

FORTITUDE

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FORTITUDINE

Motto of the United States Marine Corps in the 1812 era

Historical Bulletin Vol. 36, No. 1

2011

"We can only know who we are by being certain of who we have been."

Gen Leonard F. Chapman Jr.
24th Commandant of the Marine Corps

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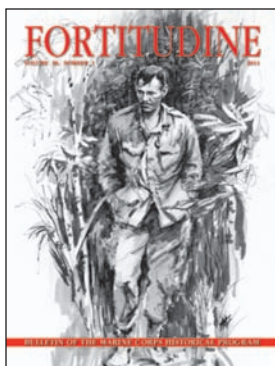
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About the Cover: The cover, by then-Major Albert "Mike" Leahy, combat artist, depicts a captain emerging from the jungle, showing the signs of war in his face. His company rescued another company that had sustained 48 casualties. The battle occurred in Hai Lang Forest, Quang Tri Province, then-South Vietnam. Lieutenant Colonel Leahy recently died, and his Marine Corps story is told on page 23.

This 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 four-issue subscriptions from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office. The appropriate order form appears in this issue.

African-American Marines



Dr. Charles P. Neimeyer

Recently, the Marine Corps History Division proudly joined all Americans in the celebration of Black History Month. However, few Americans may realize that Black History Month was originally known as Black History Week. In 1913, on the 50th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, Dr. Carter G. Woodson and other black leaders put together a historical display that celebrated the progress of African-Americans since the end of slavery along with the historical contributions of the African-American community throughout American history. Presented to standing room only crowds, Woodson's display was a tremendous hit with the American public and convinced him and other scholars to advocate a specific time of the year to celebrate African-American history. It was said that Woodson's group selected the month of February as the appropriate time for annual recognition due to the fact the African-American community already celebrated the birthdates of President Abraham Lincoln and noted African-American social reformer, orator, and writer, Frederick Douglass, on 12 and 14 February, respectively. Officially recognized by Congress since 1976, Black History Month remains an important celebration of the history and contributions of the nation's African-American community since its founding. And while some rightfully argue that the celebration of African-American history needs to expand beyond a single month, few dispute the wisdom of revisiting this important topic on a regular basis.

In keeping with this tradition, during July 2011 a display will be unveiled at the Pentagon honoring the service of early African-American naval officers—both Navy and Marine Corps. The Navy's section will predominately focus on a pioneering group of

African-American officers known today as the "Golden Thirteen," who were commissioned in 1944 into the U.S. Navy. The Marine Corps officer program did not have a similarly identifiable cohort. Nevertheless, the earliest African-American Marine Corps officers, through their persistent courage, diligence, and professionalism, overcame the worst racial barriers to progress existing at that time. It is important that all Marines of today, whatever their gender, race, or ethnicity, be aware of the pioneering efforts of these early African-American officers in breaking down the barriers of inequality.

Here is a quick look at some of the Marine Corps vignettes in the proposed display. In 1944, the first African-American Marines were assigned to the Navy's V-12 program, which was designed to provide qualified enlisted men with both a college education and ultimately a commission in the Navy or Marine Corps Reserve. Private First Class Frederick C. Branch, born in Hamlet, North Carolina, and formerly of the 51st Defense Battalion, became the first African-American commissioned Marine Corps officer in November 1945. Although he immediately went on inactive duty, Branch stayed in the reserve, commanded a reserve unit in Philadelphia in 1949, and returned to active service during the Korean War. Today, "Branch Hall," located at the Officers Candidate School, Quantico, Virginia, is named in his honor.

In 1946, Herbert L. Brewer of San Antonio, Texas, was one of three African-American Marines who had been enrolled in the V-12 program and commissioned as reserve officers on inactive status. Brewer served on active duty in the Korean War and in 1973 was a reserve colonel in the Philadelphia area and was the highest

ranking African-American officer in the Marine Corps Reserve at the time. The other two Marines commissioned were Charles C. Johnson of Washington, DC and Judd B. Davis of Fuquay Springs, North Carolina. All three were prior enlisted Marines who had passed through the famous Montford Point training program at Camp Lejeune. In 1947, Charles Johnson transferred his commission to the U.S. Public Health Service where he performed duties as an engineering officer and ultimately rose to the rank of rear admiral and assistant surgeon general.

The first African-American to obtain a regular officer's commission was John E. Rudder of Paducah, Kentucky. Rudder enlisted in the Marine Corps and served during World War II as a corporal. After the war, Rudder entered the Navy Reserve Officers Training Corps program at Purdue University and graduated in June 1948 shortly after being commissioned a second lieutenant in the Regular Marine Corps. He left the service in 1949.

William K. Jenkins, a former Navy enlisted man, was commissioned in the Marine Corps Reserve in June 1948 and placed immediately on inactive duty. Jenkins was recalled to active duty at the start of the Korean War in 1950 and served as machine gun platoon leader and rifle platoon leader. He was the first African-American Marine officer to serve in combat. Also in 1950, Annie L. Grimes of Chicago, Illinois, was the third African-American woman to enlist in the Marine Corps. She ultimately became one of the first African-American women to join the officer ranks when she was promoted to chief warrant officer during the Vietnam War.

The first African-American officer,

Frank L. Petersen, to be commissioned in the Marine Corps from the Naval Aviation Cadet Program soon became one of the Marine Corps most accomplished officers. He was originally from Topeka, Kansas, and had enlisted in the Navy after a year of college and then entered the cadet program. He received both his wings and his commission at Pensacola, Florida, on 1 October 1952 and served with Marine Fighter Squadron 212 during the Korean War. During Vietnam in 1968, Lieutenant Colonel Petersen commanded Marine Fighter Squadron 314. During his service as an aviator, he flew in excess of 350 combat missions and during his career commanded at the squadron, group, amphibious brigade, and Marine Aircraft Wing. He retired from active duty as a Lieutenant General following his command of the Marine Corps Combat and Development Center at Quantico, Virginia. Lieutenant General Peterson established so many "firsts" that is difficult to list them all in this space. He was and remains a Marine's Marine.

Kenneth H. Berthoud Jr. of New York City was the second officer to receive a regular commission and served in Korea and Japan as a tank platoon leader and battalion staff officer. He later served in Vietnam as a group and battalion operations officer. Hurdle L. Maxwell was the first African-American officer to command a Marine infantry battalion. Maxwell had been an enlisted Marine before being commissioned in 1953. During this same period, women African-American Marines such as Gloria Smith, a graduate of Central State College in Ohio, were entering the officer corps as well. Smith was promoted to captain in 1973 and was, at the time, the most senior African-American woman in the Marine Corps. Indeed, pioneers like Gloria Smith and Annie Grimes led the way for other African-American women to make their way upward in the officer ranks in the years to come.

While not commissioned during the 1950s, new heights were reached in 1981, when then-Major, Charles F.

Bolden, became the first African-American astronaut. A resident of Houston, Bolden received an appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy and after graduation was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1968. He flew more than 100 combat missions in North and South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. After 34 years in the Marine Corps he retired as a Major General following his command of the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing. After military retirement, Bolden was selected as the 12th administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in 2009.

In conclusion, the many contributions of early African-American Marine Corps officers represent a proud chapter in the history of our Corps. Role models such as Frederick Branch, Frank Petersen, Annie Grimes, and Charles Bolden continue to inspire young American men and women who wish to share in the common bond and honor of serving in the United States Marine Corps.

□1775□

National Museum of the Marine Corps

Arms Assembled: The Richmond Rifle Musket

*by Bruce A. Allen
Museum Specialist*

During the American Civil War, the armories of both the North and the South produced tens of thousands of firearms of all kinds. The style of firearm most widely made and used by soldiers on both sides was the three-band-muzzle-loading firearm known as a "rifle musket." Rifle muskets, produced in .58-caliber, fired the minie ball projectile, a conical-shaped bullet. While undersized to the bore of the firearm, the minie ball had a hollow base that expanded and engaged the rifling, which increased both accuracy and speed of loading. Some of the first rifle muskets to be produced by the Confederacy were known as the Confederate Model 1855, or the Richmond rifle musket.

The Confederate Model 1855 rifle musket was a .58-caliber muzzle-loader, weighing 9.25 pounds. It was 56 inches long and used a service load

of 60 grains of black powder. The rifle musket could hit a target up to (but not limited to) 500 yards. The rear sights were set up for 100, 300, and 500 yards. The Confederate Model 1855 was almost an exact copy of the 1855 Springfield rifle musket, for good reason!

Confederates made them from excess parts and machinery taken from the Federal armory at Harpers Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia) in 1861. Two years earlier, a detachment of U.S. Marines under the command of Colonel Robert E. Lee, had ended the raid of abolitionist John Brown and his followers at this very location. On 18 April 1861, Virginia forces, led by Captain Turner Ashby under the command of Colonel T. J. Jackson, took control of the armory. United States Army Lieutenant Roger Jones, in command of the arsenal, tried to set fire to

the armory and thus destroy the weapon-making equipment to keep it from falling into enemy hands. But the attempt was sabotaged by workers who remained loyal to Virginia. Confederate forces extinguished the fire and saved much of the machinery and gun parts recently manufactured. Three months later, Confederate leaders decided to relocate the parts and machinery to Richmond.

Initially set up in a tobacco warehouse, the Richmond Armory became one of the most productive facilities created by the Confederate government. Production of Richmond rifle muskets began under the supervision of Lieutenant Colonel James H. Burton, using the parts from Harpers Ferry. Eventually, the equipment was moved from the tobacco warehouse to the Old Virginia Armory after renova-



Photo by Christina Johnson

Detail of the Richmond lock plate

tions had been made to that building. The armory was under the ownership and control of the Commonwealth of Virginia until August 1861, when the building and its equipment was loaned to the Confederacy for the duration of the war.

