

# FORTITUDINE

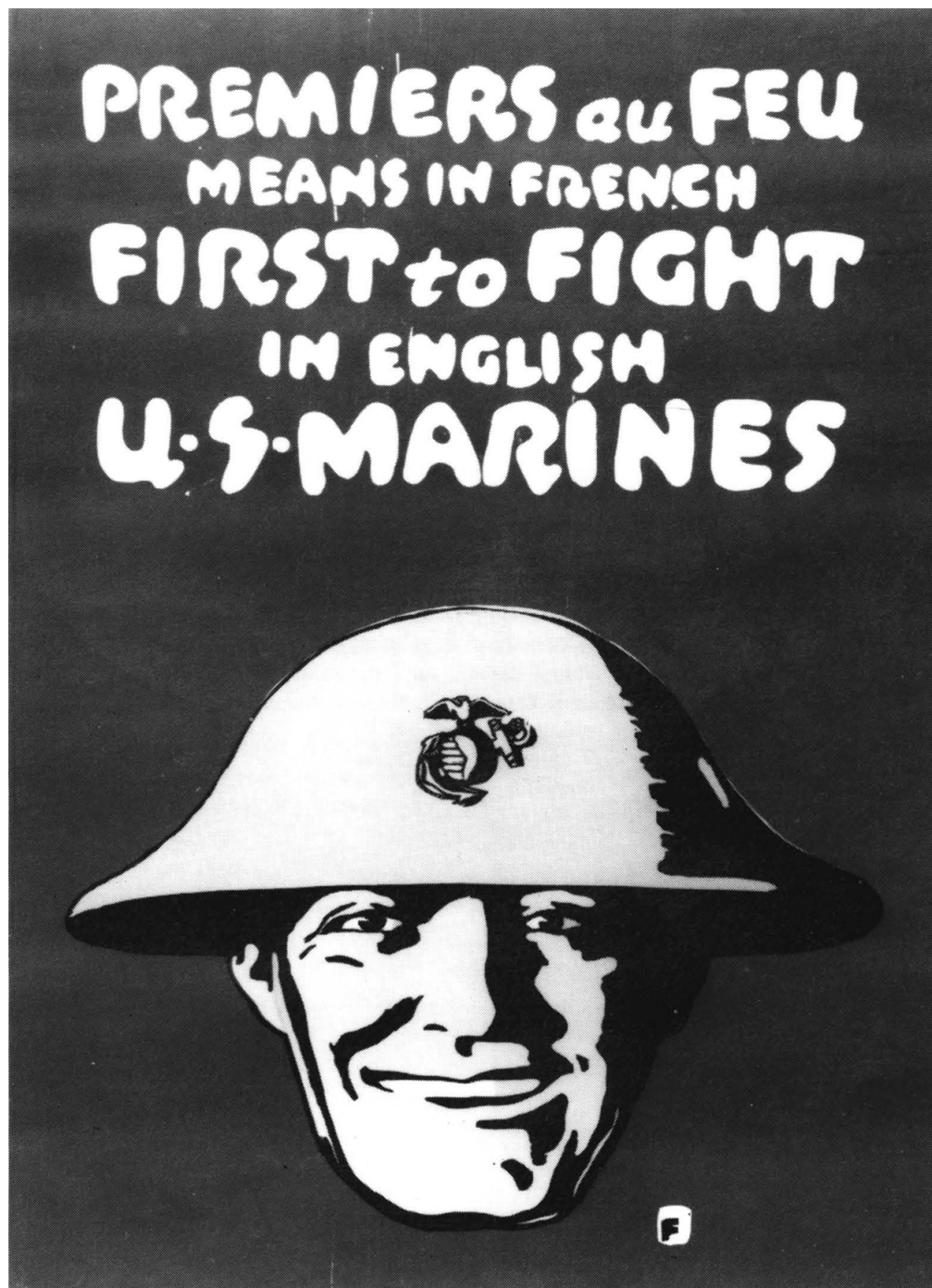
BULLETIN OF THE MARINE CORPS HISTORICAL PROGRAM

HISTORICAL BULLETIN VOLUME XXIII

WINTER 1993-1994

NUMBER 3

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WORLD WAR I MARINES FOUGHT IN NATION'S LARGEST BATTLE TO DATE . . . MAPS USED BY MARINES IN FRANCE IN 1918, WORLD WAR II PHOTO ALBUM DONATED TO COLLECTION . . . PERSONAL PAPERS GIVE CLUES TO LIFE OF 'FOLLOW-ME' NEVILLE . . . 12TH MARINES' VIETNAM SOUVENIR . . . FLIGHT LINES: BELL UH-1 'HUEY'

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# FORTITUDINE

*Motto of the United States Marine Corps in the 1812 era.*

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This quarterly bulletin of the Marine Corps historical program is published for Marines, at the rate of one copy for every nine on active duty, to provide education and training in the uses of military and Marine Corps history. Other interested readers may purchase single copies or one-year subscriptions (four issues) from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Memorandum from the Director: Marines in the Meuse-Argonne, Part I, Reaching the Meuse</b>	
<i>BGen Edwin H. Simmons, USMC (Ret)</i> .....	3
<b>Readers Always Write: Respect, Yes, But No Need to Glorify a Former Enemy</b> .....	10
<b>Unusual Collections Arrive by Way of Unusual Routes</b>	
<i>Frederick J. Graboske</i> .....	12
<b>Historical Quiz: Blacks in the Marine Corps</b>	
<i>Lena M. Kaljot</i> .....	12
<b>Acquisitions: Johnson Rifle Was a Favorite of Marine Parachutists</b>	
<i>Kenneth L. Smith-Christmas</i> .....	13
<b>Tarawa 50th Anniversary Marked at Museum</b>	
<i>Col Alfred J. Ponnwitz, USMC</i> .....	14
<b>Answers to the Historical Quiz: Blacks in the Marine Corps</b> .....	14
<b>Foundation Cites Greenwood's Life Accomplishments</b>	
<i>Charles R. Smith</i> .....	15
<b>Mentioned in Passing: Iwo Jima Marine, First Woman Judge Advocate Mourned</b>	
<i>Benis M. Frank</i> .....	16
<b>Portrait Bust Honors 'First Commandant' Nicholas</b>	
<i>Col William J. Davis, USMC</i> .....	17
<b>Papers Give Closer Look at 'Fighting Commandant'</b>	
<i>Amy J. Cantin</i> .....	18
<b>Volunteer Restores 12th Marines' 'Vietnam' Cannon</b>	
<i>1stLt Julia N. Garvin, USMC</i> .....	19
<b>Flight Lines: Bell UH-1 'Huey'</b>	
<i>Michael E. Starn</i> .....	20
<b>World War II Chronology, 1941-1945: September-December 1944</b>	
<i>Robert V. Aquilina</i> .....	21
<b>Making the Command Chronology: One Good Photo May Be Worth Many Pages of Text</b>	
<i>Capt David A. Dawson, USMC</i> .....	24

## THE COVER

The recruiting poster art, "Premiers au Feu Means in French, First to Fight, in English, U.S. Marines," is a product of master American graphic artist C. B. (Charles Buckles) Falls, whose work spans 65 years from the end of the 19th century through the first half of the 20th. The 38" x 28" poster is printed in four colors on white: the face in yellow, the helmet in grey, the background in dark green, and the shadowing in black. The lettering is the white of the paper. Falls was born in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1874. During World War I, in the midst of a successful career, he personally "adopted" the U.S. Marine Corps, producing what many consider his most striking wartime poster art for the Marines. He believed that "a poster should be to the eye what a shouted command is to the ear." Many of these eye-catching posters, including the one shown, are in the collection of the Marine Corps Museum, as is one entitled simply "Books Wanted," featuring a young Marine happily carrying stacked recreational reading matter. It became the most circulated poster of the war.

