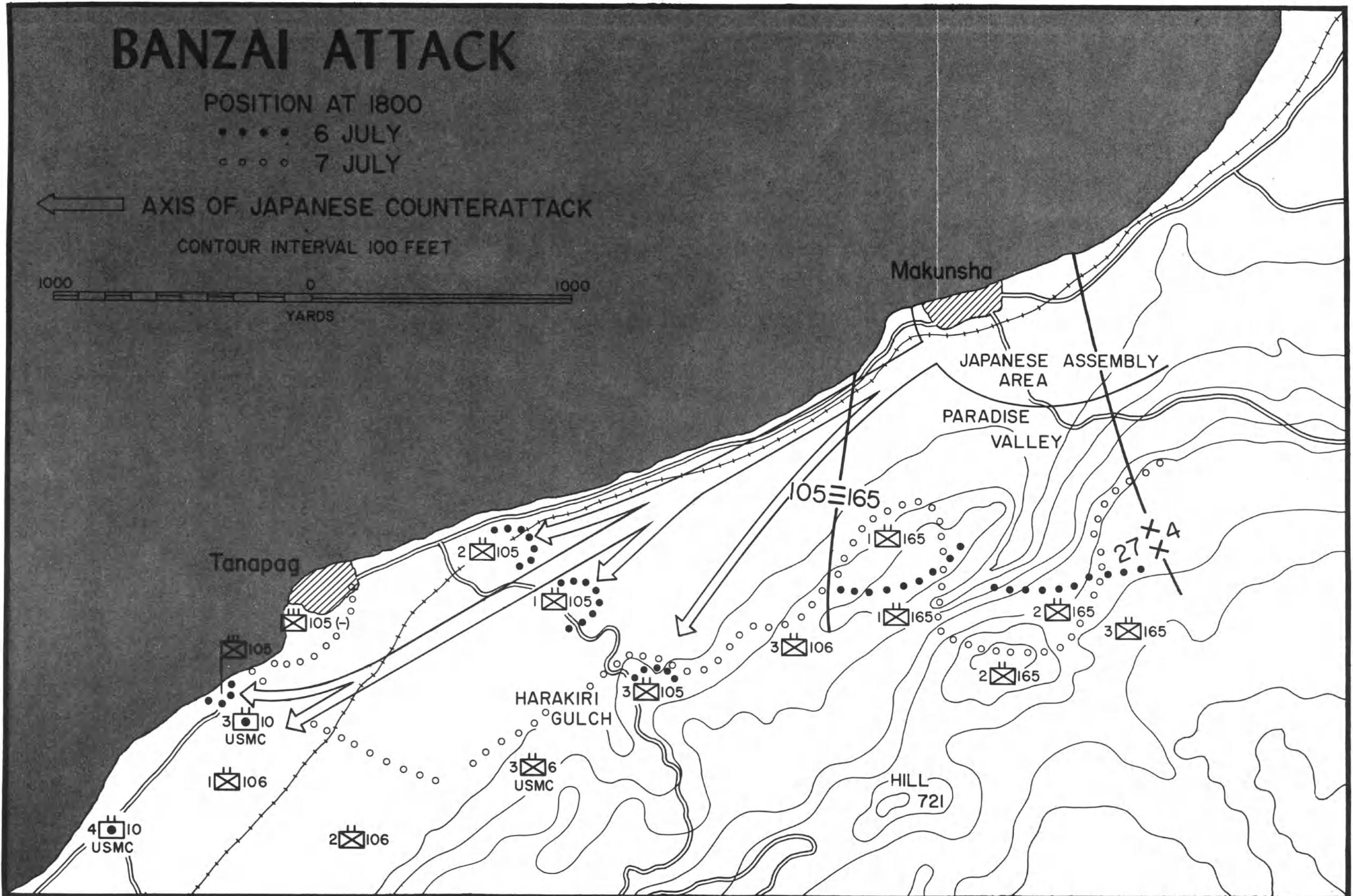
POSITION AT 1800

••••• 6 JULY

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ 7 JULY

← AXIS OF JAPANESE COUNTERATTACK

CONTOUR INTERVAL 100 FEET

