

CHAPTER 7

What's Next?

Background—Camp Life, 1944-45—Okinawa

Background

Can you believe it? No New Zealand! Not even the camp we built on Hawaii. We're going back to Saipan, where we just had our bloodiest battle so far. Worse than that, we have to build another camp. It ain't ethical, it ain't logical, but it's Marine Corps.

Quit your bitchin', Marine, what did you expect?

The battles of Saipan and Tinian were over. The United States now had airfields on both islands from which bombers could reach the home islands of Japan only 700 miles away. The B-29 raids from those airfields increased daily. Only trouble was, some of them didn't make it back. So, an intermediate airfield at Iwo Jima, almost at the midpoint between Japan and the Marianas, had to be captured for the morale and safety of the Army Air Forces. The Navy and Marines did so at a cost of 5,931 killed and 17,372 wounded.¹

During that battle, 19 February to 26 March 1945, the 6th Marines and the rest of the division remained in area reserve, usually on Saipan. During that battle and before, they constructed new camps, sent out daily patrols to mop up bypassed Japanese stragglers, and absorbed a steady flow of officer and enlisted replacements for the casualties suffered on Saipan and Tinian.

Nobody knew where he would be involved next. Few cared. They licked their wounds, mourned lost friends, and thanked God they were still alive. They also welcomed the replacements, mostly untested in battle, but a few returning veterans wounded in previous battles. Maybe they didn't know when or where they would be sent next, but by now they knew they surely would be called upon eventually. Anyway, it was still just late 1944, and they were a long way from the home islands of Japan.

At the end of the northern part of the Marianas operation members of the 2d Division were spread all over. Some of the wounded had been flown to the hospitals in the Hawaiian Islands, principally near Honolulu. Some had continued on eventually, if not immediately, to the continental United States. More went south on hospital ships to naval hospitals in the Russell Islands north of Guadalcanal. The attached 1st Battalion, 29th Marines, which had fought so valiantly with the 2d Division on Saipan, rejoined its parent

outfit, the 29th Marines of the 6th Marine Division. Even the 2d Division was split, with the 8th Marines staying on Tinian while the rest of the division moved back to Saipan. On 9 August the division command post moved to Saipan. By 13 August the entire division, less the 8th Marines, was back on Saipan.²

The Marines were greeted with the familiar stacks of tent decks and furled tents. Unlike Hawaii, where they built a single, huge Camp Tarawa, the division spread from the northern end of the island near Mapi Point to the southern plateau near Aslito.³ Consequently there were many smaller camps. These were clustered close together near their regimental headquarters. In between were the die-hard Japanese survivors hiding in the jungle-covered ravines and caves. The 6th Marines were near the southern ridges of Mount Tapotchau, but on a cliff facing east, looking out over the ocean.

Camp Life, 1944-45

About a week after moving over from Tinian, the 2d Division relieved the 27th Infantry Division in mopping-up operations.⁴ The first month the division killed or captured many Japanese, but the number grew smaller as the days wore on.

At the same time, camps had to be built. Strong-backed tents sprung up. The engineers erected mess-halls, cookshacks, and heads. A natural amphitheater in the 1st Battalion's area served as the 6th Marines' combination movie theater and stage on which visiting USO shows could perform. Filled sandbags served as seats. There was a stage platform and movie booth to house the projector. Luckily, the rainy season the Marines had endured in August and September was about over. The effects of hot chow, showers, and plenty of sleep began to show. Morale rose. Life wasn't so bad after all.

There were nightly movies, mostly old, but welcomed entertainment. Occasionally a USO show would appear. Betty Hutton and the comedian Joe E. Brown were both big hits. Still, "a poor trade for Wellington," the old timers muttered.⁵ A Catholic chapel was built in the 1st Battalion's area and a Protestant chapel was located in the 3rd Battalion's camp, just across a road which ran along the eastern edge of the island and divided the two camps. Both chapels consisted

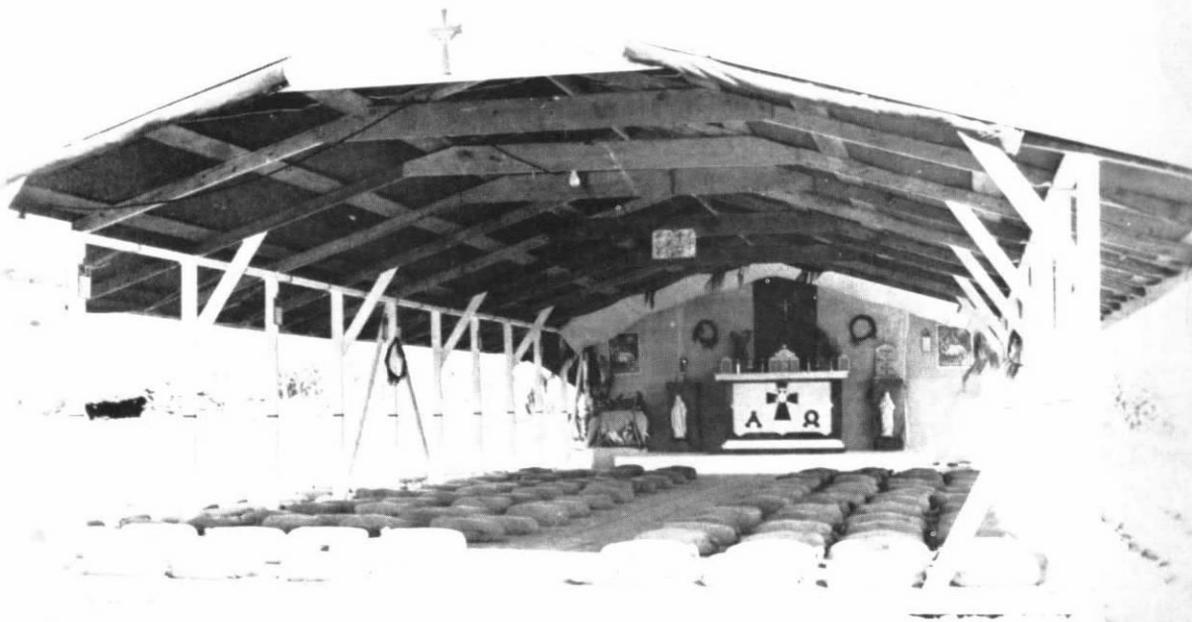


Photo courtesy of Mr. A. A. Mannino

An open-sided temporary shed, with sandbag pews, serves as the first Catholic chapel built for the 6th Marines on Saipan. A new chapel replaced it not long afterwards.

of a large tent-fly over pews made of filled sandbags. Both had wooden altars and pulpits.

There was a great deal of sickness. Some malaria lingered from Guadalcanal, but dengue was the main problem. The latter, also carried by mosquitoes, was referred to as "breakbone fever." The command used DDT and other preventatives liberally, but with little success. Gradually the 6th Marines settled into the camp and daily patrolling routine.

One night, after enjoying a movie in the 6th Marines' outdoor theater, the lights came on and the Marines sitting on the last row of sandbagged seats were surprised to see a Japanese soldier sitting next to them. They yelled, and grabbed him. They led him to the Regimental 2 [Intelligence] office tent, turned him in, and returned to their battalion area. Later, regiment reported that the interrogation hadn't provided any new information. The Japanese captive complained mostly about the old movies and "lousy chow" with which he was getting bored. It turned out that he had been living in the wooded ravine separating the 1st and 2d Battalion areas. Each night he would come out after dark, see the movie, and steal food from the 1st Battalion's mess area. The next day the regiment ordered the 1st Battalion to thoroughly clean out the ravine. No urging was required, and no more Japanese

were caught complaining about the quality of the movies and food.

Shortly after returning from Tinian, Colonel James P. Riseley was relieved as commanding officer of the 6th Marines by Colonel Gregon A. Williams. The latter served as an assistant naval attache at the American Embassy in China at the beginning of World War II because he was a Japanese language officer. The Japanese captured him, claimed he was a spy, and threw him in prison. They beat him on the cheeks until the insides of his cheeks were raw. Then they pulled a beggar off the street, and made him run his filthy fingers around the inside of Williams' mouth. In due course, however, the Japanese released all American diplomatic personnel, including Williams. After months of medical care and recuperation, he was now joining the shooting war.

Colonel Williams, a bachelor, made all of his battalion commanders and his principal staff officers live in tents in the vicinity of his, and eat their meals in his regimental mess, a wooden building with open, screened sides because of the heat.

Although Lieutenant Colonel Jones retained command of the 1st Battalion, he lost his executive officer, Major Donovan, to an awards board assignment at Fleet Marine Force, Pacific headquarters on the island



Photo courtesy of Mr. A. A. Mannino
Members of the 6th Marines leave Sunday services at the second, more permanent Catholic chapel built for the 6th Marines on Saipan near World War II's end.

of Oahu, Hawaii. In place of Donovan he received a replacement major named Lawrence V. Patterson. Lieutenant Colonel Edmund B. Games, who had relieved Major Leroy P. Hunt, Jr., just before Tinian, relinquished command of the 2d Battalion and moved

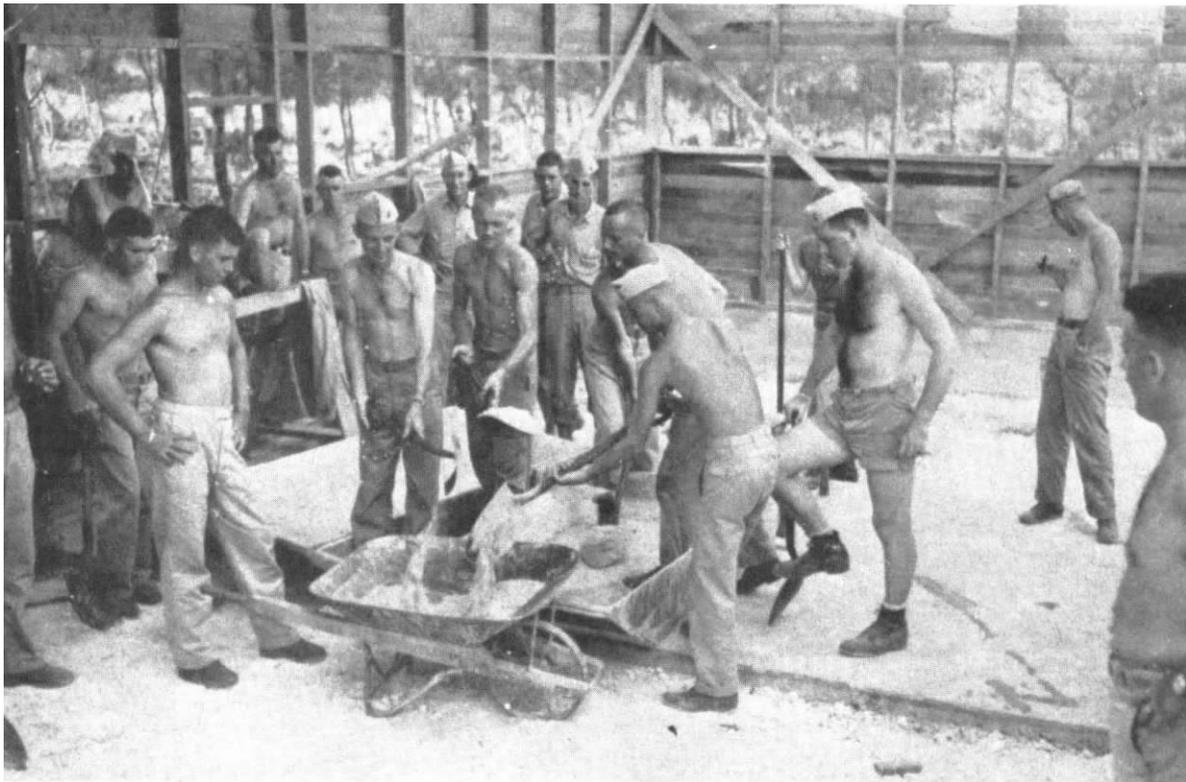
up to the regimental executive officer's position. His place in the 2d Battalion was taken by Lieutenant Colonel James R. Clark, another replacement. Major John E. Rentsch, who had commanded the 3d Battalion after Easley had been wounded on Saipan, and again after Easley was killed on Tinian, was relieved on 1 September by Lieutenant Colonel Loren E. Haffner, who had been the regimental operations officer as a major. Both Majors Hunt and Rentsch left the 6th Marines for other assignments.

Shortly after Haffner took command of the 3d Battalion he was talking to his sergeant major about the untidy appearance of some of his Marines. He decided to do something about it, and told the sergeant major to march in the few replacements who had reported for duty that day. The sergeant major marched them briskly to the front of Haffner's desk, commanded "left face, stand at ease," and waited for Haffner to make his welcoming remarks. Haffner cast a baleful stare at them and launched into a heated discourse on how sloppy and unkempt they looked. Finishing off with a demand that all of them get haircuts and report back to the sergeant major for inspection, he nodded for them to be marched out. After they had departed, he complained to the sergeant

1stLt Alfred A. Mannino of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, stands beside the wind-powered washing machine he built on Saipan overlooking the ocean near the end of World War II.

Photo courtesy of Mr. A. A. Mannino





Author's Collection

Officers of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, construct their own wood-frame officers' club, nicknamed the "Willie K Club" on Saipan in the months preceding the end of the war.

major, who had remained behind, that a new executive officer was supposed to have reported aboard by now to help him out.

"He just did," the sergeant major replied. "He was the first one in the line you just finished reading off."

And he was. He was the same Captain Bill Scherin who had been wounded on Tinian while commanding Company A. Now a major, he soon cleaned himself up and reported to his new commanding officer, albeit a bit apprehensively.

In early October the Japanese resistance dwindled to infrequent sniper fire, mainly on Tinian. The 8th Marines, less its 1st Battalion, moved to Saipan in preparation for a division-wide offensive to complete the mopping-up of Saipan. As late as early November, Marines were killed at regular intervals and supplies were still being stolen. On 15 November a division offensive jumped off. It was really little more than a series of large patrol actions; however, when it ended the Marines had killed 255 Japanese and captured 47. The Marines lost nine killed and 40 wounded.⁹

By then, rotation to the continental United States finally began for a lucky few. Many others transferred to newer divisions in various parts of the Pacific. Yet

the character of the 6th Marines and 2d Division did not change. Although veterans of previous campaigns were fewer and fewer, the new arrivals soon learned through the daily patrols and from the war stories of the veterans what lay in store for them. The training grind continued. Still, there was time for an occasional dip in the pools made in the coral rocks by the ocean.

By the end of July, Army engineers were working around the clock enlarging the old Japanese Aslito airfield on Saipan and the Ushi airdrome on Tinian. They also had started building a giant airfield on Kagman Peninsula on Saipan's eastern coast south of the 2d Division's various camps. Night after night the Japanese attacked both Saipan and Tinian with all of the planes they could muster. These raids lasted throughout the fall, winter, and into the spring of 1945. Obviously we were getting closer to the home islands of Japan, and the Japanese didn't like it. Yet the work went on.

On 12 October 1944 the first of the huge B-29s came to Saipan. Marines gawked at the sky as the biggest planes they had ever seen flew over them. The climactic air offensive against Japan was starting. One of the favorite diversions of the Marines became going down to the new airfield on Kagman Peninsula

and watching the returning B-29s. After completing five missions over Japan, the Army Air Forces awarded each crew member an Air Medal. The bomber squadrons held military formations as soon as the planes returned, and pinned the Air Medal on those who qualified. The Marines called these "cluster musters" and watched them from the grassy ridges near the airfield with great mirth and slapping of knees.

Camp life droned on. Boxing matches became very popular, as were the various organized sports. Anything to keep busy. A group of officers in the 1st Battalion built a fine officers' club with a bar, an ice machine, and cement deck. If they couldn't obtain things by trading liquor with the Seabees, they found other ways to secure the necessary materials. The war in Europe was progressing nicely, and any news of this was consumed eagerly by the Marines. They wanted the war in Europe to end soon so some assistance could be sent to the Pacific to help them defeat the Japanese. Everyone fully expected that final victory would require a landing on Honshu and Kyushu islands of the Japanese archipelago. That would be tough, for the enemy would be all the more stubborn in defense of his homeland.

Jones had a boxing ring built in the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, area. Here the 6th Marines Boxing Team would assemble every afternoon under the direction

of First Sergeant Michelony. It became an extremely popular place every afternoon. Soon the 1st Battalion placed more winners in the boxing bouts than any other unit in the division. Saturday nights were boxing nights, and the Marines would gather atop sandbags to watch their tentmates fight it out. Boxing rated second only to the movies for recreation. Concerts by the division band would also be held here weekly.

Once in a while an incident would break the monotony of camp life. One day at lunch in the regimental mess, Colonel Williams announced that he had been visited that morning by the Protestant chaplain, who had a complaint. Pointing out that his chapel was in the 3d Battalion's area, the chaplain stated that he frequently visited the 3d Battalion's officers' mess. He said that although no liquor was served during working hours, he never looked into the place without seeing several officers loafing around, drinking coffee. This being so, the chaplain said, he saw no reason for his designation as the regimental war bond officer. He had many more important things to do, and there were obviously plenty of officers with not enough to do.

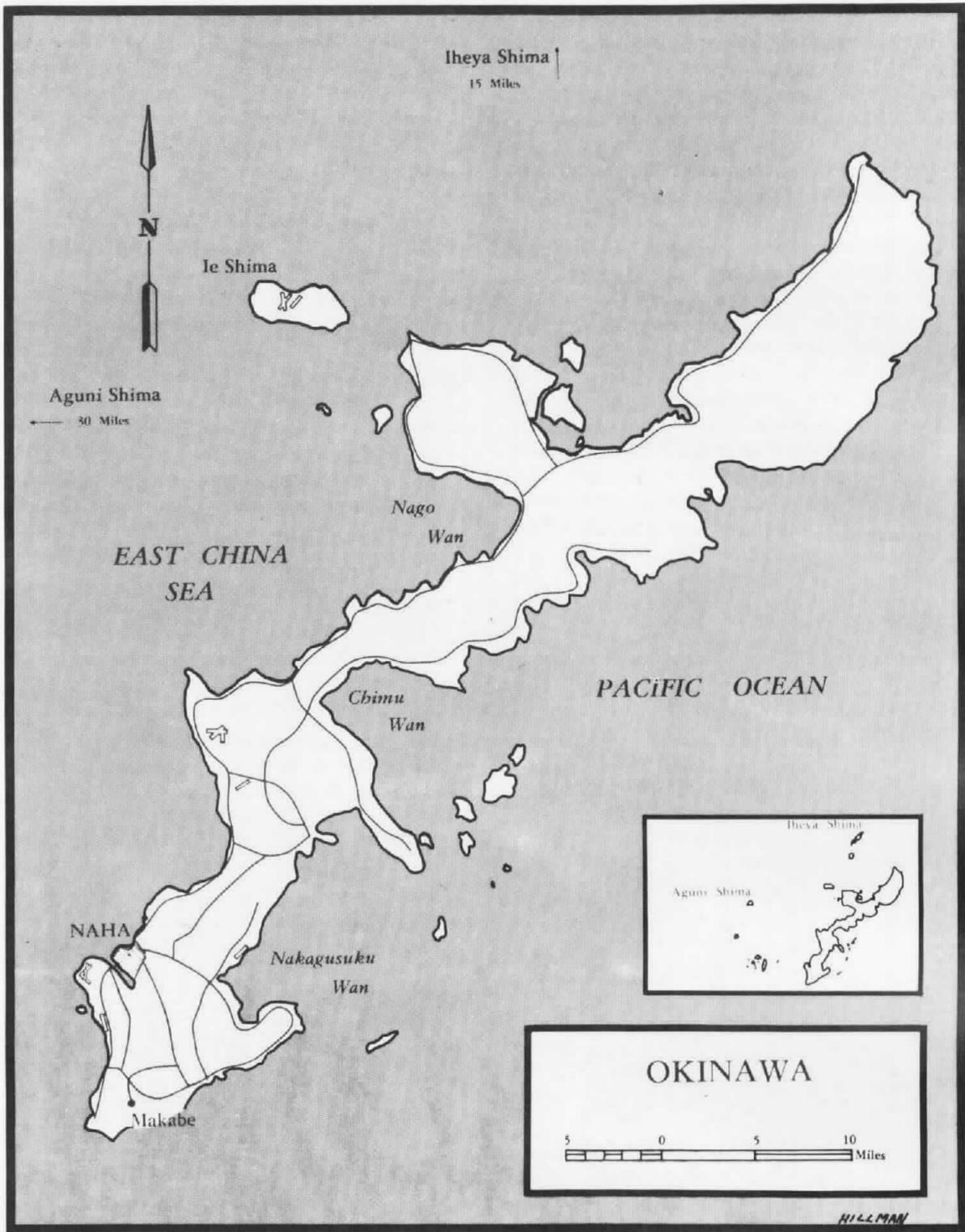
All the officers in the mess laughed except Lieutenant Colonel Haffner. He was furious.