*Fortitudine* is produced in the Editing and Design Section of the History and Museums Division. The text for *Fortitudine* is set in 10-point and 8-point Garamond typeface. Headlines are in 18-point or 24-point Garamond. The bulletin is printed on 70-pound, matte-coated paper by offset lithography.

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# Marines in the Meuse-Argonne

## Part I: Reaching the Meuse



BGen Simmons

**A**FTER THE HARD fighting at Blanc Mont during the first week of October 1918, the Marine brigade of the 2d Infantry Division went into camp at Chalons. Here there was a bit of rest while replacements from the 1st Marine Training Regiment at Quantico were fed into the depleted ranks. Not all the 2d Division had been brought together because the 2d Field Artillery Brigade and other

combat and service support units were still serving with the 36th Division under the French in the Blanc Mont sector. Further separation of units was threatened.

On 19 October, the French Fourth Army, of which the 2d Division was still a part, ordered that a brigade be detached and sent forward to relieve the French 73d Division at Leffincourt. MajGen John A. Lejeune, the division commander and future Commandant, designated the Marine brigade. Under its commander, BGen Wendell C. Neville, Lejeune's longtime comrade and another future Commandant, the brigade marched north on 21 October, its advanced units reaching Leffincourt, while the brigade staff worked out the details of the relief. Meanwhile, Lejeune was protesting the piece-mealing of his division to G.H.Q. The orders diverting the brigade were canceled and on the following day, 22 October, the brigade turned around and marched back to its camp at Chalons.

Prompted by this march and counter-

march, Lejeune visited the American First Army headquarters at Souilly on 23 October to beg for the return from the 36th Division of his artillery brigade, engineer regiment, and supply trains, and for sufficient Army replacements to bring his division up to full strength. Meeting with BGen Hugh Drum, USA, the chief of staff, he learned that the 2d Division was being reassigned to the First Army, specifically to join the V Corps to be the point of the wedge for a great attack that was to break through the center of the German Army.

**T**HE MEUSE-ARGONNE offensive, with over a million Americans, was quite the largest battle in which the United States had ever taken part. The mission given the American First Army by the generalissimo of the Allied Armies, Ferdinand Foch (not quite yet *Marshal* Foch) was to drive the Germans back of the Sedan-Mezieres line before severe winter weather set in. Gen Henri Petain, com-

*Part II, "Crossing the Meuse," will be in the next Fortitudine. The two-part "Marines in the Meuse-Argonne" is derived from the chapter on the Meuse-Argonne of the manuscript for "Through the Wheat: The U.S. Marines in the First World War," a 75th anniversary commemoration of World War I being written by BGen Simmons. Corrections, comments, and amplifications are solicited.*

*The wild and tangled Argonne forest was so formidable a defensive position that Napoleon, a hundred years earlier, had led his army around it. In 1918, as shown here, the Germans had*

*prepared elaborate dug-outs that often ran for hundreds of feet underground and enabled their soldiers, by using the further exit, to come out at the rear of U.S. First Army formations.*



manding the French forces, pessimistically did not expect the Americans to get beyond Montfaucon. He expected Ludendorff to throw in all available reserves to block the American advance.

Pershing had taken personal command of the First Army. The concentration of forces followed plans worked out by Col George C. Marshall, Pershing's Assistant G-3. The III Corps was on the right of the zone of action, the V Corps in the center, and the I Corps on the left. The I Corps' neighbor to its left was the French Fourth Army, to which the U.S. 2d Division had been assigned for the opening phases of the offensive.

In Phase I, 26 September to 3 October, the III Corps on the right had driven ahead beyond Montfaucon and the V Corps had made small gains in the center, but the I Corps, on the left, had bogged down in the Argonne Forest. Phase II, 4 to 31 October, was characterized by frontal attacks that yielded gains. Clemenceau, the President of France, impatiently suggested to Foch that he move to have Pershing relieved. A more understanding Foch declined to pursue the matter. Pershing, however, in mid-October, reorganized his army to ease his span of control. The headquarters of an American Second Army, under MajGen Robert L. Bullard, USA, was formed to take command of the American forces east of the Meuse. MajGen Hunter Liggett, USA, was given command of the First Army. New corps commanders were named. Pershing moved himself up to army group commander and by the end of October, was ready for the third phase of his offensive.

On the eastern half of Pershing's front of more than 80 miles, now the zone of action of the Second Army, the *Kriemhilde Stellung*—a portion of what the Allies called the "Hindenburg Line"—had been breached. On the western half, the zone of the First Army, the Germans were still firmly in place.

**N**ORTH OF Sivry-sur-Meuse the Meuse River made a sharp bend to the west. The river line was defended by the *Freya Stellung*, which lay along the Baricourt Heights, coming down from the northwest to the Meuse. But before reaching the *Freya Stellung*, the remaining portion of the *Kriemhilde Stellung* had to be reduced. This would open the way for a further crossing of the Meuse.



*In a much-published view, Marine BGen Smedley D. Butler, center, is the host at 5th Marine Brigade headquarters in Pontanezen, France, on 18 June 1919, to artilleryist MajGen Charles P. Summerall, USA, left, and MajGen John A. Lejeune, USMC.*

Presumably Drum made all of this known to Lejeune. Drum then passed Lejeune on to Hunter Liggett. Liggett, an old friend, was cordial and complimentary, and assured Lejeune that he would approach the French for the return of the artillery, engineers, and supply trains. Lejeune also obtained the diversion of 2,500 Army replacements intended for the 3d Division.

Next day, on 24 October, the 2d Division headquarters displaced to Les Islettes. Lejeune was billeted in a large, old-fashioned house. The division was joined a few days later by its missing artillery, engineers, and supply trains. On 25 and 26 October the 3d Infantry and 4th Marine Brigades made night marches by muddy side roads to an assembly area in a woods near Exermont. Lejeune moved his headquarters to Charpentry the following day.

**“C**HARPENTRY, THE new capital city of the Second Division, was a sight to behold,” wrote Lejeune. “It was situated in a flat valley with high, steep hills all around it, and was in a sea of mud. It was a ruined town, having been a target for German artillery since the day it was wrested from German hands by the Americans, and only two or three buildings were in

condition to be used. Division headquarters occupied a two-story building. It was nearly a complete wreck, and promised to fall down as soon as hit again by one of the numerous shells that were being hurled at the town by the enemy.”

