

A Brief History Of The 4th Marines



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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 4TH MARINES

by

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PREFACE

"A Brief History of the 4th Marines" is a concise narrative of the regiment since its initial activation over a half century ago. Official records of the Marine Corps and appropriate historical works were utilized in compiling this chronological. It is published for the information of those interested in the 4th Marines and in the events in which it has participated.



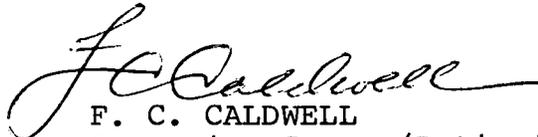
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FOREWORD

This historical reference pamphlet is the seventh of a series concerning the regiments and aircraft groups which comprise the regular Marine Corps. In time, it is planned to cover each of the major component units of present day divisions and aircraft wings in similar fashion. The narrative not only highlights the significant actions of the 4th Marines, but also furnishes a general history of Marine Corps activities in which it took part. In briefer form, it replaces and updates a comprehensive history of the regiment, Hold High the Torch, which was published by the Marine Corps in 1960 and is now out of print.

Final editing and preparation of the manuscript for publication was done by Henry I. Shaw, Jr., Chief Historian and Head, Histories Branch. Sergeant Michael L. Gardner typed the final draft. Maps were prepared by Sergeant Kenneth W. White. All illustrations are official Department of Defense (Marine Corps) photographs from the files of the Combat Pictorial Branch, G-3 Division of this Headquarters.



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A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 4TH MARINES

The Early Years

The 4th Marines is one of the more illustrious and colorful regiments in the Marine Corps. It has since its activation over a half century ago served throughout the world with distinction in both war and peace. The regiment was originally activated on 16 April 1914. Three years earlier, however, a unit with the numerical designation of 4th Regiment was activated for a very brief period. This regiment was provisional in nature. The intent behind its creation in April 1911 was that it be used primarily for expeditionary duty. It was later redesignated as the Provisional Battalion and then was deactivated on 12 July 1911.(1) The present 4th Marines, consequently does not trace its history and lineage back to this organization.

In the spring of 1914, relations between the United States and Mexico had deteriorated to an extremely low level. A very grave crisis developed early in April when a number of American sailors from the USS Dolphin were seized by Mexican authorities at Tampico. Although the bluejackets were soon released with apologies, the Mexicans refused to salute the American flag as demanded by Rear Admiral Henry T. Mayo, the senior U. S. naval officer present in the area. Tensions were heightened when 11 days later it was learned that a German vessel loaded with arms was about to land at Vera Cruz in violation of an earlier American embargo on such shipments. As a result, on 21 April, President Woodrow Wilson ordered United States naval forces to land and seize the customs house at Vera Cruz.(2) American military forces, in addition, were ordered to concentrate on the border and to embark for waters off Mexico.

One effect of this partial mobilization was the activation of the 4th Regiment of Marines at Puget Sound, Washington on 16 April 1914. The regiment was initially composed of the Field and Staff, the 25th, 26th, and 27th Marine Companies. Colonel Joseph H. Pendleton, who had prior expeditionary command experience in the Philippines and Nicaragua, was designated as the commanding officer. Two days after its activation, the 4th Regiment embarked on board the USS South Dakota and sailed for San Francisco. Upon the warship's arrival on the 21st, the same day of the landing at Vera Cruz, four companies from Mare Island joined the regiment. The 31st and 32d Companies embarked on board the South Dakota while the 34th and 35th Companies embarked on board the collier Jupiter. The regiment on the following day headed back out to sea, this time bound for Mexican waters.

With the arrival of the two ships in Mazatlan, the South Dakota was ordered to proceed further south. On 28 April, it steamed into Acapulco harbor and dropped anchor.(3) Reinforcements for the regiment arrived in Mazatlan a week and a half later. The USS West Virginia, which carried the reinforcements, had originally sailed from Puget Sound on 27 April with the 28th Company on board. The 36th Company, which had been at Mare Island, embarked on the ship at San Francisco on 2 May. The 4th Regiment was now comprised of 10 companies, all located in Mexican waters.(4)

The Marines maintained their vigil through May and June while preparing for a possible landing, if the situation ashore warranted it. Although no landing was necessary, the three ships with the regiment on board kept the Mexican coast under surveillance by cruising up and down the shoreline. By the end of June, tensions between Mexico and the United States had sufficiently eased to allow the withdrawal of the 4th Regiment from Mexican waters.(5) Thus ended the regiment's first expedition to Latin America, much to the disappointment of its personnel who had expected to see action.

The 4th Regiment returned to the United States in early July. Home base for the new unit was established at San Diego, California. Between 7 and 10 July, the regiment disembarked and went into quarters on North Island. There it remained through the end of the year, being reduced in strength by the deactivation of the 35th Company in July and the 36th Company in October.(6) Part of the regiment, the 1st Battalion, was ordered north to Mare Island in December. The battalion at this time was commanded by Major John T. Myers. He had gained fame as a hero in the defense of the legations at Peking during the Boxer Rebellion. Myers later was promoted to the rank of lieutenant general. The remainder of the regiment, consisting of the Field and Staff, the 25th, 26th, 27th, and 28th Companies, moved into new barracks in San Diego.

Major Myers and his men in the following February transferred to San Francisco to set up a model camp on the grounds of the Panama-Pacific Exposition. The exposition commemorated the 400th anniversary of Balboa's discovery of the Pacific Ocean while at the same time it celebrated the opening of the Panama Canal. San Diego also was observing the opening of the canal through the establishment of the Panama-California Exposition in that city. Once again a battalion from the 4th Regiment was asked to set up a model camp. This request was fulfilled by Major William N. McKelvy's 2d Battalion.

A new dispute between the United States and Mexico in June 1915 threatened to disrupt the temporary calm in the relations between the two countries. Such a possibility was occasioned by the threat of marauding Indians to the lives and property of Americans living in the Mexican state of Sonora. Mexico had



Former President T. R. Roosevelt visiting the Panama-California Exposition in 1915. Colonel J. H. Pendleton, Commanding Officer of the 4th Regiment, in the background. (USMC Photo #516302).



Marines in combat in the Dominican Republic. (USMC Photo #515027).

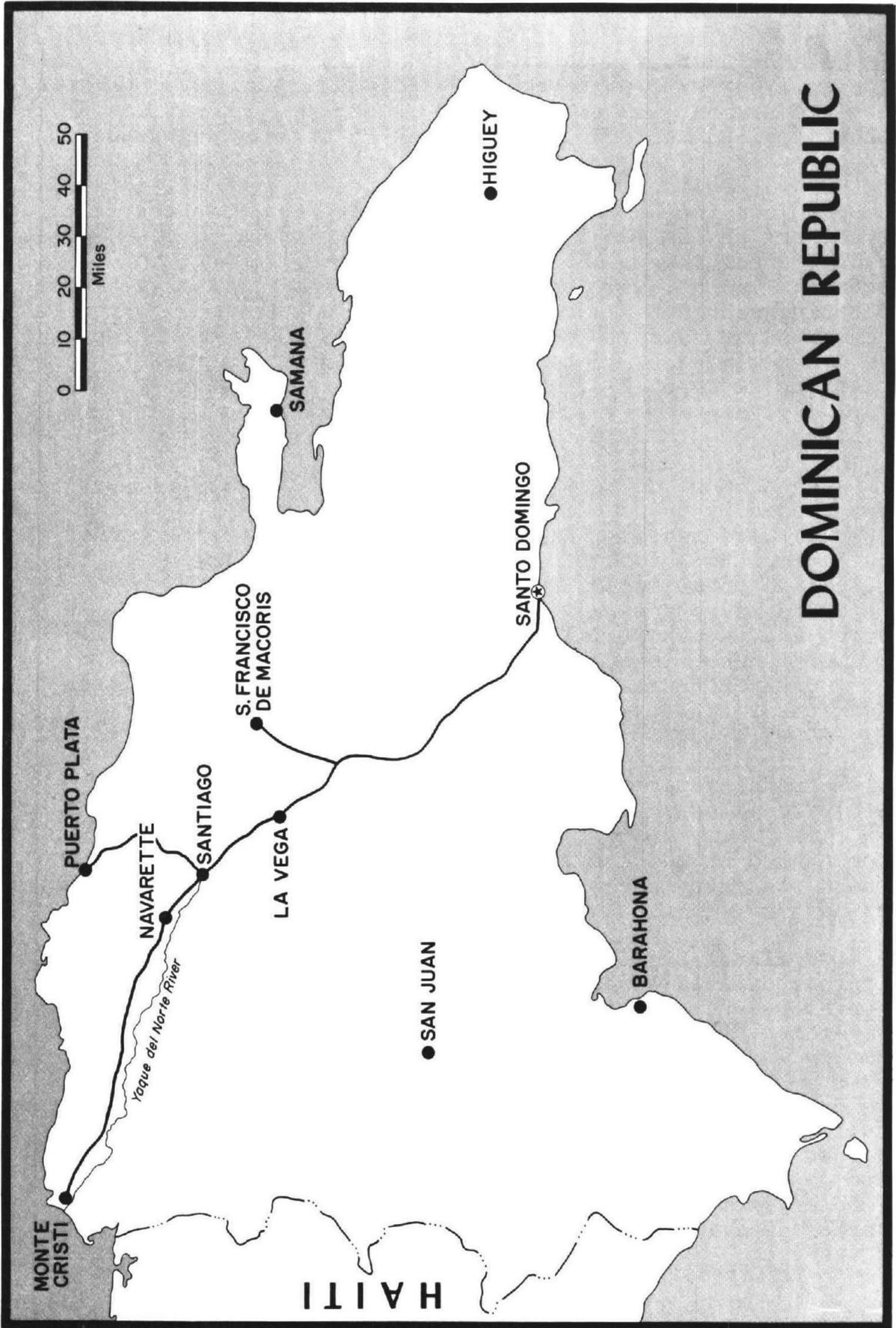
not taken any effective measures to prevent the Indians from attacking U. S. citizens. The American Government responded by dispatching the USS Colorado to the west coast of Mexico. On board the cruiser was 2/4, less the 27th Company which remained in San Diego. The vessel arrived off Guaymas on 20 June. As was the case in the previous year the Marines did not land. After a month in Mexican waters the Colorado returned to San Diego, arriving there on 30 July 1915. The battalion, however, did not disembark until 10 August. (8)