For two good reasons, the Richmond armorers replaced the 1855 Springfield's Maynard tape primer with a percussion cap. The Maynard primer was comprised of two paper strips glued together with small amounts of priming compound placed in between the paper at set intervals. The percussion cap was more reliable, and it saved time. The percussion cap ignition system used a copper or brass cap filled with fulminate of mercury. When the musket's hammer struck the cap, it created a spark, which ignited the black powder with far more reliability than the tape primer, which would not function at all when wet. Confederate workers also spent less time machining the lock plates, allowing those machines to be used elsewhere.

Three different Richmond rifle musket types were built. Type 1 incorporated what was known as a high-hump lock plate. These lock plates were marked with the year of manufacture behind the hammer and "RICHMOND, VA" directly behind the front lock plate screw. This design was put into production quickly, using the machinery taken from Harpers Ferry. When the Confederacy took control of production in August 1861, the armory began turning out the Type 2. The letters "CS" were stamped into the lock plates directly above "RICHMOND, VA." In March 1862, the Type 3, with its low-hump profile, was created. This model closely resembled the Model 1861 that was being produced at the Federal armory in Springfield, Massachusetts, and elsewhere. It was easier to prime and de-prime the lower-hump model, another improvement in the weapon's history.

Thanks to the equipment taken from Harpers Ferry, the Richmond Armory was able to produce the firearms needed by Confederate sol-

diers for four years: 11,762 rifle muskets. Firearms coming out of the Richmond Armory had a reputation for being the best made in the South, due largely to the armory's use of steel barrel bands, trigger guards, and other components, unlike other southern armories, which were using brass or bronze. The only brass on the Richmond rifle muskets was at their nose caps and butt plates, although some sported iron butt plates from surplus parts that came from Harpers Ferry. Iron was scarce in the South and was saved for barrels and bayonets.

Walnut stock blanks were also hard to come by in Richmond. Georgia's Macon Armory supplied completed stocks, and Danville, Virginia, provided stock blanks. The supply was especially affected in 1864 when Union General William Sherman marched his troops through Georgia.

In 1862, the Richmond Armory shifted its primary function from production to refurbishing firearms collected from battlefields. In July, the armory produced 471 rifle muskets and refurbished another 1,050. The Richmond Armory also created the Richmond carbine, as well as the Richmond rifle, a shorter two-band version of the rifle musket, using stocks that had defects and were no longer suitable for the longer rifle musket.

The Type 2 rifle musket with its high-hump lock plate, brass nose cap, and iron butt plate, equipped with an original Confederate canvas sling, is on exhibit in the Civil War exhibit at the National Museum of the Marine Corps. This exhibit is part of a new gallery, "Defending the New Republic, 1775-1865," which opened in June 2010. □1775□

Richmond rifle musket as displayed at the National Museum of the Marine Corps

Photo by Christina Johnson



Notes of the Wounded: Captain Robert S. Hunter and the Battle of La Flor, Nicaragua

*by Amanda J. Rowley
Reference Branch, Intern*

Paper that is old, creased and folded, and marked up with pencils and smudges can be typical or extraordinary depending on its purpose. In June 2010 I reviewed historical documents that became extraordinary as I discovered their history. One of the documents was an envelope simply labeled on the outside with the following:

**Personal
La Flor**

16-18 May 1928

Notes written to E.S.P. by Capt. Hunter after he was wounded.

This envelope contained four pieces of old paper with six notes written on them. The handwriting was hard to read in places, and the paper appeared rather dirty. The file that held these copies was labeled “Battle of La Flor” so I assumed the notes might have something to do with that skirmish. I looked for clues as to who Captain Hunter and E.S.P. were in the patrol report, discovering they were Captain Robert S. Hunter and Lieutenant Earl S. Piper.

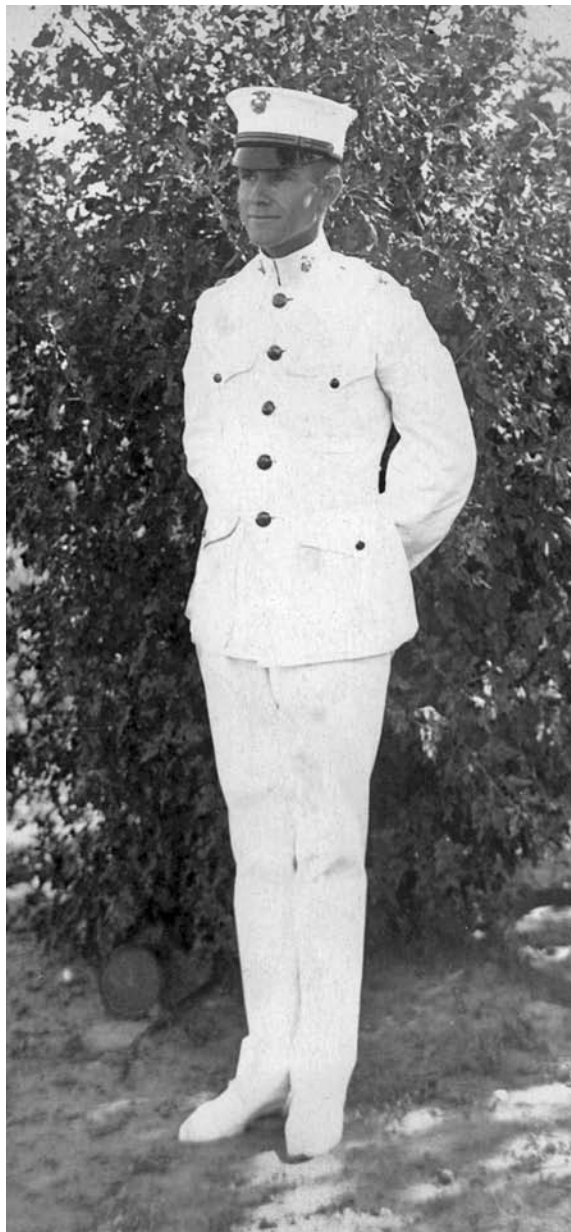
As I read the patrol and combat reports, a picture began to form, and these seemingly random notes began to take life. Captain Hunter’s last words were written for he could not speak, having been shot through the shoulder and neck in an engagement between the Marines and Nicaraguan bandits on 13 May 1928. He died five days later from his wounds. These pieces of paper are some of the last things he touched and contain the last words of a man struggling to speak and to survive.

Nicaragua had been in a contentious condition with revolutions and counterrevolutions with on-again-off-again intervention

from the United States since the 1890s. In 1926, more Marines arrived in Nicaragua to protect the United States nationals living there from bandits who were destroying their property and threatening their lives. The Marines participated in regular patrols of the countryside to learn the whereabouts of the bandits and their leader,

Capt Robert S. Hunter

Marine Corps Photo



Augusto C. Sandino. The Battle at La Flor was fought on 13–14 May 1928 between bandits, and Marines and Nicaraguan National Guard (Guard) members while they were on patrol in the Cua River region in northern Nicaragua. It had been three months since the last bandit engagement, and the Marines needed to know where the bandit leader, Sandino, had relocated his men. This patrol was sent from the Quilali garrison along with patrols sent from Matagalpa and Corinto Finca. The patrol of 38 men, under the command of Captain Robert S. Hunter and Lieutenant Earl S. Piper, left on 9 May from Quilali to reconnoiter and attempt to make contact with the bandits.

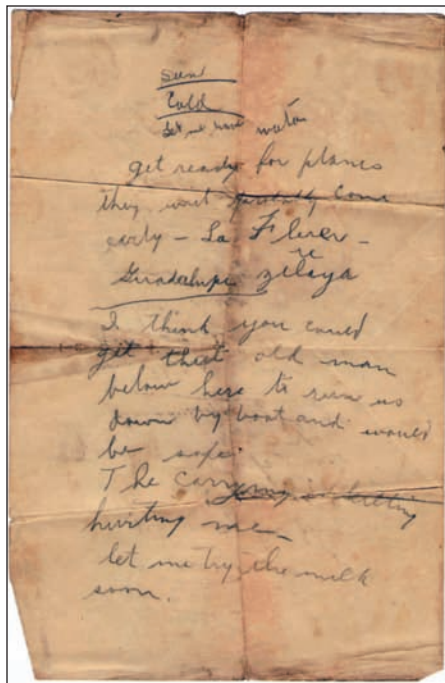
The patrol passed many natives in their homes, and some shots were fired by members of the Guard, but no firm contact was made until 13 May. At 1540 the Marine patrol was ambushed atop a hill near the Bocaycito River by a bandit force approximately 75 strong. During the battle, Corporal William R. Williamson was shot and killed. Captain Hunter, seeing that Corporal Williamson was dead and knowing that his men needed the use of Williamson’s Thompson submachine gun, ran back to procure the weapon. He began firing and was in turn hit in the neck and then in the shoulder. The shot to the neck damaged his voice box, making it almost impossible for him to speak. Hospital Corpsman Oliver L. Young reported that while treating Captain Hunter, “He raised up on his left elbow and said ‘Can’t go back go ahead.’ This was practically the last sentence he was able to speak.”

Fighting continued for fifty minutes, ending when the bandits ceased fire and retreated. The patrol quickly regrouped at the top of the hill where they treated Captain Hunter and another wounded Marine, Private Dubois, and buried Corporal Williamson. As they made camp for the night, their concerns were evacuating the wounded and fighting off any additional attacks from the bandits.

In the morning, Lieutenant Piper ordered reconnaissance of the area. Seeing no danger, they began their march back to where they had come the previous day, carrying Captain Hunter on a litter. The patrol was again attacked as they made their way down the hill; the Marines took cover in the stream bed, but many of the Guard scattered. Despite being severely wounded, Captain Hunter attempted to rise up and join the fight. He was finally returned to his litter by his men. The bandits were repulsed by expert firing with the Thompson submachine guns and the fine grenade-throwing of Sergeant Gerald R. Brown, a skill that caused his fellow Marines to ask if he was a world champion discus thrower. The patrol tried again to resume their march but was again hindered by bandits' gunfire. At 1030, 14 May, as a Marine plane flew overhead, all fighting ceased. The patrol continued on until 1600, stopping due to exhaustion and the critical condition of Captain Hunter.