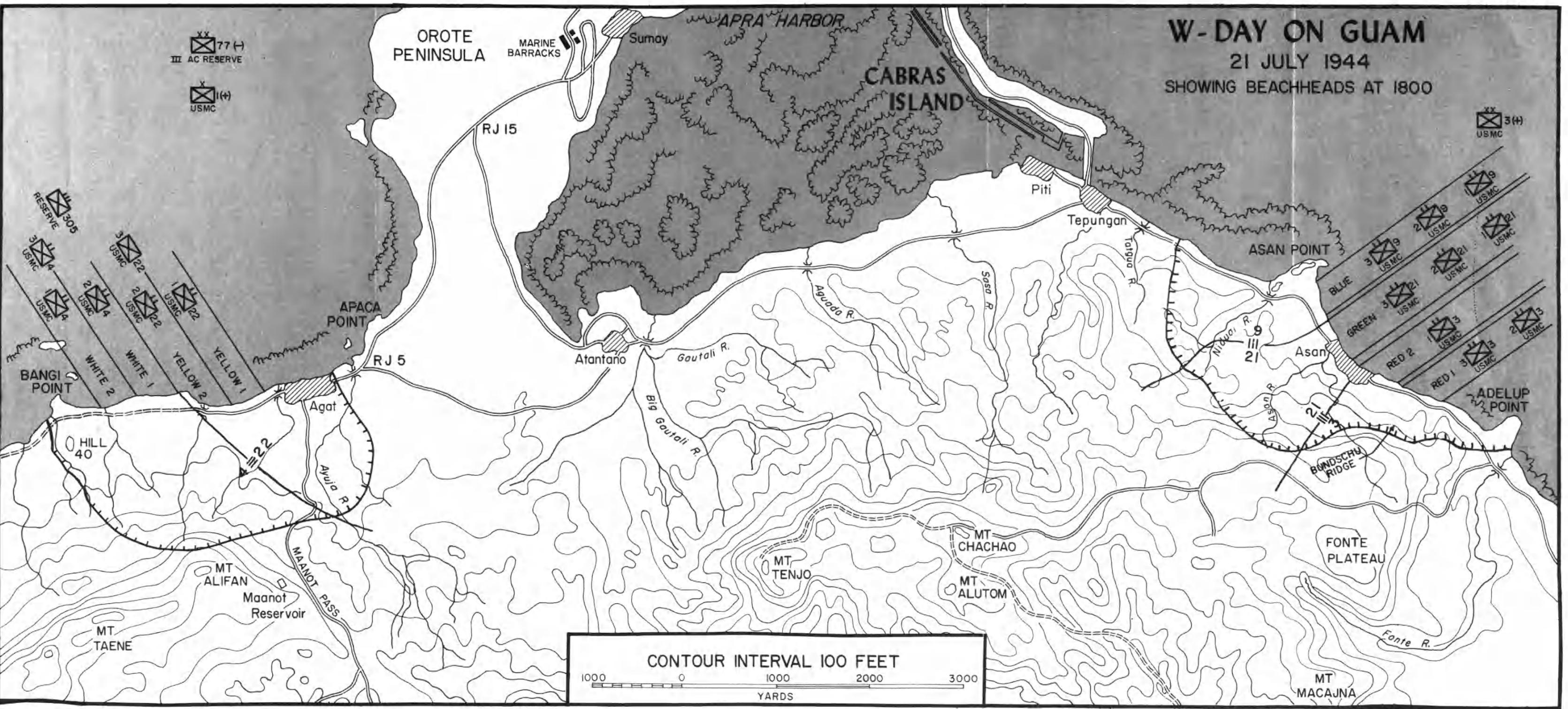


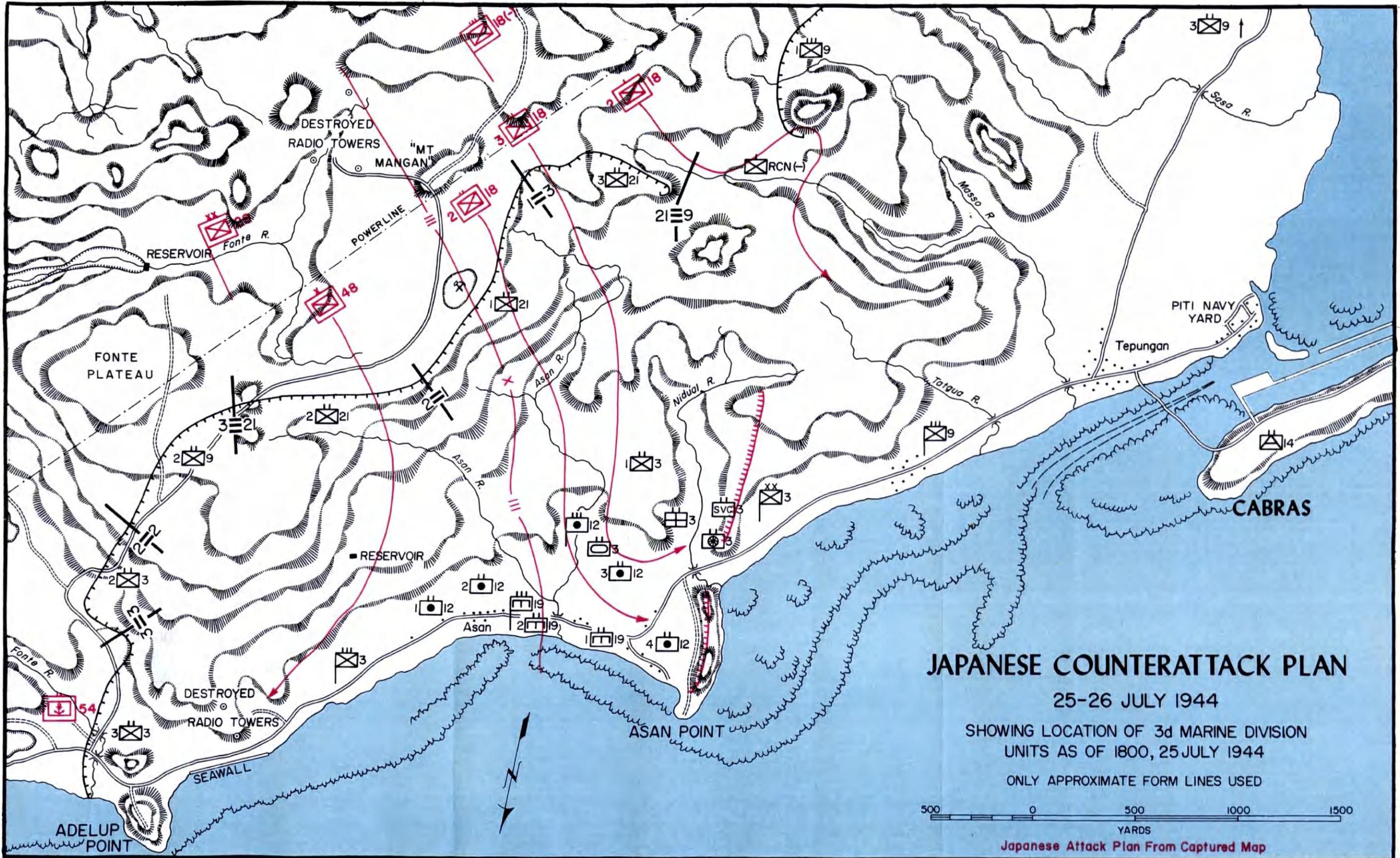
MAP VI

R.F. STIBIL

W-DAY ON GUAM

21 JULY 1944
SHOWING BEACHHEADS AT 1800





JAPANESE COUNTERATTACK PLAN

25-26 JULY 1944

SHOWING LOCATION OF 3d MARINE DIVISION
UNITS AS OF 1800, 25 JULY 1944

ONLY APPROXIMATE FORM LINES USED



Japanese Attack Plan From Captured Map