Haffner returned to his office and sent for a special working party. It consisted of an NCO in charge, a Marine with an aiming circle, a Marine with a sledge hammer, and one with plenty of wooden stakes and chalk

1st Sgt Louis J. Michelony, Jr., (right, front row) served as the boxing coach of the regimental boxing team formed after the 6th Marines returned to Saipan after conducting a landing feint on Okinawa. Father J. P. Gallagher, a Navy chaplain with the regiment, stands at right.

Photo courtesy of SgtMaj L. J. Michelony, Jr.





line. He then gave his instructions. The aiming circle man was to chart a course straight through the existing Protestant chapel. At regular intervals the two other Marines would drive stakes in the ground and connect them with the chalk line. The NCO in charge also was carefully briefed as to what his answer would be to the expected question from the chaplain.

As predicted the chaplain saw the line being staked through the center of his chapel. He rushed over and asked, "What are you men doing?" The NCO answered, "We're laying out where Colonel Haffner plans to build the new battalion beer garden." The chaplain ran to Colonel Williams. Williams called Haffner and told him to quit teasing the chaplain. The chaplain not only kept the job of being the regimental bond officer, he never again crossed Haffner.

Okinawa

During its time in camp, the 2d Division shifted from the V Amphibious Corps to the III Amphibious Corps. Early in 1945, the latter corps became part of the U.S. Tenth Army. Soon the transports and supply ships began to tie up at the floating piers on Saipan's west coast to load the 2d Division. The Tenth Army decided that the 2d Division would carry out a diversionary feint on L-Day (which was how the day of landing was to be designated for Okinawa). Two Marine and two Army divisions would make the main landing on Okinawa's southeast coast. If needed, the 2d Division, designated as corps reserve, would make a covered landing on the western beaches on an unspecified date. This was the largest number of troops ever launched against the enemy in the long Central Pacific drive.

The amphibious armada of ships converging on Okinawa was huge. The uneventful trip north provided the usual dull shipboard routine. After their mission became known, there were many disgruntled Marines in the 2d Division. After all, hadn't they proven that they were the world's best fighting outfit? The handful of veterans from Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Saipan, and Tinian were happy. A similar feint at Tinian had been successful, yet there was plenty of fighting to be done once they got ashore. Anyhow, it would be fun to fool the Japanese once again. Also, Okinawa was considered one of the Japanese home islands, although the people were ethnically different. This would be another first.

L-day was set for 1 April 1945, April Fool's Day and Easter Sunday combined. Okinawa was needed both as a great stationary air base close to Tokyo and the main Japanese homeland, as well as a close-in staging

area for the final troop assault against the enemy. Best guesses were that the Japanese garrison ranged between 50,000 and 75,000 men. The civilian population was believed to be about 435,000 Okinawans. The Tenth Army had 182,112 men, of whom 81,165 were Marines. All landbased air was grouped under a Tactical Air Force, Tenth Army, commanded by Marine Major General Francis P. Mulcahy.⁷

The 2d Division was at early chow on its various APAs and LSTs. It was still dark when general quarters sounded, but the sky was beginning to get light. The noise of Japanese airplane engines grew louder. Another enemy bombing attack, the Marines thought. But these were kamikaze pilots flying one-way missions. They were the first encountered off Okinawa. At 0520 a kamikaze pilot dove his plane into the unarmored side of the APA *Hinsdale*. It struck the ship at the waterline and just forward of the engine room. A short time later, a Zero fighter smashed through the hull of LST 884, and another plane exploded on a second LST, blowing two Marines off the stern. Many Marines and Navy personnel were killed. One APA and one LST sank. Landing craft filled with survivors dotted the sea. These craft desperately followed the other ships, which had increased their speed. Eventually the other ships picked up the survivors, but the "joke on the Japanese" had backfired. No member of the 6th Marines was hurt.

The 2d Marine Division began its diversion. LCVPs, each containing a handful of Marines, lowered from the APAs. The LSTs disgorged their LVTs. The principal commanders from company level or higher stayed on the ships. Very few Marine lieutenants participated. It was mainly a Navy show. All landing craft approached the designated line of departure and started forming waves. Navy control boats were on station. American airplanes strafed the beaches, and naval bombardment ships started firing. The signal was given and the waves started towards the beaches. About 1,000 yards before reaching the beaches, all waves split in the middle to the right and left, and returned to their mother ships. The feint was over. There were no casualties after the earlier attack and ship sinking.

Ironically, across the island above Naha near the Yontan airfield, the main force landed unopposed. Lieutenant General Mitsuru Ushijima had elected not to defend the beaches and airfield. His *32d Army* included two divisions, a brigade, a tank regiment, and a great amount of artillery. He had concentrated his strength to the south.⁸

The next day, L + 1, the feint was repeated. The ene-

my was not interested. The 2d Division's ships reloaded their boats and the entire armada sailed south to keep out of range of the kamikaze pilots being launched against the Americans assaulting Okinawa. There the ships circled in the East China Sea for a month, waiting for a call to land. Finally the decision came: back to Saipan, but keep the ships combat-loaded in case Tenth Army needed the division.

This time Saipan was a welcome sight. The Marines knew they might still be called back to take part in the Okinawa fight, and there was always the grim fate they suspected awaited them on the home islands of Honshu and Kyushu. Even bloodier fighting was a possibility around such cities as Nagasaki, Yokahama, and Tokyo. Only a few men in the United States and at a place in New Mexico called Alamogordo had any reason to believe that an assault landing against those islands might not be necessary. So, to the Marines on Saipan, even the monotony of training and the easy camp life were acceptable for now.

A month after returning to Saipan on 16 May, the 8th Marines shipped out to seize some small islands off Okinawa. This operation turned out to be nearly a resort vacation. The islands held nothing but frightened civilians. By mid-June, the Marines were relieved by Army troops, and the regiment encountered the savage realities of Okinawa while attached to the 1st Marine Division. It was during a visit to the 8th Marines' command post that Lieutenant General Simon B. Buckner, the commander of the U.S. Tenth Army, was killed by a salvo of enemy artillery shells. The day was 18 June 1945.⁹

On 22 June, Okinawa was declared secured. The 6th Marines did not begrudge this final victory for the 8th Marines, who had been among the first to fight on Guadalcanal. The 6th Marines had been the last, so it seemed proper to rejoice with their sister regiment.

When the 8th Marines finally returned to Saipan in mid-July, it found the 6th Marines and the rest of the division engaged in heavy training. The division command already had begun its planning for the next big operation, called Olympic, the invasion of the Japanese homeland. It was a poorly kept secret. Everyone knew there was only one worthwhile target left. Nevertheless, leaves up to a month's duration in the United States were available to those veterans who had been out of the country 33 months or longer. There would be plenty of time for them to return during the big invasion as replacements. This time the 2d Division would be in the assault.¹⁰

The men were still chuckling about an incident that happened upon the return from Okinawa. The division commander, Major General Watson, who was

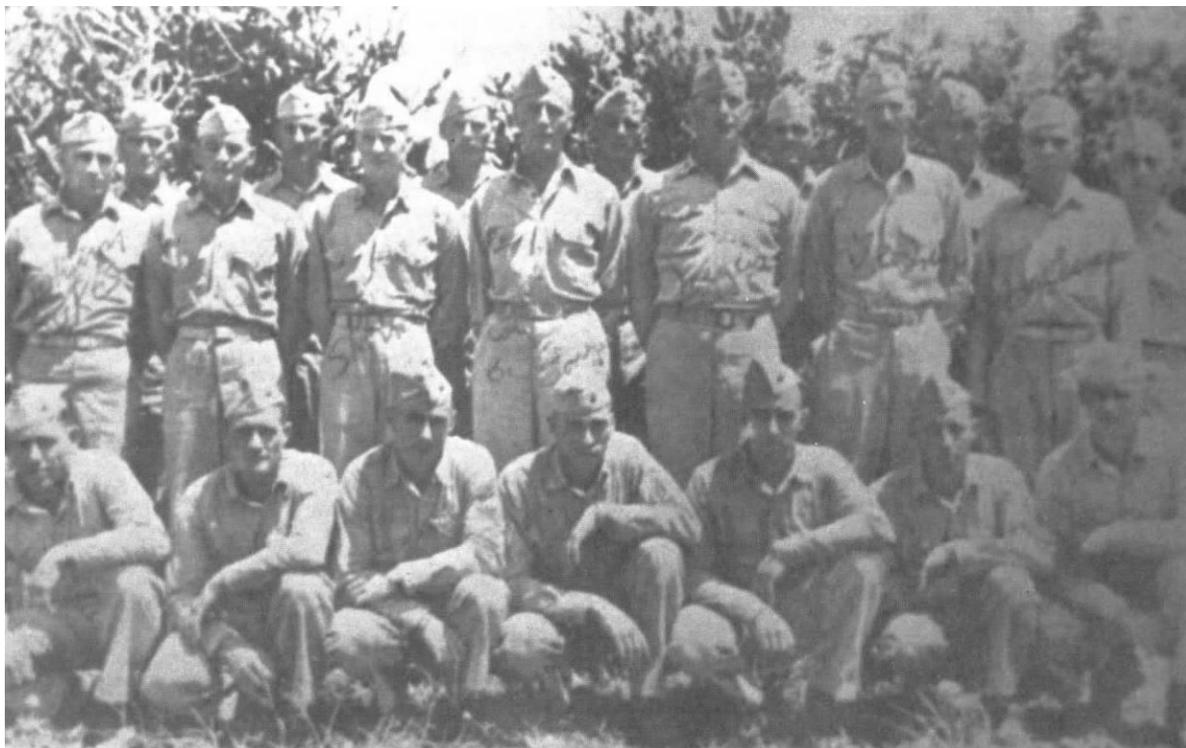
rather short in stature, had a tall, lanky aide-de-camp. The aide was never seen to smile, and everybody called him "Laughing Boy." He sat in the back seat of the general's jeep as they bounced around the island, and always had a sad expression on his face like a basset hound.

While bringing the general's jeep ashore from the transport to the pier on Saipan, "Laughing Boy" had a terrible mishap. One of the sailors had forgotten to secure the ramp of the LCVP carrying the jeep and the aide. About 10 feet from the pier, the ramp let down, and the LCVP sank with the jeep and "Laughing Boy." The aide only got wet, but it took people on the pier a while to raise the jeep. When the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, landed on the pier "Laughing Boy" was a dejected sight. Still dripping wet, and sitting on an equally soaked footlocker, he stared glumly into the distance. When Lieutenant Colonel Jones learned what had happened, he asked the aide if he had informed the commanding general. He received an affirmative answer, followed by this unsolicited remark, "The way he hollered you'd think the old son-of-a-bitch believed I did it on purpose. Anyhow, how was I to know he had three wrist watches in his foot locker?"

During the afternoon of 17 July 1945, Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of Great Britain, received a telephone call from American cabinet officer Henry L. Stimson. Churchill glanced at a sheet of paper before him on which he had written "Babies satisfactorily born." By Stimson's manner he knew something extraordinary had occurred. "It means," Stimson said later in the phone call, "that the experiment in the New Mexico desert has come off. The atomic bomb is a reality." No one then could measure the immediate military consequences of the discovery.¹¹ The final decision lay with President Truman. The British had given their concurrence to its use as a weapon even before the test had taken place.

None of this was known, of course, to the 6th Marines or any other members of the vast accumulation of military power poised for the final thrust at Japan. Once Okinawa was declared secure, the ships unloaded and departed from Saipan. However, the many weapons cases, crates, jeep windshield protectors, and other items, were set aside and kept ready for the next order to mount out. In the meantime training continued, commanders held regular inspections of personnel and equipment, and the camps settled down to a daily routine.

During one such inspection of the 1st Battalion's gun shed, there was suddenly a series of unexpected



Author's Collection

This photograph, taken on Saipan at the end of World War II, shows the few remaining officers and men of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, who had been with the battalion through all its Pacific campaigns. The battalion commander, LtCol William K. Jones, who joined as a second lieutenant in 1939 before Iceland, is in the center, first standing row.

popping noises. Lieutenant Colonel Jones didn't crack a smile. After the inspection party had departed, the gunnery sergeant in charge breathed a sigh of relief. Then the new executive officer, Major Lawrence V. Patterson, returned highly indignant. "I want to know which of you men dared pass gas during a battalion commander's inspection," he said. The gunnery sergeant was in a quandary. He knew, and he suspected Jones did also, that the popping noises were caused by a batch of bottled homebrew beer they had aging under the tent deck. A few of the caps blew when the beer fermented too soon.

Lieutenant Colonels Jones and Haffner were old friends who had been in the 6th Marines ever since they came on active duty in 1939. Now that Haffner had command of the 3d Battalion, their tents were close together near the cliff in the regimental headquarters area. The normal routine meant that Haffner, a powerful man who stayed in great physical condition, got up before breakfast and did exercises with a barbell he had fashioned from a set of wheels from one of the island's small Japanese sugarcane railroad cars. Jones in the next tent would roll over and

complain that his sleep was being disturbed. In the evening before dinner Haffner went through another set of strenuous exercises. Jones again complained about the deep breathing, grunts, and other noises, only this time while relaxing on his canvas cot sipping a glass of "liberated" Japanese cherry wine. This went on for some time. Finally, fitness report time came. One evening Haffner came into Jones' tent and inquired if he had gotten his fitness report. When Jones answered, "Yes," Haffner asked, "What did the Colonel give you for physical fitness?" Jones answered, "Outstanding," and, guessing something was wrong, asked, "What did he give you?" "Just 'Very Good,'" replied Haffner angrily. "I'm going to talk to him about it," he said as he stomped out.

A little while later Haffner returned muttering to himself. "What did the Colonel say?" Jones asked, chuckling. "You won't believe this," Haffner replied, "but when I asked why he only gave me 'Very Good' he had the nerve to say that he did so because any man who had to spend as much time as I did exercising couldn't be in very good shape!"

Haffner walked angrily out of the tent, got his

weights, went to the edge of the cliff and threw them over. He then returned to the tent where Jones was convulsed with laughter, flopped down on the extra cot, and demanded a glass of cherry wine. *C'est la guerre!*

In March 1945 Major General Curtis LeMay started firebombing Yokohama and Tokyo a little before the American invasion of Okinawa. It brought the war close to home for the Japanese civilians who previously had grown used to high explosive bombs. Since they lived mainly in flimsy wooden houses, the firestorms caused by the American incendiary bombs brought utter devastation and the loss of many civilian lives. This and the subsequent loss of Okinawa brought the realization to many Japanese that they had lost the war.

During the summer of 1945, many changes took place in the command structure of the 6th Marines. Although Colonel Williams remained as the commanding officer and Lieutenant Colonel Games was still the executive officer, Lieutenant Colonel Jones of the 1st Battalion and Lieutenant Colonel Haffner of the 3d Battalion received orders to the United States. Jones was relieved by Lieutenant Colonel Richard D. Strickler, and Haffner by Lieutenant Colonel Glenn R. Long. Clark remained in command of the 2d Battalion. Major Patterson, the 1st Battalion executive officer, also returned to the States after relief by Major Patrick Laughlin.

On the night of 5-6 August 1945, a B-29 named the *Enola Gay* took off from Tinian and dropped its atomic bomb on Hiroshima.¹² Beginning on 10 July the hundreds of planes of Admiral Halsey's Task Force 38 bombed the islands from Hokkaido in the north to Kyushu in the south. They also battered the remnants of the Japanese fleet in the Inland Sea. U.S. battleships were bombarding the home islands at will. The naval blitz, together with the savage B-29 strikes from Saipan and Tinian, drove the Japanese to their knees. With their cities aflame, their fleet destroyed,

and the remnants of their once-powerful army dispersed, there was no way for the Japanese to strike back effectively. They wanted to quit, but they were not ready for unconditional surrender. They tried to negotiate.¹³ The U.S. pressure continued.

All of this was well known in the 6th Marines. Excitement grew as letters from home inquired as to when they would be coming home for the long-awaited reunion. Soon they thought. Now an assault landing wouldn't be necessary. The previous 2 May the Germans had surrendered and the war in Italy ended.¹⁴ The U.S. Army was the logical one for occupation duty, the Marines thought. The Marines would go home and be demobilized. Wishful thinking! The old timers didn't let themselves be caught up in the enthusiasm of the moment. They knew there was work yet to be done.

On the day Okinawa was secured, Major General Watson was transferred to Washington. Brigadier General LeRoy P. Hunt, the assistant division commander, got another star and took command of the 2d Division.¹⁵ He was well liked and morale remained high.

A second atomic bomb was dropped on Japan, this time on Nagasaki, on 9 August 1945.¹⁶ The Japanese agreed to the Allies' terms for surrender. The war was over. The long trek from the cold winds of Iceland, through the jungle hell of Guadalcanal and the bloody fighting at Tarawa, Saipan, and Tinian had finally ended in victory. The men of the 6th Marines were elated, and both surprised and glad they had survived.

Soon the word came from division, "Prepare to load out." The crates, weapons boxes, and jeep windshield protectors which had been kept after moving back from Okinawa were broken out. But less-welcome word also came. They were not going home, they were going to be part of the occupation force for Japan.

"That Tinian was a good investment, I guess," one Marine said.¹⁷

"Yes, but I'd just as soon be going home," answered another.

CHAPTER 8

The Occupation

Background—The War Ends!—The Occupation—Just Marking Time—Heading Home

Background

When the first atomic bomb to hit Japan was dropped from the *Enola Gay* on Hiroshima early on 6 August 1945, it missed its aiming point by a few hundred feet, according to the one man, then-24-year-old Lieutenant Jacob Baset, who was on both the *Enola Gay* and *Bock's Car*, the plane that dropped the second bomb two days later on Nagasaki. The first bomb was nicknamed "Little Boy"; the second one, "Fat Man." Baset's responsibility on both planes was to monitor the working of the fuse device that set off the bombs. This occurred when radar beams bounced off the ground indicated that the weapon had fallen to a precise altitude for an air burst which would give maximum destruction. The first drop, although off the mark, went very well. The Nagasaki drop suffered from visibility problems. Actually, the target was to be Kokura. However, the city of Yawato had been fire-bombed two nights before and Kokura, downwind from Yawato, was obscured by smoke and haze from the still burning city of Yawato. Rather than drop "Fat Man" in the sea and abort the mission, the crew received orders to try Nagasaki. Since the second drop was to be "the convincer," they were supposed to bomb the residential parts of the city, causing maximum casualties. Instead, when the plane got over Nagasaki they found that it was still closed-in by weather. They had to make a radar run. During the last 10 or 15 seconds of the run, a hole opened in the clouds and Behan (the bombardier) said "I got it, I got it, I got it," and he dropped visually. The hole was too small. Behan missed his aiming point, and dropped the bomb in the middle of the industrial area near the Mitsubishi Shipyards. This was three miles southeast of the residential area.¹

At this time all the 6th Marines knew was that the heavy cruiser USS *Indianapolis* had stopped at Tinian on a special mission. Actually, it later turned out that she had dropped off the final parts for the atomic bombs. When men asked the 8th Marines, still on Tinian, about the *Indianapolis*, they didn't know any more than the Saipan Marines knew.

When the *Enola Gay* dropped the first bomb, the common question in the 6th Marines was, "What in the hell is an atomic bomb?" Naturally, no one knew.