**T**HAT MORNING, 27 October, Lejeune drove to V Corps headquarters at Cheppy to report to MajGen Charles P. Summerall, USA, who had taken command of the corps just about two weeks earlier, having relieved the elderly MajGen George H. Cameron, USA.

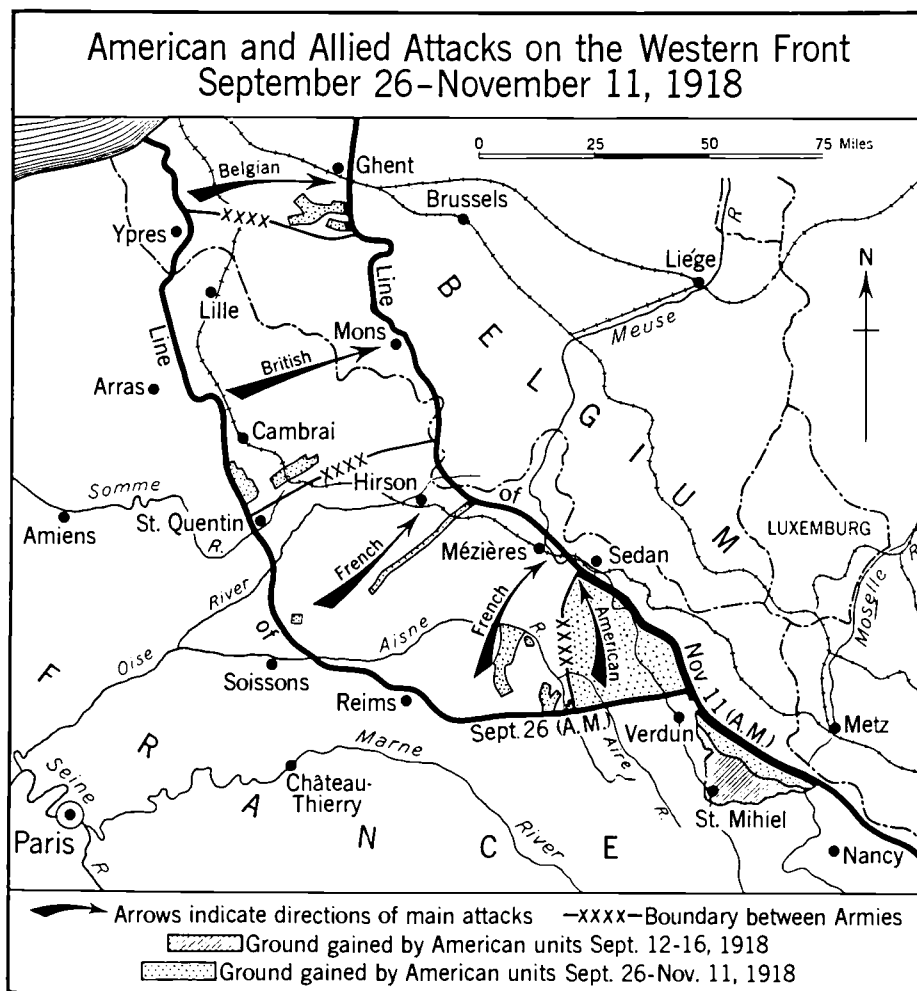
Summerall was the son of a long line of Florida preachers and he might have been one himself if it had not been for the impoverishment of his family by the Civil War. This made it expedient for him (Lejeune, Annapolis '88, was a like case) to go to West Point, where he graduated in 1892, 20th in a class of 62. He went into artillery and was a junior officer in Reilly's Battery, which supported the Marines in the relief of Peking in the Boxer Rebellion. His churchly background gave him the habit of delivering little homilies on every possible occasion.

He had made his reputation as an artillery brigade commander at Cantigny. Allied artillery doctrine, hammered out in

trench warfare, was that the number of guns should be proportional to the lineal frontage to be attacked or held. In 1917, experienced British and French artillerists listened in amusement to the newly arrived American gunner who preached that guns should not be allotted to linear front, but to the number of infantry in action. In the spring of 1918, Summerall, commanding the 1st Artillery Brigade, 1st Division, at Toul and Cantigny, had the chance to test his new techniques aimed at putting gunfire where the infantry wanted it. He was credited with perfecting the "creeping" or "rolling" barrage and facilitating call fires with better wire communications. After Cantigny he moved up to command of the 1st Division. He fought it well at Soissons, where his guns virtually destroyed the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich Division* of Prussian Guards. His artillery virtuosity was again demonstrated at St. Mihiel. Command of V Corps was his reward.

**S**UMMERALL WAS also an ambitious, driving man. He told Lejeune, quite pointedly, that he had found it necessary to relieve several front-line commanders from duty. He then went into the details of the corps' role in the big attack due to begin at dawn on 1 November. The V Corps front extended from the Bois de Bantheville to St. Georges. On the right, the 89th Division had broken through the *Kriembilde Stellung*. On the left, the 42d Division, the celebrated Rainbow Division, was still in front of the *Kriembilde*. Momentarily both the 1st and 2d Divisions were in reserve. The 2d and 89th Divisions would now move into the assault. The 2d Division would relieve the 42d, smash through the *Kriembilde*, and go ahead, with the 89th Division on its right and the 80th Division of the I Corps on its left, against the *Freya Stellung* on Barri-court Heights. On D-day, the 2d Division was expected to advance nine kilometers, taking the fortified towns of Landres-et-St. Georges, St. Georges, Landreville, Chennery, and Bayonville; also the Bois des Hazois, Bois l'Epasse, and, finally, the Heights of Barri-court.

At a second conference, artilleryman Summerall promised Lejeune an enormous concentration of artillery. The 2d Division's own artillery would be reinforced by the fires of the artillery brigades of the 1st and 42d Divisions as well as all



American Battle Monuments Commission, American Armies and Battlefields in Europe (Washington, D.C., 1938)

available corps and army artillery, a total of more than 300 guns. Summerall then asked for assurances that the first day's objectives would be taken. Lejeune told him that he had every confidence that his division could take the Barri-court Heights, if at least one of his flanks was protected by an adjacent division. MajGen William M. Wright, USA, commanding the 89th Division, which would be on the right of the 2d Division, said his troops were tired but would stay abreast.

**S**UBSEQUENT TO MEETING with Summerall, Lejeune called a conference of his brigade and regimental commanders. Detailed planning down to the platoon level proceeded. The division would go forward in column of brigades on a front of slightly more than two kilometers. The 4th Brigade would lead off on the first day, with the 3d Brigade to pass through and continue the attack on order. For the jump-off, the 23d Infantry would be attached to the Marine brigade and would go in on the right against the Bois l'Epasse. Once the wood was taken, the 23d would

revert to the 3d Brigade and the 4th Brigade would take over the whole division front.