A few months later, elements of the regiment were again heading toward familiar waters. Civil strife caused by Mexican revolutionaries and Yaqui Indians necessitated the sending of an American force to the vicinity of the disturbances. On 25 November, the 1st Battalion sailed on board the USS San Diego from San Francisco. The regimental headquarters, the 25th, and 28th Companies boarded the ship for its journey two days later. As ordered, the San Diego anchored off Topolobampo; thus placing pressure on Mexican authorities to act to end the threat to American lives and property. The turmoil ashore, however, had subsided sufficiently by mid-December to allow for the recall of the Marines. The regiment, upon transferring to the USS Buffalo, proceeded north to Guaymas and thence to San Diego. The ship entered San Diego Bay early in February 1916, and all but the 1st Battalion disembarked. That battalion then sailed north to San Francisco to pick up its equipment. It rejoined the regiment shortly thereafter. (9)

The regiment, or elements of it, had in less than a year and a half embarked three times for expeditionary duty in Mexico. In each case no landing was required, nor did the regiment engage in combat. This would not be the case during the unit's next expedition to Latin America.

The Dominican Republic

In the spring of 1916, civil war broke out in the Dominican Republic and the Dominican Government was powerless to end the strife. The country had for years experienced something less than domestic tranquility. It had been in the past subjected to foreign intervention in one form or another as a result of the chaotic conditions that were continually present in the country. Intervention was nothing new therefore. The United States felt that the situation in 1916 could not be tolerated any further. Fears for the safety of Americans and other foreigners in the country arose among American Government officials. The Wilson Administration promptly decided to support the government of President Juan Jimenez, such as it was. American sailors and Marines from nearby Cuba and Haiti and the United States were ordered to intervene in May 1916. It was hoped that these forces would



eventually bring some stability to the Caribbean nation.

As the Americans entered Santo Domingo, the capital, the rebels withdrew to Santiago, the second largest city, where a rival government was established. American authorities in the country called for reinforcements as the rebels prepared to make a stand. The only Marines that could be spared were those of the 4th Regiment. On 6 June, the entire regiment entrained at San Diego for New Orleans. It boarded the USS Hancock three days later and sailed immediately for the troubled country. (10) Colonel Pendleton, upon the arrival of the regiment in Dominican waters, was designated commander of all naval forces operating ashore. His command included a number of ships' detachments and separate companies that already were deployed. The 4th Regiment subsequently made its initial landing at Monte Cristi on 21 June 1916. Preparations were promptly begun for a drive on Santiago which was held by rebel leader Desiderio Arias.

The advance on the city was begun on the 26th and was spearheaded by the regiment. Two columns moved toward Santiago from two different points. The main column, which included the 4th Regiment reinforced by artillery, departed Monte Cristi by road. The other column which included the 4th and 9th Companies of Marines and the Marine Detachments from the New Jersey and the Rhode Island left by train from the coastal town of Puerto Plata. This latter column under Major Hiram (Hiking Hiram) Bearss was to link up with Pendleton's force at Navarette for the final phase of the drive on Santiago.

During the first day of the operation, Colonel Pendleton's column made exceptionally good progress--advancing approximately 20 miles while encountering only a few scattered snipers. The first enemy fortifications, known as Las Trencheras, were encountered at the end of the first day. A strong force of rebels was entrenched in two lines along this ridge which dominated the road that the Marines had to march over.

Pendleton began preparations for the seizure of the position but delayed his attack until the following morning. A frontal assault was ordered. Pendleton brought up his artillery to cover the first line of trenches while a machine gun company was emplaced in a flanking position. The regiment, after working its way forward to effective firing positions, was drawn up in a line for the assault. With support from the artillery battery and from the machine guns, the infantry charged the enemy lines, only to be halted temporarily by heavy defending fire. The assault, however, was continued after fixed bayonets were ordered. This time the Marines were successful in forcing the rebels to withdraw from the first line of trenches.

After falling back to their second line of defense, the

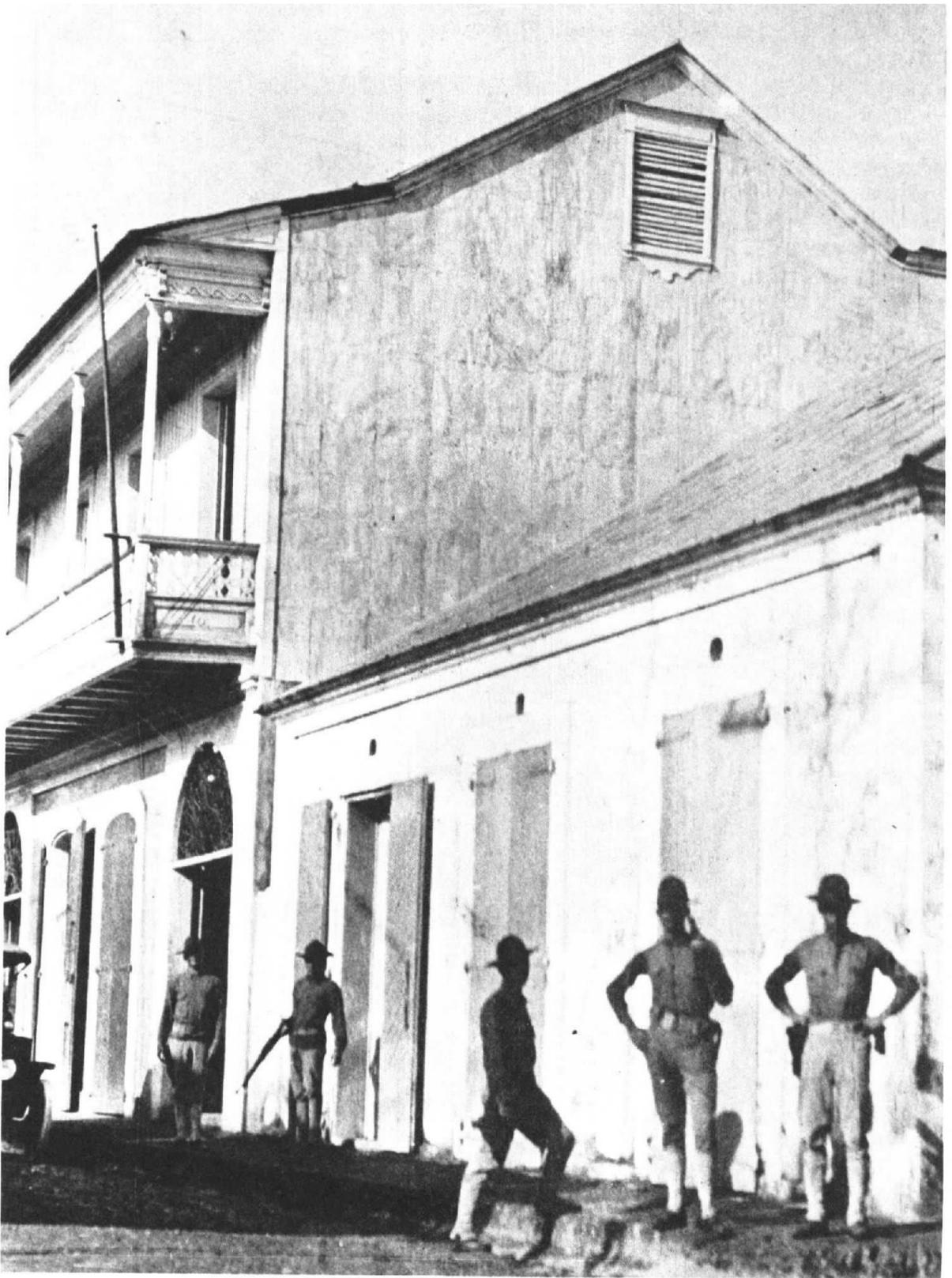
rebels were also forced in due course to flee from this line. Accurate Marine rifle fire had weakened the Dominicans' disposition toward any further resistance. Las Trencheras was seized by the Leathernecks at the cost to the regiment of one killed and four wounded. Five enemy bodies were found later; however, the natives reported the rebel losses were much greater. This encounter with rebel Dominicans was the first actual combat engagement for the 4th Regiment and it more than adequately met the test of its combat effectiveness. The significance of this battle lies in the fact that this was the first experience of Marines advancing with the support of modern artillery and machine guns.(11)

On the 28th, the Marines resumed their march as the rebels continued to withdraw to their stronghold at Santiago. The rebels in their retreat burned and destroyed a number of bridges while harassing the column with light attacks. One such probe occurred that evening. A rebel patrol struck at a Marine machine gun outpost but was easily repulsed with the Marines only suffering one wounded. Two more clashes occurred two days later. Marine casualties were again very light--one killed.(12) In these brief encounters the Dominicans had refused to make a stand. The next engagement proved to be somewhat different.