The notes lack any dates, and as such, have been organized as closely as possible with the timeline of events as stated in the patrol report. Furthermore, the following picture shows only one of the six notes that are quoted in this story.

Sun
Cold
Let me have water
get ready for planes
they will probably come
early—La Fluor—
Guadalupe Zelaya
I think you could
get that old man
below here to run us
down by boat and would



Marine Corps File
Handwritten notes by Capt Hunter after he was wounded

be safe
The carrying is killing
hurting me—
let me try the milk
soon
Hurry and get
started get me off
of the ground
do you think I could
swallow water

On 15 May the patrol reached La Flor finca (farm) at 1040 with Captain Hunter weakened, and the men that were carrying him exhausted. "Realizing that Capt. Hunter could not be moved for several days and that we could not move without reinforcements we asked for same and also rations, when planes appeared at 1100 and when we found it was impossible to arrange a pick-up at this place." The report states, on 16 May, that when the planes returned, they relayed the information that relief columns were heading to the patrol's location and to wait. The following day the planes dropped medical supplies and rations and "Captain Hunter [was] resting more easily and evidently gaining strength, as he was now able to swallow a few liquids and could talk much better." The next notes show that Captain Hunter was

improving and was involved in deciding how to get back to the garrison.

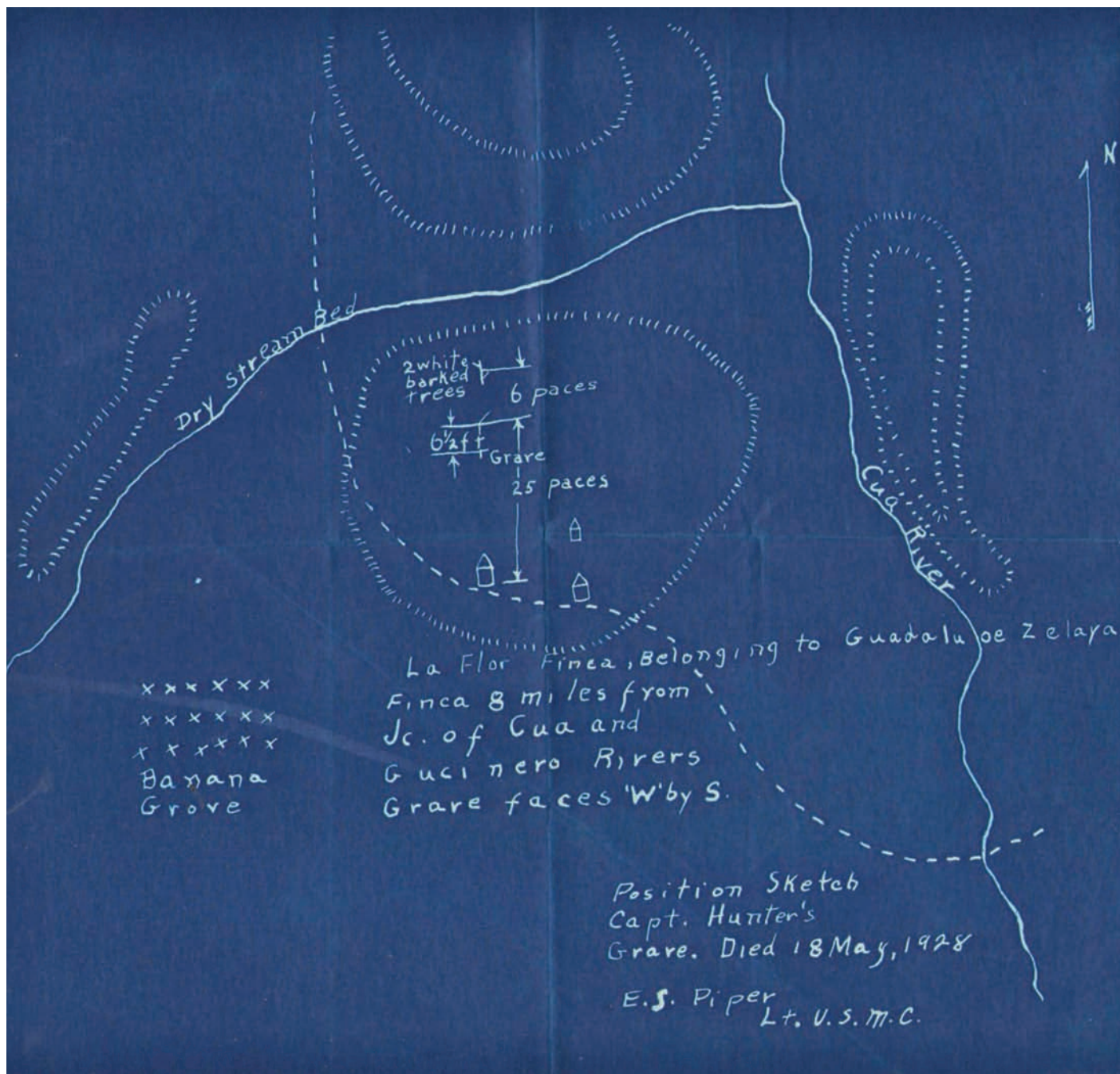
Did they make pickup [?]
We better go to Jinotega
They may be dry—we
must take chance
road goes up west side
of Gusineru. This is
bound to be more direct
Jinotega
road wet
better take
down
Cua by boat
plane will
land [impossible]
maybe on
sand in Coco

This road leads
down the
Bocay[cito] which
we crossed

talk in
morning

When the planes flew overhead that afternoon they signaled if the patrol thought Captain Hunter could be evacuated via the Coco River. The patrol responded yes and made plans to move the following morning; however, Captain Hunter did not see the sun rise. He died at 1525 on 18 May 1928. Lieutenant Piper wrote in his report: "Captain Hunter's courage and fortitude were inspiring up until his death." In a letter to Captain Hunter's family, Lieutenant Piper wrote that he was buried at the camp in La Flor "simply but reverently by his men who offered [a] silent prayer." The Battle of La Flor was only one of many encounters with the Sandino bandits during 1926–28 and could be viewed as a failure because of the loss of life. But the legacy of Captain Hunter and Corporal Williamson as men who fought well for their country is of more value than the piece of ground temporarily lost. The Marines did not come away from Nicaragua ending the country's internal strife, but the training and experience gained in the battles and skirmishes would prove invaluable in World War II.

The Marines also do not forget their



Marine Corps Photo

Map of Capt Hunter's grave site drawn by Lt Piper

own. In the personal papers of Robert S. Hunter, kept at the archives at the Gray Research Center, it was discovered that Captain Hunter did make it home to the United States. When Mrs. Emma Hunter received a telegram stating that her son had died in combat in Nicaragua, she requested that his body be returned to the United States so he could be buried at home. The brigade surgeon replied that the body could not be moved for at least one year because the location was inaccessible due to continuing

encounters with Sandino's bandits. The Marine Corps ultimately disinterred Captain Hunter's remains and returned them to the United States with a Marine Corps escort, Captain James W. Webb, for reburial in Kansas. He arrived home 6 June 1929 and was buried next to his father in the Mulberry cemetery in Kansas.

Captain Hunter was awarded the Navy Cross, posthumously, on 28 September 1928. The citation reads as follows: "For extraordinary heroism in

battle when on the occasion of an engagement with armed bandits in the vicinity of Pena Blanca, Nicaragua, 13 May 1928, he carried a machine gun forward to a position from which to deliver an accurate and active fire on the enemy. Although receiving wounds at this time which later resulted in his death Captain Hunter continued in the fight to the last, displaying the type of grit, determination and courage which characterizes conduct above and beyond the call of duty."

□1775□

Battles Captures the Scenes and a Promotion

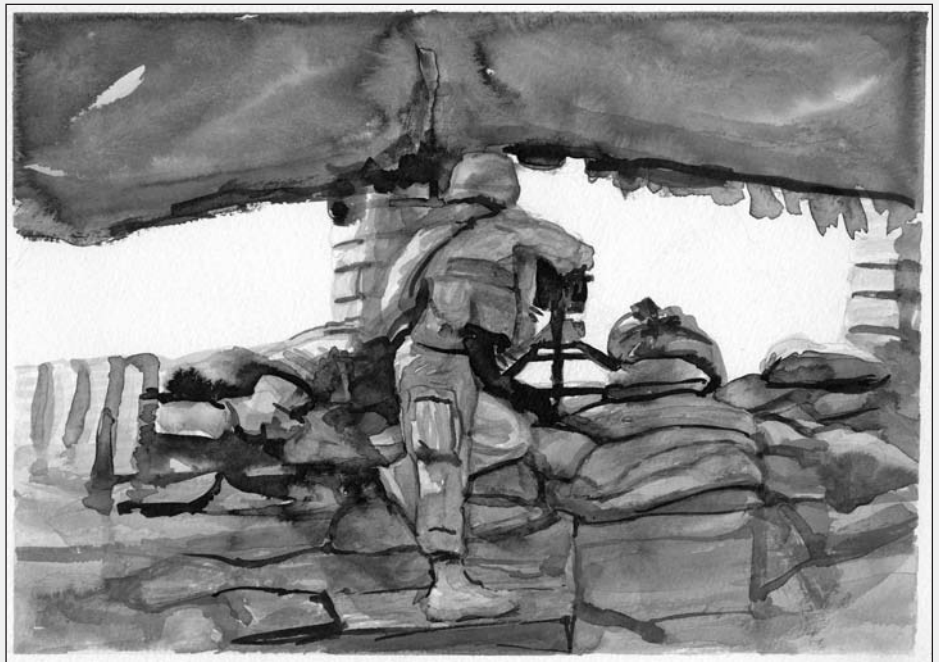
by Gregory A. Macheak
Editor

In honor of his service to the Marine Corps as a combat artist and in recognition of his promotion to Staff Sergeant, *Fortitudine* is pleased to showcase Staff Sergeant Kristopher J. Battles' work from Iraq, Afghanistan, and Haiti. The picture to the right shows Battles drawing while a captain sleeps. His other featured works show his pencil drawings, and watercolor and oil paintings.