Even the power of the blast and the damage it could cause were beyond imagination.

This was near the 14th of August since President Truman announced the end of the war on that date. Four days earlier, 10 August 1945, Japan had sued for peace under the terms of the Potsdam Declaration, i.e., unconditional surrender. The war had cost the Marines a total of 86,940 dead and wounded.²

The occupation of northern Japan went swiftly and smoothly. The Japanese cooperated to the fullest with Supreme Commander, Allied Powers (SCAP), General Douglas MacArthur. There was a complete lack of overt signs of resistance. This allowed considerable changes in the operation plans of the U.S. Sixth Army and the Fifth Fleet. It permitted an administrative landing without the show of force initially planned. Nevertheless, amongst the men who had fought the Japanese since Guadalcanal days, there was considerable skepticism.³

The War Ends!

Back on Saipan before Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the men of the 6th Marines still believed that they were preparing to invade Japan. This caused a great deal of apprehension among both the new officers and men and the veterans. The new men were uneasy because they couldn't understand the seriousness of combat when they hadn't had a chance to experience it. The veterans also felt uneasy because they were beginning to wonder if they had used up their luck, and if the law of averages would catch up with them during the major encounter the invasion of the homeland of Japan would certainly be.

Around July and August they began to hear rumors that perhaps they wouldn't have to invade Japan because the war would end. These rumors were coming from the Army Air Forces officers flying the B-29s.

One night the Marines were at the outdoor movie when suddenly an announcement ordered them to return to their areas immediately. Once there, they combat loaded on 6x6 trucks and rushed to defend the airstrip. It was an emergency maneuver that proved costly since one jeep turned over during the rush, killing a Marine. Much later they learned the event occurred on the night the first atomic bomb was leaving for Japan. The Army Air Force had heard rumors that

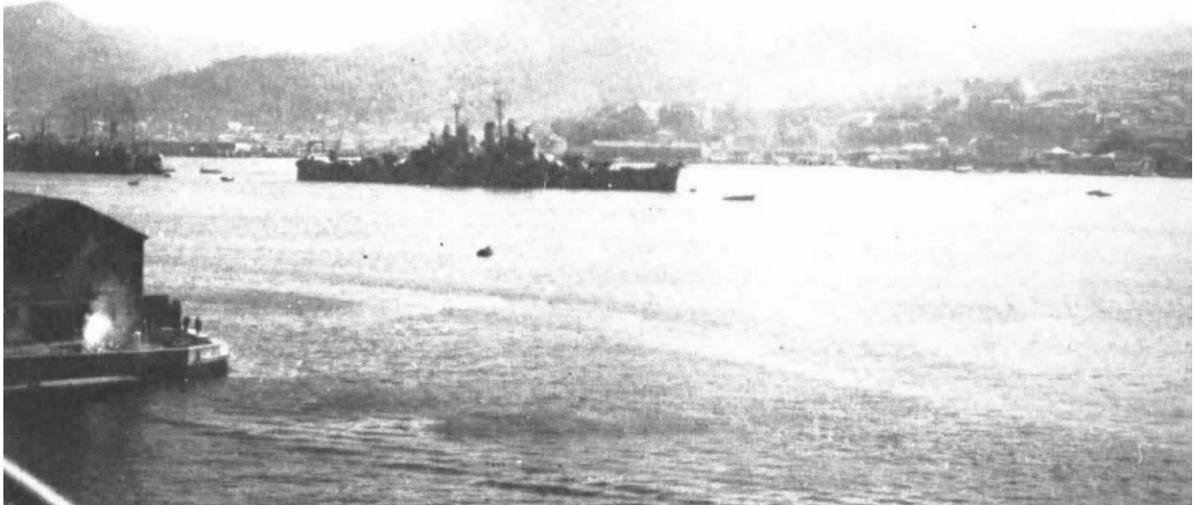


Photo courtesy of Mr. A. A. Mannino

American warships lie at anchor in the harbor of Nagasaki, Japan, in September 1945 after bringing the 6th Marines to that atom-bomb-destroyed city for occupation duty.

the Japanese were going to try to blow up the bomb before it left.

Shortly after the dropping of the two bombs, the men of the 6th Marines started to believe the rumors about the war ending. Surprisingly there wasn't as much celebration as one would expect. There were mixed emotions. The veterans were happy the war was over, but suspected that someday we would have to fight the Russians. Since they had self-confidence and had already proven themselves in combat, why not do it now and save their children from getting involved in the future? The new and mostly young joinees were still in an excited mood and thought in their ignorance that combat would be fun. Overall there was mild excitement and happiness for those veterans who felt their luck might not last through another major campaign.

In early September, the 6th Marines got the word to prepare to move to Nagasaki to police the area and make sure there was no resistance. Few Marines liked the assignment. The oldtimers wanted to go home and rejoin their families. The newer replacements believed the Army would make better occupation troops, and they also wanted to go home. Nevertheless, preparations began for the move to Japan.

The Occupation

Lieutenant General Harry Schmidt, still commanding the V Amphibious Corps, received the responsibility of occupying Kyushu island. The major objectives were the cities of Nagasaki and Sasebo, a major naval base. On 22 September the 5th Marine

Division arrived off Sasebo and landed. The next day the 2d Marine Division landed at Nagasaki, just three weeks after the atom bomb explosion.⁴

The ships carrying the 6th Marines came up the river to the Mitsubishi Shipyard, which was near the center of the city. They had a Japanese pilot who, however unsurprisingly, many thought acted as though the war was still on. Everyone could see a lot of debris and bodies floating out to sea. The ships moved slowly through the mine fields with embarked Marines awed by the sights.

A group of nuns in full habit waved to them from the right bank as they neared their destination. They were apparently attached to a large Catholic church in the area. The scene was incongruous.

Finally the ships reached the Mitsubishi Shipyard. The 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, was the first to land of the 2d Division units. The Marines debarked and moved to a large, heavily damaged building for billeting. The Japanese had used it for building midget submarines. The atom bomb had blown off the roof and the structure was in poor shape.

The Marines moved into the best remaining parts of the building. They set up billets for officers and enlisted men. The regimental headquarters moved into a steel-reinforced concrete building within a half mile of the center of the atomic blast. Although badly damaged it was usable.⁵

The Japanese still had four million men under arms after the surrender, and the cooperative spirit of these

men was a surprise. Many Americans had expected that at least some of the heavily armed men might resist the Emperor's order to lay down their arms. None did.

First Lieutenant Alfred A. Mannino, who had command of a machine gun platoon in the 1st Battalion, recalls that he landed with his machine guns loaded. They fully expected resistance. Since they believed they had better be prepared, all Marines were combat loaded. They saw no Japanese women or children during the first three days. After that, the women and children started to come out of the caves and sheltered areas slowly and cautiously. By the fourth or fifth days there was a fair amount of traffic in the streets.⁶

Further north and closer to Tokyo was Yokosuka, a great naval base and shipyard. At 0930 on 29 August the reconstituted 4th Marines landed there. At 1018 it raised the U.S. flag and Commander, Task Force 31, Rear Admiral Oscar Badger, on the USS *San Diego*, took the surrender of the area.⁷

The U.S. Sixth Army, which had the responsibility under Supreme Commander Allied Powers for the southern island of Kyushu, followed the SCAP direc-

tives for the disposition of Japanese military equipment. They divided all material into the following categories:

1. That to be destroyed or scrapped (explosives and armaments not needed for souvenirs or training purposes).
2. That to be used for our operations (telephones, radios, and vehicles).
3. That to be returned to the Japanese Home Ministry (fuel, lumber, etc.).
4. That to be issued as trophies.
5. That to be shipped to the U.S. as trophies or training gear.⁸

During the first couple of weeks in the Mitsubishi factory, Company A, 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, had set up its cots on the second floor with nothing but the sky above since the building had no roof. To make matters worse, a typhoon approached the coast of Japan. The rain came. Water on the deck rose almost to cot level.

Early in September the weather turned cold, and the Marines were still in their summer-weight com-

This warehouse on the docks of Nagasaki, Japan, itself damaged by the atom bomb, serves as a barracks for units of the 6th Marines at the beginning of the occupation of Japan.

Photo courtesy of Mr. A. A. Mannino

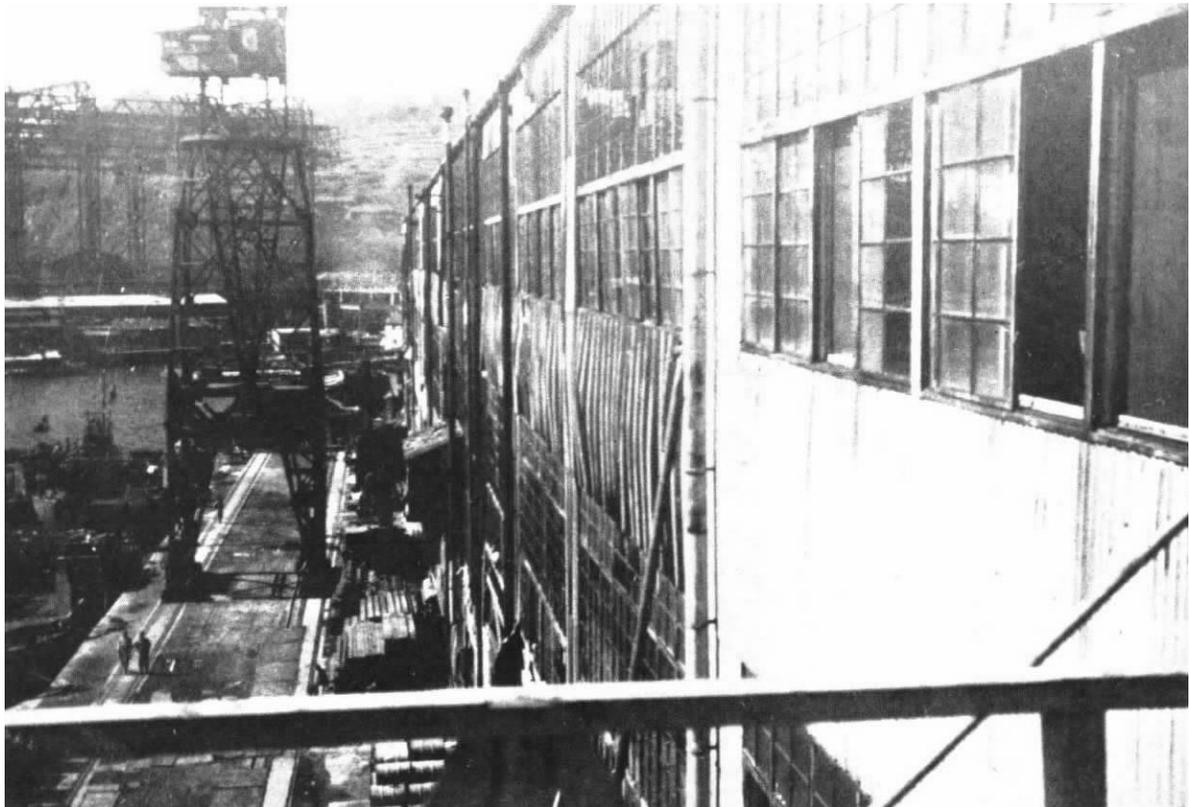




Photo courtesy of Mr. A. A. Mannino

A Marine's snapshot records a small Japanese army camp near Nagasaki, one of several the 6th Marines disarmed at the beginning of occupation duty in Japan in 1945.

bat uniforms, and living in a damaged factory. A temporary warehouse for supplies was in operation. The officer-in-charge had jackets and blankets, but he wouldn't release them because, according to regulations, this shouldn't be done until 1 October. Major General Hunt came through on an inspection. When he asked the routine questions, "Are you happy, son? Are you getting enough to eat?" he was told they were cold. When the general asked why, a sergeant told him that although there were warm clothing and blankets in the warehouse, they could not be released until 1 October. The next day the supply officer issued the clothing and blankets.

General Walter Krueger, who commanded the Sixth Army, which originally was scheduled to attack Kyushu, was well pleased with the progress of the occupation in the area of the V Amphibious Corps (VAC). At 1000 on 24 September he assumed command of all U.S. forces ashore on Kyushu. His other corps began landing the next day.⁹

Under the plans made when it became apparent American forces would receive the cooperation of the Japanese, direct military rule was abandoned. Instead, the responsible occupation force commanders were to supervise the execution of SCAP directives by the

Japanese government. These directives implemented the MacArthur policy of using but not supporting that government.

American infantry regiments became the "Chief instrument of demilitarization and control. The entire plan for the imposition of the terms of surrender was based upon the presence of infantry regiments in all of the prefectures within the Japanese homeland."¹⁰

This then was the general plan employed by the 6th Marines. After it established initial liaison with the local Japanese authorities, the regiment moved into bivouac areas, some prepared by Japanese labor. Reconnaissance patrols located military installations and checked inventories of war materiel submitted by the Japanese. The regimental commander then divided his zone into battalion areas of responsibility. Before moving units into these areas, however, the Marines ensured there were proper billeting and sanitation measures in existence. The company commanders had the authority to seize any military installations in their zones, and to use both Japanese military personnel not yet demobilized, and laborers furnished by Home Ministry representatives, to dispose of materiel.

In addition to the already explained duties of the

occupation forces, they also were responsible for the processing of hundreds of thousands of military and civilian personnel returning from the once far-flung empire. Additionally there were thousands of Korean, Chinese, and Formosan prisoners and impressed laborers requiring care and return to their native countries. In these movements the Americans primarily used Japanese vessels and crews to conserve American manpower and resources.

One scene that vividly impressed members of the 6th Marines when they first docked at Nagasaki were several American hospital ships taking on board severely emaciated former American prisoners of war, many of whom had to be carried on stretchers. The tasks assigned to the Marines as occupation forces took on even new meaning as the days wore on.

As the regiment settled down into the new routine, the days at first were action-packed. Quonset huts, rejuvenated Japanese barracks and buildings, messhalls, heads, showers, and the other necessities started to appear. The Navy had been examining women in the Nagasaki houses of prostitution and was ready to reopen them. General Krueger heard of this and put a stop to it. As one Marine remembers it, "You could hear the howl that went way back to San Francisco."

Early in September the regiment moved from the dilapidated Mitsubishi dock area to a former Japanese army camp. Reconnaissance patrols went to the surrounding small towns and villages in furtherance of SCAP directives. In some cases any weapons found would be piled in the center of the village and destroyed. Many of them were rifles, and old ones at that. The search for some wood or coal that the Marines could burn in stoves at night was not ignored by company commanders, in spite of SCAP directives. It was

Occupation duty in Japan went smoothly, as shown in this informal snapshot of 1stLt Alfred A. Mannino and another Marine officer with a young Japanese.

Photo courtesy of Mr. A. A. Mannino



turning bitterly cold. On one such quest, the commander of Company C, 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, First Lieutenant Alfred A. Mannino, went into a village, looked up the mayor, and told him in his best Japanese that he needed wood or coal to keep his men warm. When he had finished, the Mayor smiled and in perfect English said, "You speak very good Japanese." When Mannino expressed surprise, the mayor said he was a graduate of Saint Louis University, and had enjoyed four years there. He also said he had played on the university golf team, and even had an engraved golf club he had won as an award.

During the visit the children of the town kept coming up to Mannino's jeep and touching the tires. They had never seen anything like it. In fact, the Mayor said, the Marines were the first western people ever to have visited the village. He was very cordial and gave up the necessary coal to burn in the company's barracks.

The Marines' barracks at this time consisted of Quonset huts. Young Japanese girls, teenagers, came in every day at noon to clean the buildings. The officers' huts were set aside from the rest of the battalion and regimental headquarters areas. One of the girls who came regularly to one of the officers' huts spoke reasonably good English. The officer asked her to help him speak better Japanese. After several months she worked up her courage and asked him permission to ask a question, "Which one of your parents did you kill before you were allowed to join the Marine Corps?" The astounded officer asked her why she asked such a question. She replied that she had been told that before you could join the Marines you had to prove how nasty you were by killing either your mother or father. She believed this, as did some of her Japanese friends.

There were other surprises in this strange land for the Marines. On another occasion as the officers returned to their billeting area, the battalion commander asked an officer to get a stick and kill a snake coming out from under one of the Quonset huts. He pointed to the snake which was about three feet long. The officer he asked was at the same time looking at another snake he thought to be about 20 feet long. When he pointed to the huge snake the Colonel hollered for him to get a rifle and kill it. The officer got the rifle but the snake disappeared into a cave before he could kill it. They didn't investigate any further.

As the days wore on the regiment slowly returned to peacetime activities. The occupation duty had become boring and tedious. There was considerable exchanging of personnel as the older veterans, who were



Photo courtesy of Mr. A. A. Mannino

The historic Kinkakuji Temple in Kyoto, Japan, sits beside its lake, and serves as one of the many scenic attractions visited by members of the 6th Marines during rest and recreation (R&R) leaves granted during the early months of the American occupation of Japan.

going home, were replaced by newer Marines. It became more and more important to keep the men busy. Otherwise, to relieve their boredom, they would leave camp and seek trouble. In addition to beginning a regular training routine, the regiment emphasized intramural sports. Typically, complaints continued in spite of every effort made by the officers.

Just Marking Time

Since the regiment and battalions were spread out into different assigned areas, the companies didn't see much of one another. This made it very difficult for the regimental chaplains, both Catholic and Protestant, to hold services each Sunday. "Lay leader" Marines, provided with suitable literature, would hold meetings and read to those assembled in place of a regular service.

Every Saturday the regiment would hold an inspection during which the attached units displayed their tanks, artillery, and equipment. The Japanese would come from miles around to see the show. They seemed to appreciate not only the display of power but also the precision drill of the Marines.

No one knew of the possible side effects of an atomic explosion. The Marines walked around the ruins of

Nagasaki with nothing on but their dungarees and issue shoes. Some girders in the wrecked Mitsubishi shipyard were still too hot to touch when the Marines arrived. In the center of the bomb blast everything had been evaporated except the wheels of a street car. It was a dead city, with people too stunned to talk much about what had happened. One former U.S. Navy steward who had retired there but still spoke good English said, "We all thought the world had come to an end. There was first an intense flash followed by an unbearable heat wave that almost cooked us. We had all been through conventional bombing before and could not account for what had happened. It was like hell."

Later on, groups of Marines were allowed to go on rest and recreation (R&R) leaves to nearby points of interest, such as the city of Kyoto. An officer would accompany these R&R groups. The train which picked up the Marines stopped in each area to pick up the ones that qualified. Each such area group had a sergeant in charge. The officer and the sergeants were responsible to see that all personnel returned safely to their units. Once in a city like Kyoto the officer and sergeants had very little to do since all activities were supervised by R&R personnel. On one such trip the

roll call for the return trip revealed five Marines missing. The officer refused to let the train leave until he had accounted for all of the men. At the end of 30 minutes of holding the train the engineer told the officer he was going to leave without the missing men. The officer took out his pistol and told the engineer he would shoot him if he moved the train. Of course, the officer had no intention of carrying out his threat, but the engineer fell for the bluff. After another half-hour the five Marines arrived. They admitted that they had liked Kyoto so much they told the R&R personnel that they had missed their train and intended to stay for another R&R period. They didn't get away with it.

During the long R&R periods (approximately three weeks) a number of Japanese women would attach themselves to the group. In this case, as the Marines boarded the train, around 200 women also climbed aboard. Since it was a three-day train ride, the officer-in-charge decided to let them stay, as it was his responsibility to bring the Marines back. Nobody had said anything about civilians being involved. At the end of the line there were still two dozen women on board. These he turned over to the Red Cross and asked them to see that the women were safely returned to their villages. It is easy to understand why officers dreaded being assigned to supervise R&R groups.

After a few months, the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, moved to Sasebo, another coastal city. There Company C took over the naval airbase and with it the responsibility for looking after the equipment that was being unloaded from U.S. ships. This consisted of thousands of jeeps; trucks of all sizes, including 6x6s; armored half-tracks; and other types of Marine Corps vehicles. These vehicles covered many acres and had to be guarded. Fortunately the Japanese were most cooperative and caused few problems.