Information had been obtained to the effect that rebels were waiting for the Marines on a fortified ridge that bisected the road at Guayacanas. Pendleton ordered his Marines to advance against the position on 3 July 1916. The 26th Company drew the first fire from rebel outposts at 0800. The column was halted by Colonel Pendleton. The 1st and 2d Battalions of the 4th Regiment were brought up and ordered to attack. As the Marines pushed forward, they came under long range enemy rifle fire, necessitating the call-up of machine guns for support. The fighting continued until about noon when the Dominicans, who apparently had no stomach for further combat, abandoned their fortifications to the Marines.

As it turned out, this became the final engagement for the regiment before its entry into Santiago. Casualties for the Leathernecks amounted to one killed and eight wounded. Rebel casualties could not be determined. The battle was important in the history of the 4th Marines insofar as the regiment subsequently acquired its first Medal of Honor recipient. First Sergeant Roswell Winans, while manning his machine gun, displayed such exceptional valor that he was later awarded the nation's highest military honor. Sergeant Winans obtained his award for the bravado that he demonstrated when for a time he single-handedly raked enemy lines with his weapon. Then, when the gun jammed, he set about clearing it in full view of the Dominicans without regard to his personal safety.(13)

On Independence Day, the column, after a rather uneventful



Marines in front of Headquarters of the 4th Regiment in Santiago, Dominican Republic, July 1916. (USMC Photo #515281).

day's march except for an exchange of fire with a mounted enemy patrol, reached Navarette and joined forces with Major Bearss' detachment. (14) After sending the wounded back to the coast via the railroad, Pendleton, on 5 July, now with the two columns combined, moved out toward his final objective--Santiago. The rebels by this time were fairly-well demoralized following their unsuccessful encounters with the Marines. With the Americans approaching the city, a "peace commission" rode out from Santiago to parley with Colonel Pendleton. The Dominicans withdrew after a futile attempt was made to get him to delay his entry into the city. Pendleton decided to move quickly to occupy Santiago so as not to give the enemy time to reorganize its defense. He ordered his forces forward that night; by sunrise the Dominicans arose to find the Marines looking down on them from El Castillo, a hill which dominates the approaches to the city. The rebels wasted no time in arranging for the peaceful entry of the Marines. That afternoon, Santiago and its outlying defensive strongpoints--Castillo and Fortaleza San Luis--were occupied by Pendleton's Marines. (15)

Following the completion of the American occupation of the country in July, the Dominicans still continued to quarrel over the establishment of a cohesive government. This continued disunity led to the formation on 29 November 1916 of an American military government in the Dominican Republic. The country was then divided into zones for occupation purposes by the newly activated 2d Marine Brigade of which the 4th Regiment was a component unit. The 4th Regiment was assigned to the northern zone. Its primary mission was that of maintaining law and order. Regimental headquarters was established at Santiago with the numbered companies located elsewhere.

Most Dominicans complied with the provisions of the military government. In San Francisco de Macoris, however, the situation was somewhat different. Juan Perez, the provisional governor, and a band of followers had occupied a local fort and refused to lay down their arms. This was a direct violation of the directives that were promulgated by the military government. In the town, some 30 miles southeast of Santiago, were two companies of the 4th Regiment: the 31st and the 47th. First Lieutenant Ernest C. Williams, the commanding officer, decided to forcibly oust the Dominicans from their stronghold after they refused to evacuate their positions. Williams and 12 enlisted men on the night of 29 November crept as close to the entrance of the fort as possible without arousing suspicion. On a signal from Lieutenant Williams, the men made a dash for the open gate. The Dominicans, taken by surprise, were unable to slam the gate closed. The rebels were nonetheless able to let loose with a fusillade from the fort which cut down eight of the Marines in their rush for the gate. Williams and the remaining four men pushed their way through the entrance, firing their weapons as they burst into the fort. Within 10 minutes the fort was secured and the fight was over; the

Dominicans had either fled or surrendered. First Lieutenant Williams received the Medal of Honor for his leadership in the battle. This engagement was the last organized resistance that the 4th Regiment faced in the Dominican Republic, although minor patrol actions continued to occur for some time.(16)

Second Brigade units supported the military government for the next six years by garrisoning the country and carrying out the policies of the regime. One of the most important tasks of the Marines was suppression of banditry which at times was both difficult and frustrating for the Leathernecks. Organized banditry did not cease until mid-1922. After persistent and continuous efforts by the brigade, the most active bandit leaders by that year had either surrendered or had been captured or killed.(17) The 4th Regiment and the entire brigade had for years been actively occupied in disarming the general populace while attempting to control banditry. By July 1922, the 2d Brigade had collected about 53,000 firearms; 200,000 rounds of ammunition; and some 14,000 cutting weapons.(18)

American authorities and Dominican representatives eventually agreed in June 1922 to the withdrawal of United States forces from the country. A principal provision of this agreement was the creation of a provisional government to rule the nation until a duly elected one was established. On 21 October 1922, the Provisional Government took office in the Dominican Republic and, as a result, all civil functions were transferred to it from the American occupation forces. The 2d Brigade subsequently became a garrison force only.(19) The 4th Regiment as part of the American garrison remained in the Dominican Republic for almost two more years until elected government took office. The Provisional Government was replaced on 12 July 1924 with the swearing in of Horacio Vasquez as President. The American occupation was terminated shortly thereafter.(20) During the eight years that the 2d Brigade served in the country, its units were able to bring to the Dominican Republic a stability that had not been known for some time. Banditry and rebellion had been suppressed while relative peace and calm returned. Brigade casualties resulting from hostile action amounted to 16 killed and 54 wounded during this period.(21)

Even before official liquidation of the American presence, the 4th Regiment began preparatory moves to leaving the country. It was reduced in strength, and the personnel that remained were then organized into three lettered companies: A, B, and C. Company D, which consisted of personnel from other brigade units, was added later.(22) On 7 August 1924, the 4th Regiment, with over eight years of continuous duty in the Dominican Republic, departed and sailed from Santo Domingo on board the USS Henderson. The ship docked at San Diego, California, 18 days later. The regiment immediately disembarked and went into quarters at its old home.(23) A reorgan-

ization soon took place with personnel from the deactivated 7th Regiment transferring to the 4th Regiment. This was followed by an intensive training program which included maneuvers in Hawaii. (24)

Other than participating in training exercises the regiment's routine was normal for peacetime. One exception occurred, however, on 1 July 1925 when the 2d Battalion, consisting of 15 officers and 299 enlisted men, was ordered to Santa Barbara, California to aid local authorities. An earthquake had severely damaged the city. The battalion, besides rendering general assistance to the townspeople, assisted civilian officials in restoring order, guarding property, and preventing looting. (25) That fall saw a new structuring of the regiment with the addition of a third battalion which was activated on 1 October 1925. The new battalion's existence, at this time, was fairly short, for on 6 July 1926 the 3d Battalion was deactivated. (26)

The 4th Regiment in 1926 was again called upon to perform a peacekeeping mission. The Marine Corps for the second time during the 1920s had orders to protect the United States mail. Following a series of mail robberies, the Federal Government on 20 October 1926 directed the Marine Corps to furnish units for mail guard duty. The country was divided into two zones with the 4th Regiment designated as the Western Mail Guards. Brigadier General Smedley D. Butler with his headquarters in San Francisco was placed in charge of the Western Zone. Units of the 4th Regiment were deployed throughout the western states. Fourth Regiment Marines not only performed guard service on trains and trucks carrying the mail but were also detailed to guard post offices and railroad stations.