Staff Sergeant Battles has traveled to training exercises, such as Mojave Viper, and forward operating bases in Iraq and Afghanistan, taking pictures and drawing Marines, living and working—sleeping, fighting, or talking with the indigenous people throughout the world. His trips have also taken him on humanitarian missions, the latest to Haiti, where he has painted the landscape and lives of people being helped by Marines. Wherever he goes, Staff Sergeant Battles, carries the time honored call issued to the first Marine combat artists in World War II: “Go to war, do art.” □1775□



1st Kristopher J. Battles '08





Sgt. KJ Battles 2007

Guard post at O.P. Riviera
in Saglawiyah, Iraq



Sgt. KJ BATTLES 2011

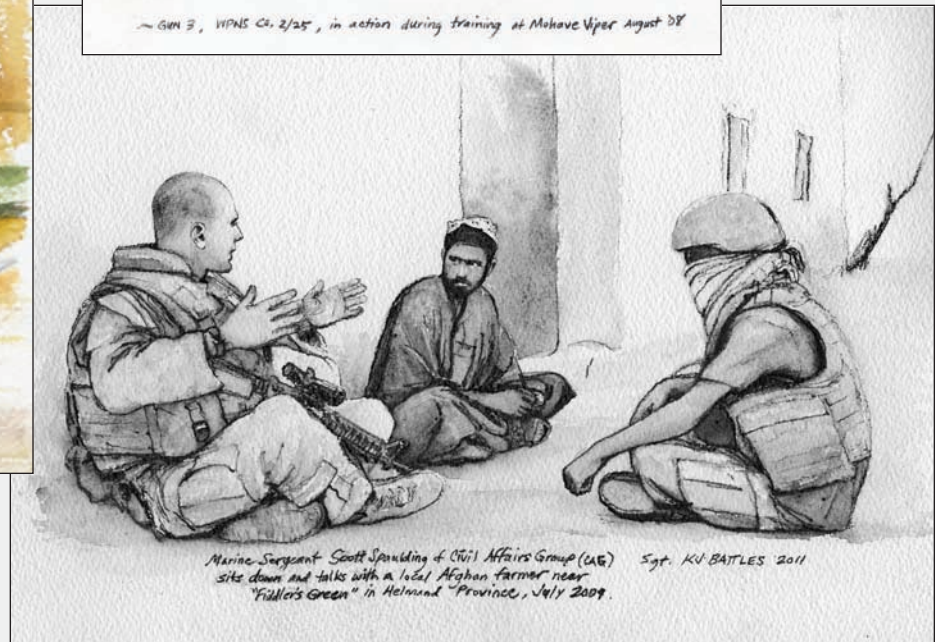


Sgt. KJ BATTLES '08

~ GEN 3, WINS C4 2/25, in action during training at Mahave Viper August '08



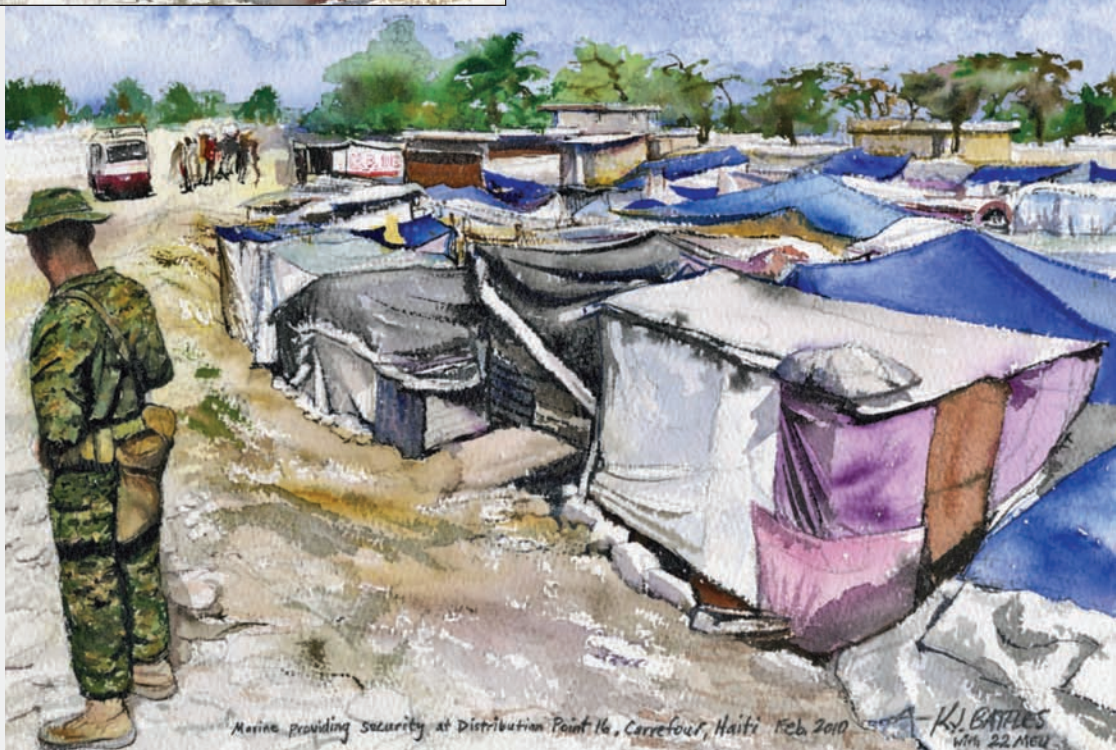
Sgt. KJ BATTLES '09



Marine Sergeant Scott Spaulding of Civil Affairs Group (CAG) sits down and talks with a local Afghan farmer near "Fiddler's Green" in Helmand Province, July 2009. Sgt. KJ BATTLES 2011



Sgt KJ Battles '07



Every Marine a Historian—Revisited: The Unit Historian and Command Chronology

by Annette D. Amerman
Historian

“Chances are, the opportunity to improve official history will come your way during your career; make the most of it!” Colonel Frank C. Caldwell

It has been more than forty years since the publication of Colonel Frank C. Caldwell’s “Every Marine an Historian” in the March 1966 *Marine Corps Gazette*. A recent request from the operating forces about the varied responsibilities of a unit historian, coupled with last summer’s 45th anniversary of the Command Chronology Program, seems a fitting occasion to re-examine part of the theme of that article, the responsibilities of the unit/staff historian and the command chronology. The historians of the Marine Corps History Division are charged with the responsibility of collecting, researching, writing, and perpetuating the history of the Corps and its Marines. However, just as Colonel Caldwell explained forty-four years ago, “the official histories are only as good as the material that forms their basis. Marines provide that material.” It is the responsibility of all Marines to ensure that the historians have accurate information and proper documentation to do their jobs acceptably.

Staff Historian

Marine Corps Order 5750.1H (*Manual for the Marine Corps Historical Program*) outlines the roles and responsibilities for command historical programs and staff historians at the unit level. Each unit is required to assign a staff historian who has the responsibility to maintain unit historical summary files and to prepare and submit command chronologies. The staff historian, usually a Marine within the unit’s S-3/G-3 section, takes on these responsibilities—of course, as an additional duty to their assigned primary functions within the unit. Ideally, the primary duties of the designated staff member should be such



Marine Corps Photo

Second Marine Division Chief of Staff, Colonel David M. Shoup, at work on Tinian in 1944. “Every Clime and Place” had new meaning when paperwork needed to be completed, even in the Pacific during World War II.

that the staff historian is involved in, or can observe, key command activities. Selecting a Marine with excellent writing skills, a keen eye for detail, and the ability to collect appropriate information and documents, has proven invaluable in maintaining a first-rate historical program. The staff historian is also the unit’s liaison with the Marine Corps History Division—a relationship that flows both directions. Questions regarding the history and honors of the unit are often directed by the commanding officer to the staff historian, who then typically contacts the History Division’s Historical Reference Branch. When the same historians have questions while preparing the unit lineage and honors certificates, the queries flow in reverse.

The Marine assigned the role as staff historian is responsible for promoting a general awareness of the unit’s historical achievements, maintaining any historical property at the unit, and managing command pro-

grams such as Lineage and Honors, Commemorative Naming, historic sites, and oral history. Documents, such as streamer entitlements, copies of unit lineage and honors certificates, and relevant news articles should be maintained in the file. Notes, personal observations by the staff historian, and copies of after-action reports, letters of instruction, and other key documents routinely prepared by the unit should also be retained in the file and can often aid in preparation of the command chronology. The staff historian is the commanding officer’s principal point of contact for information regarding the history of the unit. A detailed historical summary file should be maintained so that requests from the commanding officer can be answered expeditiously.

Command Chronology

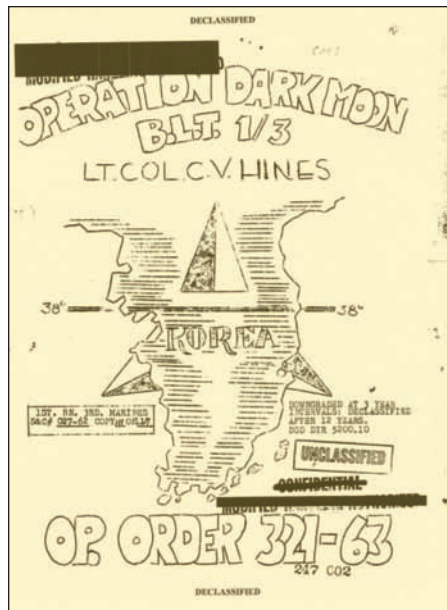
The Marine Corps has required various types of historical reports from units—after-action reports, command

diaries, special action reports, etc. Regrettably, though, there was no single program or report which was required of all units, bases, air stations, and commands prior to 1965. For this reason, there is a large gap in the history of the Corps for significant periods of time. In an attempt to remedy this omission, historians and archivists of the Corps created the command chronology. The Commandant approved the new report and subsequently issued MCO 5750.2 in July 1965, which formally established the Command Chronology Program. It not only replaced the command diary, but also required all Marine units down to the battalion/squadron level, separate posts and stations, and special detachments to submit command chronologies at least twice a year. Those units engaged in combat or other operational deployments (e.g., humanitarian) were required to submit command chronologies on a monthly basis.