The three artillery brigades—the most experienced American field artillery in France—would fire a preparation of two hours, then a standing barrage of 10 minutes, and then a roll forward at the rate of 100 yards every four minutes on rough ground.

Close-in fires would be provided, as usual, by machine-gun barrages. All the machine guns in the 2d Division, except for two companies, were gathered for the preparatory fires, some 255 machine guns. The Marine machine gunners were as good as any in the American Army, but they envied the machine gunners of the 89th Division their water-cooled Vickers machine guns, which could deliver five times the volume of fire of the French Hotchkisses with which the Marines were still equipped.

The promised replacements had come in and the division was close to full strength. Special troops attached for the



attack included a company from the 1st Gas Regiment, a company of 15 light tanks, a squadron and a half of aircraft, and a balloon company, all American except for a few French aircraft.

Summerall, accompanied by Lejeune, visited each of the 12 infantry battalions of the two brigades and gave repeated rousing exhortations to take the Heights of Barricourt which would force the Germans to retreat behind the Meuse. In Lejeune's words, "... four hours of tramping through the mud and making speeches in the open air..." Before driving away, Summerall said once again to Lejeune that he had been compelled to relieve a number of officers for failure to carry out orders and that he would continue to do so. Lejeune quietly assured him that the officers of the 2d Division would carry out their orders.

The 2d Division began its movement into the lines on the night of 30/31 October, relieving the support and reserve battalions of the 42d Division. The front-line battalions of the 42d Division stayed

*Allied troops, here French cavalry on the right, pass each other in the glowing sunshine of a country autumn, the visual peace of the scene marred by the footsoldiers' gas masks, which speak of the unseen horrors of the 1918 fighting in eastern France.*



in place and would continue to hold the outpost line until 3 a.m. on 1 November. Command of the sector passed to Lejeune at noon on 31 October and he opened his division headquarters at Exermont at 4 p.m.

By this time all but a few die-hards in the German Army knew that the war was lost. Bulgaria, Turkey, and Austria-Hungary were now out of it and Germany stood alone. But the High Command, perhaps already planning the next war, was determined that the German withdrawal would cost the Allies heavily. Preliminary plans were to drop back to the Antwerp-Meuse Line which would mean a retreat on the American front to the east bank of the Meuse.

OPPOSITE THE AMERICAN First Army was the German *Fifth Army*, commanded by General von der Marwitz, an old adversary of the Marines. On the German right was the *Provisional Corps* of *Argonne Group* under General von Kleist. On the left was the *XXI Corps*, also known

as the *Meuse West Group*, under General von Oven.

Immediately opposite the 42d Division was the German *41st Division*, the left-most division of the *Argonne Group*. On its right was the *15th Bavarian Division* which the Marines had met at Blanc Mont. To its left was the *88th Division* of the *Meuse West Group*.

As it happened, the German *52d Division* was relieving the *41st Division* at the same time the U.S. 2d Division was relieving the 42d. By the morning of 1 November, all three regiments of the *52d* were in position, but the *41st Division* lingered in the area. Average strength of the German regiments was 800 men, conventionally organized into three battalions, each with three rifle companies and a machine gun company.

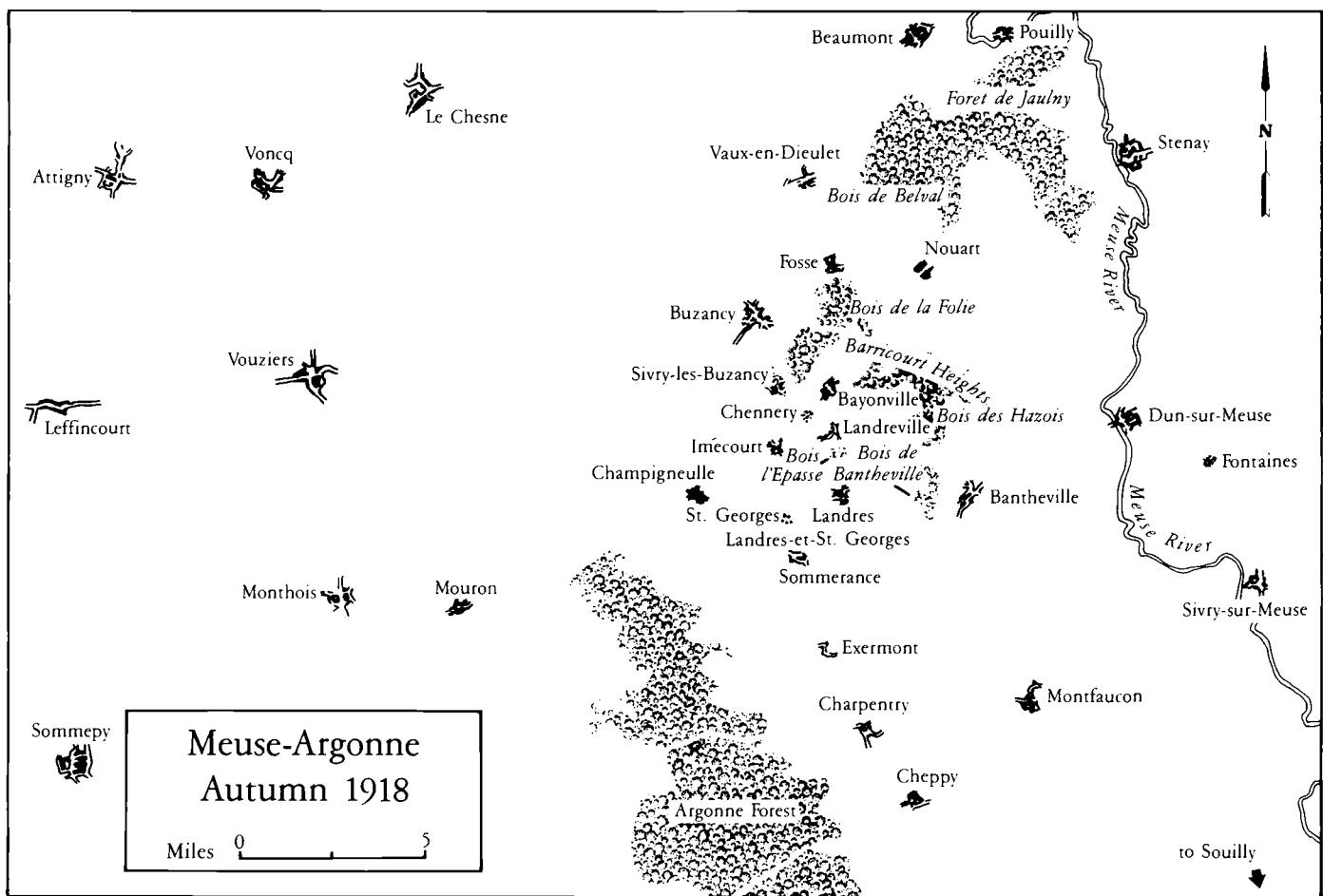
The Germans were quite aware that a big American attack was coming. As General von Gallwitz, commanding the parent *Army Group*, wrote later:

We continuously detected additional new divisional insignia. As for the west bank of the Meuse, we discovered there more than six divisions, as originally reported. That famous American crack unit, the 2d Division, withdrew from opposite Army Unit C and was now reported to be near Montfaucon.