The employment of Marines as mail guards caused the number of mail robberies to drop sharply within a very brief space of time. On 10 January 1927, elements of the 4th Regiment began returning to San Diego. Withdrawal was completed in February with the last unit of the regiment arriving back at San Diego on the 24th. (27)

China Marines

Threats to the security of the International Settlement in Shanghai, China early in 1927 earmarked the 4th Regiment for a new and more colorful period in its history. With its stationing in Shanghai the regiment became known throughout the Marine Corps as the "China Marines." (*) Personnel of the

(*) During the 4th's tour in China six "China Marines" later went on to become Commandant of the Marine Corps: Alexander

4th Regiment for nearly 15 years protected American interests and maintained the American presence in Shanghai without ever having to resort to actual combat, although the situation in the city was at times extremely critical.

China had for years been troubled by internal disorders and civil wars. During times of crisis events in China often took on an anti-foreign tinge, prompting the call by foreign nationals for intervention by their governments on their behalf. The United States itself was not adverse to intervening, for on a number of occasions Marines and sailors landed to provide protection for American citizens and their property. In the mid-1920s, fighting broke out between opposing Chinese factions around the city of Shanghai which contained the largest foreign settlement in China. Twice in 1925 Marines landed to protect American interests. Two years later, a more serious threat loomed over Shanghai and the foreign interests located within the International Settlement of the city. Nationalist Chinese forces in early 1927 were pushing toward the city and crushing all those who opposed their advance. This caused consternation not only in the local Chinese community but also in the foreign settlement, because historically the defenders of a Chinese city when threatened with imminent defeat would loot the city and then abandon it to the opposing side who would in turn loot what remained. The fears of the foreign element in Shanghai were intensified, moreover, by the reputation of the Nationalists, especially the Communist faction, for being violently opposed to foreigners and their interests. Old China hands recalled the fanatic outbursts of the Boxers and urged their governments to send forces to Shanghai to protect them and their interests. In addition, officials of those countries who already had forces stationed in the city requested that their garrisons be reinforced.

The United States, feeling that the situation warranted intervention, ordered the transfer of about 340 Marines from Guam to Shanghai.(28) Their arrival in February did nothing to quiet the fears of American citizens. In the meantime, however, the 4th Regiment following its return from mail guard duty was dispatched to China. The regiment, less the 2d Battalion had embarked on board the USS Chaumont and sailed from San Diego on 3 February 1927. On board the transport was Major Alexander A. Vandegrift's 3d Battalion which had been reactivated on 10 January 1927 at San Diego.

Three weeks after its departure, the Chaumont dropped anchor off Shanghai, but the regiment did not disembark at this time.(29) The State Department had instructed Clarence Gauss, the consul general in Shanghai, not to request military aid

A. Vandegrift, Clifton B. Cates, Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr.,
Randolph McC. Pate, David M. Shoup, and Wallace M. Greene, Jr.

until danger to American life and property was well-defined.

(30) Immediate criticism was forthcoming from American citizens and other nationalities, because of the reluctance of American authorities to permit the deployment of the regiment.

(31) Nonetheless, the regiment was not permitted to land, although fighting around the International Settlement increased in intensity after the 4th's arrival. On 21 March, the Municipal Council of the International Settlement finally declared a state of emergency. This was the justification that American officials needed. Consul General Gauss approved the landing of the 4th Regiment that same day.

Once ashore, the regiment's initial mission became one of reinforcing the Marines already in Shanghai in the prevention of rioting and mob violence within the American sector. (32) Its main concern was protecting American lives and property. In so doing, the regiment cooperated with the forces of seven other nations in the protection of the International Settlement. The 4th Regiment was assigned to help maintain internal security along with Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch units. The Marines set up check points and established roving patrols in the eastern and western sectors of the zone. The regiment was limited to internal defense since its orders specified that it was not to come into conflict with Chinese troops. It was, therefore, not deployed at the barricades along the perimeter of the zone. But on several occasions, British and Italian forces manning the barricades asked and received machine gun support from elements of the regiment when the fighting threatened to spill over into the International Settlement. The foreign powers were determined to prevent the warring factions from entering their sectors of the city. The British, in applying this policy, were forced to open fire on those Chinese soldiers who attempted to break through the Settlement's defense lines. Although the 4th Regiment furnished support to the British, the Marines at no time found it necessary to open fire. (33)

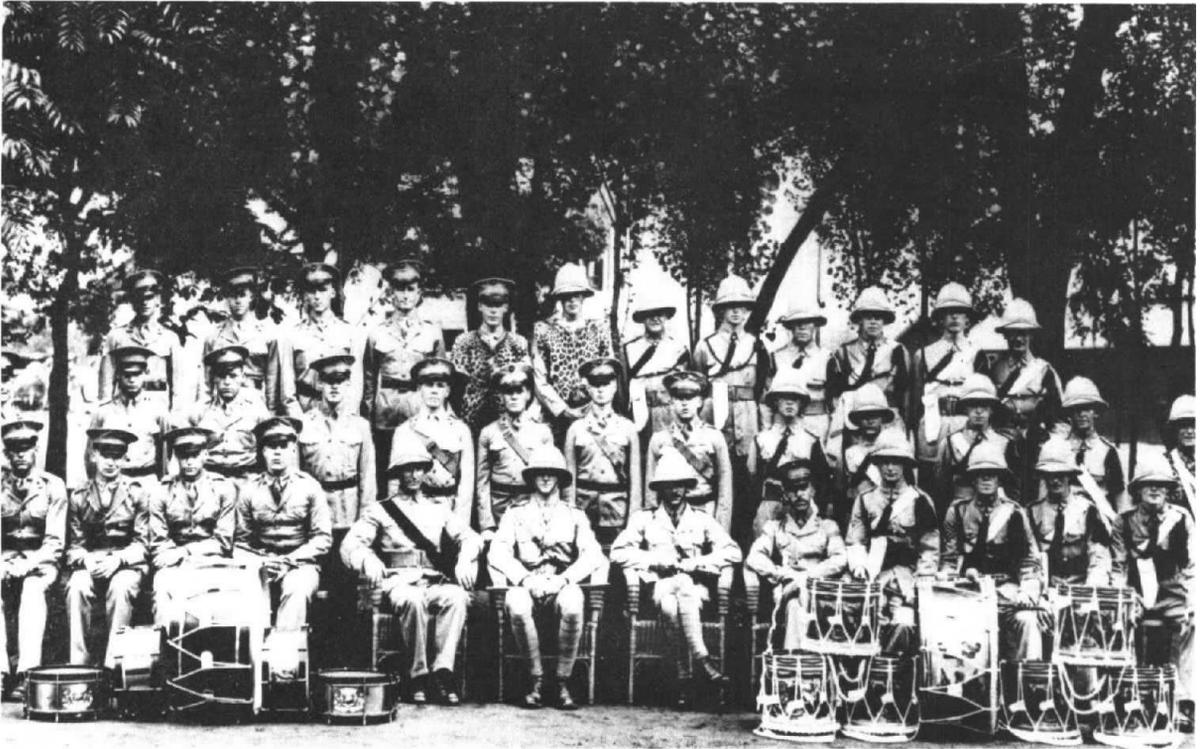
A few days after the landing of the 4th Regiment, Brigadier General Smedley D. Butler, a veteran of the Boxer Rebellion, arrived in Shanghai to take command of all Marine forces ashore. Butler's command was originally designated as the Marine Corps Expeditionary Force, Asiatic Fleet. The Expeditionary Battalion which had landed on 9 February was attached on 1 April to the 4th Regiment with the designation of Provisional Battalion. Shortly thereafter, on 4 April, the Expeditionary Force was redesignated as the 3d Marine Brigade. (34) The original instructions of the 4th Regiment, the main element of the brigade, were subsequently amplified by General Butler who now gave the regiment more leeway in accomplishing its mission. He specifically ordered the Marines to support the perimeter defenses, if necessary, to prevent a breakthrough. (35)

The American Government, fearing additional disorders in other parts of China, ordered more reinforcements to the country in April. On the 17th, the 3d Battalion, 6th Regiment; 1st Battalion, 10th Regiment; the 2d Battalion, 4th Regiment, which had remained behind in California; and a number of smaller units sailed from San Diego on board the SS President Grant, arriving at Olongapo in the Philippines on 4 May 1927. Upon arrival, 2/4 and 3/6 formed the nucleus of the Provisional Regiment. The newly activated regiment remained, however, in the Philippines for over a month before deploying to China. It finally sailed on board the Chaumont for the Asian mainland on 10 June. Although the regiment did enter the port of Shanghai, its final destination was elsewhere. Two and a half weeks after its departure, the Chaumont disembarked the Provisional Regiment at Tientsin, China to strengthen American forces in that area. (36)

As the Provisional Regiment was leaving the Philippines, the situation in Shanghai was improving considerably. Fighting had ceased and the foreign troops were pulled back from their defensive positions. The 4th Regiment discontinued its patrolling in May and began assuming the responsibilities associated with garrison duty. (37) The integrity of the International Settlement had been preserved and maintained through the coordinated efforts of British, Japanese, Italian, American, Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch military units and the Shanghai Volunteer Corps; no major intrusion into the zone by the warring Chinese occurred. The French had manned their own separate defenses in their concession and did not bring their sector into the overall defense scheme.