On a few occasions, an officer would be invited to be the guest of honor at the homes of local dignitaries. There the officers were given the traditional "first head," of steamed fish. Besides not finding the dish particularly appetizing, very few Americans could eat the eyes, as was expected of them.

In spite of the occasional R&R outings and intensive efforts by their officers to relieve their boredom, occupation duty was becoming more and more tedious for Marines. The oldtimers waited for their discharge papers and transportation back to the states. The future of the new joinees in the regiment was uncertain and the subject of many rumors.

In 1945, after the surrender, Congress set the peacetime strength of the Corps at 107,000. This was nearly six times its prewar strength, but less than a quarter

These buildings at Hadnot Point house the headquarters of the 2d Marine Division as they have since 1946 when the division returned to the United States from occupation duty.

Department of Defense (USMC) Photo A452656



of its top wartime strength of 485,053. There would be two Fleet Marine Forces—one in the Pacific with headquarters in Hawaii, and one in the Atlantic, headquartered in the Norfolk, Virginia area. Each force was to have a division and wing plus a few supporting combat and combat service units.¹¹ Even with this reduction in the number of units, peacetime strength ceilings eventually cut these division, wing, and support units down to almost skeletal size.

In late 1945 Colonel Gregon A. Williams moved up from the 6th Marines to become Chief of Staff of the 2d Marine Division. Colonel Jack P. Juhan relieved him for a short time as commanding officer. Colonel James P. "Phil" Berkeley in turn relieved Juhan in early 1946, and retained command of the regiment until it returned to the United States.

As the other divisions returned to the United States, they shrank to cadres before the Marine Corps deactivated them. The 4th Division deactivated in November 1945, followed by the 3d Division in December, the 5th Division after returning from Japan in January 1946, and the 6th Division in April 1946.¹² This left only the 1st and 2d Divisions on the active list. The 1st Division was in the occupation force for China and the 2d Division in Japan.

This was all known to the members of the 6th Marines as they fretted to get home. They received their discharges based on a point system which considered their length of service, time overseas, wounds, and medals.

In February 1946 the 6th Marines dropped to its peacetime strength, as did the other units in the 2d Division. Soon afterwards the 3d Battalion returned home for disbandment. On 15 June 1946, the 2d Division turned over its zone of occupation for loading out and returning to the United States.

Heading Home

At first it was exciting. The veterans knew that it was much preferable to an assault landing against a stubborn enemy. Even the newcomers who had never experienced combat knew in their hearts that this was true.

Occupation duty had now become a grind. Old friends and respected veterans were already home enjoying the reunion with their families. Some were even planning new entrances into the civilian world. Now that the regiment was on the way to the United States, all its members were eager for either a discharge or to continue their careers in the Corps and face whatever the future held.

The 2d Marines left Sasebo on 13 June 1946, and the 8th Marines soon after. Both were bound for Norfolk, Virginia. The division headquarters, also bound for Norfolk, left on 24 June. Once in the States, the 2d Division would occupy Camp Lejeune.

The 6th Marines parted company with old comrades, for it was going to the west coast rather than the east coast. The regiment arrived at Camp Pendleton on 15 July 1946. Initially it was attached to the Marine Corps Base. On 11 September it became part of the 3d Marine Brigade. When the brigade disbanded on 16 September 1947, the 6th Marines transferred to the 1st Marine Division, also at Camp Pendleton. On 1 October 1947 the 6th Marines dropped to battalion size (the 1st Battalion) when its Headquarters and Service Company disbanded and its 2d Battalion became Headquarters, 7th Marines. For a short time, 1 October to 17 October 1949, the 6th Marines went out of existence. However, on 17 October the Marine Corps reactivated a new 6th Marines as part of the 2d Marine Division at Camp Lejeune.¹³

The 6th Marines had been the last of the 2d Division to reach the Pacific fighting at Guadalcanal, the last to leave occupation duty in Japan, and the last to reach the 2d Division at Camp Lejeune, where it comfortably resides today. Not only had it been one of the three infantry regiments of the 2d Division which had fought hard battles, it had provided the infantry elements for two Marine brigades—the 1st Provisional and the 3d. The regiment had covered itself with honors and distinction in World War II as it had done previously in World War I, and as it continues to do today. It passed on to today's 6th Marines not only the Croix de Guerre from World War I, but also a Presidential Unit Citation and a host of stars on additional campaign streamers for its battle flag from World War II.

The spirit of the World War I and World War II 6th Marines lives on today not only in its active-duty members but also in its retired and former members. Every 20 November, or on a weekend near that date, some of the survivors of Tarawa meet at Center House, Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C., to commemorate that historic battle. A moment of silence is a traditional ritual of remembrance from those still left to those who never came home. In June 1984 the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines' veterans held a reunion in Kansas City, Missouri, commemorating the 40th anniversary of the landing on Saipan. More than 100 survivors from places as far away as Hawaii attended. There were many former Navy corpsmen in the crowd. Fifty percent of those attending brought their wives.

As John Toland, the Pulitzer Prize-winning historian, wrote in his first novel, *Gods of War*, "Much of the action centers around the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines. I chose this outfit not only because of its outstanding

history prior to World War II but because its performance in the Pacific typified, in my opinion, the U.S. Marine Corps. It was a true band of brothers in battle, and remains so in peace."

CHAPTER 9

1945-1965

*Background—Korea—Rebuilding the 6th Marines—Action in Lebanon—Cuban Crisis
The Quiet Time—Dominican Crisis—Lessons Learned*

Background

As had happened before, after World War II was won the country, and a lot of the world, relaxed. A euphoria set in. Congress again decided to restrict appropriations for military purposes as it had done so often in the past. This action actually fit in with the prevailing view of the populace. The country was sick of war and all it meant. Surely World War II was "the war to end all wars." Those who had served were anxious to get home, pick up their civilian careers, and forget about fighting. Once again the United States' great balanced military force was allowed to rapidly disintegrate.

The reduction of the vast store of equipment built to support and win the war took various forms. The ships that constituted the greatest navy the world had ever seen were sailed to the United States and "put into mothballs," i.e., dead storage, sold, or, in the case of a few, kept in active service. Many ships, from battleships and aircraft carriers to cargo ships and tankers, were retired from active duty as the numbers of Navy personnel shrank. Similar action was taken by the other services. It was claimed that it was cheaper to throw things in the ocean or bury heavy equipment, tanks, and ammunition overseas, than to ship them home.

As determined as the country was to disarm itself rapidly, it was equally as dedicated to spending millions of dollars to rebuild the cities and economies of war-ravaged allies and former enemies alike. In April 1948 a law was enacted to set up a European recovery program, known as the Marshall Plan after the Secretary of State, Army General George Catlett Marshall. The Greek and Turkish aid programs, recognition of Israel, and the initial discussions of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) also came during his secretaryship.¹

Marshall later became Secretary of Defense under President Truman and, some felt, continued his efforts to emasculate the Navy and Marine Corps as he was thought to have done as the trusted military advisor to Truman. He was followed in this sensitive post by James Forrestal, with whom the Corps had not been particularly satisfied. Nevertheless, Forrestal's regime was looked on with nostalgia in comparison to that of his successor, Louis A. Johnson.

It was the 28th of March 1949, when Johnson was sworn in as Secretary of Defense. Truman was surfeited with both the Navy and the Marine Corps. He expressly directed Johnson to remember that economy was the watchword, and that he particularly wanted the Navy and the Marine Corps "brought to heel." Johnson's attitude was expressed to Admiral Richard L. Connally shortly after Johnson was appointed Secretary of Defense. He said:

Admiral, there is no reason for having a Navy and a Marine Corps. General Bradley (then Chief of the Joint Staff) tells me amphibious operations are a thing of the past. We'll never have any more amphibious operations. That does away with the Marine Corps. And the Air Force can do anything the Navy can do, so that does away with the Navy.²

As had happened so often in the past, the Corps was under siege. Actually these attacks began in 1946 almost immediately after the end of World War II. Then-Commandant General Alexander A. Vandegrift, who earned the Medal of Honor at Guadalcanal, assembled his most trusted advisors. Together they fought the merger battles during the 1945-47 phase of the Marine Corps' struggle for survival. Once again the Corps was saved by Congress.

However, Truman and Johnson decreed that the Corps be cut from almost 75,000 to 65,000, its infantry forces cut from 11 to 8 battalions, and its aviation squadrons from 23 to 12.³

On the international scene other events would also take place during this period which would vitally affect the Marine Corps. In the Middle East waning British and French influence brought the rise of constant strife. Israel was born, setting off Jewish and Arab conflicts continuing to this day. In the Caribbean area, always a hotbed of revolutions and coups, the United States had a near-to-home strategic problem which still confronts the nation. In the Far East-Pacific area many problems, spawned by World War II and its aftermath, would test a nation rapidly disarming and preoccupied with its own social and economic problems.

Korea

Although the 6th Marines did not fight in the Korean War as a regimental name, its former members were in the Inchon landing just the same. It is well, therefore, to consider what went on to better understand the evolution of the regiment.

When the war started on 25 June 1950, the 5th and 1st Marines were stationed at Camp Pendleton. Then-Commandant General Clifton B. Cates offered a regimental combat team and an aircraft group for immediate service during the first frantic hours. The Navy, Army, and Air Force were silent. Finally, General Cates persuaded the Chief of Naval Operations to give the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Naval Forces Far East authorization to offer General MacArthur, Commander-in-Chief Far East, a Marine air-ground brigade. MacArthur fired off a dispatch to the Joint Chiefs of Staff asking for the Marines. It wasn't until 3 July that the approval was given.⁴

At Camp Pendleton, the 1st Marine Division, already skeletonized, stripped out the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade under the command of Brigadier General Edward A. Craig. The core of the ground element was to be the 5th Marines, then under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Raymond L. Murray of World War II fame.

As early as 10 July, MacArthur told Lieutenant General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., who visited him in Tokyo as the Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force Pacific, that if he only had the 1st Marine Division he would land it at Inchon.⁵ Shepherd told him the rest of the division could be ready by the first of September, and went back to his headquarters to start badgering Cates to help him keep his promise to MacArthur.

The brigade sailed from San Diego on 12 July.⁶ Army General Walton J. Walker's Eighth Army had been pushed back to a perimeter at the southern end of the Korean peninsula around the town of Pusan. The North Korean Army could not be stopped, it seemed. By the last week of July the perimeter threatened to collapse. MacArthur ordered the Marine brigade to Pusan as the last of his available reserves.

At the time, the strength of the Marine Corps was 74,279 on active duty, with 27,656 of them in the Fleet Marine Force. This was before Secretary Johnson's threat to reduce the Corps even more to 65,000 in his next fiscal year's budget. Nevertheless, to accommodate this force, which had been cut from 107,000 decreed by Congress at the end of World War II to the 75,000 limit set by executive order, the "J" tables of organization, slightly revised, had come into being. The original "J" tables did away with the regimental echelon while trying to experiment with a brigade echelon in its place.

Now the number of infantry regiments in a division was cut from 3 to 2, the number of battalions in a regiment from 3 to 2, the number of companies

in a battalion from 3 to 2, etc., right on down the line. The Marine aircraft wings were similarly affected. This was the state of the Marine Corps when North Korea invaded South Korea on Sunday, 25 June 1950.

Truman, remembering it had been only five years since World War II ended, refused to reinstate the draft. Faced with the imminent collapse of South Korea and thousands of Americans being killed, captured, or wounded, Truman gave permission to mobilize the Reserve and National Guard units. Such a mobilization took time, however, and there was no time to spare.

Meanwhile Headquarters Marine Corps, under constant pressure from MacArthur through Shepherd to build up the 1st Division for deployment to the Far East, took some unusual steps. The 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, was away from Camp Lejeune on Mediterranean duty with the Sixth Fleet. It and its ships were ordered to proceed through the Suez Canal directly to Korea. Personal baggage, etc., was to return to Camp Lejeune on a LST for storage. Once in Korea, the battalion reported to the 7th Marines and fleshed out that regiment, serving under its new designation as 3d Battalion, 7th Marines.

The division headquarters and the 1st Marines were put together in 10 days from the Camp Lejeune 6th Marines' battalion already sent out to Camp Pendleton and filled out with reserves and drafts of Marines from posts and stations. The Marine brigade sailed from San Diego on 12 July 1950.

Meanwhile, Colonel Homer L. Litzenberg, Commanding Officer, 6th Marines, was told to form the 7th Marines from what was left at Camp Lejeune and be prepared to move to Korea.

So, the assembling of the 1st Division for the Inchon landing consisted of the 5th Marines, being pulled from the Pusan perimeter and loading out of Pusan; the 7th Marines, still on the high seas, with one of its battalions coming by way of the Suez Canal; and the 1st Marines, which was staging out of Kobe, Japan. The division was literally formed on the battlefield and one of its regiments, the 7th Marines, had recently been the 6th Marines.

MacArthur unfortunately had other detractors in Washington, D.C., besides Truman and Johnson. In his memoirs he said:

The target date, because of the great tides at Inchon, had to be the middle of September. This meant that the staging for the landing at Inchon would have to be accomplished more rapidly than that of any other large amphibious operation in modern warfare. . . . My plan was opposed by powerful military influences in Washington. The essence of the operation depended upon a great amphibious movement,

but the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Omar Bradley, was of the considered opinion that such amphibious operations were obsolete—there would never be another successful movement of this sort.⁷

The outcome of this difference of opinion is well documented in the history of both the Inchon landing and MacArthur's career.

The 6th Marines at Camp Lejeune began to rebuild immediately. As was true for the rest of the 2d Division, this process was slowed by the necessity to provide replacements for the 1st Division fighting in Korea.

Rebuilding the 6th Marines

Colonel Russell N. Jordahl was the first new regimental commander, followed almost immediately by Colonel Henry W. Buse, Jr., who then turned over command to Lieutenant Colonel William F. Prickett, who held command for a short time. Colonel Ormond R. Simpson then took command from 1952 to 1953. He was then sent to Korea to command first the 1st Marines and then serve as G-3 in the division. Then the slogan was "There are only two kinds of Marines—those who have been to Korea and those who are going." These were hard times for the understrength 6th Marines.

Colonel Simpson relieved Colonel Prickett, who had been executive officer to Colonel Buse in 1952. Buse had already moved to become the division's G-3. When Simpson examined the regimental colors behind his desk, he made a startling discovery. Although all of the bands on the staff were correct for World War I—silver, with the name of the engagement engraved thereon—those after World War I were homemade. A lot of them were copper, some were brass, and the etching was obviously done free-hand by an amateur. He sent for his sergeant major.

"Sergeant Major," he said, "what do you think of the bands?"

"The bands look terrible," the sergeant major answered.

Colonel Simpson said, "Alright, get some new bands, Sergeant Major."

With an "Aye, aye, sir," the sergeant major left.

In two months he showed up with a box of silver bands going back all the way through the history of the 6th Marines. Deciding that the emplacement of the bands deserved a ceremony, Simpson, through a great deal of effort, eventually located a Marine who had been in the regiment each time a band was awarded after World War I. Someplace he found a Marine who had been there by scouring the entire division.

Some were old, grey-haired colonels, some former enlisted men now officers.

The division commander and his staff showed up along with the commanding officers of the other regiments. When Simpson launched into his speech covering the history of the regiment, it went fine at first. As each campaign was mentioned the appropriate silver band was slipped on the staff by the Marine he had found who had been there. He got through page six of his script, and the rest was missing. With more than 2,500 Marines looking on, Simpson had to speak without notes. It went off well and was a very impressive ceremony.

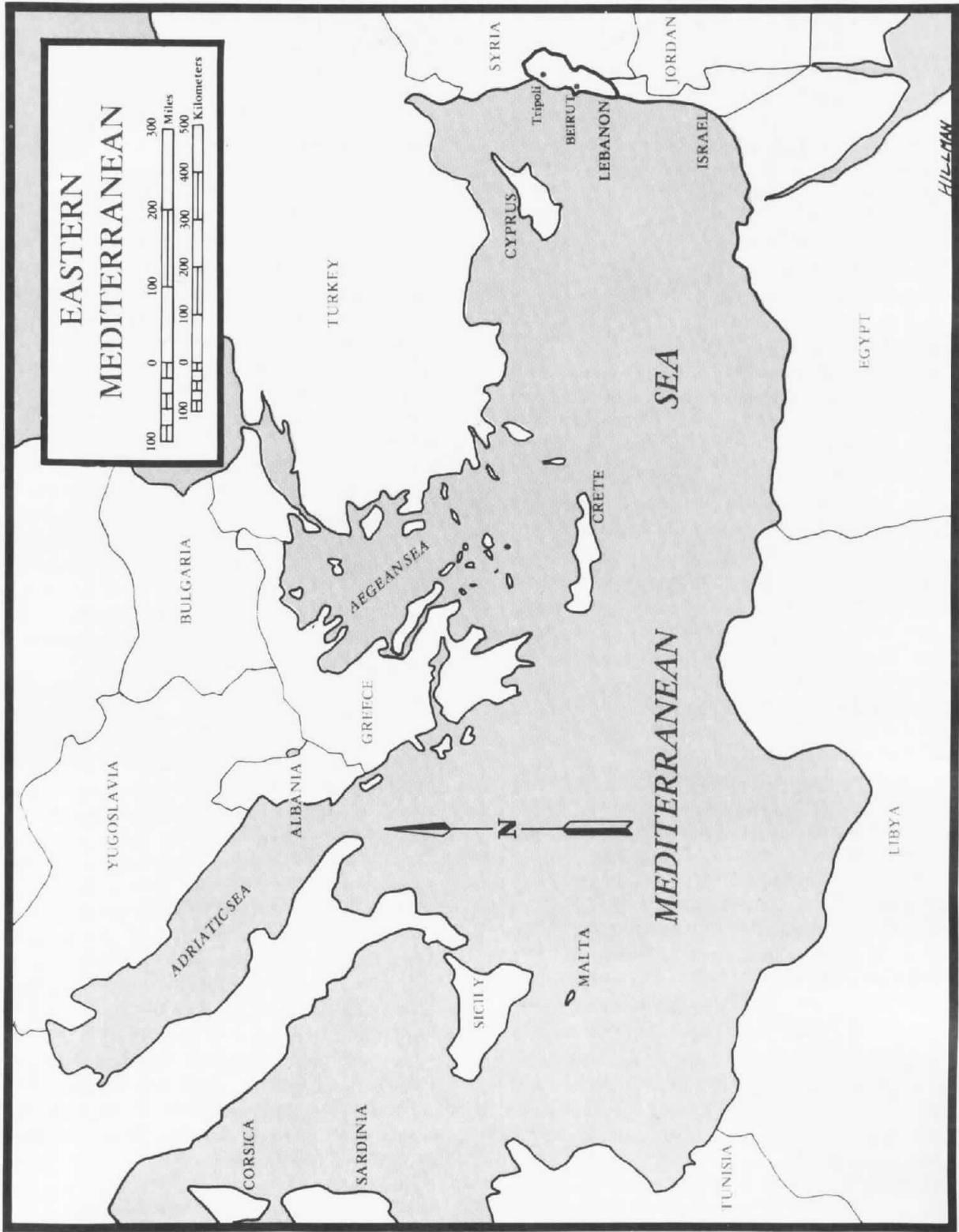
Although interesting, it was a frustrating time to be in command of the 6th Marines. The regiment had to take its turn in furnishing a battalion for either the Mediterranean or the Caribbean ready battalion. Drafts of enlisted men had to be furnished because of the war in Korea. Officers were ordered out by name.

A third responsibility was to train what was left, and participate in landing exercises with the rest of the division. The entire regiment went to Vieques and trained as a unit for three months. Then what was left of the division came to Vieques for an amphibious operation. The 6th Marines were designated the aggressors, and ordered to defend against the landing. At the time Major General Edwin A. Pollock was the division commander.

Simpson was in a quandary. It being a controlled war game, he knew the aggressors were supposed to defend against a landing, but lose eventually. He also knew that Lieutenant General Graves B. Erskine, as Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic, would be the Exercise Commander. General Erskine had the reputation of being fair, but tough. Whether or not to show Erskine his defensive plan posed a problem for Simpson. He called the Force chief of staff and asked him if the "Big E" wanted to see his plan. The chief said, "I don't know. Hold on, I will ask him."