THE GERMAN LINE in front of the 2d Division was held by a single battalion stretched out across a hill south of Landres-et-St. Georges, its position organized, in German fashion, in considerable depth, with strong points rather than a continuous line. Elements from both the *41st* and *52d Divisions* were in St. Georges itself.

Of Exermont, Lejeune wrote to his wife that night, "It is a filthy hole. I have my room and our offices in an old peasant's house, and my room adjoins the stable which is under the same roof; my nearest neighbors are two mules in the stable."

Lejeune slept briefly but was up before 2 a.m. to assure himself that his troops were in their jump-off positions and that the artillery and machine guns were in readiness for the bombardment. The artillery preparation began at 3:30 a.m. Lejeune walked out on a high ridge from where he could watch the shellfire. He was confident that his doughboys and Marines



had learned to “lean on” the rolling barrage even if it meant taking a few casualties from short rounds.

The 1st of November was cold and cloudy, with heavy fog in the morning. The artillery preparation was so thorough “that scarcely a square foot of ground in the enemy’s front line area was left unturned by bursting shells.” In addition to the artillery, “. . . the gas company threw into the enemy positions its quota of destruction.”

**T**EN MINUTES BEFORE H-hour a standing barrage came down like a curtain 200 yards in front of the German line. The American machine guns began their overhead fire. As scheduled, at 5:30 a.m., the three regiments crossed the jump-off line simultaneously.

On the right flank, the 23d Infantry, with two battalions in the assault, proceeded methodically with the taking of Landres-et-St. Georges and the cleaning out of the Bois de Hazois and Bois l’Épasse and then pulled back to join the 9th Infantry in support of the 4th Brigade which was echeloning to the right to take over the whole division front.

The remainder of the attack was to be made in column of brigades with the 3d Brigade following the 4th Brigade. The artillery barrage was to roll forward and then stand just beyond each successive objective. This would give time to the second-in-column battalions to move through the lead battalions and continue the attack in leap-frog fashion.

Upon learning that the 23d Infantry had taken its objectives on schedule, Lejeune went forward to establish an advance headquarters at Landres-et-St. Georges. En route he stopped at Somerance, the P.C. (“post of command”) of the 6th Marines, and met with Col Harry (“Light Horse Harry”) Lee, the heavy-set regimental commander, and LtCol Thomas Holcomb, the regiment’s second-in-command and another future Commandant. Breakfast was being served at the regimental headquarters. Lejeune broke out his mess kit and somewhat self-consciously joined the chow line for a breakfast of bacon, beans, biscuit, and coffee before driving on to Landres-et-St. Georges.

In the 4th Brigade attack, the 5th Marines, the senior regiment, was on the right, and the 6th Marines on the left. The

battalions of both regiments were in column. The brigade’s first objective was an east-west line about 400 meters short of Landreville.

Both the 5th Marines, under Col Logan Feland, and the 6th Marines, under Col Lee, were in column of battalions with a thousand yards distance between battalions. Maj George W. Hamilton’s 1st Battalion led in the 5th Marines zone, followed by Capt Charles E. Dunbeck’s 2d Battalion and Capt Henry L. Larsen’s 3d Battalion.

In the 6th Marines zone, Maj Frederick A. Barker’s 1st Battalion was in the assault followed by Maj George K. Shuler’s 3d Battalion, and Maj Ernest C. Williams’ 2d Battalion. After the initial barrage, each battalion had a machine gun company attached to it for the advance, either the regimental machine gun company or a company from the 6th Machine Gun Battalion, now commanded by Maj Matthew H. Kingman.

The attack went like clockwork. The Marines had learned to stay close behind the creeping artillery barrage. The two small villages that stood in their way were



*In the Meuse-Argonne region, Allied tanks demonstrate their fire before heading into the lines. The photograph well records the landscape of the region, characterized by long, level vistas punctuated by occasional wooded hills or rocky outcroppings, and agricultural villages and hamlets—the Landres-et-St. Georges, Chennery, and Bayonville of the Marine Brigade.*

virtually demolished by the artillery fire. Heavy belts of barbed wire caused momentary pauses. German artillery was the most potent element of the defense. Col Georg “Break-through Miller” Bruchmuller had arrived on 26 October to be the chief of artillery for the *Fifth Army*. The German gunners stood their ground until their guns were overrun.

**H**AMILTON’S BATTALION soon outflanked Landres and the ridge south of the village and, without difficulty, reached its objective a few hundred yards south of Landreville. Barker’s battalion met heavy machine gun fire coming out of a small wood south of St. Georges.

Capt Macon C. (“Dick”) Overton, “one of the most gallant young officers of the Marine Corps,” led his 76th Company against the machine guns. The seemingly indestructible young Georgian had commanded the company since Belleau Wood. He was guiding a tank in its attack against a machine gun nest when a Maxim bullet killed him. Those guns knocked out, Barker reached his objective, a small stream line running east from the village of Imécourt, without further difficulty.

Maj Barker had come to France in the first convoy in June 1917 as a captain and commander of the 47th Company, 5th Regiment. In September, with a temporary promotion to major, he had gone to Paris as an assistant provost marshal. In late July 1918 he returned to the brigade in time to command the 1st Battalion, 6th

Regiment, at St. Mihiel and Blanc Mont.

The 18th Company, 5th Marines, under Capt LeRoy P. Hunt, had the task of maintaining contact with the 89th Division on the right. Hunt had done extremely well with his company at Blanc Mont. In the Second World War he would command the 5th Marines at Guadalcanal and go on to retire as a lieutenant general.

A provisional battalion, on the left, under Maj George C. Stowell, consisting of the 95th Company, 6th Marines; Company G, 319th Infantry, 80th Division; and two machine-gun platoons, was given the more difficult mission of connecting the I and V Corps.

**S**TOWELL HAD COME to France in the fall of 1917 as a captain and commander of the 76th Company for the first week of Belleau Wood. For some reason, now forgotten, he was plucked out of that command and sent back to the 2d Replacement Battalion. He came back to the 6th Marines in early September and commanded the 75th Company at St. Mihiel and Blanc Mont. Now, with a temporary promotion to major, he was in command of what was called the “Liaison Battalion between 3rd and 5th Corps.”

The 80th Division had made little progress, leaving Stowell’s provisional battalion to protect the open left flank. Stowell and his pick-up command charged into the ruined village of Imécourt and captured its garrison of 150 Germans, then slid over into the 80th Division’s zone of

action, keeping abreast of the 2d Division’s advance.

At about 8 a.m., Dunbeck’s 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, and Shuler’s 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, moved through the front lines and took up the assault. Dunbeck’s battalion went into the village of Landreville where the Germans made the mistake of firing machine guns at them from windows. This nuisance taken care of with grenades and rifle fire, the Marines accepted the surrender of about 100 arms-raised Germans.