The easing of the threat to the International Settlement caused a reduction in strength for the 4th Regiment. During October 1927, two of its units went out of existence. On 4 October, the 2d Battalion at Tientsin was redesignated as the 2d Battalion, 12th Regiment. (With this redesignation 2/4's lineage and honors were transferred to 2/12. However, a new 2/4 would be activated in the future, but for lineage and honors purposes it would in no way be connected to the old 2d Battalion, 4th Regiment.) Three days after the 2d Battalion ceased to exist the Provisional Battalion was deactivated. (38)

Shanghai for the next few years was relatively peaceful, and garrison duty for the 4th Regiment passed uneventfully. One unique fact stands out during this period--the creation of the Fessenden Fifes and the subsequent establishment of close ties with the 1st Battalion, Green Howards, a famous British regiment. Under the auspices of Sterling Fessenden, the American chairman of the Shanghai Municipal Council and Civil Commandant of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps, a number of musical instruments were given to the 4th Regiment in late 1927 as a token of appreciation for its service during the previous crisis. The instruments were intended for use in the



Fessenden Fifes of the 4th Marines with members of the Green Howards in Shanghai, China. (USMC Photo #515703).



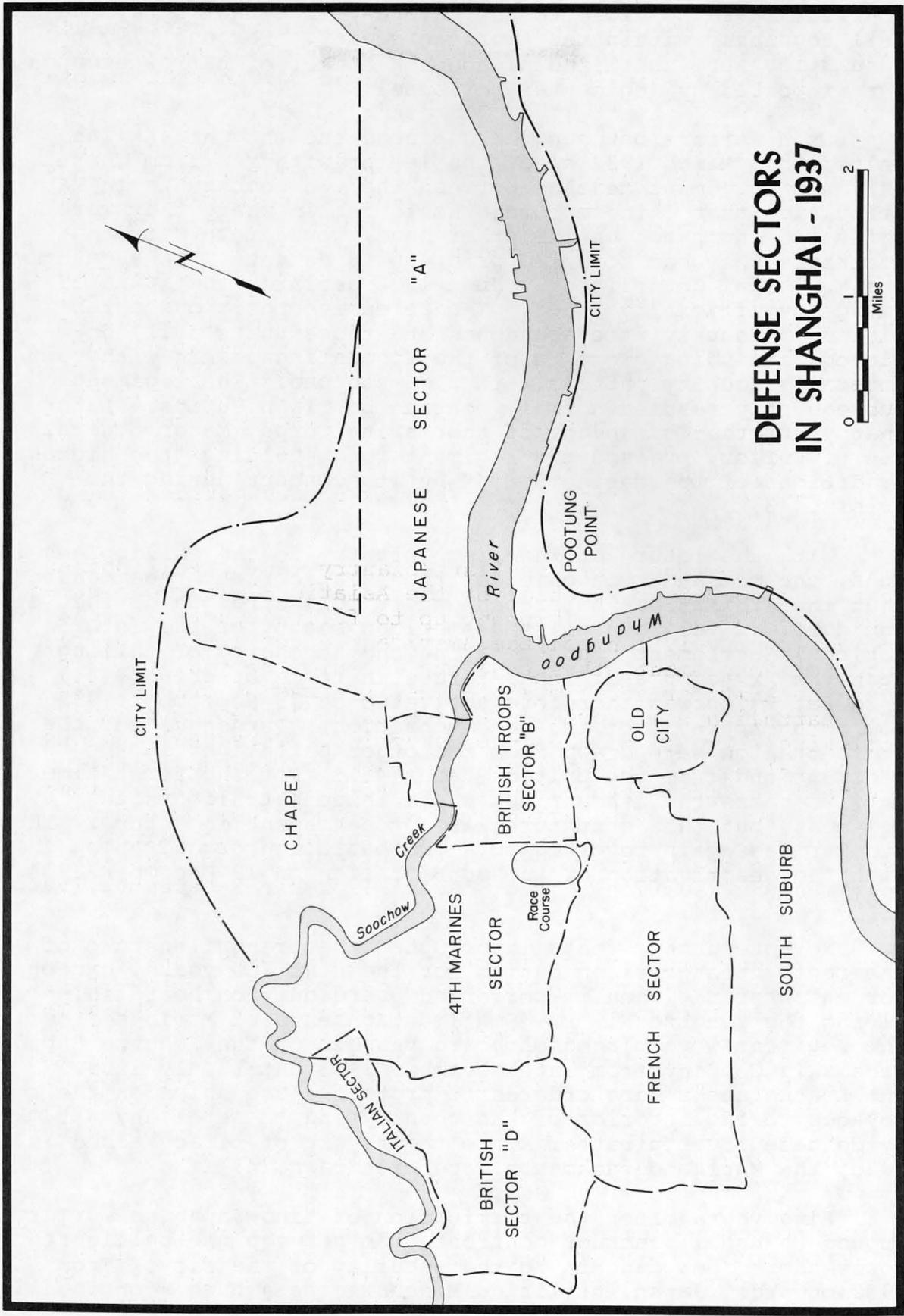
A 4th Marines' machine gun unit in defensive position in Shanghai during the 1932 crisis. (USMC Photo #527757).

formation of a fife and drum corps. The 4th Regiment, as a result, became the only unit in the Marine Corps to be equipped with a fife and drum corps, known as the Fessenden Fifes in honor of Sterling Fessenden. The Marines were taught to play the instruments by fifers and drummers of the Green Howards which was also stationed in Shanghai, thus cementing the close relationship between the two regiments which had been established during the emergency earlier that year. After the withdrawal of the Green Howards, the commanding officers of both regiments would exchange annual greetings to commemorate their service together in Shanghai. (39)

Continuing with its policy of reducing its forces in China, the United States ordered the evacuation of the 3d Marine Brigade in early 1928. The 4th Regiment was detached on 14 January, and a few days later most of those Marines who had been a part of the brigade with the exception of the 4th Regiment departed China. (40) The regiment, after three years in China, received its present designation; it was redesignated as the 4th Marines on 13 February 1930. Numbered companies in both battalions were redesignated as letter companies on the same day.

The security of the International Settlement was once again threatened in early 1932. The occasion for this new disturbance of the peace in the Shanghai area had its origins in the previous September when Japanese forces stationed in Manchuria began the outright seizure of the region. Defeated on the battlefield in the fall of 1931, the Chinese resorted to other measures to oppose the taking of Manchuria; the most effective being an economic boycott of all Japanese goods and products. The boycott was most noticeable in Shanghai--it was a center of anti-Japanese feeling. Hostility between Chinese and Japanese civilians erupted into bloody clashes between the two groups in January 1932. In retaliation, the Japanese garrison in the city attacked regular Chinese Army units in neighboring Chapei. (41) The Shanghai Municipal Council on 28 January 1932 declared a state of emergency and requested the 4th Marines be used in guarding the boundaries of the International Settlement. The regiment was deployed immediately along Soochow Creek, the dividing line between the zone and Chapei. Elements of the regiment also assisted the civilian police in patrolling the Settlement as was the case in 1927. The mission assigned to the 4th Marines was one of preventing the fighting from spilling over into the zone.

In early February, the garrison in Shanghai was reinforced by the arrival of Marines from the Philippines and from the Marine detachment on board the USS Houston. The Army's 31st Infantry, moreover, was ordered to China to strengthen American forces there. Fighting between the antagonists in the meanwhile continued throughout the month. The regiment's defensive positions were constantly exposed to fire from both sides. The



**DEFENSE SECTORS
IN SHANGHAI - 1937**



conflict raged so close to the Marines' line that stray shells fell regularly within the American sector. Fortunately, no casualties were sustained although a number of narrow escapes were reported by regimental personnel.

Open warfare between the Japanese and the Chinese was halted on 3 March 1932 after the latter withdrew from Chapei. (42) An agreement reached between the two combatants in May stipulated that Chinese forces would remain where they were while the Japanese, on the other hand, would return to the positions they had occupied prior to 28 January. Consequently, the Municipal Council on 13 June 1932 declared the state of emergency officially ended. The defensive positions established in January were abandoned and those units still deployed, including elements of the 4th Marines, were withdrawn. Internal security patrols were also stopped. The regiment subsequently resumed normal, routine garrison duties. Later that year, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Major General Ben H. Fuller, praised the regiment for upholding "the highest traditions of the Marine Corps" by its conduct during the crisis. (43)

With the return of the 31st Infantry to the Philippines in June, the commander in chief of the Asiatic Fleet recommended that the 4th Marines be brought up to full strength so that it could effectively control the American sector of the International Settlement, thus negating the necessity of calling upon the Army for additional forces in times of crises. (44) A 2d Battalion was therefore activated on 18 September 1932 following approval of the recommendation. Personnel for the new battalion were drawn from the other battalions in the regiment and from the United States (45). For the first time in five years the 4th Marines was a three-battalion-size regiment, but this structure was not permanent in nature. The 4th Marines again reverted to a two battalion organization with the deactivation of the 3d Battalion on 19 December 1934. (46)

No noteworthy events interrupted the tranquil nature of the regiment's garrison duties for the next few years, except for an interlude when it performed guard duty on board ships plying the Yangtze River. Small detachments of Marines from the regiment were placed on board vessels of the Yangtze Rapid Steamship Company from late November 1933 until July 1935. The Leathernecks were ordered to protect these ships on their voyages to the interior of the country and to repel any attacks by Chinese river pirates. Once the threat of piracy eased in 1935, the Marine detachments were withdrawn. (47)

Five years after the termination of Sino-Japanese warfare around Shanghai, another confrontation between the belligerents foreshadowed new dangers to the security of the city. From 1932 onwards, Japan, utilizing Manchuria as a base, continually

made encroachments on Chinese territory in north China in an effort to bring more area under its influence. Japanese inroads into China proper led to a clash between Japanese and Chinese forces at the Marco Polo Bridge near Peiping on 7 July 1937. The battle was used as an excuse by Japan to send more troops to China. The outbreak of open hostilities was inevitable. As tensions mounted, two members of the Japanese military were killed in Shanghai by a Chinese. Japan retaliated by sending a number of warships to the city; the landing of troops followed. The Nationalist Government in the meantime began its own movement of troops to the beleaguered city. Bitter fighting eventually broke out between the two antagonists.