He came back to the phone chuckling. "General Erskine," he said, "told me to tell you that he will arrive in Vieques two days before the landing. If he doesn't like your plan then, he will get another colonel to command the 6th Marines Reinforced." That made Simpson's day!

The exercise went well and the 6th Marines left for a well deserved rest in Panama. It had been in the field for almost four months. Panama was considered to be the best liberty port available. It could absorb a large number of people, and the reinforced regiment numbered about 5,000.



They had a good liberty. When the ships were ready to move out, one outfit reported two Marines missing. Although Simpson didn't know what to expect, he had military police all over the place checking jails, hospitals, etc. Then, just as the last ship was casting off lines from the dock, a Panamanian taxi came roaring over the hill. It pulled up to the dock, and two Marines jumped out. The lines had been cast off, but the ship put down a plank, and the two Marines climbed aboard. All present!⁸

On 21 August 1950 came the news about the victory of the 1st Marine Brigade in the Pusan perimeter at the First Battle of the Naktong. Congressman Gordon L. McDonough, a staunch friend of the Corps, took the occasion to write a letter to the President praising the Marines' fighting ability, describing how they were saving the Army from being pushed into the sea, and declaring that the Corps should have its own representative on the Joint Chiefs.

This infuriated Truman, who was coming under heavy criticism for the unpreparedness of our forces in Korea and Japan. He vented his frustrations on the Marines by writing the Congressman a furious response in which he belittled the Marine Corps. McDonough immediately had the letter inserted into the *Congressional Record*, thus making it public property. Senators and Congressmen from both sides of the aisle, the general public, and veterans' organizations, all excoriated the President. Although Truman did apologize formally to Commandant Cates, the attention the affair generated caused Senator Paul H. Douglas and Congressman Mike Mansfield, both former Marines, to introduce a bill providing that the Fleet Marine Force be composed of four combat divisions and four aircraft wings. Also, the bill provided that the Commandant should be a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff opposed the bill. As enacted, the legislation (Public Law 416) stated that the Fleet Marine Force should have no less than three combat divisions and three aircraft wings. Truman signed the law.

The Marine Corps couldn't afford to gloat. Although allowed to expand, and to get rid of the "J" tables of organization, the bill provided many headaches, primarily caused by the rapid expansion. For example, the Corps grew from 75,000 in 1950, to 192,600 in June 1951, to 231,967 in 1952, and to 249,206 by June 1953.⁹ However, all of this did let the 6th Marines accelerate its rebuilding to a full-strength, three-battalion regiment.

Consequently, throughout the 1950s and 1960s to the present day, the 2d Marine Division at Camp

Lejeune has provided the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean with a reinforced battalion. The 6th Marines provided one of its battalions when its turn came. The normal requirement for the "Med Battalion" was to conduct landing exercises and training exercises on friendly shores, sometimes in conjunction with the armed forces of those nations.

Also involved were some humanitarian missions. For example, the Greek Ionian Islands have frequent earthquakes. In August 1953 the 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel John K. Lynch, was ordered to the Greek islands of Zante, Cephalonia and Ithaca, which had experienced severe earthquakes. They found widespread destruction and loss of life. The naval group's medical personnel and supplies, together with the Marines, divided into six separate rescue teams, each team operating independently in its assigned disaster area. After administering to the dead, injured, and hungry, the Marines assisted in restoring power, repairing water mains, instituting sanitation measures, erecting temporary shelters, and clearing roads. The new battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Wilson F. Humphrey, who had relieved Lynch, and the rest of his battalion demonstrated that the Marines were combat-trained and ready, but they were equally effective in providing humanitarian aid.

In 1957, the 6th Marines (Reinforced), commanded by Colonel Austin C. Shofner, sailed 5,500 miles to Saros Bay in the vicinity of the World War I Gallipoli operation in Turkey. Operation Deepwater, as it was called, was a test of the military defensive capabilities of NATO's amphibious force. Gallipoli, a World War I disaster which was the first modern amphibious operation attempted, had long been a fascination for the United States Marine Corps. By studying the many mistakes of that operation, the Corps had slowly evolved the concept, tactics, and equipment between the two world wars that were so successful in the march across the Pacific in World War II. Here, however, in Operation Deepwater, the 6th Marines also chalked up their own "first." It was the first exercise in Europe to amphibiously use all elements of a joint task force — land, sea, and air — since World War II. The 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, also became the first unit in the Marine Corps to participate in an amphibious tactical helicopter-borne operation overseas.

Action in Lebanon

Lebanon, geographically and historically a crossroads for Africans, Europeans, and Asians, not only has strategic importance, but also is unique among the other countries of the area as a composite of various reli-

gious factions. There are Catholics, Maronites, Chaldeans, Greeks, Jews, Armenians, Syrians, and Arabs of different Moslem factions. The National Constitution of 1926 recognized this by requiring the allocation of government jobs and appointments among religious beliefs. This action mainly represented a division of power between the Christian and Moslem communities. Normally, it was agreed, there would be a Maronite Christian president, a Sunni Moslem premier, and a Shiite Moslem speaker of parliament. Parliamentary seats were to be allocated on the basis of the relative numerical strength of religious communities in each electoral district.

Strongly influenced by the western world, Lebanon became a center of learning and wealth, and the pleasure capital of the Middle East. It became noted for its beautiful beaches, and luxurious hotels and resorts, some of which were high in the mountains. Under French mandate after World War I, Lebanon became independent after World War II. Since its independence, the rivalry between the Moslem and Christian communities had risen. On 22 March 1945, Lebanon joined the Arab League Pact, and in 1948 it aligned itself with the other nations of the league in the Arab-Israeli War of 1948. The country's international position was, therefore, precarious, and its internal situation delicate. It tried to play honest broker between competing camps, which caused it to receive diverse pressures from all sides.

In early May 1958, revolution on the part of the Moslems broke out against the administration of President Camille Chamoun, a Christian. The threat to Lebanon was not just internal. Reports of infiltrators from Syria and their aid to the rebels started to surface. The Lebanese government complained to the United Nations Security Council which, after much debate, decided to send a group of observers to Lebanon to investigate. The group was unable to obtain the necessary evidence. A coup d'etat in Iraq destroyed the only Arab member of the Baghdad Pact, which put an end to the Iraq-Jordan Federation and threatened the throne of King Hussein of Jordan. The only counterbalance to the Egypt-Syria union no longer existed. President Chamoun appealed to the United States and Great Britain for help.¹⁰

In November of 1957, the Joint Chiefs had cautioned Admiral James L. Holloway, Commander in Chief Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean (CinC-NELM) of the possibilities of the overthrow of the Jordanian government and perhaps a coup d'etat in Lebanon. He was directed to plan for limited action if these contingencies occurred. Headquarters, 2d

Provisional Marine Brigade, under the command of Brigadier General Sidney S. Wade, was established at Camp Lejeune on 10 January 1958. Originally tasked to plan a combined operation in the Mediterranean, it was abruptly ordered to that area due to the riots and coup in Lebanon and the threat to Jordan. The brigade's infantry battalions, the 2d Battalion, 2d Marines, and the 1st Battalion, 8th Marines, were then afloat in the Mediterranean with the Sixth Fleet. On 25 June 1958, the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Robert M. Jenkins, left Morehead City to relieve the 1st Battalion, 8th Marines, which was due to return to the United States.

On 14 July 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower directed CinC-NELM to land the Marines on the beach near the Beirut International Airport, seize the field, and, if possible, secure the water supply systems, bridges, and the northeastern sector of the city. The landing took place as ordered on 15 July 1958.

The 2d Battalion, 2d Marines, seized the airport, followed by the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines. The Marines had to be prepared to meet armed resistance on the beach. However, witnessing the assault were bikini-clad sunbathers, workmen, and other observers. They all waved as the Marines charged ashore. Soft drink vendors were soon out in force. One young Marine was heard to say, "It's better than Korea, but what the hell is it?"

The morning after the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, came ashore, the 2d Battalion, 2d Marines, moved towards the city and took control of the dock area, while putting guards on critical bridges and the United States Embassy. The rebel stronghold in the center of the city was left alone by the Marines.¹¹

The 31st of July an election was held, and General Fuad Chehab took over from Chamoun. He formed a coalition with the rebels, and took office on 23 September.

In the meantime, Army troops started to arrive at the International Airport on 19 July. From their arrival to the assumption of command of American Land Forces by an Army general on 26 July, Marine Brigadier General Wade was in command.

During this period there was no serious combat activity, but the Marines' forward positions were harassed. Further, rebel groups had been firing at American aircraft when they came in for landings. There were no American casualties, although firefights with the rebels erupted occasionally. The biggest problem facing the Marines was an outbreak of dysentery among the battalions. By the end of August strict

hygienic controls adopted by the Marines had brought the ailment under control.

The Marines' fire discipline was outstanding, and proved to be a stabilizing feature of the American intervention. General Creighton W. Abrams described the Lebanon operation as a "show of force with psychological overtones."¹²

The 29th of September, the 6th Marines (Reinforced), commanded by Colonel William B. McKennon, composed of regimental headquarters and 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel William Wilkes, arrived in Beirut harbor. On the same day the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, departed for Camp Lejeune.

On 8 October, the United States announced it was withdrawing all its forces from Lebanon. By 18 October all the Marines in country were gone.¹³

Cuban Crisis

In October 1962, President John F. Kennedy issued an ultimatum to the Soviet Union requiring that offensive missiles be removed from Cuba. The garrison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba was reinforced to regimental strength. The 6th Marines and the rest of the 2d Division went to sea in amphibious ships. The division was reinforced by the 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade from the 1st Division, which had joined it by coming through the Panama Canal from California. The Soviet Union and Cuba backed down, and the rest is history.

The Quiet Time

After the Cuban crisis and the Lebanon excitement, things seemed to quiet down a little for the 6th Marines. General David M. Shoup, the twenty-second Commandant, who had commanded the 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, as a major from 19 February to 23 June 1942, was a shrewd fundamentalist. He was skeptical of the counterinsurgency doctrines then in vogue. This included the United States doctrine toward Castro's Cuba. As regards Vietnam, which was starting to receive political and media attention, he considered it a rat hole, and sought to hold the Marine commitment to a minimum.¹⁴

The 1st of January, 1964, General Wallace M. Greene, Jr., became the Twenty-third Commandant. He had been Shoup's chief of staff, and had made a fine record in World War II. He was more of an internationalist than Shoup and was soon put to the test.

Dominican Crisis

The Dominican Republic shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti at a strategic location in the

Caribbean. Furthermore, it is within a 1,000-mile radius of southern Florida, the Panama Canal, and the oil fields and refineries of Venezuela, Columbia, and the Netherlands West Indies. It is obvious why the region has always been of vital interest to the United States. Although often acting unilaterally to protect that interest, more recently the United States had tried to act in concert with other American neighbors.

When Fidel Castro seized control of Cuba in 1959, he installed the only Communist government in the Western Hemisphere, thereby introducing a new element to be reckoned with. This caused the United States to resolve that there would be no opportunity for another such government to come to power in the hemisphere.¹⁵

Before and after President Raphael L. Trujillo's assassination in the Dominican Republic in May 1961, showing the flag and ships' visits had kept the lid on a very volatile situation. In 1961, when a civil war appeared to be imminent, a well-timed amphibious operation calmed things. This action had to be repeated in 1963.

Late on Saturday, 24 April 1965, the 6th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), on board ship and anchored south of Puerto Rico's Vieques Island, received word that a Communist-inspired coup was taking place in Santo Domingo.¹⁶

The 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, shortly before the Communist-attempted coup effort started to materialize, had been designated the "Ready Battalion" in the 2d Marine Division. This meant that the battalion was brought up to full strength in both men and equipment. In view of the increasing tempo of the conflict developing on the other side of the world in Vietnam, such an effort was a major undertaking for the east coast Marine Corps.

The battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel (later Major General) Robert D. Bohn decided to take his command on a long conditioning march from Camp Lejeune to Fort Bragg, both in North Carolina. After receiving permission from division, he energetically organized the march by reconnoitering the route, selecting bivouac areas and getting permission from the respective farmers, arranging for jeep ambulances, trucks at the head and end of the troop column, and the numerous other details involved.

Shortly before he planned to start the march, Bohn was told that the commanding general, Major General Ormond R. Simpson, wanted to see him. Reporting to the chief of staff, Colonel John R. Chaisson, he was ushered into the general's office. Simpson looked up, and informed Bohn that he had been thinking about the march, and that he had decided against it. Simp-



Department of Defense (USMC) Photo A450193

Unarmed members of the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines (left), in charge of the evacuation of American citizens from the Dominican Republic in late April 1965, as well as some of the civilians themselves, await the arrival of the next flight of UH-34D helicopters from HMM-264 which will fly them to the safety of the USS Boxer (LPH 4) offshore.

son did not like the idea of road marches; he considered them too dangerous. Bohn was astounded, and argued vehemently in favor of the march, citing all the safety precautions he had made, planning and reconnaissance time already expended, and any other reasons that came to his mind. Simpson was unmoved. Bohn looked at the chief of staff, who had been a staunch supporter of the idea. Chaisson, looking at the ceiling, offered no help. Bohn continued to argue. Finally, Simpson, swayed by Bohn's explanation, gave his permission for the march. Bohn was elated, and congratulated himself.

Lieutenant Colonel Bohn's battalion was only about two days on the march when the Dominican crisis broke. Bohn, who had maintained constant radio contact with the division headquarters, radioed back and asked General Simpson if he should return to Camp Lejeune. Simpson replied, "No, continue to march." Bohn did continue, but called in every hour to see if he should return to camp. Simpson kept replying, "Continue to march." When the battalion arrived at Fort Bragg, Bohn heard that the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, had replaced his as the "Ready Battalion." Some time later, Chaisson informed Bohn that both Simpson and Chaisson had received word that the 6th MEU might be needed in Santo Domingo, but both were sworn to secrecy. By arguing so strongly and getting Simpson's permission for the march he had

unknowingly cheated the 2d Battalion out of seeing any action in Santo Domingo.

The infantry element of the 6th MEU was the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines (Reinforced), under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Poul F. Pedersen. The battalion was backloading on its ships after participating in a training exercise on Vieques. Company K had finished flying by helicopter back to the USS *Boxer* (LPH-4). Company L, the battalion headquarters, and the MEU staff were also on the *Boxer*. Company I was on one of the other ships, and configured for a surface landing. Company M had been left at Guantanamo Bay to be part of the base defense force. Before leaving Camp Lejeune the Marines in Company M needed the Marines in the rest of the 3d Battalion that while the latter were cruising around the Caribbean, Company M would be "guarding the line" at "Gitmo." Even though such duty was routine, Company M Marines delighted in questioning the manhood of the rest of the battalion's members. So, as will be seen, Company M missed action in the Dominican Republic. The revenge felt by the other Marines was sweet indeed. Now it was their turn to chide them for sitting on their duffs at "Gitmo" while the rest were in "combat." Foreseeing this, the Company M commander practically had a mutiny on his hands when his Marines learned they were missing the action in the Dominican Republic.

Back at the 6th MEU, its commander received orders to proceed to Santo Domingo and to evacuate up to 1,200 U.S. citizens. The MEU had its own helicopters, Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 264 (HMM-264), but fixed-wing support would have to come from Roosevelt Roads in Puerto Rico. By the time the Navy amphibious squadron and its embarked Marines reached the waters off the capital, Santo Domingo, the rebels had gained control of the downtown area and the President had quit. Even so, only an unarmed rifle platoon from Company K was sent ashore to direct the evacuation by helicopters. To their dismay, they discovered the number of U.S. citizens and foreign nationals to be evacuated had increased to 3,000.

The designated evacuation point was the Embajador Hotel. It had a polo field next to it which was used as a landing zone (LZ). As the civilians were flown in helicopters to the *Boxer*, the Marine junior officers were forced to give up their quarters to the civilians and sleep wherever they could.

Early in the afternoon of 29 April, the U.S. Embassy received heavy small-arms fire. Not until the next day did the battalion headquarters, the rest of Company K, and Company L come ashore. By nightfall all were ashore. Company I landed the next day by small boats or amtracs.

At that time the perimeter included only the hotel and the LZ. It was decided to extend it and to set up a roadblock on the road leading into the hotel from the north to prevent the rebels from entering the area. The Marines not only had to man the perimeter and roadblock, but also reinforce the small Embassy guard in protecting the Embassy itself.

Company I was still aboard ship with the heavy equipment of the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines (Reinforced). Reports revealed that the rebels were expanding their operations while the still-loyal armed forces were stalled. It was then decided that the heavy equipment might be needed ashore. The company landed in LVTs on a beach, designated Red Beach, that was 13.5 miles southwest of Santo Domingo at the mouth of the Rio Haina. Tanks and Ontos also landed across Red Beach. Immediately after landing, the units formed an armored column, and moved north to join the perimeter around the Embajador Hotel.

Two Army airborne battalion combat teams (BCT) from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, were flown to Ramey Air Force Base in Puerto Rico, prepared to make an air-assault drop near the San Isidro airfield early on 30 April.¹⁷ The two airborne BCTs were diverted from

The 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, having landed in the Dominican Republic in April 1965, finds itself in an environment different from pine-covered training areas of Camp Lejeune.

Department of Defense (USMC) Photo A19573





Department of Defense (USMC) Photo A19576

Capt William G. Davis (with hand on holster) of Company I, 3d Battalion, 6th Marines talks with 1stLt Harry J. Shane (right), the battalion adjutant, before moving to straighten the line of the International Safety Zone in Santo Domingo in the 1965 intervention.

Ramey and told to land at San Isidro rather than air drop there since the airfield was still in the hands of loyal troops. This brigade was to secure the airfield and screen the east and north from rebel fire.

The 6th MEU was directed to continue the protection of the LZ and move west to establish an International Safety Zone (ISZ), from the sea north along Calle Sacorro Sanchez, Calle Navarro, and Avenida Presidente Rios to the juncture at Avenida San Martin.

The first day ashore seemed a long one to the 3d Battalion Marines. The battalion was issued live ammunition before going ashore. In the excitement, the ammunition for the .45-caliber pistols was issued by boxes of 50 rounds instead of the 21 rounds per gun planned by the supply people. Consequently those at the end of the line got no ammunition when there was no more available. Those lucky enough to have a box of 50 rounds were most reluctant to give any of theirs to their unfortunate fellow Marines. The unfortunates had to do some fast talking to get their buddies to share.

U.S. forces were forbidden to use any weapons larger than small arms, unless specifically authorized by higher headquarters.¹⁸ Loyal Dominican troops patrolled the area between the U.S. Army and Marine perimeters.¹⁹ These forces soon, however, moved back

to the safety of the airfield, leaving the Army and Marine perimeters isolated from one another.

The men of the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, were very well trained, but most of them were "green" troops unaccustomed to hostile fire. Consequently, when they received fire they returned it by firing every small-arm weapon they had. After a couple of days, however, fire discipline improved. The normal response to incoming fire thereafter was to put everyone on line and try to determine the source. Usually the hostile fire came from the windows of nearby buildings. These windows all had built-in louvered blinds with slats about three inches wide, which could be opened just enough for a sniper to poke the muzzle of his rifle through. After a couple of hostile rounds the sniper usually would be located. The first round from an M-79 grenade launcher would blow the entire set of blinds into the room. The second M-79 round quieted things down nicely. The rebels soon got the message—you shoot at the Marines and they will kill you.

The 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, moved eastward when ordered. Expecting heavy resistance, the infantry was preceded by Ontos, tanks, and LVTs. Soon the companies advanced in single file, moving from tree or lamp post to lamp post. While approaching the objective, Company I received small-arms fire from an

area of low-income housing. The company commander, Captain William G. Davis, requested permission to use heavier caliber weapons so he could clear the area of rebels. It wasn't until 1530 that authorization was granted, since the request had to go up the chain of command. Even then, he was limited to using only 3.5-inch rocket launchers.