While each unit's historian responsibilities are generally the same, the type of information retained and included in a command chronology often differs based on the type of unit—aviation, infantry, artillery, or combat service support. Where fighter squadrons report the number of sorties flown and targets eliminated, heavy helicopter squadrons may report tons of cargo or number of personnel transported or evacuated, and artillery units may report number of rounds fired and other missions accomplished. Tailoring the command chronology, based upon the type of one's unit, aids historians and planners in the future immeasurably. While simply "cutting and pasting" information from one submission to the next may seemingly save time, if specifics on operations, problems encountered, and solutions achieved are omitted, they remain forgotten forever.

Purpose and Uses

The command chronology is THE document for historians—it is the primary source. Command chronologies are the garden from which numerous products grow, such as official histories, monographs, and battle studies.



"Artistic" example of the cover to 1st Battalion, 3d Marines, Op-Order 321-63, submitted in 1963

History Division historians also mine the command chronologies for information needed to prepare the official lineage and determine battle honors for eligible units through certificates of Lineage and Honors. Well-written command chronologies that include an array of supporting documents such as Letters of Instruction, Operation Orders, After-Action Reports, and other supplemental reports, created by the unit during the reporting period, are an invaluable source to more than just historians. The records are heavily used by elements of Headquarters Marine Corps such as the Military Awards Branch, Manpower Support Branch, Plans, Policies and Operations Branch, as well as other government agencies and veterans. Units are also beneficiaries of the command chronologies when using the historic documents during professional military education programs.

Seemingly a wearisome and onerous requirement, the command chronology is the foundation document upon which many rely—including the units themselves. Units have often queried History Division about historical events, names of previous commanding officers, requested verification on dates of activation, and specifics of past operations for professional military education and esprit de

corps. Without the command chronology, historians would be unable to respond positively to a unit's request.

Room for Improvement

Excellent command chronology submissions have become the exception, instead of the norm, over the past two decades. The advent of computers and the ease of "copy/paste" and the reliance upon technology instead of writing skills has succeeded in degrading the quality of the all-important reports. Since Desert Shield and Desert Storm, command chronology submissions in times of conflict, war, and deployments, have suffered due to the mistaken belief that the report is a frustrating and burdensome requirement that is less important in the bigger picture of the unit's responsibilities. While some still adhere to the belief that "paper-work will ruin any military force," without a detailed, official record of events, one can not learn from the lessons of the past. It is well and good to remember the Latin phrase, "Vox audita perit, littera scripta manet" ("The spoken word perishes, the written word remains.") with regards to the history of the Marine Corps.

To ensure the quality of the command chronology submitted, a few suggestions are offered to those assigned the task of preparing the chronology:

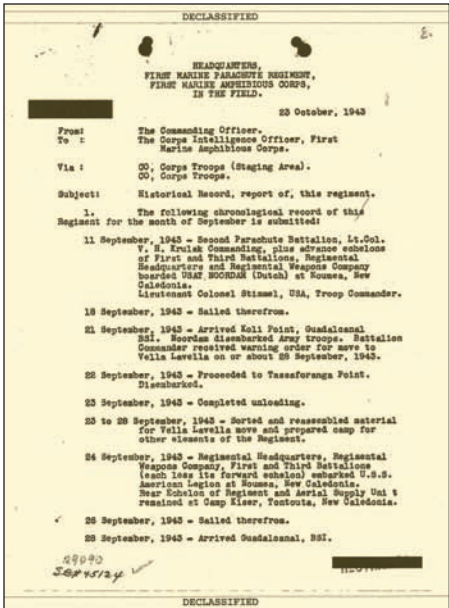
- ♦Full names and ranks of all staff: Ensuring that full names and ranks are used can save historians hours of searching for the elusive "Lt. J. Smith."
- ♦Do not recreate the wheel: When compiling and preparing the command chronology, a quick reference to reports or lengthy documents in the body of Section II or III, and then including the cited reports in Section IV, can save a great deal of writing time and effort.
- ♦Less is not more: Including supporting documents is an excellent means of easing the writing effort; however, if supplemental documents are not available, include the necessary information and details within the appropriate sections—even if it seems excessive. Tailor the report to include information specific to your type of unit.
- ♦Specific dates and locations: Streamers such as the Iraq and

Afghanistan Campaigns have specific campaign periods; without exact dates of arrival in, or departure from operational areas, units can find themselves lacking enough information for historians to determine participation credit.

♦Size of detachments: Streamers, again such as the Iraq and Afghanistan Campaign streamers, are percentage based streamers—for example, battalions and squadrons are required (by MCO P10520.3B—Flag Manual) to have at least 50 percent of the unit deployed in the operation for the entire unit to be entitled to the streamer. Knowing the exact strength of detachments deployed is critical to making the above determination.

Another disturbing trend has been the tardy submissions of command chronologies. Timely submissions are imperative to writing relevant and well-timed battle studies, reports, and decision papers. Biannual command chronologies cover the reporting periods of 1 January to 30 June and 1 July to 31 December each year; units have 90 days to submit the hard copies, via their chain of command, to the Marine Corps Archives at Quantico, Virginia. Many reports are delayed while making the way through the chain of command; therefore, a simultaneous electronic submission directly to the Marine Corps Archives is encouraged. To arrange this option, units should contact the Marine Corps Archives for further instructions.

A few attendees of the Commanders Course may recall hearing the statement that “the Marines that serve in your command are forever and always your Marines. If you fail to ensure that their deeds, accomplishments and operations are recorded in your command chronology, you fail them again in the future.” Marines are resourceful, and if the record lacks the necessary information, the veteran will seek out their former commanders for the “eye witness” or “personal” account of events for their various Department of Veterans Affairs’ claims. Relying upon one’s memory is unnecessary when the well-written and documented command chronology is on file in the Marine Corps Archives. For specific information relating to the Command Historical Program or the



First page of the Historical Report submitted by 1st Marine Parachute Regiment in October 1943

submission guidelines for command chronologies, please visit <www.history.usmc.mil> and review MCO 5750.1H (Chapter 5 and Appendix A).

Specific questions regarding submitting the command chronology should be directed to the Marine Corps Archives at (703) 784-4685 and other questions regarding the program or the Marine Corps historical program should be directed to the Marine Corps History Division at (703) 432-4874.

Frequency of Command Chronology Reports

Task-organized units activated for specific missions, exercises, or deployments of short duration will submit a single command chronology immediately upon completion of the activity for which they were established. If activated for more than six months, reports will also be submitted for regular reporting dates and upon completion of the mission. Units conducting operational deployments, engaged in combat operations, or in other special situations will submit command chronologies monthly.

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Organization	Annual (1 Jan–31 Dec)	Annual (1 Jan–30 Jun) (1 Jul–31 Dec)
Operating Forces (formerly FMF) including MEF, MEB and MEU and down to and including battalions/squadrons, and separate companies/batteries.		X
4th Marine Division	X	
4th Marine Aircraft Wing	X	
4th Marine Logistics Group	X	
Marine Corps Districts	X	
Marine Corps Combat Development Command	X	
Headquarters Battalion, Headquarters Marine Corps	X	
Bases and Air Stations	X	
Marine Detachments	X	
Marine Corps Reserve Units down to and including battalions/squadrons, and separate companies/batteries regardless of geographic separation from parent command		X
All other command organizations		
Marine Corps Embassy Security Group		X
Marine Cryptologic Support Battalion		X
Marine Corps Forces		X

Adapting to the Foe: Cultural Intelligence and the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity

by Abbi N. Molzahn, Intern
Nicholas J. Schlosser, Historian

“Therefore, just as water retains no constant shape, so in warfare there are no constant conditions. He who can modify his tactics in relation to his opponent and thereby succeed in winning, may be called a heaven-born captain” Sun Tzu

More than two millennia ago, the great Chinese military theorist Sun Tzu declared that “Military tactics are like unto water . . . Water shapes its course according to the nature of the ground over which it flows; the soldier works out his victory in relation to the foe whom he is facing.” Thousands of years later, U.S. commanders would confront this challenge in the Afghanistan and Iraq Wars. The al-Qaeda terrorist network, the Taliban, and the Iraq insurgency all constituted unconventional threats far removed from the regular military forces the U.S. military and intelligence gathering agencies had trained to fight during the Cold War. Both conflicts thus spurred a range of significant changes in how the United States military prepared for and waged war against irregular threats. It soon became clear to planners that a rapid adaptation of the existing U.S. intelligence structure was needed to successfully fight against such enemies. For the Marine Corps, this entailed using the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity to better provide cultural intelligence for Marines in the field of operations.

As with all modern military organizations, the Marine Corps has used dedicated units and staffs to obtain, interpret, and disseminate intelligence necessary for conducting operations. Each of the three Marine expeditionary forces has an attached intelligence battalion and all divisions, aircraft wings, regiments, aircraft groups, battalions, and squadrons have a chief of intelligence and staff (the S-2 or G-2). Each Marine division also fields reconnaissance battalions and, before the creation of the Marine Special Operations Command,



Photo by LCpl Dexter S. Saulisbury, VIRIN: 110128-M-KC852-019

Marine Corps Intelligence Activity frequently cooperated with Female Engagement Teams in Afghanistan, providing them with useful cultural intelligence. Here, Corporal Kelly Gates, a member of a team attached to the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, speaks with an Afghan man during a health initiative at Patrol Base Uzmon in the Sangin District of Afghanistan in January 2011.

force reconnaissance companies. The aviation combat elements of the Marine Air-Ground teams also include manned and unmanned aerial reconnaissance and electronic warfare assets.