**M**ORE SERIOUS WAS a German second line, a portion of the *Freya Stellung*, which ran generally east and west through Bayonville. Key to the position was tree-covered Hill 299 concealing a number of machine guns and some artillery. Dunbeck’s battalion took the hill and reached its objective, about 500 yards north of Bayonville, by noon.

Capt Dunbeck insisted that his name was “Charley,” not Charles, and that he had been named for a favorite horse on his father’s stock farm in Lucasville, Ohio. Dunbeck, who had enlisted in 1903, had come to France with the 5th Regiment in that first convoy in June 1917 as a newly made marine gunner. Promoted to captain, he was wounded in both legs at Belleau Wood, but came back in July to command the 43d Company at Soissons, St. Mihiel, and Blanc Mont, where he was again wounded.

Shuler’s 3d Battalion, 6th Marines, met



little resistance until it reached the villages of Chenney and Bayonville. These were taken with the aid of tanks. Again, about 100 Germans, along with assorted machine guns and artillery pieces, surrendered.

Maj George Shuler was another of those 5th Regiment "originals" who had come over in June 1917. As a captain, he had been adjutant, which equated to operations officer at that time, of the 5th Marines at Belleau Wood and Soissons. Promoted to major, he was transferred to the 6th Regiment and commanded a battalion at St. Mihiel and Blanc Mont.

**A**BOUT NOON, the third echelon—Larsen's 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, and Williams' 2d Battalion, 6th Marines—passed through the lines and began the final phase of the day's attack. By then all organized resistance had been overrun and the only remaining fight was from small, isolated pockets of Germans. Larsen's battalion reached its objective, a line about one kilometer southwest of Baricourt shortly after 2 p.m.

"Heavy Hank" Larsen, a second-generation Norwegian, had entered the Marine Corps as a second lieutenant in 1913 and had been still another of those who had come across in the first convoy. He had been second-in-command of the 3d Battalion, 5th Regiment, at Belleau Wood, Soissons, and St. Mihiel, moving up to command, although still a captain, at Blanc Mont.

"Major" was the table of organization grade for battalion commanders in the First World War, although by November 1918 many of the battalions were being led by captains.

**W**ILLIAMS REACHED HIS objective, the southern edge of the Bois de la Folie, about an hour later. His Marines found "Bolo" Williams a hard-drinking, tough, and mean leader. In November 1916, with 12 Marines, he had stormed the *fortaleza* at San Francisco de Macoris, defended by from 40 to 100 (depending upon who was counting) Dominican rebels. This had gotten him the Medal of Honor. He had come to France in June with the 3d Replacement Battalion, and after a sojourn for indoctrination at the Army's I Corps School, he had arrived at the brigade early in August to be joined briefly to the 75th Company. Command

of the 2d Battalion, 6th Regiment, came a few days later and he had led it at St. Mihiel and Blanc Mont. One of his company commanders, Capt Clifton B. Cates, said of him, "He had all the courage in the world but I wouldn't say he was the brainiest or friendliest man in the world."

By now the division had captured several batteries of artillery and had 1,700 prisoners and many cannon in the bag. The German prisoners were put to work carrying the wounded back to the dressing stations, four prisoners to a stretcher. The burial parties, attended by chaplains, followed behind the advancing troops.

Soon after the attack began, General von der Marwitz had begun moving forward his reserves. His *31st Division* was already well forward. The *115th* and *236th Divisions*, further to the rear, were ordered to move up. Von der Marwitz hoped to hold the *Freya Stellung* between Champigneulle and Bayonville long enough to make an orderly withdrawal to the Meuse. This proved impossible. After the 2d Division had broken through the *Freya* position and was in the Bois de la Folie, Von der Marwitz ordered a new line, Buzancy to Bois de la Folie, formed to tie in with the *Freya Stellung* to the east. By nightfall on the 1st, the *15th Bavarian* was north of Sivry-les-Buzancy, its left flank bending back and connecting with the *52d Division* on the ridge between Buzancy and the Bois de la Folie.

**T**HE 89TH DIVISION, one of the American Expeditionary Forces' best, came up abreast of the 2d on the right, but the left flank remained open. A few independent-minded soldiers from the 80th Division caught up with Stowell's mixed battalion and were added to the defense for the night. To Stowell's rear, the bend in the line near Sivry further exposed the left flank of the 2d Division. Lejeune had Neville send the rear-most battalions of the 6th Marines across the division boundary into the I Corps zone to clear out the woods between Sivry and the Fontaine des Parades. Some hours after dark contact was made with a battalion of the 80th Division.

The front-line battalions sent out patrols and the brigade braced itself for an expected counterattack. The left flank was still most vulnerable. On the German side, the remnants of several divisions, organized provisionally into regiments, had

been ordered to hit southeast of Buzancy. The best they could manage was to form an outpost line north of Buzancy and in front of the Marine brigade.

At 8 p.m. Lejeune received Summerall's orders for the next day's advance. The division was to push forward to the Fosse-Nouart line at daylight. At 9 p.m. a modification to the Corps order arrived: in addition to advancing to the Fosse-Nouart line, the division was to take the town of Buzancy which lay in the 80th Division's sector. This would cause the division to attack in two directions: to the north to the Fosse-Nouart line and to the west against Buzancy. Lejeune protested to Summerall that as of 10 p.m. his left flank was still in the air. He argued that if he was to attack to the west, then the 89th should extend to the left to take over a portion of his front. Summerall acceded, the 89th Division's reserve began the march, and the 4th Brigade faced 90 degrees to the left.

Summerall, seemingly oblivious to the difficulties he was causing by changing the direction of attack, grew impatient. Fortunately for Lejeune, a protest came from I Corps that an attack across its front would surely cause a mix-up. About 4 a.m. the attack was called off, and, for the 2d Division, the "battle for Buzancy" had ended. By then it was too late to reform the 4th Brigade to attack to the north so Lejeune ordered the 3d Brigade to relieve the 4th Brigade and continue the attack. The 23d Infantry passed through the 4th Brigade in the southern part of the Bois de la Folie. The 9th Infantry remained in the vicinity of Bayonville.

**O**N THE MORNING OF 2 November, the 80th Division came up on the left flank in strength and Stowell was able to take his battalion back into the 2d Division's zone of action. During the day, the Marine brigade rested, except for Williams' battalion. Williams pushed forward patrols into Bois de la Folie until they were stopped by the German outpost line.

Only fragments of the *52d Division* remained in the Bois de la Folie. On the night of 2/3 November these were relieved by the skeleton *115th Division*. On the *115th's* left the *88th Division* was still in the lines, but reduced by now to a hodgepodge of mixed units, known by the names of their commanders, including the remnants of the *41st Division*, shriveled

The Department of Veterans Affairs is distributing a special World War I 75th anniversary commemorative medal to all living veterans of that war. This medal was designed by the U.S. Army Institute of Heraldry and is sponsored by the Chicago-based McCormick Tribune Foundation. World War I veterans or their representatives can obtain an application from the nearest VA Regional Office or from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, P.O. Box 27720, Washington, D.C. 20038-7720. Veterans also can call toll free, 1-800-827-1000, for an application. It is estimated that of the approximately 75,000 Marines who served during World War I, between 400-500 Marines are still alive and eligible for the medal.