Advancing by a series of squad and fire team rushes, the company cleared the area of all rebel activity, but not until the 1st Platoon had four Marines wounded. The rebels were seen withdrawing from the area, carrying their wounded with them. Two rebel dead were found. This area was only about a block and a half north of the U.S. Embassy.

Moving on, Company I seized the next objective with one platoon. This objective was about five blocks north of the U.S. Embassy. Here again heavy rebel resistance was encountered. Using their 3.5-inch rockets, the Marines drove the rebels away to the north. One Marine was killed and four more wounded during this action. The Marines had to cross an open area—an old airfield—to flush out the rebels in the buildings on the other side. Since the airfield was impossible to defend with only a company, Company I was permitted to withdraw and consolidate its position on the first objective.

Company K, commanded by Captain Robert C. Cockell, advanced and set up a roadblock approximately three blocks south of the U.S. Embassy. At first no opposition was encountered. Later that evening sniper fire was received.

Company L, under the command of Captain Horace W. Baker, advanced about four blocks south of the roadblock established by Company K, and set up another roadblock, initially without opposition. The company then established contact with Company K to the north. Once in position, Company L received sniper fire. It cleared a building near the company command post, killing one rebel. During the night, the Marines received more sniper fire.

On 1 May, the Army and Marine units started to effect a linkup of their separated positions. The Marines suffered no casualties, but the Army had two men killed and two wounded by sniper fire.

By this time, command of the task force had shifted from the Navy to Army General Bruce Palmer, Jr. It became apparent to him that additional troops would be needed. Anticipating this, the Commanding General, 2d Marine Division, activated the 4th MEB on 29 April. The MEB was to consist of a headquarters and the 6th Marines commanded by Colonel George W. Daughtry, as the ground elements. Since

A team of Marines carrying a 3.5-inch rocket launcher and rocket rounds crouch behind a masonry wall for protection from sniper fire as they move forward in Santo Domingo.

Department of Defense (USMC) Photo A19502





Department of Defense (USMC) Photo A19986

Members of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines wait to board KC-130s for the flight to the Dominican Republic in May 1965 to reinforce American forces already committed there.

First in, first out; a unit of the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines waits to board UH-34D helicopters from HMM-264 in May 1965 for the welcome flight back to the USS Boxer (LPH 4) at the end of the battalion's participation in the intervention in the Dominican Republic.

Department of Defense (USMC) Photo A19992





Department of Defense (USMC) Photo A450322

The 1st Battalion, 6th Marines prepares to leave the USS Chilton (APA 38) at Morehead City, North Carolina on 9 June 1965 as it returns from the Dominican Republic.

the regiment's 3d Battalion was already on the scene, the regiment consisted of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines; the 1st Battalion, 8th Marines; and the 1st Battalion, 2d Marines. The 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, and the MEB headquarters traveled to Santo Domingo by air via Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and then by surface ships to the Dominican Republic. The 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel William F. Doehler, landed the evening of 1 May and throughout the night.

The next four weeks were uneventful. The two Marine battalions improved their positions. Company C provided a security detachment to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to protect the building it used for storing food and medical supplies, and to protect their distribution points until relieved by OAS forces. The Army moved more units from the 82d Airborne Division to the Dominican Republic. JTF-122 and TF-120 were dissolved by

CinCLant, who designated General Palmer as USCom-DomRep.

The first cease-fire between the rebels and the military junta acting as the government was attempted by the United States on 30 April. Finally, a formal truce was signed on 5 May. It tasked the Organization of American States with its supervision. Fighting continued anyway between the rebels and the junta. One Marine was killed by sniper fire, Private First Class Michael Feher. He was at his post on a balcony trying to determine the location from which sniper fire was coming when he was killed. This sobered the rest of the 3d Battalion.

Lieutenant Colonel Pedersen, of the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, directed that a modified people-to-people program be established. It was welcomed by the people.

An Inter-American Peace Force (IAPE) was formally established on 20 May 1965. It consisted of units

from many Latin American countries. This laid the groundwork for the withdrawal of United States Forces from the Dominican Republic.

The 6th MEU with its 3d Battalion, 6th Marines (Reinforced), was reconstituted as the Caribbean Ready Force. Six days later, the 4th MEB departed by amphibious ships, arriving at Camp Lejeune on 6 June 1965.

Lessons Learned

The majority of casualties occurred during the first week of the landing. The 6th Marines had four killed and 19 wounded in the 3d Battalion. The 1st Battalion had one killed and one wounded.

Members of the 6th Marines who did participate, being mostly young and therefore confident of their

invincibility, were sobered when they had buddies killed or wounded. They now considered themselves combat veterans. Back at Camp Lejeune they talked about their experiences incessantly. Few knew that their predecessors had done the same upon their return from Iceland at the beginning of World War II. None in either case realized what grim battles lay ahead.

There were other valuable lessons learned during the operation. Most important, however, the 6th Marines had responded swiftly and efficiently to all tasks assigned it, and with a minimum of casualties.

The Commandant, General Greene, was soon put to an even bigger test. The Vietnam situation was steadily worsening.

CHAPTER 10

1965-1985

Background—The Late 1960s—The 1970s—Conclusion

Background

During the 1950s the French reoccupied what was known as French Indo-China—part of which was Vietnam. When the northern rebels defeated the French, and set up a Communist regime, a mass exodus was put into motion from north to south by anti-Communists. A demarcation line and demilitarized zone (DMZ), at about the middle of the long axis of Vietnam, separated North from South Vietnam. The United States supported South Vietnam, first with money for an armed force of 90,000 men. Then the size was upped to 100,000, then to 150,000. There it remained until an expansion of the United States' support in 1961.

The Soviet Union, the People's Republic of China, and other Communist-bloc countries supported North Vietnam. It soon became apparent that the North intended to conquer the South by military force and internal subversion. The North started to rearm and expand its armed forces while at the same time forming the Viet Cong in the south to carry out the internal subversion.

The Marine Corps was ordered to furnish a helicopter squadron to support the southernmost South Vietnamese Army Corps, which was responsible for all of the Mekong Delta region. A former Japanese fighter airstrip at Soc Trang in Ba Kuyen Province served as the Marine base of operations. The unit was to be in place by 15 April 1962. The operation was given the name "Shu-Fly."¹

Shu-Fly represented the first direct Marine involvement in the war which was going on between the north and the south. It was necessarily an antiguerrilla operation. But, as the years went on, the conflict grew more heated.

On 6 March 1965 the U.S. Defense Department announced that two battalions of Marines were being sent to South Vietnam at the request of the government in Saigon.² On 8 March 1965 the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade started landing at Da Nang. On 3 May 1965 the III Marine Expeditionary Force, later renamed the III Marine Amphibious Force (III MAF) began landing, with the 3d Marine Division as its ground element.³ From then on, the size of the force

grew. This growth had a profound effect upon the entire Marine Corps including the 6th Marines.

III MAF was in charge of the South Vietnamese I Corps area for the American command. It contained the five northern provinces of South Vietnam up to the DMZ. This area was to become the scene of heavy fighting in the years ahead. The military population in the I Corps area grew to more than 205,000 people by August 1968.⁴

The Late 1960s

To understand how the 6th Marines was affected even though it did not deploy to Vietnam as a regiment, it is necessary to grasp the huge demands on the entire Marine Corps that were being made in both personnel and material. At the peak of the war, 317,400 Marines were in the Marine Corps. This was in 1968. Of these, III MAF had 85,755. Although the size of the Corps was far under the 485,053 peak of World War II because peacetime personnel policies were in effect, more Marines actually served in the Marine Corps during its seven years of involvement in Vietnam than served in four years of World War II: 800,000 as opposed to 600,000.⁵ Here again the saying was, "There are three kinds of Marines—those there, those who have been there, and those who are on the way."

This personnel turbulence affected the 6th Marines greatly. Still, as far as the regiment was concerned, furnishing replacements for III MAF was only part of it. A Mediterranean battalion afloat had to be furnished, and contingencies both there and in the Caribbean had to be planned for by 2d Marine Division units. Training, both ashore and afloat, had to be carried out.

In June 1969, the President announced he intended to withdraw 25,000 U.S. servicemen from South Vietnam. The first Marine units to go were aviation. Three months later, 17 September, the President announced he was withdrawing 40,500 from South Vietnam. The 3d Marine Division was ordered to redeploy to Okinawa and set up in Marine Corps camps from whence it had originally come. This was accomplished by 10 November. Some Marine aviation units also withdrew. Later on, the rest of III MAF moved either to Iwakuni, Japan, or El Toro or Camp Pendleton, both in California.



Photo courtesy of Capt Douglas R. Doerr

The 6th Marines regimental headquarters on River Road at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.



Photo courtesy of Capt Douglas R. Doerr

These World War II era buildings, which long have served the 2d Marine Division as barracks, now are best known as the location for headquarters of the units of the 6th Marines.

This brick mess hall continues to serve the 6th Marines today as it has in the decades since the regiment arrived at Camp Lejeune after occupation duty following World War II.

Photo courtesy of Capt Douglas R. Doerr





Department of Defense (USMC) Photo A450359

ICpl Roger Lotter (holding ammunition) and PFC Willie James of Company G, 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, watch for "aggressors" during training on the island of Vieques in 1965.

Company M, 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, which missed the Dominican intervention, hikes up a hill overlooking a fjord during a NATO exercise in Norway in September 1965.

Department of Defense (USMC) Photo A450350





Department of Defense (USMC) Photo A451611

In a scene repeated many times since 1946, a squad from the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, moves forward behind a medium tank during training among the pines of Camp Lejeune.

On the east coast the 6th Marines continued its training at Camp Lejeune. The three battalions deployed at various times to the Mediterranean and the Caribbean.

CPXs and an amphibious landing demonstration were held in the Camp Lejeune area during 1966. LanForMed 2-66, during which the 3d Battalion was deployed for an extended period in the Caribbean, was also held in 1966.

In 1967, in addition to routine training, several special operations were held. These were FirEx-67, involving regimental headquarters and both the 2d and 3d Battalions; PhibLEx 10-67, involving regimental headquarters, and the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, and 3d Battalion, 8th Marines, on the island of Sardinia; LanForMed 1-67, which saw the 1st Battalion deploy to the Mediterranean; and lastly the deployment of the 3d Battalion to Guantanamo Bay during May and June as the GTMO Defense Force.

In 1968 the 6th Marines deployed first the 3d and then the 1st Battalion for maneuvers in the Caribbean. FirEx-68, involving portions of the regimental staff on Vieques, Puerto Rico, and regular field training in the Camp Lejeune area, made this another busy year.

But there were many problems ahead. A strong anti-Vietnam War movement developed during the 1960s in the United States. It affected the attitude of the average citizen and created difficulties for the armed forces, both in Vietnam and in the United States. When the United States withdrew its forces entirely,

and left the defense to the South Vietnamese Armed Forces, the Communist North soon invaded and defeated the Republic of Vietnam.

The 1970s

Many returning American veterans of the war believed that they were not honored as they had been in previous wars. Some felt they had risked their lives in vain, and were embittered by the memory of the approximately 55,000 of their buddies who had been killed. They were angry over an amnesty for draft-dodgers who had fled to Canada, Sweden, and other countries to avoid the war.

As antiwar sentiment developed in the country, drug usage also was making progress in all classes of society and in various age groups. There was a growing drug problem among the troops both at home and abroad. As it grew, morale and discipline declined. As troops were rotated from abroad, they brought the problem with them. Other factors strongly influencing military affairs in the early 1970s were the ending of the draft and the advent of the all-volunteer force in 1973.

The Armed Forces were experiencing many difficulties. Pressure was strong to keep up the level of manpower. Yet during the last phases of the American presence in Vietnam, the antiwar movement had gained great influence. There were numerous racial incidents. Some troops refused to carry out their orders if there was danger involved. Fraggging (directing

a fragmentation grenade at an unpopular officer or NCO) resulted in some deaths. It also took other forms such as boobytrapping a jeep and even shooting some men in the back. Through fear of retaliation and the dislike of informing against another man, it often was extremely difficult to locate the culprit.

Back in the United States, racial incidents grew at the various camps. Gangs of black Marines would roam Camp Lejeune or other posts and stations, and beat up white Marines found to be alone. Soon there was a backlash, continuing the violence.

Traditionally high morale was sadly shaken. A true crisis was threatening the 200-year-old Corps. Many of the problems could be traced to the end of the draft and the pressure of keeping up the size of the Marine Corps. In the process, a number of society's misfits had been recruited.

A commanding officer of the 6th Marines from those challenging days, Colonel Paul B. Haigwood, recalls that the regiment spent approximately 50 percent of its time in the field with every regimental unit available participating. Although the training was extreme and repetitive, it was necessary because of the high personnel turnover, and the requirement to meet the many commitments referred to earlier. Further, it served to lessen the racial tensions as the Category IV (less intelligent) Marines seemed to forget their problems and concentrated on being Marines. Maybe they were too tired to do anything else. In any event, over time the regimental incident rate, desertions, and

other indicators of discipline improved to the point where the 6th Marines could truthfully be called the most combat-ready unit in the division. The regiment won almost every divisional contest such as football, basketball, boxing, and marksmanship.

Nevertheless, there still were unfortunate incidents. Following a movie at the Camp Lejeune post theatre, there was a gang fight among some 25 to 30 black and white Marines from the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines. It ended with one Marine being killed. This, of course, was labeled a riot by the press, and caused unfavorable publicity for the Corps.

It was not easy being a commanding officer in those days, but as usual in Marine Corps life, there were many responsibilities to be met, and there was always a belief in a better future.

Further, amusing incidents occurred to lighten the load. During a Headquarters Marine Corps Inspector General's inspection, Colonel Haigwood was showing the Inspector General around his area. When they visited the 2d Battalion armory, they found everything to be outstanding—weapons, records, cleanliness—everything. The Inspector General announced to everyone present that this was “the best” armory he had seen in a long time, and that he would personally like to shake the hand of the NCO in charge. A young Marine stepped forward immediately, and said, “General sir, I am Corporal ___, MFICC of the Armory.” The general congratulated the corporal, praised him for what he had accomplished, and the inspection

The 2d Battalion, 6th Marines comes ashore on the island of Vieques, Puerto Rico, in one of the many such landing exercises on that island in the years since World War II.

Department of Defense (USMC) Photo 452634





Department of Defense (USMC) Photo A452280

Riflemen of Company K, 3d Battalion, 6th Marines practice small unit tactics at Porto Scuda, Sardinia, during a Mediterranean deployment with the Sixth Fleet in March 1974.

party moved on. Approximately two blocks down the street the Inspector General stopped, turned to Haigwood and said, "What in the hell does MFICC mean?" Taking a deep breath, the regimental commander answered, "It stands for M----- F----- In Complete Charge." The general laughed until he almost popped a button from his blouse.⁶

In spite of the many problems encountered, training continued during the 1970s. Not only were deployments made to the Caribbean and Mediterranean, but training was also held with the 82d Airborne Division, both at Fort Bragg and in the Camp Lejeune area. In 1973, during DesEx Alkali Canyon, USMCR units from the 4th Marine Division were successfully integrated into a major exercise. This was valuable to all the participants. Also, planning was started for Alpine Warrior 74, to be held at Camp Drum, New York. In 1974, training with U.S. Army units at Camp Pickett, Virginia, took place during Exercise Solid Punch, involving Army armor and armored infantry units. Cold-weather training at Camp Drum took place, as did other types of routine training.

Finally, the Twenty-sixth Commandant, General Lewis H. Wilson, took office. He had earned the Medal of Honor on Guam during World War II, and was

a strict disciplinarian. This was on 1 July 1975, after his predecessor requested an early retirement.⁷

Wilson immediately started to clean out the true misfits from the Marine Corps. The 6th Marines themselves offered a typical example. An article by Walter V. Robinson of the *Boston Globe* staff, dated 6 June 1976, set forth the situation. It was written from Camp Lejeune. Mr. Robinson was writing about an amphibious operation conducted by the 6th Marines. Commenting on the high seas encountered, and the fact that five Marines were injured by lightning, he still felt that the operation was more satisfactory than a similar one the year before. He said:

Last year the same could not be said. Although 2,500 men of the 3,000-man 6th Regiment were slated to participate, only 1200 them waded ashore in Operation Solid Shield 1975. Of the remaining 1,300 men, 800 were back in their barracks awaiting undesirable discharges. More than 200 others were over the hill—AWOL.

Still others were on the regimental rolls—they had been classified as deserters. And 267 6th Regiment Marines had been administratively reassigned to the brig where they were imprisoned for a variety of offenses.

The career officers and NCOs previously had been disgusted. The reforms instituted by General Wilson, however, got rid of more than 6,000 problem Marines

out of a total strength of 196,000. Enlistment standards were raised. Physical training and discipline were improved. The percentage of high school graduates in the 2d Division had dropped to 38 percent. Their commanding general had estimated perhaps 80 percent of the Marines had tried marijuana. One rifle company commander recalled he had only 17 of 189 men available for training because of personnel problems. The 2d Division discharged as undesirable 2,400 men in 1975. Of those, 1,027 belonged to the 3,000-man 6th Marines. Since December of 1975 another 600 2d Division Marines had left early under an "expeditious discharge program" initiated by the Commandant.⁸

When Colonel (later Major General) Harold G. Glasgow took command of the 6th Marines in May 1975, he found 294 of his Marines were carried in an unauthorized leave status and 231 more were either confined or under restraint. He told a reporter later that at the time he was lucky if one in every five Marines saluted him. Between 10 percent and 15 percent were intentionally trying to fail their physical fitness tests.

The problems encountered by the commanders in training and administering their units were complex and challenging. Their strength of character was tested many times in a variety of ways. In fact, company commanders were so involved in Office Hours, Request Masts, and writing up administrative discharges it was difficult to maintain a semblance of a training program.

Nevertheless, operational and training exercises were held, including a Mediterranean deployment of the 1st Battalion; Solid Shield 75 locally; two battalion-size exercises at Fort Pickett; two special exercises (reinforced rifle companies) to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba; a combined-arms exercise at Twentynine Palms, California; a cold-weather exercise at Fort Drum; and a Division CPX. A full schedule indeed, and one to cut down on the time the Marines had to be drawn into unwanted incidents.

During August 1976, the 36th Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) was formed around the 6th Marines. The 2d Battalion became the ground element, a composite squadron from MAGs 26 and 29 became the aviation combat element, while the MAU Service Support Group (MSSG) was formed from the 2d Force Service Support Group (FSSG). After the very detailed planning required and appropriate training, the 36th MAU deployed to Europe for participation in Operation Straffe Zugel and Operation Triple Jubilee.

Operation Straffe Zugel was part of Reforger Exer-

cise 75 and was conducted in the central plains of West Germany near the city of Hanover. The 36th MAU's participation represented the first Marine Corps maneuver elements in Germany since World War I. This exercise further paved the way for subsequent Marine participation in larger training exercises in Germany—Teamwork/Bonded Item and Northern Wedding/Bold Guard. The Marine Corps was again becoming involved in the defense of western Europe, as it was in World War I.

Operation Triple Jubilee was conducted in three separate locations in the United Kingdom. According to the account of then-Colonel Glasgow, the first phase was near Plymouth. This exercise concentrated on small-unit training with the Royal Marines. A memorable occurrence was the celebration of the 200th Marine Corps Birthday at the Royal Marines' Stonehouse Barracks. The Royal Marines were hosts, then-Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps General Samuel Jaskilka was the guest of honor, and the other guests included both General Peter Whiteley, Commandant General of the Royal Marines, and General A. C. Lammers, Commandant of the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps.

The second phase of Triple Jubilee was conducted on Salisbury Plain near Portsmouth and Southampton. The 3d Brigade of the Royal Marines both controlled the exercise and acted as aggressors. It was a rewarding, excellent exercise.

The third phase of Triple Jubilee consisted of an amphibious landing across the beach at Barry Buddon, Scotland, near Arbroath. The North Sea was rough, and the weather cold, but the 6th Marines looked like real professionals. After liberty at Dundee, the regiment returned to Camp Lejeune exhilarated by the many interesting and satisfying times it experienced.