However, the Marine Corps did not create a central intelligence organization along the lines of the venerable Office of Naval Intelligence until the 1980s. In 1988, the Commandant, General Alfred M. Gray, established the Marine Corps' Intelligence Center to serve as the Corps' service level intelligence organization, to support the commandant, and to aid the Marine Corps Combat Development Command. In 1993, the organization was renamed Marine Corps Intelligence Activity. Based in both the National Maritime Intelligence Center and Marine Corps Base Quantico, the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity became one of three maritime intelligence organizations, alongside the Office of Naval Intelligence and the Coast Guard Intelligence Coordination Center.

As with scholars studying any one of the other 17 organizations that comprise the U.S. Intelligence Community, many difficulties confront historians chron-

cling the activities of the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity. Most of their operations and the documentary sources that tell those operations and activities remain classified. Nevertheless, the organization made important contributions to the Marine Corps as it adapted to fight the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Marine Corps is primarily an operational and tactical warfighting organization. Consequently, the principal mission of the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity has been to collect, analyze, and produce intelligence for operations, pre-deployment planning, and training in order to allow the intelligence battalions to accomplish more mission specific duties. This focus proved particularly useful during the wars in Central Asia and the Middle East in the first decade of the twenty-first century. The Marine Corps Intelligence Activity's decentralized approach and focus on providing detailed yet comprehensive information about an area of operations consistently contributed to Marine Corps successes in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Many longstanding intelligence organizations saw the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity as an effec-

tive example to follow as a result.

During the Cold War, both the United States and the Soviet Union danced a strategic two-step, realizing that any significant escalation in tensions between the two superpowers could result in nuclear war. However, the possibility of war spurred the United States intelligence community to stay one step ahead of the Soviets in order to ensure complete military preparedness. United States analysts focused their efforts on monitoring Soviet nuclear developments and troop movements. As a result, information could be drawn largely from aerial and satellite reconnaissance and the majority of intelligence analysts remained in the United States and not in the field. Intelligence agencies did carry out clandestine operations however, sending specialized personnel to track enemy actors within the traditional hierarchical power structure of the Soviet Union. With intelligence being collected through either technological or specialized means, only a small number of collection experts and analysts were needed to process the information and produce it for the development of military operations. While this centralized structure was effective against the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc, it could only acquire limited information on terrorist and insurgent groups such as al-Qaeda.

In his study *The Sling and the Stone*, Colonel Thomas X. Hammes (retired) argued that unlike the Soviet Union, insurgents did “not function within clear bureaucratic boundaries” but instead thrived “on the seams between various governmental security organizations” in hopes of gaining the upper hand. Militarily speaking, insurgents realized America would dominate them in a traditional battle space and therefore worked to avoid major engagements. Instead, terrorists and insurgents carried out quick, sporadic attacks giving U.S. forces little, if any time to prepare and circumvent them. Hence the irregularity of insurgent tactics forced military strategists to reform their tactics.

The intelligence services were also forced to adapt, as insurgent and terrorist tactics and strategies undermined the traditional means of acquiring information. Since insurgents operated without a centralized power structure or base of

operations, aerial and satellite surveillance was no longer as viable a means of gathering information on enemy operations. Terrorist and insurgent cells were frequently hard to locate, often rendering clandestine operations futile. With insurgents living within populated areas, the local population had transformed into a haven and center of operations. Consequently, the population became the primary source for information on enemy activity.

The 2008 U.S. Army's *Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures in a COIN Environment* handbook stated that locals often had “better human intelligence collection capability” than even military and intelligence personnel due to their cultural knowledge and awareness of who amongst the population were sympathizers to their cause. With “all of the information needed to produce intelligence and focus combat power on the enemy” now existing in the immediate area of operations, primarily in the form of human intelligence, engaging the local population was an absolutely essential component in waging the “Long War.” In other words, the Cold War mentality needed to be replaced by the complete immersion of military forces and intelligence personnel into their adversary's target population.

Thus, new means and more efficient methods of collecting human intelli-

gence on a large scale had to be created. There was no doubt that extracting information on enemy activity from the population would help to piece the puzzle of enemy operations together. However, that was only one type of intelligence and one facet of waging a successful counterinsurgency. As the NATO commander in Afghanistan from 2009–10, General Stanley A. McChrystal, USA, stated that “the conflict will be won by persuading the population, not by destroying the enemy.” Nevertheless, this was quite a new concept for intelligence agencies. Before the emergence of insurgent tactics on a global scale, interest in social, political, economic, religious, and cultural information had been considerably less than in enemy activity. Yet, engaging the local shopkeeper, farmer, and families would not only allow military and intelligence personnel to more accurately and effectively attain strategic intelligence on enemy operations, but cultural engagement would also help them to preemptively combat insurgent operations by increasing trust between U.S. forces and the local populace through humanitarian means. This approach would potentially minimize the insurgent hold over the population and decrease the odds of insurgents gaining new recruits from among the population. As a result, it was imperative to grant equal focus to both cultural awareness and to enemy activity.

Furthermore, it also became appar-

An important characteristic of counterinsurgencies remains the necessity of operating amongst the populace. In this image, Lance Corporal Andrew J. Brodehl (left) and Corporal Jason T. Guiliano of Task Force 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, conduct a patrol through a bazaar in Afghanistan in 2008.

Photo by Sergeant Ray Lewis, VIRIN: 0810008-M-2322L-273



ent that analysts deployed in the theater of operations would be able to more effectively process intelligence material. By retaining only a small number of personnel in the continental United States, intelligence organizations lacked sufficient resources to efficiently collect and accurately process such volumes of intelligence in a timely fashion. Sending analysts to the theater of operations placed them closer to their sources and allowed them to rapidly provide units in the field with information and actionable intelligence. With forces operating in such a rapidly changing environment where battle was sporadic but intense, intelligence agencies could not afford to have a lack of or delay in producing accurate and actionable intelligence.

Beginning with the insertion of Task Force 58 into Afghanistan in 2001, and continuing through the wars in both that country and in Iraq, it quickly became apparent to Marine Corps planners that grasping and understanding the culture of the area of operations was necessary for devising effective counterinsurgency plans and tactics. Planners quickly realized that understanding the cultural terrain, local customs, religion, and traditional power centers of a particular region was a critical element in operational planning. To meet these challenges and fulfill these requirements, the Marine Corps created a number of new organizations such as the Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning in 2005 and the Center for Irregular Warfare in 2007. It also revised the curriculum of the Command and Staff College in 2005 and transformed the Combined Arms Exercise into Exercise Mojave Viper between 2004 and 2005 to better prepare Marines for fighting in a counterinsurgency environment.

The Marine Corps Intelligence Activity's nature as a decentralized organization comprised of both Marines and civilians made it a particular valuable asset as the Marine Corps strengthened its interest in cultural intelligence. In 2010, Marine Corps Intelligence Activity (MCIA) analyst Dan J. Darling summarized the unique placement of the organization within the Marine Corps' intelligence gathering operations:

... there was always sort of a challenge for MCIA, finding its niche because you have the existing intelligence support battalions already within the Marine Corps. And so the idea is 'well then what do you guys do, that the intel battalion isn't already doing?'. . . and sort of our view, as has been articulated by leadership, is that MCIA is an institutional preservation of knowledge for the Marine Corps . . . and tie between the Marine Corps and the broader Intelligence Community.

It was evident that Marine Corps Intelligence Activity would have to become an even more "agile" and decentralized enterprise in order to "effectively manage disparate functional operations, fuse and interpret their inputs, and rapidly disseminate precise intelligence," into actionable information for Marines in the field. Recognizing the need for fast, accurate intelligence for forward-deployed units, the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity expanded its personnel base, began forward deploying analysts, and made sure that its vast collections of data and information were easily and readily available to Marines in the field of operations.

The Marine Corps Intelligence Activity hired a mix of Marines and civilians. One of these civilian analysts, Larissa M. Mihalisko, commented that the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity was able to effectively produce more comprehensive and thorough intelligence by drawing from a larger skill base and more experience by "bringing in civilian expertise and combining it with Marine expertise." The organization also began forward-deploying cultural intelligence teams to areas where Marines forces were operating. Analysts deployed as part of Marine Corps Intelligence Activity Cultural Intelligence Teams (Cultural Intelligence Teams) to theaters where Marines were operating in the field. This had four major effects. First, it gave the analysts an opportunity to be truly immersed in the cultural and interdependent aspects of the society in which Marines were operating, integral to acquiring accurate intelligence in a population-centric war. Second, civilian analysts were better

able to understand specific intelligence inquiries, gear studies in support of particular tactical needs, and produce readily useful intelligence. Third, as Mihalisko noted, the Cultural Intelligence Teams presence helped existing Marine intelligence battalions look at "the cultural and non-kinetic issues on the ground," and assess "who the population is, who the key power brokers are, etc. in order to help answer some of those questions." In doing this, the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity greatly alleviated additional intelligence duties placed on strained intelligence battalions and intelligence staffs.

While this close relationship helped to maximize both the amount of intelligence being collected and processed as well as the time in which it could be disseminated to the troops, Marine Corps Intelligence Activity realized the success of engagements and speed with which analysis could be produced upon arrival to the theaters depended on the level of cultural training their collection experts and analysts received beforehand. Moreover, since Marine Corps Intelligence Activity functioned as the Marine Corps' own intelligence organization, its top priorities mirrored that of the Corps as a whole. So as Marine Corps Intelligence Activity began working with the Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning to strengthen cultural intelligence, the focus of their initiatives was just as much to prepare Marines within the Corps as it was to provide information for intelligence agencies as a whole.

After receiving training, analysts deployed to areas of operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other countries with the intention of establishing relationships with the Marines and local population. By doing so, analysts such as Mihalisko found there was a whole "web of people to tap into." First Lieutenant Chase Reeves agreed in the article *Off Target with Intel* that such methods "drastically" helped to "narrow the scope" on who the enemy was. With regards to enemy activity they were able to find out "when and how" insurgents placed "[Improvised explosive devices], what direction the Munafakeen come from, how many of them there are, what vehicles they

drive, what they look like, and where they live.” All were pieces of importance which helped transform an ambiguous and complex battlespace into an understandable and manageable area of operations, while simultaneously increasing the accuracy of their intelligence information. Marine Corps Intelligence Activity analyst Mihalisko noted that engaging the population was “critical to help us really understand Helmond and Afghanistan in general,” later adding that it was “a Rosetta Stone” which “opened our eyes to a whole other network that we just never were aware of before,” providing intel personnel “little nuggets” of information that were so “key to understanding” and producing accurate analysis.