The 4th Marines was once again deployed along Soochow Creek at the time of the actual outbreak of fighting. The defense of the International Settlement was coordinated with the other powers as was the case in previous crises. The 4th Marines was ordered to prevent both belligerents from entering the American sector "by means other than rifle fire." Gunfire could only be used as a last resort.(48) Recalling the crisis of 1932 and feeling that the present crisis could have disastrous consequences, the American Government decided to send reinforcements. The 2d Marine Brigade under Brigadier General John C. Beaumont, former commanding officer of the 4th Marines, sailed from San Diego in late August. The brigade, arriving at Shanghai on 19 September, was composed principally of the following organizations: the headquarters element; Battery F, 2d Marine Anti-Aircraft Battalion; and the 1st and 2d Battalions, 6th Marines. The 4th Marines was attached to the brigade on the 20th.(49)

Heavy fighting between Japanese and Chinese forces in Shanghai persisted throughout September and October. After well over a month of continual employment in defensive positions along the perimeter, the regiment was relieved on 23 September by other 2d Brigade units. While on the perimeter, personnel from the 4th Marines had constantly been exposed to the danger of small arms fire and stray shells and bombs. Re-deployment of the regiment back along the front lines came after a 10-day rest period. Fighting around Shanghai ended a month later with Japan in full control of the surrounding territory.(50) The 2d Marine Brigade, less the 4th Marines, was withdrawn as an uneasy peace settled over the city. The 4th Marines, as in the past, became the sole protector of American interests in Shanghai following the departure of the brigade on 17 February 1938.(51)

Although fighting in the area had ceased, tensions in the International Settlement did not fully subside. Japan, with its jurisdiction of territory adjacent to the city now assured, began a campaign to undermine the position of the Western Powers in the International Settlement. The main concern of



4th Marines on parade in Shanghai, China in 1937. (USMC Photo #521007).



Lieutenant Colonel Herman Anderson and the staff of 2/4 on Corregidor in early 1942. (USMC Photo #58736).

the 4th Marines thus became one of thwarting any Japanese attempt to change the status quo of the American sector. A Japanese move in this direction would probably result in little or no assistance to the 4th Marines from the other foreign military contingents, because of their reduction in strength. The situation became more dubious and uncertain with the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939. The value of Italian troops in preserving the integrity of the zone was doubtful because of Italy's membership along with Japan in the Axis alliance. The summer of 1940 saw a worsening of conditions as Italy was now involved in a shooting war with Great Britain and France. In June, France was defeated. The repercussions were felt in Shanghai as the French garrison on orders from the Vichy Government was neutralized from use in opposition to the Japanese. Two months later Britain withdrew her forces because of pressing needs elsewhere.(52) The 4th Marines, therefore, became the only obstacle in Japan's designs on the International Settlement.

The United States seriously began considering the evacuation of its forces from China following the growth of Japanese power and hegemony in the country. Admiral Thomas C. Hart, commander in chief of the Asiatic Fleet, felt that war was inevitable and began pulling out those units under his command that were in exposed positions along the Chinese coast. He also recommended that the 4th Marines be withdrawn from Shanghai but no action was taken on this suggestion.(53) By September 1941, conditions in China were so grave that officials in Shanghai strongly urged the evacuation of all naval personnel from north China, including the 4th Marines. Information had been obtained indicating the Japanese military intended within a short time to seize the entire International Settlement. Incidents were planned by the Japanese so as to give them an excuse to move troops into the American sector. The regiment was placed on alert and ordered to watch for terrorists.(54)

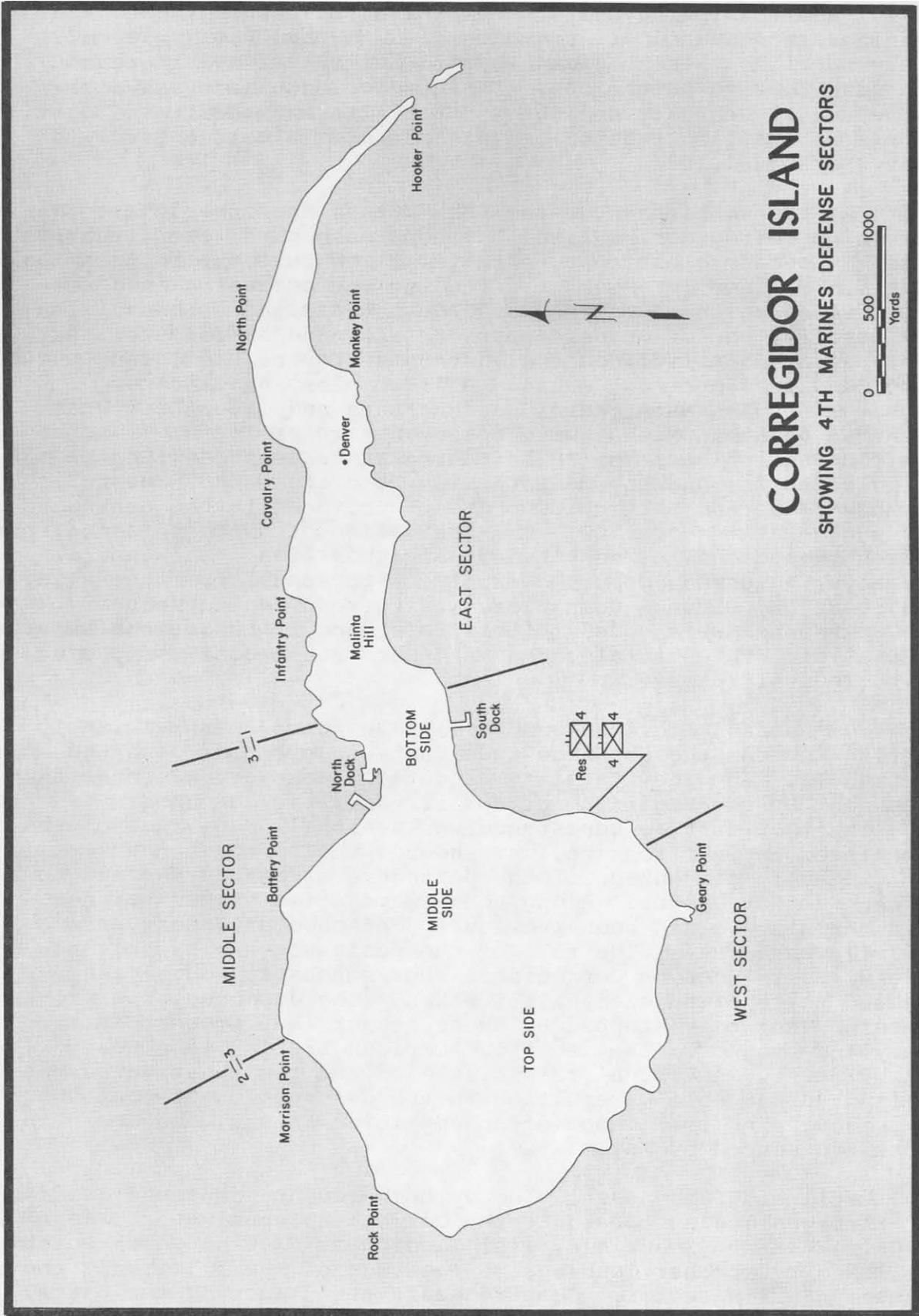
Washington finally consented to the withdrawal of the 4th Marines in the fall because of the increasingly perilous situation and the untenable position of the regiment. Permission for the evacuation was received on 10 November 1941. Plans for its departure that had been drawn up previously were immediately put into effect. The first contingent, consisting of the 1st Battalion and part of the Headquarters, embarked on the newly arrived President Madison and sailed for the Philippines 17 days after the arrival of the evacuation order. The next day, 28 November, the rest of the regiment boarded the President Harrison and also sailed for the Philippines.(55) The era of the "China Marines" thus came to an end.