Between the two main operations, 36th MAU made port visits to Amsterdam and Rotterdam in the Netherlands and Brest and Le Havre in France.⁹

The stiffer enlistment standards paid off. The 2d Division's high-school-completion rate jumped to 60 percent within a year. The greater emphasis on physical fitness soon made a leaner, stronger, and more confident Marine Corps.

Already a marked change could be seen. The quality of the Marines had improved, morale was high, the disciplinary rate was falling—the Marine Corps had won its fight. As the *Boston Globe* article of 6 June 1976 had labeled it—"The Marines' Toughest Fight: Long Battle for Respectability."

Another important change had taken place. General Wilson established the Combined Arms Training Pro-



Photo courtesy of Capt Douglas R. Doerr

This CH-53 hulk serves the 2d Marine Division as a training device for teaching units and vehicle drivers the proper techniques of helicopter embarkation and debarkation. As a tribute to Capt Douglas R. Doerr, some members of the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines painted his name prominently on the front of the fuselage beside the pilot's seat.

gram at Marine Corps Base, Twentynine Palms, California. The 6th Marines looked forward to its turn for participation in this training program. In the meantime, the 1st Battalion went to Guantanamo Bay on a special reinforcement exercise and the 3d Battalion went to Fort Drum, New York, for a cold-weather exercise.

In late 1981, a particularly unusual exercise took place. The 2d Battalion, 6th Marines (Reinforced), was the ground element of 32d MAU afloat in the Mediterranean in three ships—an LHA, an LST, and an LPD. Two-thirds of the reinforced battalion embarked on the USS *Saipan* (LHA-2). Talks were held previously over the Marines taking part in an annual Rapid Deploy-

ment Joint Task Force (RDJTF) exercise, Bright Star (The RDJTF is now Central Command, or CentCom). The exercise was scheduled to culminate in an amphibious landing on the southern coast of Oman. The Government of Oman and the planners at the highest levels feared that Marine Corps participation in the exercise might send the wrong signals to other friendly Arab nations, as well as to potential adversaries in the area. Finally, the decision was made that the Marines could land, but could not advance more than one mile inland, or stay ashore more than 24 hours. The Marines eagerly accepted this chance to show their stuff and meet Omani military personnel.

During late November 1981, 32d MAU departed the

The 2d Battalion, 6th Marines occupies brick buildings amid Lejeune's oaks and pines.

Photo courtesy of Capt Douglas R. Doerr





Photo courtesy of Capt Douglas R. Doerr

This brick barracks, dating back to World War II but modernized to modern habitability standards, currently serves as the headquarters of the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines.

Mediterranean via the Suez Canal, sailed the Red Sea, and entered the Indian Ocean. Exhaustive and detailed plans were made while in transit. Two rifle companies would land via helicopters a few meters inland, and seize key terrain features in order to isolate the beachhead. The remaining rifle company, plus the various reinforcing attachments, were to land by surface to secure the beachhead.

On D-day, the Marines held reveille at 0330; H-hour was set for midmorning around 0930. Before H-hour, much had to be done, including checking the men

and their equipment. Lieutenant General Robert Kingston, Commanding General, RDJTF, and his staff were due aboard at 0800 for a briefing on the scheme of maneuver, and to observe the landing from the *Saipan*.

At H-2 hours, the first waves were called to their debarkation stations. The ship suddenly went dark—and quiet. The *Saipan* was dead in the water.

Without command, Marines turned on the flashlights hanging from their web gear, and others broke out battle lanterns. Soon the word went out that the

Assault amphibian vehicles and helicopters bring the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines ashore during an exercise while it was on a unit deployment to the 3d Marine Division in 1983.

Photo courtesy of LtCol W. L. Fox, USMC





Photo courtesy of LtCol W. L. Fox, USMC

LtCol Wesley L. Fox (left), leads the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines on a training hike down a road on Okinawa while his battalion was on unit deployment to the 3d Marine Division.

ship had sailed into a huge school of jellyfish. The ship's water system had sucked hundreds of the slimy creatures into the water system which fed the ship's main condenser. No one could tell how long it would take the ship's engineers to clear the system. Even if the ship was able to backflush its water system, it still could not move without sucking in even more fish and clogging the system once again.

Consequently, with no power, communication could not be initiated to start the heliborne phase, the ship could not ballast down to debark the landing craft loaded with tanks for a rendezvous with the surface assault forces, and there was no communication with the aircraft carrier several miles away. The operation came to a standstill!

There was only one thing for Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. Tschan, the battalion commander, to do. Using the backpack radios, he had his air liaison officer, Captain Dennis Tedder, coordinate the fixed-wing air from the carrier and the heliborne forces from the *Saipan*. He then contacted the commander of the surface force, Captain Harold W. Laughlin, Jr., USMC, to inform him of the situation, and to assist in coordinating the surface assault.

While this was going on, the ship lowered small boats into the water to circle the ship at high speed

and hopefully drive the jellyfish away. At first, nothing happened. Finally, the seemingly solid wall of fish broke up, power was restored, the ship got underway, and the operation was back on track. Everyone heaved a sigh of relief.

The amphibious landing was flawless. The reinforced battalion received high praise from the Omani and British military officials who witnessed the landing. These people, of course, had no knowledge of the near disaster that had almost cancelled the operation.

It was a splendid example of the teamwork necessary in an amphibious operation and a tribute to the resourcefulness, flexibility, and cooperation of both the Navy and the Marines.¹⁰

On 11 June 1982 the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, got a new commanding officer. His name was Lieutenant Colonel Wesley L. Fox. He decided before very long that something was needed to unify the battalion as an entity—there was too much individualism. For example, on battalion runs many Marines just fell out and quit running. Once a company commander, rather than falling out himself, simply slowed his company to his own speed. This broke up the battalion formation with the company running on its own, five minutes behind the rest of the battalion.

Fox had observed that the battalion motto was "At-

tack!" and was not initially impressed. However, he hit upon the idea of turning the motto to his advantage. He directed that, at formations, upon the termination of his return salute to the company commanders turning their companies over to them, the entire battalion would sound off with "Attack! Attack! Attack!", loud and clear. He had to make the battalion practice it several times before it was loud enough for his satisfaction that morning.

In addition to the practice of sounding off upon the termination of all battalion formations, it was used as a greeting with the salute between officer and enlisted men and at major events as a motivator. In Fox's opinion, this use of the motto brought individuals of the battalion closer together and developed the camaraderie he had been seeking.

In January 1983 the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, became the first East Coast unit from the regiment to deploy to Okinawa as a Marine Corps rotation battalion. Its place in the regiment was taken in February of that year by the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Peter M. Hesser. This was the first time since 1927 that this battalion had returned to the United States.

While overseas as a battalion of the 3d Division based on Okinawa, the 1st Battalion participated in

two joint training exercises—Team Spirit in Korea (winter training with the Korean Marines at Pohang) and a Joint Airborne Air Transport (JAAT) exercise with the U.S. Air Force on the islands of Tinian, Guam, and Japan. The Marines were well received by the natives everywhere.

Fox also led his battalion on a tough forced march to the top of Mount Fuji in Japan before the official climbing season began. They made it up and back down on the same day, in spite of the 40-mile-an-hour wind and extreme cold at the top. A service record book entry was made on all Marines who made it to the top. Liberty in Tokyo for all hands finished the event.

Upon departing from his inspection when it came time for the battalion to return to Camp Lejeune, the commanding general, Major General Robert E. Habel, surprised everyone by asking loudly to the battalion, "What do you do best?" The battalion immediately shouted "Attack! Attack! Attack!"¹¹

Lieutenant Colonel Fox, a 35-year veteran, was first an enlisted Marine. In 1966, Fox, then a gunnery sergeant, was commissioned along with other outstanding NCOs as a second lieutenant. As commander of Company A, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, he earned the Medal of Honor in Operation Dewey Canyon in Viet-

The 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, temporarily deployed to the 3d Marine Division, climbs Mt. Fuji in Japan. Each Marine is using a "Fuji stick" as an aid in making the climb.

Photo courtesy of LtCol W. L. Fox, USMC





Department of Defense (USMC) Photo DM-SN-82-07426

A group of parka-clad Marines from Company B, 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, refills small fuel containers for squad stoves during cold weather training in Norway in 1981.

nam. He turned over command of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, after it rejoined the regiment. The ceremony took place on 26 July 1983. His relief was Lieutenant Colonel Thomas D. Stouffer, a Naval Academy graduate and a former graduate-level Fulbright scholar at the University of Vienna, Austria. Fox, at this writing, is the Director of the Marine Corps Staff NCO Academy, Quantico, Virginia. Stouffer is serving at Headquarters Marine Corps. Since the 1st Battalion was fortunate in having two outstanding commanders follow each other, 1983 would be a good year to examine some of the experiences an infantry battalion might encounter.

Since unit rotation was in effect now for the 2d Division units, elements of the 6th Marines were sometimes spread among Okinawa, the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, and Camp Lejeune.

Although no units of the 6th Marines were present at the Beirut Marine headquarters bombing on 23 October 1983, the huge loss of Marine lives pulled everyone at Camp Lejeune even closer together. The many families of the Camp Lejeune area who lost their Marines had to be taken care of. Casualty assistance officers, neighbors, and friends took care of that

responsibility. The 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, which had been the ground element of the 28th MAU, was replaced in that assignment by the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines. Elements of the 2d Battalion, under Navy Cross recipient Lieutenant Colonel Edwin C. Kelley, Jr., were flown to Beirut as replacements for the 1st Battalion, 8th Marines. Kelley took command of that battalion. Although recently returned from a major deployment for jungle warfare training in Panama, the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, had to assume the mission of the 2d Battalion in Operation Ahous Tara II in Honduras.

On 10 November 1983, the 28th MAU mounted out from Camp Lejeune and embarked at Moorehead City, North Carolina. The MAU commander was Colonel Randall W. Austin, formerly Commanding Officer, 6th Marines. Both the MAU Headquarters and most of the 1st Battalion (to include Company G of the 2d Battalion, which was attached) were on the USS *Nassau* (LHA 4).¹² Rumors were rampant that they were going to war. Hurried arrangements had been made with the ships to provide at least a semblance of a birthday for the embarked Marines on this very memorable day. Cakes were prepared, streamers hung in the messhall, and steak dinners cooked. The

pageant which was provided was dramatized by the stormy seas and the rolling and pitching of the ships. The Marines were truly soldiers of the sea. Many got seasick, especially those on the LST. On the latter ship, when the oldest and the youngest Marines came up for the cake cutting, their skin was said to be the same color as their green uniforms. The oldest Marine bravely did his duty when presented with the first piece of cake. However, when the youngest Marine was presented with the second piece, he quickly accepted it, hesitated, and said to his company commander, "I do appreciate the honor, sir, but please don't make me eat it!"¹³ The birthday celebration on the heaving ocean forged even more the esprit that bound the battalion together.

The landing in Honduras occurred shortly afterwards. Prior to the landing, the battalion had been briefed on the situation ashore. In addition to a possible threat from terrorists, the Marines had been cautioned not to drink or eat anything indigenous. In the advance inland, the Marines passed through small villages, and saw many lonely huts. The poor people they saw obviously led a hard life. At nightfall, while the Americans ate their rations, ragged, but alert and friendly children and a few older people began to drift into their lines. Soon the Marines began to give them their candy, crackers, and extra food. The Hondurans

eagerly ate the food, and tried to talk in broken English. Soon more food was being given away than was eaten by the Marines.

Dawn came slowly to the Honduran jungle, and a soft, cold fog hugged the ground. Just before first light the young Hondurans from the night before reappeared. They carried blue enamelled pots of coffee and stacks of hot tortillas on wax paper plates. These were offered to the cold, hungry Marines. At first, remembering their caution and afraid of possible contamination, they tried to refuse. Finally, their translator told them that in the Honduran culture to refuse was an insult to the children. The Marines gratefully ate and drank their fill. Not a single case of an upset stomach was reported.¹⁴

The honesty and friendship displayed by these people impressed everyone. They enthusiastically assisted the Marines in recovering any equipment "left adrift" in the heat of "combat." Sometimes, the natives returned the recovered item with fresh grapefruit for the relieved owners. This was done even though the Marines were using land that bordered the natives' property, which sometimes received live ammunition from the Marines' weapons. After seven days ashore, the 28th MAU was back on board the ships in time to enjoy the Thanksgiving dinner waiting for it.¹⁵

The most significant event in 1984 was the deploy-

Three men from Company K, 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, talk with two Peruvian boys during Operation Unitas XXII, one of a series of exercises involving units from other countries.

Department of Defense (USMC) Photo DM-SN-82-11297



ment of the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines, to Okinawa, and the return of the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, to Camp Lejeune in January. The regiment once again had all of its battalions. Routine training took place at such facilities as Twentynine Palms and Fort Pickett, in addition to that conducted at Camp Lejeune. In late September, the 3d Battalion deployed to Panama for jungle warfare training, and the 1st Battalion went to Bridgeport, California, for mountain warfare training. By year's end, all of the regiment's battalions had returned to Camp Lejeune.

In February 1984, the regiment had played host to the 7th Naval Reserve Construction Regiment. This unit contained 1,100 Seabees. Regular training, both formal classes for officers conducted by a Mobile Training Team from Landing Force Training Center in Little Creek, Virginia, and regular training exercises at various places, took place. These are mentioned to show that there was a constant requirement for planning ahead.

By mid-year two battalions were getting ready to deploy on major exercises or commitments, and one other was returning from a six-month deployment to Okinawa.

The year 1985 saw the regiment once again with all of its battalions. As before, a demanding training and exercise schedule had to be planned for and executed.

As the 6th Marine Regiment approached its 69th Birthday, it could look back on battles won in the past, and enjoy a sense of satisfaction for having been involved in numerous exercises in the present to test, train, and strengthen its Marines.

The training in the 1970s and 1980s was intensive in all of the areas mentioned before. Fort Drum, Fort Pickett, Vieques, Twentynine Palms, and Fort Bragg became as familiar as Norway and other far-flung places. Regimental CPXs, various ceremonies such as the Marine Corps birthday, division exercises, squad competitions, all at Camp Lejeune, fell into whatever gaps could be found in the training schedule. Exercises with the Army, Navy, and Air Force became more and more common. All in all, these were active, exhilarating times that built the Marine Corps into what it is today.

Conclusion

The 6th Marines has trained in varied climates and places in recent years. They have participated in un-

usual and imaginative exercises ranging from fire team to MAF level. Planning continues for the future, utilizing the lessons learned in the past.

The regiment has had many Medal of Honor recipients, listed in Appendix E. Those who have received the Navy Cross, Silver Star, or Bronze Star in combat simply are too numerous to list. The same goes for the many who earned the Purple Heart the hard way. This also holds true for those dedicated stalwarts who have won meritorious decorations both in peace and war. Without the devotion to duty of all of these people, the fame of the 6th Marines would not exist.

In sum, the regiment has been fortunate in the quality of its leadership ever since its inception. In addition to three Commandants, the list of its members who attained general officer rank of from one to four stars is again too long to enumerate. Some, who, because of personal reasons, chose to pursue civilian careers have risen in their professions to creditable heights and are still proud of their Marine Corps and 6th Marines heritage.

But taking all of the above into account, as well as everything which has been narrated in this history of the 6th Marines, what are the intangibles that have made such a great regiment? At the top of the list one must put patriotism. In a recent article in the *Washington Times Magazine*, author Jennifer Harper covers this subject nicely. In the article, Colonel Robert C. Johnston, commanding officer of the Marine Corps Officer Candidate School in Quantico, is quoted as saying, "We don't have a course entitled 'Patriotism 101' here. It is instead something that has to be experienced.

"Patriotism is present on a daily working basis—it's reinforced by a sense of history, by seeing the flag, by working on a team, by knowing that you've made a commitment to your country.

"Patriotism is a very complicated emotion, really, and there are a lot of qualities that parallel it—loyalty to your unit, your Corps, teamwork, pride in the organization. Pride in the Marine Corps or pride in any of the services is really pride in the United States."¹⁶

All of these apply not only to the officers and enlisted Marines who have been written about in this history. It also applies to the wives and children who make up the military family and who bravely support their Marines.

Notes

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The Occupation

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Appendix A

Commanding Officers

Col Albertus W. Catlin 11 Jul 1917 - 15 Nov 1917
Maj Frank E. Evans 16 Nov 1917 - 15 Jan 1918
Col Albertus W. Catlin 16 Jan 1918 - 6 Jun 1918
LtCol Harry Lee 7 Jun 1918 - 12 Jul 1918
Maj Thomas Holcomb 13 Jul 1918 - 15 Jul 1918

LtCol Harry Lee 16 Jul 1918 - 12 Aug 1919

Deactivated

Capt Charles B. Hobbs 15 Dec 1920 - 22 Mar 1921
Capt Francis S. Kieren 23 Mar 1921 - 20 Jul 1921
Maj Calvin B. Matthews 21 Jul 1921 - 8 Sep 1921
Capt Thomas E. Wicks 22 Nov 1921 - 6 Jan 1922
Maj Calvin B. Matthews 7 Jan 1922 - 14 Aug 1922

Maj Harold L. Parsons 15 Aug 1922 - 4 Sep 1922
Maj Calvin B. Matthews 5 Sep 1922 - 19 Feb 1923
Maj Thomas S. Clarke 20 Feb 1923 - 31 Jul 1923
Maj James J. Meade 1 Aug 1923 - 8 Oct 1923
LtCol Edward A. Greene 9 Oct 1923 - 25 Nov 1923

Maj Ralph S. Keyser 26 Nov 1923 - 25 Feb 1924
Maj Howard C. Judson 26 Feb 1924 - 4 Jun 1924
LtCol Edward A. Greene 5 Jun 1924 - 14 Mar 1925

Deactivated

Col Harold C. Snyder 26 Mar 1927 - 2 Aug 1928
Col Charles H. Lyman 3 Aug 1928 - 9 Jan 1929
Maj Calhoun Ancrum 10 Jan 1929 - 31 Mar 1929

Deactivated

LtCol Andrew B. Drum 25 Oct 1935 - 30 Oct 1935
Col Philip H. Torrey 31 Oct 1935 - 7 Jun 1937
Col Thomas S. Clarke 8 Jun 1937 - 12 Jan 1938
LtCol James L. Underhill 13 Jan 1938 - 11 May 1938
LtCol Alphonse De Carre 12 May 1938 - 15 May 1938

Col Harry L. Smith 16 May 1938 - 31 May 1939
LtCol Earl H. Jenkins 1 Jun 1939 - 20 Jun 1939
Col Samuel L. Howard 21 Jun 1939 - 2 Jun 1940
LtCol Franklin A. Hart 3 Jun 1940 - 21 Jun 1940
LtCol Oliver P. Smith 22 Jun 1940 - 28 Jun 1940

LtCol Franklin A. Hart 29 Jun 1940 - 23 Jul 1940
Col Leo D. Hermle 24 Jul 1940 - 31 Dec 1941
LtCol William McN. Marshall 1 Jan 1942 - 24 Mar 1942
Col Leo D. Hermle 25 Mar 1942 - 31 Jul 1942

Col Gilder D. Jackson, Jr. 1 Aug 1942 - 13 Apr 1943
LtCol Lyman G. Miller 14 Apr 1943 - 30 Apr 1943
Col Maurice G. Holmes 3 May 1943 - 16 Dec 1943
Col James P. Riseley 17 Dec 1943 - 3 Sep 1944
Col Gregon W. Williams 4 Sep 1944 - 5 Nov 1945

Col Jack P. Juhan 6 Nov 1945 - 24 Jan 1946
Col James P. Berkeley 25 Jan 1946 - 26 Mar 1946
Col John F. Hough 27 Mar 1946 - 30 Mar 1947
Col George H. Potter 31 Mar 1947 - 6 Apr 1947
Col John F. Hough 7 Apr 1947 - 11 Jun 1947

LtCol Thomas C. Kerrigan 12 Jun 1947 - 29 Jun 1947
Col Hewin O. Hammond 30 Jun 1947 - 15 Jul 1947
Col James P. S. Devereux 16 Jul 1947 - 30 Sep 1947
Col George H. Potter 1 Oct 1947 - 31 Oct 1947
Maj Norman R. Nickerson 1 Nov 1947 - 13 Nov 1947