There are also a limited number of the original World War I Victory Medals available for issue or replacement. Marine veterans, or their eligible next of kin, can request issuance of this service medal by writing to the following address:

National Personal Records Center  
Navy Reference Branch  
9700 Page Boulevard  
St. Louis, Missouri 63132

down to a composite regiment. Its strength on 31 October had been 2,300 rifles. What it was now, no one knew. On the right of the *115th*, the *31st Division*, which the Marines had met briefly at Thiaccourt, was beginning the relief of the

### Readers Always Write

## Respect, Yes, But No Need to Glorify a Former Enemy

Reference the recently distributed *Time of the Aces* commemorative monograph by Peter Mersky, I think Mersky did a marvelous job of pulling it together, and I am pleased that he thought my comments were helpful. However, I feel constrained to mention one side of an issue or two in my suggestions that didn't seem to stand out in his otherwise excellent coverage.

First of all, I think a commemorative piece on our Marine aces of WWII should

*15th Bavarian*. To the rear, in its assembly area, the *52d Division* could muster only an infantry strength of 35 officers and 242 men. By the morning of 3 November the German line ran north of Buzancy and the Bois de la Folie, to between Nouart and Barricourt, and then on to Villers. The Germans had already put their withdrawal to the east bank of the Meuse into motion. Von der Marwitz pulled the headquarters of *Fifth Army* back to Virton. The headquarters of the *Argonne Group*, under Von Kleist, found new quarters at Carignan.

**L**EJEUNE ORDERED the 3d Infantry Brigade to move up in line of regiments to the Fosse-Nouart line. The 23d Infantry, already in the Bois de la Folie, took the road to Fosse in a night march. The 9th Infantry moved north from Bayonville toward Nouart. German rear guards were brushed aside. The Fosse-Nouart line was taken by 6 a.m. on 3 November. The 3d Brigade, followed by the 4th Brigade, continued to advance, and by noon had reached the southern edge of the Bois de Belval. That afternoon of 3 November, Lejeune moved his headquarters forward to Bayonville and Chennery.

At the highest levels of command, it was quite clear to the Germans that they must withdraw to their final position, the Antwerp-Meuse line. That portion of the *Fifth Army* still west of the river was placed under the *Third Army*, which was on the left of the Crown Prince's *Army Group*. At 1 p.m. on 3 November Von der Marwitz received orders for the *Fifth Army* to hold its present lines for two days. He ordered

a counterattack by the *Argonne Group* against the 2d Division. Before it could be launched, he received orders at 8 p.m. that evening to fall back behind the Meuse.

On 4 November the 3d Brigade pushed on forward. In two days it had advanced seven miles. The woods, the villages, and the crossroads acted as checkpoints by which the advance could be measured. That night Lejeune, who had moved his headquarters forward to Fosse, ordered the 4th Brigade to go in on the right of the 3d Brigade and connect with the 89th Division. The 5th Marines, led by the 2d Battalion, went into the front lines. The 6th Marines remained in reserve south of the Bois de Belval where Neville also maintained his brigade PC.

The *236th Division* was now in front of the 2d Division, covering the German withdrawal across the Meuse. Pushing back the *236th* was primarily the job of the 3d Brigade. On the right the 5th Marines helped the 89th Division clear the Germans out of the Jaulny Forest and went on to reach the Meuse at Pouilly on 5 November.

The traffic jams and congestion in the rear were unbelievable. It was difficult getting ammunition and rations forward and equally difficult getting the wounded back.

During the night of 5/6 November the *236th Division* withdrew across the river. Next day the 9th and 23d Infantry moved up to the left of the 4th Brigade and the near bank of the Meuse belonged to the 2d Division. All bridges across the Meuse were found to be destroyed. □1775□

*(To be continued)*

emphasize *just that*. In my opinion there is no need to include four whole pages on Japanese fighter pilots. I believe emphasis would be better placed on the picture of inexperienced, "fresh out of flight school" American pilots, rising to defeat a soundly combat-experienced Japanese air force, both ashore and afloat. To let today's Marines know precisely what was accomplished, that emphasis should clearly include certain facts. A prime example is

found in kill ratios in aerial combat. They ranged from about 2.5 to 1 at the beginning of the Solomons campaign to over 10 to 1 at the end of the war, both in favor of our forces.

Secondly, I believe a much stronger comparative piece on the system of kill credits should have been included. Our system of verification called for immediate post-action debriefing on "who saw what," when memories were the freshest

and clearest, after each mission. Japanese pilot claims, as pointed out by the author, were taken at *face value with no verification required*. In addition, our pilots were even using gun camera film to help verify their claims in 1944 and 1945. I don't think there is a single reason to be backward about making any of these points in definition of the magnitude of the combat accomplishments of 50 years ago.

Lastly, there is the reliance in some circles on what is termed "post-war records" of the Japanese "made available" and used to "correct" U. S. records. Considering the pounding that by-passed enemy bases received, plus the *levelling* accorded the "home islands" of Japan during '44 and '45, whatever enemy records were still legible would have to be suspect at best. It seems to me that we have no obligation to tread lightly on these matters. We had a great respect for the Japanese in most of their conduct as an enemy air power, and a keen understanding of the performance of their flying machines and the abilities of their pilots. But we don't need to glorify and magnify either, especially in a monograph about *our* pilots and *our* machines.

MajGen John P. Condon, USMC (Ret)  
Alexandria, Virginia

In the recent past I received my copy of the WWII series [entry]: *Up the Slot: Marines in the Central Solomons* by Maj Charles D. Melson, USMC (Ret). On page 4 is listed the Marine Troop List, citing the units as located \*New Georgia only, \*\*Vella Lavella only, and \*\*\*New Georgia and Vella Lavella. It is interesting that 50 years after the Solomon Islands actions took place there are still errors in the retelling.

First and foremost, the troop list on page 4 omits VMF-212, commanded by Maj S. B. O'Neill (Maj H. M. Elwood, Exec Officer). VMF-212 was one of the first Corsair squadrons to occupy Vella Lavella after its capture. It conducted flight ops from Vella Lavella during mid-September through D-Day at Bougainville on 1 November. VMF-212 was then relieved by VMF-214 (Boyington) and proceeded to Efate where Elwood relieved O'Neill as C.O. of VMF-212. VMF-212 returned to Vella Lavella in January 1944 to relieve VMF-214 just days after Boyington was shot down.

During this second tour, VMF-212 was moved forward to operate from Bougain-

ville where it was fully occupied in reducing the enemy's VF inventory at Rabaul. Before completing this tour VMF-212 flew cover over the capture of Green Island.

VMF-212 was sent forward to fly from Green Island for its third and last combat tour. By this time Japanese defense of Rabaul had just about collapsed. Elwood was returned to Hawaii to prepare for the Marianas Operations and VMF-212 moved on to the Philippines, after its third tour.