Marine Corps Intelligence Activity analysts also interacted with the local populations in Iraq and Afghanistan. A particular example of this was Marine Corps Intelligence Activity’s cooperation with the Marine Corps’ Female Engagement Teams in which Mihalisko assisted during her deployment. First employed in Afghanistan in February 2009, the Female Engagement Teams represented the Marine Corps efforts to access the population, attempt to forge relationships, and access potential sources for intelligence. Both Marines and the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity jointly wielded humanitarian efforts to foster a stronger spirit of cooperation with locals which in turn discredited insurgent propaganda. For example, while one of Mihalisko’s friends was working with a Female Engagement Team, a few Afghan men began laughing upon entering her medical clinic. When asked why, they stated “the Taliban told us that you’re here to rape our women and that you’re going to hurt our women, but now we see that you have women here working and that you’re going to do good things for our women. So we’re going to bring our wives to the clinic.” Moreover, analyst Dan J. Darling stated that while at a meeting in Marjah, a district administrator held up Mihalisko as an example of what educated women could accomplish. He went on to note that engaging the local population “in that kind of capacity at least indicates for me, what, if properly

done, you can achieve through Female Engagement.” Thus, somewhat naturally, engagement with the populace was an important means for achieving victory in a population-centric war.

While working to build trust and a rapport with the local populace was important, the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity also recognized the necessity of adapting to the insurgents. Marine Corps Intelligence Activity analysts realized that their methods of dissemination and operation needed to mirror that of their adversary. Therefore, although insurgents operated in a decentralized fashion, they were nonetheless connected through technology. Hence, the very same technological advances and degree of global interdependence which had spawned and enhanced the insurgents’ ability to fight were likewise the very tools with which to combat them. For instance, Marine Corps Intelligence Activity made its databases readily accessible to Coalition forces, enhancing their ability to battle insurgents. The organization also strengthened its ability to provide up-to-the minute geospatial and terrain analysis to forces in the field.

As Darling stated, the importance of disseminating cultural and intelligence information could not be overrated, saying that “one of the things that we learned when we were out there, was that a lack of information can kill you, and that’s not an exaggeration. I mean there were some places that people have died in because they didn’t have the access to the right information. They didn’t understand who they were fighting or what the operating environment was like and what tools can be used.” So “forcing information out” is really how “you win these types of conflicts . . . it won’t be a purely kinetic victory.”

Darling compared the amount of cultural and intelligence information encased “throughout both our government and other governments” to the “last scene in Indiana Jones and the *Raiders of the Lost Ark* where all this valuable stuff was just sitting in a basement somewhere and no one knows it’s there . . . and so frequently what I’ve found is that what might seem obscure was really priceless data.” Marine Corps Intelligence Activity began producing a

diverse series of products geared toward meeting the particular needs of U.S. and Coalition forces, ranging from country handbooks, culture smart cards, tribal databases, terrain, weapons, and terrorist assessments, and analysis. All of these were made available in different forms to suit various clearance levels and interests and produced through a collaborative effort with other agencies.

The Marine Corps Intelligence Activity’s decision to focus on deploying civilian collection experts and analysts to the theaters of operation, in tandem with their comprehensive cultural training won the organization accolades from both military personnel and the greater intelligence community. In 2002 Secretary of the Navy Gordon R. England awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation to Marine Corps Intelligence Activity for its ability to “direct operational and tactical level intelligence support” and “rapidly reorganize personnel and resources to meet the unique challenges encountered in providing intelligence support” in the “Long War.” In 2005 Secretary England also awarded Marine Corps Intelligence Activity the Navy Unit Commendation for the “critical intelligence support that gave U.S. Marine forces tactical advantage on the battlefield.”

The innovative spirit that pervades the United States Marine Corps strongly shaped the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity and led it to evolve new concepts and techniques to better serve the Corps’ counterinsurgency efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. By forward deploying its analysts and helping to provide Marines with cultural intelligence, the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity participated in a broader shift which saw Marine planners focusing on how an understanding of languages, local customs, and religion are as important on the counterinsurgency battlefield as a mastery of marksmanship, combined arms operations, and close air support. In short, the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity contributed to the mission of all supporting branches in the Marine Corps: it served the Marine Corps rifleman in the field.

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Operation Provide Comfort

"First to Write" highlights History Division's past work through excerpts from earlier publications.

Following the 1990–91 Gulf War, Saddam Hussein's Iraq was racked by popular uprisings in the south amongst the Shia Iraqis, and in the north amongst the Kurds. It quickly became apparent that these revolts, inspired in large part by America's victory over Iraq in the Gulf War, were going to lead to a massive humanitarian crisis. Eventually, "no fly zones" were established over northern and southern Iraq and in the north an international coalition launched Operation Provide Comfort.

Begun in April 1991 Operation Provide Comfort established a safe haven for Kurdish civilians and provided the resources required to alleviate the humanitarian refugee crisis. The Marine Corps played a large role in Operation Provide Comfort, primarily through the efforts of the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) under the command of Colonel James L. Jones Jr.

This excerpt is from Lieutenant Colonel Ronald J. Brown, *Humanitarian Operations in Northern Iraq, 1991: With Marines in Operation Provide Comfort*. (History Division, Quantico, VA, 1995) pp. 62–66. The book above can be found in PDF format at <www.history.usmc.mil> under Publications.

Into Iraq

At noon on 19 April 1991, Lieutenant General Shalikashvili was escorted by a Marine security detachment when he met with Brigadier General Nashwan Dahnoun, the senior representative of the Iraqi Army General Staff. The meeting was held near Zakho and was described as a "polite, proper, frank [discussion that] clarified all views." Rather than beat around the bush or engage in lengthy pleasantries, General Shalikashvili told the Iraqis what was going to happen in a straight forward manner. He outlined CTF Provide Comfort's mission. He emphasized the



Painting by Col Peter M. "Mike" Gish

As part of the British-conceived plan to provide a safe haven for the Kurds in northern Iraq, the allies built three large refugee relocation camps in the vicinity of Zakho. The Marines of 24th MEU (SOC) built the first of these in mid-April, then turned it over to the U.N. High Commission for Refugees in May 1991.

humanitarian nature of the operation, but made it very clear that Iraqi interference risked military confrontation. The noise of American jets passing overhead reinforced this point, providing overall an excellent example of "aggressive restraint."

General Shalikashvili went over plans to build refugee camps, and the prospective sites were located on a map. To ensure the safety of the refugees and the combined task force, General Shalikashvili also requested information about Iraqi minefields around Zakho. He reminded General Nashwan about the limits on Iraqi military operations and inquired about the scheduled withdrawal of troops. Nashwan balked at the request to pull back, stating Iraqi "police" were needed to ensure public order, but promised to provide information about the minefields. In closing, General Shalikashvili proposed establishing a Military Coordination Center (MCC) to prevent future misunderstandings.

At 1330 on 20 April, HMM-264 delivered the first wave of a two-company

helicopterborne task force to Zakho. Company G landed just outside the city. The heavily laden Marines (some carrying more than 60 pounds of equipment and ammunition) moved to the high ground and occupied overwatch positions which gave them a clear view of the objective. The remainder of the force included the BLT Alpha Command Group, Company F, and an 81mm mortar section. Lieutenant Colonel Tony L. Corwin noticed Iraqi soldiers still in the objective area, despite the fact they should have been gone. Reports from the reconnaissance teams confirmed the presence of many Iraqis and a few armored vehicles. The Marines and Iraqis were soon standing eyeball-to-eyeball with neither side about to blink.

Lieutenant Colonel Corwin gave clear instructions for the Iraqis to move out of Zakho. At first, the Iraqi commander belligerently replied he knew nothing about Operation Provide Comfort and had no orders to vacate. However, some menacing overflights by heavily armed American A-b Warthogs

and Sea Cobra helicopter gunships convinced the Iraqis to sling arms and hit the road. As soon as the Iraqis left, the Marines began building a refugee camp to demonstrate their humanitarian intent. Before nightfall, a dozen bright blue and white tents had been erected. These were the first of more than 10,000 tents that would be put up in three camps that eventually housed more than 180,000 refugees! The BLT Bravo Command Group, Companies E and H, the artillery, assault amphibians, and a light armored vehicle detachment remained at the Iraqi border ready to move into Zakho the next day.

Lieutenant Colonel Kohl, commanding officer of MSSG-24, was given an unusual operational mission by Colonel Jones. The Turkish-Iraqi border crossing at Habur was closed, but had to be opened to allow overland supply of the assault force. This task would normally have been given to the ground combat element, but Lieutenant Colonel Corwin was busy conducting the assault, so Kohl was tasked to do this. Lieutenant Colonel Kohl, First Sergeant Delgado, a five-member civilian relief team, and a rifle squad departed Silopi for Habur during mid-afternoon of 20 April.

During Desert Storm the Iraqis had

dropped both bridge spans at Habur and mined the roadway leading to Zakho, but since the cease fire, a field expedient bridge had since been thrown across the river. Reports indicated the Iraqis had removed some, but not all of the mines. At Habur, Lieutenant Colonel Kohl located a Turkish lieutenant who spoke broken English. Kohl patiently explained the crossing was to be opened to allied traffic the next morning. The Turkish officer escorted Kohl to the center of the bridge where they met an Iraqi border guard. Kohl again explained the situation, then indicated he was concerned about explosives on the bridge and along the main supply route. The Iraqi remained silent about the mines, but stated he did not have the authority to allow the Americans to cross and would have to check with his superiors. While Kohl waited for an answer, Iraqi reinforcements occupied the heights overlooking the road. To counter this show of force, Marine Sea Cobras, Army Blackhawks, and Air Force Warhogs droned ominously in the sky overhead. About 20 minutes later the Iraqi returned and granted permission to cross the bridge. For the second time that day, the 24th MEU (SOC)'s policy of aggressive restraint paid big dividends.