Col George H. Potter 14 Nov 1947 - 30 Apr 1948
LtCol George D. Rich 1 May 1948 - 23 May 1948
Col George H. Potter 24 May 1948 - 6 Jul 1948
LtCol William N. McGill 7 Jul 1948 - 8 Mar 1949
Col John H. Cook, Jr. 9 Mar 1949 - 29 Sep 1949

Deactivated

Col Homer L. Litzenberg 17 Oct 1949 - 7 Jul 1950
Col Russell N. Jordahl 8 Jul 1950 - 13 Aug 1950
LtCol William F. Prickett 14 Aug 1950 - 10 Sep 1950
Col Henry W. Buse, Jr. 11 Sep 1950 - 13 Dec 1951
Col William F. Prickett 14 Dec 1951 - 16 Jan 1952

Col Ormond R. Simpson 17 Jan 1952 - 23 Apr 1953
Col Charles M. Nees 24 Apr 1953 - 27 Jul 1954
Col Jean H. Buckner 28 Jul 1954 - 1 Jun 1955
LtCol Wilson F. Humphreys 2 Jun 1955 - 9 Jul 1955
Col Edward L. Hutchinson 10 Jul 1955 - 5 Jul 1956

Col Max C. Chapman 6 Jul 1956 - 10 Jun 1957
LtCol Theodore F. Beeman 11 Jun 1957 - 16 Jun 1957
Col Austin C. Shoffner 17 Jul 1957 - 11 Aug 1957
Col William J. McKennan 12 Aug 1958 - 1 Dec 1959
Col Melvin D. Henderson 2 Dec 1959 - 7 Mar 1961

Col Maxie R. Williams 8 Mar 1961 - 6 Jun 1961
Col Jonas H. Platt 10 Jul 1961 - 19 Jul 1962
Col Robert W. L. Bross 8 Aug 1962 - 26 Jul 1963
LtCol Anthony A. Akstin 27 Jul 1963 - 23 Aug 1963
Col Glenn R. Long 24 Aug 1963 - 13 Jul 1964

Col George W. E. Daughtry 14 Jul 1964 - 14 Jul 1965
Col John N. McLaughlin 15 Jul 1965 - 28 Dec 1965
Col James B. Ord 29 Dec 1965 - 6 Jul 1966
Col James C. Short 7 Jul 1966 - 1 Jun 1967

Col Oscar T. Jesen, Jr. 2 Jun 1967 - 11 Mar 1968
Col Richard H. Kern 12 Mar 1968 - 26 Mar 1968
Col Robert M. Platt 27 Mar 1968 - 6 Aug 1969
Col Paul B. Haigwood 7 Aug 1969 - 14 Oct 1970
Col Francis R. Kraince 15 Oct 1970 - 1 Jun 1972

LtCol John J. Peeler 2 Jun 1972 - 19 Mar 1973
Col Ezra H. Arkland 20 Mar 1973 - 20 Feb 1974
Col David M. Ridderhof 21 Feb 1974 - 7 May 1975
Col Harold G. Glasgow 8 May 1975 - 3 Jun 1976
Col Daniel J. Ford 4 Jun 1976 - 23 Sep 1977

Col Leemon D. McHenry 24 Sep 1977 - 18 Jul 1978
Col Francis V. White, Jr. 19 Jul 1978 - 20 Jun 1979
Col Louis J. Piantadosi 21 Jun 1979 - 19 May 1980
Col Frederic L. Tolleson 20 May 1980 - 20 Aug 1981
Col Randall W. Austin 21 Aug 1981 - 19 Oct 1983

Col William M. Keys 20 Oct 1983 - 6 Feb 1986
Col James E. Livingston 7 Feb 1986 - present

Appendix B

Chronology

- 6 April 1917 U.S. declares war on Germany and its allies.
11 July 1917 6th Marine Regiment activated at Quantico, Virginia.
15 March - 13 May 1918 6th Regiment enters active combat, Toulon sector, Verdun.
31 May - 5 June 1918 Aisne Defensive, Chateau-Thierry Sector (Capture of Hill 142, Bouresches, Belleau Wood).
18-19 July 1918 Aisne-Marne Offensive (Soissons).
12-16 September 1918 St. Mihiel Offensive (vicinity of Thiaucourt, Xammes, and Joulay).
1-10 October 1918 Meuse-Argonne Offensive (Champagne), including capture of Blanc Mont Ridge and St. Etienne.
1-11 November 1918 Continuation of Meuse-Argonne Offensive.
11 November 1918 Armistice ends hostilities in World War I.
17 November -
10 December 1918 March from the Meuse River in France to Rhine River for occupation duty in Germany.
13 August 1919 6th Regiment deactivated at Quantico, Virginia.
15 September 1921 6th Regiment reactivated at Quantico, Virginia.
23 September 1922 83d Company, 3d Battalion, 6th Regiment, represented USMC at opening of Brazilian Exposition, Rio de Janeiro.
June 1924 - March 1925 Elements of 6th Regiment participated in expeditionary duty in Cuba and Dominican Republic.
15 March 1925 6th Regiment deactivated at Quantico, Virginia.
26 March 1927 6th Regiment reactivated at Philadelphia Navy Yard for duty in China.
1927-1929 Duty in China.
31 March 1929 6th Regiment deactivated at San Diego, California.
1 September 1934 6th Marines reactivated at San Diego, California.
28 August 1937 6th Marines sailed for China on USS *Chaumont*.
18 February 1938 6th Marines departed China for San Diego.
31 May 1941 6th Marines sailed from San Diego for Iceland.
7 July 1941 Transports bearing 1st Marine Brigade (Provisional), including the 6th Marines, reached Reykjavik, Iceland.
7 December 1941 Japan attacked U.S. Forces at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, bringing the U.S. into World War II.
31 January 1942 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, departed Iceland for the U.S.
9 March 1942 Last elements of 6th Marines departed Iceland.
30 March 1942 All elements of 6th Marines were again together, at Camp Elliott, near San Diego.
19 October 1942 6th Marines departed U.S. for New Zealand.
1 November 1942 Elements of 6th Marines began arriving in New Zealand.
26 December 1942 2d Marine Division, including 6th Marines, departed New Zealand for Guadalcanal.
4 January 1943 6th Marines landed on Guadalcanal to help replace elements of the 1st Marine Division.
19 February 1943 6th Marines began embarking on ships for movement back to New Zealand.

- 21 November 1943 Late in the day (D +1), elements of 6th Marines began landing on Tarawa to reinforce units already fighting there.
- 23 November 1943 Tarawa declared secured; 6th Marines, less 2d Battalion, began preparing for reembarkation.
- 26 November 1943 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, completed mopping-up of remaining islands of Tarawa Atoll.
- December 1943 - May 1944 6th Marines, along with the rest of the 2d Marine Division, re-equipped and trained replacements at Camp Tarawa in Hawaii.
- 25 May 1944 The 6th Marines departed Pearl Harbor enroute to Saipan in the Marianas.
- 15 June - 10 July 1944 6th Marines participated in the battle for Saipan.
- 24 July - 1 August 1944 6th Marines participated in the battle for Tinian.
- 1 April 1945 6th Marines participated in a turn-away landing on Okinawa before returning to Saipan.
- 6 August 1945 Atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, followed three days later by a second bomb dropped on Nagasaki.
- 14 August 1945 President Harry S. Truman announced the surrender of Japan.
- 22 September 1945 The 2d Marine Division arrived in Japan for occupation duty.
- 15 July 1946 6th Marines arrived at Camp Pendleton, California for duty with 3d Marine Brigade. (The remainder of the 2d Marine Division went to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.)
- 16 September 1947 3d Brigade disbanded; 6th Marines transferred to 1st Marine Division.
- 1 October 1947 6th Marines temporarily disbanded.
- 10 October 1947 6th Marines reactivated at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, as part of 2d Marine Division.
- June-July 1950 6th Marines sent virtually all units and personnel to 1st Marine Division for Korea, and then began rebuilding the regiment.
- 15 July 1958 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, as part of 2d Provisional Marine Brigade, landed at Beirut, Lebanon to intervene in a civil war.
- 29 September 1958 The reinforced 6th Marines arrived in Beirut, while the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, departed for the continental U.S.
- 18 October 1958 All Marine units departed Lebanon.
- October 1962 Elements of the 6th Marines embarked in amphibious ships during the Cuban Missile Crisis.
- 28 April - 6 June 1965 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, landed in the Dominican Republic to intervene in a civil war. Other elements of the regiment deployed to the Dominican Republic shortly afterwards.
- 1965-1983 6th Marines participated in a long series of training exercises at Camp Lejeune, other bases within the United States, and during numerous deployments with the fleet to the Caribbean, Norway, and the Mediterranean.
- October 1983 Elements of 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, transferred to Beirut, Lebanon, as replacements for Marine casualties.
- 1980s Elements of 6th Marines placed under the operational control of the 3d Marine Division at various times throughout the 1980s for deployment to the Western Pacific.

Appendix C

Lineage

1917-1919

ACTIVATED 11 JULY 1917 AT QUANTICO, VIRGINIA, AS THE 6TH REGIMENT.
DEPLOYED DURING OCTOBER 1917-FEBRUARY 1918 TO FRANCE AND ASSIGNED TO THE 4TH MARINE BRIGADE,
2D DIVISION (ARMY), AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

PARTICIPATED IN THE FOLLOWING WORLD WAR I OFFENSIVE CAMPAIGNS:

AISNE

AISNE-MARNE

ST. MIHIEL

MEUSE-ARGONNE

PARTICIPATED IN THE FOLLOWING WORLD WAR I DEFENSIVE CAMPAIGNS:

TOULON-TROYON

CHATEAU-THERRY

MARBACHE

LIMEY

PARTICIPATED IN THE OCCUPATION OF THE GERMAN RHINELAND, DECEMBER 1918-JULY 1919.

RELOCATED DURING AUGUST 1919 TO QUANTICO, VIRGINIA.

DEACTIVATED 13 AUGUST 1919.

1921-1925

REACTIVATED 15 SEPTEMBER 1921 AT QUANTICO, VIRGINIA.

ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN EXPEDITIONARY DUTY IN CHINA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC,
JUNE 1924-MARCH 1925.

DEACTIVATED 15 MARCH 1925 AT QUANTICO, VIRGINIA.

1927-1929

REACTIVATED 26 MARCH 1927 AT PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA.

DEPLOYED DURING MAY 1927 TO SHANGHAI, CHINA, AND ASSIGNED TO THE 3D BRIGADE.

RELOCATED DURING MARCH 1929 TO SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, AND DETACHED FROM THE 3D BRIGADE.

DEACTIVATED 31 MARCH 1929.

1934-1949

REACTIVATED 1 SEPTEMBER 1934 AT SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, AS THE 6TH MARINES, FLEET MARINE FORCE.

ASSIGNED 1 JULY 1936 TO THE 2D MARINE BRIGADE, FLEET MARINE FORCE.

DEPLOYED DURING SEPTEMBER 1937 TO SHANGHAI, CHINA.

RELOCATED DURING APRIL 1938 TO SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA.

2D MARINE BRIGADE REDESIGNATED 1 FEBRUARY 1941 AS THE 2D MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE.
DEPLOYED DURING MAY-JULY 1941 TO REYKJAVIK, ICELAND, AND ASSIGNED TO THE
1ST PROVISIONAL MARINE BRIGADE.
RELOCATED DURING FEBRUARY-MARCH 1942 TO SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, AND ASSIGNED TO THE
2D MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE.
DEPLOYED DURING OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 1942 TO WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND.
PARTICIPATED IN THE FOLLOWING WORLD WAR II CAMPAIGNS:
GUADALCANAL
SOUTHERN SOLOMONS
TARAWA
SAIPAN
TINIAN
OKINAWA
REDEPLOYED DURING SEPTEMBER 1945 TO NAGASAKI, JAPAN.
PARTICIPATED IN THE OCCUPATION OF JAPAN, SEPTEMBER 1945-JUNE 1946.
RELOCATED DURING JULY 1946 TO CAMP PENDLETON, CALIFORNIA.
REASSIGNED 11 SEPTEMBER 1946 TO THE 3D MARINE BRIGADE, FLEET MARINE FORCE.
REASSIGNED 11 JULY 1947 TO THE 1ST MARINE DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE.
DEACTIVATED 1 OCTOBER 1949.

1949-1984

REACTIVATED 17 OCTOBER 1949 AT CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH CAROLINA, AND ASSIGNED TO THE 2D MARINE
DIVISION, FLEET MARINE FORCE.
ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN THE LANDINGS IN LEBANON, JULY-OCTOBER 1958.
PARTICIPATED IN THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS, OCTOBER-DECEMBER 1962.
ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED IN THE INTERVENTION IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, APRIL-JUNE 1965.
PARTICIPATED IN NUMEROUS TRAINING EXERCISES THROUGHOUT THE 1970S AND INTO THE 1980S.
ELEMENTS PARTICIPATED AS PART OF THE MULTINATIONAL PEACE-KEEPING FORCE
IN LEBANON, FEBRUARY-JUNE 1983.
ELEMENTS PLACED UNDER THE OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF THE 3D MARINE DIVISION
AT VARIOUS PERIODS THROUGHOUT THE 1980S FOR DEPLOYMENT TO THE WESTERN PACIFIC.

Appendix D

Honors

PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION STREAMER
WORLD WAR II
TARAWA-1943

WORLD WAR I VICTORY STREAMER WITH ONE SILVER STAR

ARMY OF OCCUPATION OF GERMANY STREAMER

YANGTZE SERVICE STREAMER

MARINE CORPS EXPEDITIONARY STREAMER WITH TWO BRONZE STARS

CHINA SERVICE STREAMER

AMERICAN DEFENSE SERVICE STREAMER WITH ONE BRONZE STAR

EUROPEAN-AFRICAN-MIDDLE EASTERN CAMPAIGN STREAMER

ASIATIC-PACIFIC CAMPAIGN STREAMER WITH ONE SILVER AND ONE BRONZE STAR

WORLD WAR II VICTORY STREAMER

NAVY OCCUPATION SERVICE STREAMER WITH "ASIA" AND "EUROPE"

NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE STREAMER WITH ONE BRONZE STAR

ARMED FORCES EXPEDITIONARY STREAMER WITH TWO BRONZE STARS

FRENCH CROIX DE GUERRE WITH TWO PALMS AND ONE GILT STAR

Appendix E

Medals of Honors

Note: During World War I, when the 6th Marines was detached from the Navy Department for duty with the U.S. Army in France, some Marines received Medals of Honor from both the Army and the Navy for the same action. In such cases, both citations appear herein.

Private John Joseph Kelly, USMC
Unit: 78th Company, 6th Regiment
Birth: 24 June 1898, Chicago, Illinois
Citation:

(Army Medal)

Private Kelly ran through our own barrage 100 yards in advance of the front line and attacked an enemy machine-gun nest, killing the gunner with a grenade, shooting another member of the crew with his pistol, and returning through the barrage with eight prisoners.

(Navy Medal)

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while serving with the Seventy-eighth Company, Sixth Regiment, Second Division, in action with the enemy at Blanc Mont Ridge, France, 3 October 1918. Private Kelly ran through our own barrage a hundred yards in advance of the front line and attacked an enemy machine-gun nest, killing the gunner with a grenade, shooting another member of the crew with his pistol, and returning through the barrage with eight prisoners.

Corporal John Henry Pruitt, USMC
Unit: 78th Company, 6th Regiment
Birth: 4 October 1896, Faderville, Arkansas
Citation:

(Army Medal)

Corporal Pruitt single-handedly attacked two machine guns, capturing them, and killing two of the enemy. He then captured 40 prisoners in a dugout nearby. This gallant soldier was killed soon afterwards by shellfire while he was sniping at the enemy.

(Navy Medal)

For extraordinary gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while serving with the Seventy-eighth Company, Sixth Regiment, Second Division, in action with the enemy at Blanc Mont Ridge, France, 3 October 1918. Corporal Pruitt single-handedly attacked two machine guns, capturing them, and killing two of the enemy. He then captured 40 prisoners in a dugout nearby. This gallant soldier was killed soon afterwards by shellfire while he was sniping at the enemy.

Gunnery Sergeant Fred W. Stockman, USMC
Unit: 96th Company, 2d Battalion, 6th Regiment
Birth: 16 March 1881, Detroit, Michigan
Citation:

During an intense enemy bombardment with high explosive and gas shells which wounded or killed many members of the company, Sergeant Stockman, upon noticing that the gas mask of a wounded comrade was shot away, without hesitation, removed his own gas mask and insisted upon giving it to the wounded man, well knowing that the effects of the gas would be fatal to himself. Despite the fact that he was without protection of a gas mask, he continued with undaunted courage and valor to direct and assist in the evacuation of the wounded in an area saturated with gas and swept by heavy artillery fire, until he himself collapsed from the effects of gas, dying as a result thereof a few days later. His courageous conduct undoubtedly saved the lives of many of his wounded comrades and his conspicuous gallantry and spirit of self-sacrifice were a source of great inspiration to all who served with him.

Private First Class Harold Glenn Epperson, USMCR
Unit: Company C, 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, 2d Marine Division
Birth: 14 July 1923, Akron, Ohio
Citation:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving with the First Battalion, Sixth Marines, Second Marine Division, in action against enemy Japanese forces on the Island of Saipan in the Marianas, on 25 June 1944. With his machine-gun emplacement bearing the full brunt of a fanatic assault initiated by the Japanese under cover of predawn darkness, Private First Class Epperson manned his weapon with determined aggressiveness, fighting furiously in the defense of his battalion's position and maintaining a steady stream of devastating fire against rapidly infiltrating hostile troops to aid materially in annihilating several of the enemy and in breaking the abortive attack. Suddenly a Japanese soldier, assumed to be dead, sprang up and hurled a powerful hand grenade into the emplacement. Determined to save his comrades, Private First Class Epperson unhesitatingly chose to sacrifice himself and, diving upon the deadly missile, absorbed the shattering violence of the exploding charge in his own body. Stout-hearted and indomitable in the face of certain death, Private First Class Epperson fearlessly yielded his own life that his able comrades might carry on the relentless battle against a ruthless enemy. His superb valor and unfaltering devotion to duty throughout reflect the highest credit upon himself and upon the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.

Private First Class Robert Lee Wilson, USMC

Unit: Company E, 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, 2d Marine Division

Birth: 24 May 1921, Centralia, Illinois

Citation:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving with the Second Battalion, Sixth Marines, Second Marine Division, during action against enemy Japanese forces at Tinian Island, Marianas Group, on 4 August 1944. As one of a group of Marines advancing through heavy underbrush to neutralize isolated points of resistance, Private First Class Wilson daringly preceded his companions toward a pile of rocks where Japanese troops were supposed to be hiding. Fully aware of the danger involved, he was moving forward while the remainder of the squad, armed with automatic rifles, closed together in the rear when an enemy grenade landed in the midst of the group. Quick to act, Private First Class Wilson cried a warning to the men and unhesitatingly threw himself on the grenade, heroically sacrificing his own life that the others might live and fulfill their mission. His exceptional valor, his courageous loyalty and unwavering devotion to duty in the face of grave peril reflect the highest credit upon Private First Class Wilson and the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.

Appendix F

Contributors

Active-duty Marines

MajGen Harold G. Glasgow
Col Robert E. Tschan
LtCol Wesley L. Fox
LtCol Thomas D. Stouffer
Capt Douglas R. Doerr
Capt Richard P. Mills

Retired Marines

Gen Gerald C. Thomas
LtGen Ormond R. Simpson
MajGen Robert D. Bohn
MajGen Raymond L. Murray
Col James A. Donovan
Col Loren E. Haffner
Col Paul B. Haigwood
Col Gerald C. Thomas, Jr.
Col Ronald B. Wilde
LtCol William D. Mears
LtCol Robert J. Vroegindewey
MSgt Lewis J. Michelony

Former Marines

Mr. Baine P. Kerr
Mr. Alfred A. Mannino
Mr. Edward Walsh

Civilians

Mr. David M. Sablan
Mr. Robert L. Sherrod

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