World War II

The first echelon arrived at Subic Bay on 30 November, followed the next day by the second. The regiment, shortly after the completion of its transfer to the Philippines, was given the responsibility of protecting the Olongapo Naval Station and the naval base at Mariveles. With war immediately on the horizon, the 4th Marines began frantic preparations to make itself ready for that possibility. Although war was expected, it broke out earlier than had been anticipated. Japan launched a sneak attack on the Philippines on 8 December 1941 to coincide with its strike at Pearl Harbor. These attacks, initially, were in the form of bombing and strafing runs on American installations. It was not until four days after the beginning of hostilities that the regiment first engaged the Japanese. Enemy planes made their first attack on Olongapo on the 12th and were met by fire from the Marines' rifles and .30 caliber machine guns, the only weapons available to the regiment. (56)

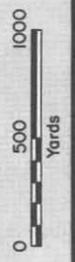
While air raids against Olongapo continued, the Japanese pressed forward with a ground attack on Manila. They originally landed on Luzon on the 10th. A major assault occurred 12 days later when the enemy came ashore in the Lingayen Gulf area. Manila's capture appeared inevitable. When the enemy neared the city the 4th Marines, now under Army control, was ordered to evacuate its positions at Olongapo. Christmas Eve witnessed the beginning of the destruction of all installations and the withdrawal to Mariveles where the 1st Battalion had been deployed since 8 December. The regiment's move to Mariveles was subsequently followed by its transfer to Corregidor, the island fortress off the southern tip of Bataan. (57) The Marines were immediately given the task of preparing beach defenses on the island, a mission originally entrusted to the Army. As the enemy bombed Corregidor, the Marines worked day and night on strengthening its defensive installations. Antiboat booms were constructed, mines laid, tank traps and trenches dug, and barbed wire strung at potential landing sites. (58)

Once the war had started the regiment's composition and structure was altered. The regiment, which had been understrength for some time, was greatly increased in size. The Marine Barracks at Olongapo was deactivated and its personnel were transferred to the 4th Marines on the 22d of December. The regiment was again reinforced the day after Christmas by the arrival of the 1st Separate Battalion which had been guarding Cavite. This battalion was redesignated as the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines, making the regiment a three-battalion-size organization for the first time in seven years. (60) It continued to expand in size over the next four months, thus becoming one of the strangest military organizations in Marine Corps history. Most of the additional personnel came from the Army,



CORREGIDOR ISLAND

SHOWING 4TH MARINES DEFENSE SECTORS



Navy, and Philippine units. Members of the strengthened 4th Marines represented all segments of U. S. and Philippine military services. The regiment by mid-April 1942 had increased in size to five battalions. The Reserve Battalion was activated on 19 February and the 4th Battalion was activated on 9 April. This latter battalion was composed almost entirely of Navy personnel. (61)

As the weeks passed, the 4th Marines and other units garrisoning Corregidor realized the hopelessness of the situation when it became clear that no relief force would be forthcoming. The 4th Marines' mission of defending the beaches gained new importance as the Japanese moved down the Bataan Peninsula. Originally, the beach defenses were assigned as follows: the 1st Battalion maintained the eastern sector of the island which included the important Malinta Hill complex, the site of General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters and later Lieutenant General Jonathan M. Wainwright's headquarters for U. S. forces in the Philippines; the 3d Battalion was entrusted with the middle sector; and the 2d Battalion held the western sector. Headquarters and Service Companies functioned in the beginning as a general reserve. (62) The activation of two more battalions strengthened the regiment's defensive position. The general reserve, which was composed mainly of personnel from the Headquarters and Service Companies, was reorganized in February. New personnel were added to this force and it became the Reserve Battalion. This battalion and 4/4 were subsequently employed as a regimental reserve.

On Bataan, American and Philippine forces were valiantly trying to stem the Japanese tide that was sweeping down the peninsula. The inevitability of defeat, however, was more than apparent by the beginning of April. American commanders, feeling that further resistance was useless in the face of the continued enemy offensive, surrendered their forces on 9 April. Only a small percentage of the defenders of Bataan managed to escape to Corregidor. Among these were a few members of the 4th Marines who had been previously detached in January for service on Bataan. The fall of the peninsula now brought new pressures to bear on Corregidor. For months it had been subjected to repeated enemy air strikes. The Japanese, with Bataan secured, not only stepped up these attacks but brought in artillery and subjected the isolated American bastion to a heavy bombardment. A virtual rain of shells and bombs saturated the island during April, resulting in the destruction of most beach defenses. The likelihood of an amphibious assault became much more pronounced by May.

Following an unusually heavy bombardment, Japanese landing craft began moving toward Corregidor on the evening of 5 May 1942. The enemy made his first landing at 2300 on North Point, followed by further landings to the west of the Point; all took place in 1/4's sector. Despite heavy resistance by the battal-

ion and severe losses to the Japanese, the enemy was able to acquire a toehold on the island. The 1st Battalion doggedly resisted the advance; nonetheless, the Japanese were able to push forward, severing communications within the area and cutting off elements of the battalion from those positions defending Malinta Hill. The Reserve Battalion, as a result, was ordered to the area to aid the beleaguered 1st Battalion. The Reserve Battalion, after moving up to the line of battle, launched three unsuccessful counterattacks. All took place in the area around Denver Battery, a strategic American anti-aircraft gun position which stood on high ground south of Cavalry Point and which had been overrun by the enemy. Colonel Samuel L. Howard, the 4th Marines' commanding officer, committed the 4th Battalion to the battle following the failure of the first three assaults. Another counterattack was launched at daybreak; this time it was spearheaded by 4/4. The attack at first gained some ground but stalled when the Japanese began landing tanks on the beachhead. Once the American attack had faltered the Japanese unleashed a terrific artillery bombardment on the Marines' lines from nearby Bataan.

The situation grew more perilous for the Marines by mid-morning, although 2/4 and 3/4 had not yet been committed. Concern over possible new landings in other areas prescribed the necessity of maintaining these units in their positions and not employing them in the battle. No major landings, however, occurred that morning; the Japanese instead concentrated on expanding the beachhead that had already been seized. The enemy continued to push towards Malinta Hill; General Wainwright's headquarters was in jeopardy. The situation grew worse when it was learned that the Marine defenders' ammunition was almost exhausted and all their heavy guns had been destroyed.(64) Feeling that further resistance was useless and fearing a possible massacre of 1,000 sick and wounded personnel in Malinta Tunnel, General Wainwright decided to surrender. At 1200 the surrender went into effect.(65) Isolated pockets of Marines, however, continued fighting for four more hours until the surrender order reached them. Colonel Howard, in the meantime, ordered the national and regimental colors of the 4th Marines burned to prevent their capture. He then led his men into captivity. As of noon on 6 May 1942, the 4th Marines temporarily ceased to exist.

Rebirth

The capture of the regiment forced it into a state of limbo, but the Marine Corps had no intention of permanently relegating such an illustrious unit to history: The 4th Marines was slated for rebirth! Accordingly, it was reborn on 1 February 1944 when it was reconstituted from units of the 1st Raider Regiment. This unit itself was formed by the consoli-