As one of the first fighter squadrons at Guadalcanal, VMF-212 did a bang-up job. It was one of the first to be returned home, so was one of the first to return to the Solomons for a *second* combat tour. This may explain why VMF-212 could well slip through the cracks, although hardly in the circles of Marine historians. I know you can sort this out.

LtGen Hugh M. Elwood, USMC (Ret)  
Atlantic Beach, Florida

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Author Maj Charles D. Melson responds: "Gen Elwood's letter rightfully highlights the efforts of a workhorse squadron that was lost in the detail of the Central Solomons narrative. The story was one I felt should be told in the projected recounting of the Bougainville campaign, and VMF-212 also is noted in the commemorative series pamphlet Time of the Aces as producing nine of the fighter aces of the period, including Gen Elwood. The story of Marine aviation in the Solomon Islands has been told in more detail in works such as Robert Sherrod's History of Marine Corps Aviation in World War II. Sherrod notes that VMF-212 arrived back in the South Pacific in August 1943, based at Espiritu; in November it moved to the Russells; and in December to Torokina. In January 1944 the flight echelon was at Vella Lavella and the rest of the squadron at Piva. VMF-212 participated in both the Vella Lavella and Bougainville campaigns."*

On 24 October 1993, I accepted the General Wallace M. Green, Jr., Prize for the most notable book in Marine Corps history for the current year for my biography of the late Gen Gerald C. Thomas. I owe this book's success to many people, most of whom are mentioned in the book's [foreword]. *Many A Strife* would not have been written, however, without the exceptional contributions of BGen Edwin H. Simmons, Gen Merrill B. Twinning, the family of the late Gen Thomas,

the late Col "Tiny" Fraser, and my wife, Martha E. Farley-Millett. I also want to assure all Marines everywhere that royalties from the book go to the Marine Corps Historical Foundation to support further research on Marine Corps history since I wrote the book with a grant from the Elizabeth S. Hooper Foundation of Philadelphia.

I feel very strongly that I need to make these acknowledgments clear . . . .

Col Allan R. Millett, USMCR (Ret)  
Columbus, Ohio

This isn't meant as a complaint, but the information about Norman V. "Vern" McLean, author of the very good "Hiking Hiram" Bearss article [*Fortitudine*, Summer 1993] seems slightly off target in one point only: ". . . was recalled to active duty with the 6th Marines in Korea . . ." It probably should say: ". . . was recalled to active duty with the 6th Marines during the Korean War . . ." (The 6th Marines were not in Korea during the Korean War.)

MSgt John P. L. Morrison, USA (Ret)  
Sacramento, California

*EDITOR'S NOTE: MSgt Morrison and numerous other sharp-eyed readers (including author McLean) found this editor's error. The correction MSgt Morrison suggests is exact.*

Just a note to tell you how much I enjoyed the *Tarawa* [Marines in World War II Commemorative Pamphlet] monograph. I think it's the clearest and most readable piece I've ever read on that terrible battle.

Dave Shoup's S-4, Maj Ben Weatherwax, is mentioned in the account. Ben was a very close friend of our family. He was a reserve officer prior to WWII and designed the base theater at San Diego MCRD as well as the post chapel. On Christmas Eve this year, my son Tim took me down to MCRD where I was 43 years ago. Ben's theater still dominates the grinder. The post chapel is gone.

Ben maintained a close friendship with Dave Shoup after the war. He owned a radio station in my home town and was a successful architect. He was a man of many talents. He painted, wrote beautifully, and could vocalize any dialect. He died in fire at his beach home in the late 50's.

Chuck Hoonan  
Moraga, California

# Unusual Collections Arrive By Way of Unusual Routes

by Frederick J. Graboske  
Head, Archives Section

TWO COLLECTIONS which are interesting, both for their content and for the ways in which they came into our custody, have been acquired by the Personal Papers Section. We received 23 World War I maps from Thomas G. Horton of Cincinnati, Ohio. Mr. Horton, the son of former Marine Charles C. Horton, purchased some military memorabilia in a flea market. When he got the materials home and examined them, he found the maps. He told his father, who called me and asked if we were interested in Marine Corps maps from World War I. Mr. Horton's call illustrates how we obtain most of our collections—former Marines who thoughtfully and generously offer us things.

The Horton maps originally were the property of Capt David Bellamy, adjutant of the 3d Battalion, 6th Marines. One is a French map of the Verdun area, published in 1913. The lower left side is marked in blue pencil showing some of 3/6's movements during October 1918. Next to the town of Somme-Py is the note "Attack 2 Oct." What the map cannot show is the utter desolation of that war-ravaged area. The next day's action, the attack on Blanc Mont, is on the next map sheet. In that attack two Marines earned the Medal of Honor.

THE HISTORY OF a Marine's photo album, also brought into the Center, is a bit more tortuous. PFC L. L. Griffin was a Marine photographer during World

War II. It was common for such individuals to make prints for their personal use. The album somehow came into the possession of former Marine photographer Roger Garrison, of Rochester, New York. Mr. Garrison gave the album to his friend, yet another Marine Corps photographer, Arthur Nelson, of Fredericksburg, Virginia, with a request that he find it a good home. Mr. Nelson gave it to his daughter, Shirley Dean, to pass along to a member of her church, Dr. Von Hardesty. Dr. Hardesty is a curator of aviation history at the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum. I know him through my wife, who is a colleague there. Dr. Hardesty called me and offered the album to the Marine Corps, and we gladly accepted. In ascertaining the provenance of the collection I talked

with Mr. Nelson, who also has agreed to organize his own photographs for donation to us.

The Griffin collection consists of 167 photographs, primarily of the battle for Okinawa, but with a few of Peleliu and a few of the Japanese surrender in Tientsin in October 1945. The Okinawa photos mostly document the combat, but there are more than a dozen ethnographic shots of the local people. The one used here shows a little-studied aspect of the operation: rebuilding after the battle. Here are three women rethatching a hut. We have other photos of the Okinawans winnowing grain and posing for the photographer in the local costume. The battle scenes include shots of medical evacuation by air. □1775□

*With the battle over, photographer PFC Griffin was able to concentrate on subjects other than Marines: three women rethatching a hut in the Okinawan countryside.*



## Historical Quiz

### Blacks in the Marine Corps

by Lena M. Kaljot  
Reference Historian

Answer the following questions:

1. What was the recruit depot for all black Marines during the 1940s?
2. When was the first all-black Marine unit activated?
3. What was the first black Marine combat unit?
4. Who was the first black Marine officer?
5. How many black Marines have been awarded the Medal of Honor?
6. Who was the first black Marine to be awarded the Medal of Honor?
7. Who was the Marine Corps' first black aviator, as well as the first black Marine to attain flag rank?
8. Name the single major Marine installation named in honor of a black serviceman.
9. Name the two black former Marines who held world heavyweight boxing titles.
10. Who was the first black astronaut?

(Answers on page 14)