Col Mike Gish portrays the entrance to Camp Sommers in Zakho, Iraq. Camp Sommers, named for Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, David W. Sommers, housed the 24th MEU (SOC) headquarters, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 133, the U.S. Army 18th Engineer Brigade and 18th Military Police Brigade, and the Joint Civil Affairs Group.

Painting by Col Peter M. "Mike" Gish



Unfortunately, the Turks had neither instructions nor authority to allow the Americans across the border. About 90 more minutes lapsed before Turkish permission to cross was granted. On the bridge, several Iraqis worked with an American explosive ordnance demolition (EOD) team. They discovered no mines but found explosive charges under the bridge and removed them. Lieutenant Colonel Kohl's mission was a success; the first American convoy moved into northern Iraq at 0800 the next day (21 April).

During this time, the MEU Command Element, the Aviation Combat Element, and MSSG-24 settled in at Silopi, while back at Iskenderun convoys carried the final Marine increments forward. The *Charleston* and the *Austin* were completely offloaded and the MEU's 15-day Landing Force Operational Readiness Material (LFORM) was on shore. The *Guadalcanal* remained nearby to provide aviation support. Messages to the United States requested further logistics and combat support. Included in these requests were those for additional firepower control teams from 2d ANGLICO, an RPV detachment from 2d SRIG, and more engineer assets. It was also hoped that an AV-8B Harrier II detachment might be made available.

Securing Zakho

On 22 April, a Military Coordination Center was established at Zakho. Army Colonel Richard Naab, a team chief, two liaison officers, and two linguists comprised the allied team. A similar Iraqi contingent was led by Brigadier General Nashwan. The Center operated 24 hours a day to provide face-to-face discussions during tense situations, kept both sides informed about future operations, and acted as a sounding board for opposing views about current operations.

General Nashwan used the first meeting to announce that Iraqi forces north of the 37th Parallel had been ordered to pull back and that Iraqi commanders were cooperating completely. However, despite these congenial relations at the MCC, the Iraqis quickly tested the coalition's determination. Although all Iraqi troops had allegedly left Zakho, more than 300 "policemen" wearing military uniforms

and carrying automatic weapons remained. Major Raftery's intelligence section later confirmed that they were soldiers from the *66th Special Assault Brigade*. At the next meeting Colonel Naab reiterated the coalition's insistence that all Iraqi forces be moved at least 30 kilometers south, but he was answered by silence. The second major incident of the day occurred that evening when a flight of Iraqi MI-8 helicopters headed for northern Iraq was intercepted by F-16 fighters from Incirlik. The incident was quickly resolved when the helicopters landed and offered no resistance.

The American Marines in northern Iraq were joined by their foreign brothers-in-arms when the British 45th Commando, Royal Marines, was placed under the tactical control of the 24th MEU. This battalion-size unit of 637 Royal Marine "Booties" was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Jonathan Thompson. Lieutenant Colonel Thompson established his command post in an abandoned school about 10 kilometers outside Zakho. Thompson's headquarters section was joined by three rifle companies: X, Y, Z, and Company M (the British Commando Mountain and Arctic Warfare Training Cadre). Historically, British and Dutch Marines worked closely together and had often formed combined United Kingdom-Netherlands landing forces. This tradition continued in northern Iraq. On 23 April more than 400 "Cloggers" of the 1st Amphibious Combat Group (1st ACG), Royal Netherlands Marine Corps, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Cees Van Egmond, arrived in northern Iraq. With these attachments, the 24th MEU (SOC) formed an unofficial "international brigade" that mustered about 3,600 personnel.

At first, the 24th MEU (SOC) and Joint Task Force Bravo shared the former headquarters of an Iraqi infantry division on the northwestern edge of Zakho, but they had to part company when troop numbers increased. Joint Task Force Bravo increased in size during the latter part of April. It soon included the 4th Brigade (Aviation), 3d Infantry Division; the 18th Engineer Brigade with Naval Mobile Construction



Painting by Col Peter M. "Mike" Gish
A U.S. Marine from BLT 2/8 and a French soldier from the 8th Marine Parachute Infantry Regiment stop a vehicle at a jointly manned checkpoint near Zakho.

Battalion 133 (SeaBees) attached; the 18th Military Police Brigade; the 432d Civil Affairs Company; and the Canadian 4th Field Ambulance (a battalion-size mobile medical unit). The 3d Battalion, 325th Infantry (Airborne) Combat Team (3-325th ABCT) from a duty station in Italy was expected to arrive on 27 April. It was a reinforced infantry battalion commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John P. Abizaid, USA, that included a headquarters company, three rifle companies, 20 Humvee-mounted TOW antitank launchers, an 81mm mortar platoon, a 105mm artillery battery (Battery D, 3 19th Field Artillery), and small supply and reconnaissance detachments. A Spanish expeditionary force and an Italian airborne brigade were also on the way and were scheduled to land the following week.

Despite the presence of multinational security forces, many Kurds were unwilling to return to Iraq. Kurdish elders reported that the Iraqi police intimidated them during an exploratory visit to Zakho and stated they would return only if the Iraqis evacuated and an allied security force remained. General Shalikashvili felt the problem was the continued presence of Iraqi troops in and around Zakho. In addition to the "police," an infantry strongpoint

was located only two kilometers from the city and three artillery batteries were in the hills south of Zakho. General John R. Galvin (CinCEur) directed General Shalikashvili to begin planning for forcible removal of the Iraqis should it become necessary. Concurrently, Colonel Naab and General Nashwan reached an agreement to defuse the situation.

General Garner (CG, JTF-B) ordered Colonel Jones to occupy the town of Zakho. During the evening of 25 April, BLT 2/8 cordoned off the northern, eastern, and southern approaches to the city, the Dutch covered the west, and the 45th Commando cleared the city. This was a most appropriate task because the British had just seen duty in Northern Ireland and were adept at low intensity urban warfare. Calling on recent experience battling the illegal, underground Irish Republican Army, the British used a unique combination of force and tact to patrol the streets. They gently reassured the civilians and sent the previously arrogant Iraqis scurrying out of town. By sundown Zakho was in allied hands. The 24th MEU (SOC) and its attachments promptly began a rigorous security program using squad-size patrols to criss-cross the area of operations. □1775□

Lieutenant Colonel A. Michael Leahy III and Captain Cyril J. O'Brien

by Annette D. Amerman
Historian

Lieutenant Colonel A. Michael Leahy III: It was with deep sadness that the Marine Corps History Division learned of the passing of our friend and combat artist, Lieutenant Colonel A. Michael "Mike" Leahy III on 15 October 2010, peacefully and surrounded by his family, at the age of 77. Born on 19 January 1933, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Leahy grew up in nearby Somerville, MA.

He served two periods of active duty with the Marine Corps. In addition to being a combat artist, Leahy was a helicopter pilot, and had the honor of flying three presidents: Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Nixon. He was a graduate of the Philadelphia University of Art and retired from the Marine Corps Reserve in 1980 as Lieutenant Colonel. At the time of his death, he was painting commissions full-time at the Leahy Studio/Gallery in Cary, North Carolina.

Throughout his career, his artwork was featured on television, including documentary art for the Natline Series during the 1973 Watergate deliberations. His artwork appeared in many magazines, including *U.S. News & World Report* and *All Hands Magazine*. His paintings have been exhibited at the National Museum of the Marine

Corps in Quantico, Virginia, and in other venues. His many awards include the Bronze Star with Combat "V" and the Presidential Service Commendation for Executive Flight, Detachment Marine Helicopter Squadron 1. He was awarded numerous awards for his artwork to include being named the Marine Corps Combat Correspondents Association Combat Artist of the Year in 1969, the Department of Defense Thomas Jefferson Awards for artwork in 1986, and the National Naval Aviation Museum's Merit Award in 1993.

He was predeceased by his daughter, Kris, in 2008. Surviving is his beloved wife of 56 years, Patricia, their children, grandchildren, and one grandchild. He is also survived by five brothers and two sisters.

Captain Cyril J. O'Brien: It was with heavy-heartedness that the Marine Corps History Division learned of the passing of our friend and colleague, Captain Cyril John "Cy" O'Brien on 31 January 2011 at the age of 92—a day after his birthday. Canadian by birth, Cy grew up in Camden, New Jersey, and graduated from St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia in 1942. A month later, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps stating that he had been rejected as an officer candidate for being a half inch too short.

A veteran of Bougainville, Guam, and Iwo Jima, Cy was assigned to a line company at Bougainville where he participated in many patrols, often as a scout. While at an interim rest area on Guadalcanal, it was discovered that Cy had been a newspaper reporter prior to the outbreak of the war, and he was offered the opportunity to become a combat correspondent. It was as a combat correspondent that Cy participated in the battles for Guam and Iwo Jima. After the war ended, he continued as a newspaper reporter, earned a masters degree from American University and

continued on in the Marine Corps reserves, attaining the rank of Captain.

With first-hand knowledge of the battle for Bougainville, Guam, and Iwo Jima, and his experience as a combat correspondent, it was only natural that Cy was prolific in writing various accounts of these aspects of World War II: numerous articles in *Leatherneck* and *Naval History* magazines, and his published histories, *Liberation: The Marines in the Recapture of Guam* and *Two Score and Ten*. Cy proved eager and able to tell the tale of his fellow Marines whenever given the opportunity. He remained active with numerous Marine Corps and veterans' organizations especially the U.S. Marine Corps Combat Correspondents Association throughout his life.

Cy may have been short in stature, but he was larger than life in deeds, accomplishments, and in spirit. I personally will forever miss his booming voice over the phone identifying himself simply as "O'Brien!" Cy was predeceased by his beloved wife Elizabeth, originally of Philadelphia, and is survived by his children Anthony O'Brien, Bridget Turow, Johnine Meehan, and Patricia Cahill as well as seven grandchildren. □1775□