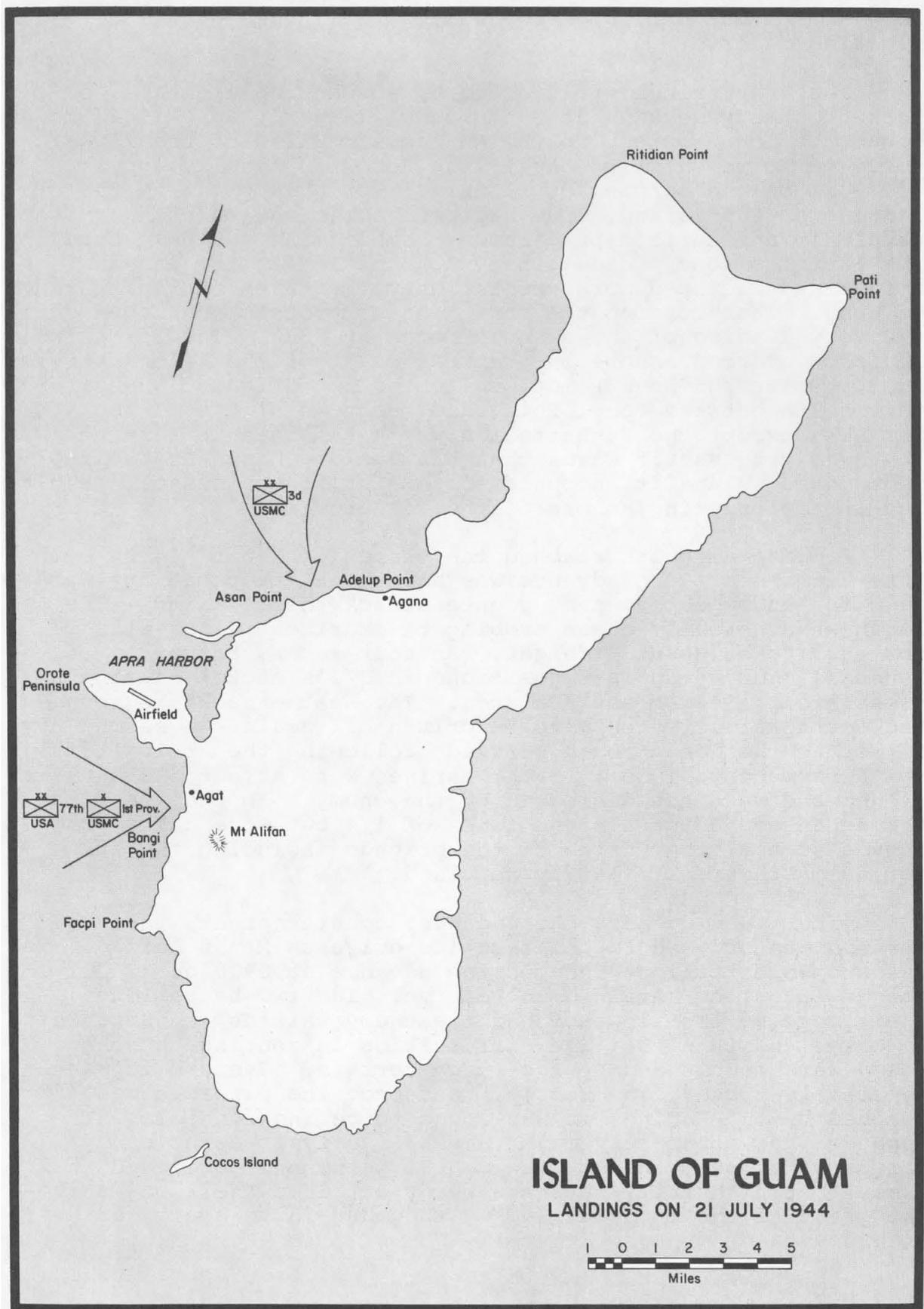
dation of four separate raider battalions. These battalions had originally been activated in 1942 and were organized and trained for commando-type operations. The raider battalions were subsequently employed in this capacity on Makin Island, on Guadalcanal, in the Central Solomons, and on Bougainville. But by the beginning of 1944, the need for the specialized services of the raiders had ceased to exist. It had been superseded by the demand for additional regular infantry regiments. (67)

Partly as a result of fulfilling the requirement for more infantry regiments and partly because of the desire to preserve the 4th Marines lineage and honors, this regiment was reactivated on Guadalcanal by the following changes in designation: the Headquarters and Service Company, 1st Raider Regiment became Headquarters and Service Company, 4th Marines; the 1st Battalion, 1st Raider Regiment became the 1st Battalion, 4th Marines; the 4th Battalion, 1st Raider Regiment became the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines; and the 3d Battalion, 1st Raider Regiment became the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines. The 2d Battalion, 1st Raider Regiment was deactivated and its personnel were absorbed by the newly activated Regimental Weapons Company of the 4th Marines. (68) This reactivation was unique insofar as the lineage and honors of both the "old" 4th Marines and the 1st Raider Regiment were passed on to this new unit.

The first mission for the 4th Marines after its rebirth was the seizure of Emirau Island in the St. Mathias Group. The objective of this operation was the construction of airfields so that American planes could more easily bomb the huge Japanese base at Rabaul. The regiment, having been recently attached to the I Marine Amphibious Corps, sailed from Guadalcanal on 17 March. Three days later, it reached its destination and began landing on the island. The Leathernecks having moved inland found no traces of the enemy but learned from the natives that the Japanese had withdrawn some time earlier. The regiment was relieved after a brief stay and was back on Guadalcanal by mid-April. Its return was followed by its assignment along with the 22d Marines to the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade for participation in the forthcoming campaign for the recapture of Guam. (69)

Guam

Guam was important from the standpoint that its recapture (it had been seized by the Japanese on 10 December 1941) would provide the United States with air bases to attack Japan while also affording a good anchorage for the Navy. Major General Roy S. Geiger's III Amphibious Corps, with the 3d Marine Division and the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade as its major components, was given the task of retaking the island. The



Army's 77th Infantry Division was initially designated as a floating reserve.

The 4th Marines, reinforced by supporting elements, embarked on Navy vessels at Guadalcanal in early June 1944 and began the long journey to the Marianas. Units of the invasion force on board ships of Naval Task Force 53 finally appeared off Guam on the morning of 21 July. For days prior to the landing on the island, Guam had been subjected to the heaviest naval air and surface preparatory bombardment yet delivered in the Pacific. Unexpectedly heavy casualties in the landings on Saipan had dictated more precautionary measures for the taking of Guam. That morning the softening-up process continued until the very landing of the assault force at 0832. The 3d Marine Division stormed ashore on the west coast of the island between Adelup Point and Asan Point, while the 1st Brigade landed further south between Bangi Point and the town of Agat. The 4th Marines, except the 3d Battalion which remained in reserve, was in the first assault waves that hit the beaches. As the regiment moved inland it encountered some stiff resistance, resulting in the ordering ashore of the 3d Battalion.

Regimental units reached the slopes of Mount Alifan by late afternoon. The advance was halted and preparations were made for an expected enemy counterattack that evening. The Japanese eventually began probing the Marines' lines with mortar fire at about midnight. An hour later, the enemy launched a drive against positions in 3/4's sector causing a breakthrough in Company K's area. The Leathernecks regrouped and counterattacked only to be driven off again. A second try to retake the lost ground was made following the arrival of reinforcements. This time the Marines were able to hold their ground and were not dislodged by the enemy. In the meantime, the Japanese had struck the lines of 1/4 but were driven back. They also hit other units of the brigade including the 22d Marines but were similarly repulsed.

After turning back the Japanese counterattack, the 4th Marines was ordered to continue its drive on Mount Alifan. The 1st and 3d Battalions resumed the advance at 0900 on 22 July. The 2d Battalion remained in reserve. The two battalions in their move up the slopes found the enemy waiting, entrenched in caves and tunnels. The difficulties in routing out the enemy were compounded by the rough terrain. The summit was especially rugged; so much so, that once the pinnacle was reached by the Marines it was found to be indefensible. The Japanese had apparently made the same analysis as no enemy forces were found there. Regimental personnel concluded their assault at nightfall, having already attained their objective--the crest of the mountain. They then dug in to await further orders.



Marines moving up with tank support in the drive on Orote Peninsula during the recapture of Guam. (USMC Photo #91371).



Colonel Allen Shapley, Commanding Officer of the 4th Marines, pointing out an objective for a forthcoming battle on Okinawa in May 1945. (USMC Photo #123072).

Two days later, 2/4, which had been in reserve, was committed to assist the 22d Marines in its sweep across the neck of the Orote Peninsula. There the Leathernecks found Japanese resistance to be extremely stubborn. Heavy fighting had weakened the 22d Marines so as to delay temporarily the projected campaign for the seizure of the peninsula. The other two battalions of the 4th Marines were thus alerted and, subsequently, ordered to move up for participation in the assault. The Japanese, in the meantime, had failed to take advantage of the precarious situation along the lines of the 22d Marines. They failed to counterattack on the night of the 24th but waited until the following evening to strike at the Marines. By that time, however, the regiment was far better prepared to meet any counteroffensive. The enemy attack proved to be a wild, head-long, banzai charge at the 22d Marines' perimeter. The onslaught was nonetheless beaten back by the Marines with the Japanese sustaining severe losses. A platoon from Company A, 1/4, which had been brought up to assist the 22d Marines, was the only unit from the 4th Marines to engage the enemy in this encounter. The platoon during the battle killed an estimated 250 of the Japanese who were assaulting the lines of the 22d Marines.

Shortly after daybreak on the 26th, the 4th Marines led off the offensive on the Orote Peninsula. The 22d Marines jumped off an hour later and joined in the engagement. Both regiments in the next three days had to fight their way through determined pockets of enemy defenders, causing the postponement of the peninsula's final capture until 29 July. Included in the casualties for this operation was Lieutenant Colonel Samuel D. Puller, the executive officer of the 4th Marines, who was killed on the 27th by fire from a hidden machine gun.

After the taking of Orote, the 4th Marines was deployed to the area south of Mount Alifan to conduct patrol operations while the 3d Division and the Army's 77th Division began a concerted drive northward up the island. The brigade, including the 4th Marines, was not committed to this final thrust at the enemy until 7 August. It had been decided to employ the brigade at this time to avoid overextension of the lines of the two divisions. The 1st Brigade advanced rapidly against only sporadic resistance once it entered the battle. When Ritidan Point, the northernmost point on Guam, was reached on 10 August the island was declared secure. The cost in casualties to the 4th Marines for the Guam campaign was over 900 killed and wounded.

The regiment remained on Guam for nearly three weeks following the end of organized resistance, participating primarily in mopping-up operations. By 30 August, all units of the regiment had embarked for the return trip to Guadalcanal. (70) While some of its elements were still at sea, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was redesignated the 6th Marine

INVASION OF OKINAWA 1 APRIL 1945

