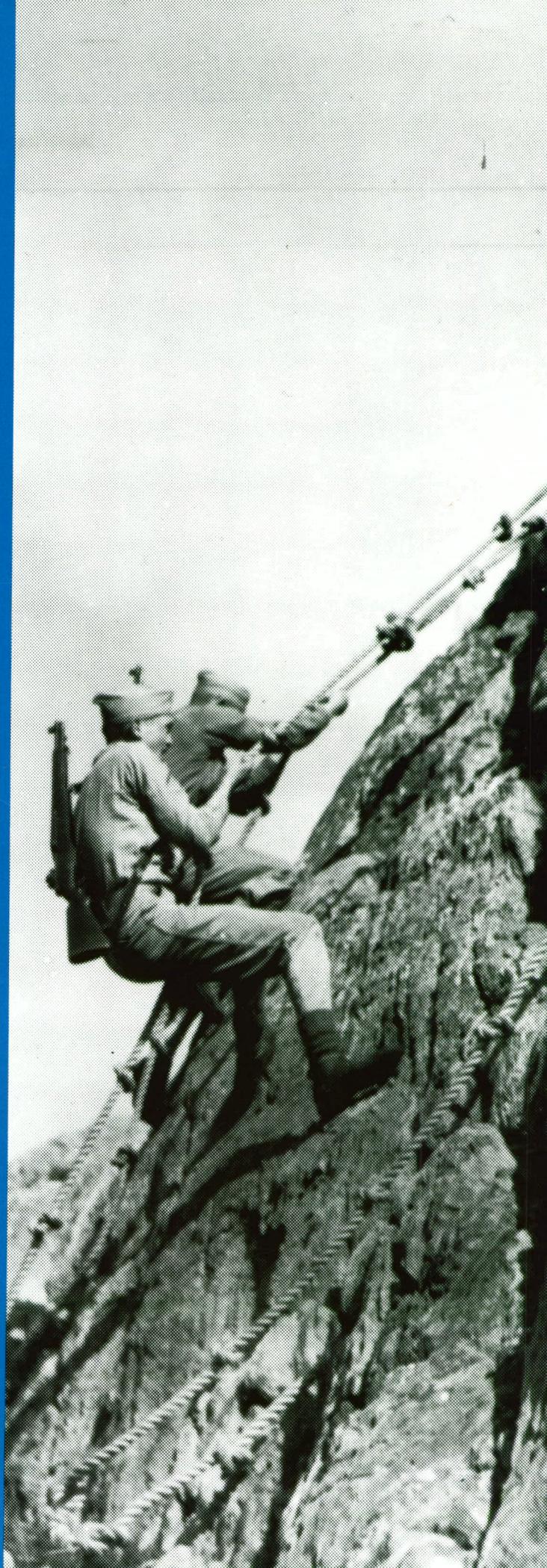


A DIFFERENT WAR:  
MARINES IN EUROPE  
AND NORTH AFRICA

MARINES IN  
WORLD WAR II  
COMMEMORATIVE SERIES

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL  
HARRY W. EDWARDS  
U.S. MARINE CORPS (RET)





# A Different War: Marines in Europe and North Africa

by Lieutenant Colonel Harry W. Edwards, USMC (Ret)

**S**hortly after the United States entered World War II, the Allies agreed that the European Theater would have priority in the war over the Pacific Theater. The Marine Corps' war was in the Pacific and all war plans regarding the employment of Marines reflected that. Nevertheless, because the Marine Corps was part of the naval establishment, it had responsibility also for furnishing men to parts of the Navy assigned to the European and Mediterranean theaters and to the operations conducted there.

These were not large Marine formations, but were, for the most part, individual Marines and small detachments assigned to guard duty at the barracks and naval operating bases established in the United Kingdom, or men assigned as "sea-going" Ma-

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**On the Cover:** *During their periods of training, the London Marines were taught how to climb cliffs using mountaineering techniques. Similar skills are elements of training undertaken by present-day Marine reconnaissance units.* Photo courtesy of Col Roy J. Batteredton, USMC (Ret).

**At left:** *Britain's King George VI inspects the Marine detachment of Washington (BB 56) on 7 June 1942. From left are: RAdm Robert C. Giffen, commanding Task Force 39; King George; Adm Harold R. Stark, special naval observer; and Capt Howard H. Benson, commander of the Washington. Commanding the Marine Detachment is Capt James D. Hittle, who retired as a brigadier general; commanding the 1st Platoon is 1stLt Jonas M. Platt, who retired as a major general; commanding the 2d Platoon is 2dLt Robert Knox.* Photo courtesy of The Admiralty, London

rines in the detachments of the large fighting ships. Another category was filled by those intrepid Marines who volunteered for duty with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), to undertake covert operations with the underground against the Nazis in the occupied countries of Europe and North Africa.

In April 1941, Congress stipulated that Marine Corps strength should be 20 percent of that of the Navy. Only a relatively few Marines were detailed to the Atlantic, and they were primarily assigned to the Navy to perform their traditional functions, that of security of naval installations and service afloat. Though few in number, they made a significant contribution, though largely overshadowed by the exploits of their fellow Marines in the Pacific.

The U.S. Atlantic Fleet in 1941 comprised four old battleships, *New York* (BB 34), *Texas* (BB 35), *Arkansas* (BB 33), and *Wyoming* (BB 32); one division of heavy cruisers, *San Francisco* (CA 38), *Tuscaloosa* (CA 37), *Quincy* (CA 39), and *Vincennes* (CA 44); the aircraft carrier *Ranger* (CV 4); and a destroyer squadron. The carrier *Wasp* (CV 7) would join the fleet shortly upon its commissioning. Marine detachments were assigned to these ships.

Marines have traditionally served as part of the complement of naval warships. In World War II, this service was confined mostly to the larger-sized ships—battleships (BB); cruisers, both heavy (CA) and light (CL); and carriers and light carriers (CV or CVL). Smaller ships normally carried a Marine detachment only when they served as flagships.

Marine training for sea duty be-

fore the war was provided at sea schools established in Portsmouth, Virginia, and San Diego, California. Marines selected for this program had to meet three principal criteria: age (over 18); height (at least 5'8"); and a willingness to serve. Those selected attended a course of eight weeks' duration whose curriculum included the operation of ships' guns to which they would be assigned as crewmen, naval terminology, boat drills, damage control, emergency drills, fire-fighting, gunnery practice, shipboard ceremonies, sentry duties, naval etiquette, and duties of a landing party.

The duties of the detachment consisted primarily of maintaining the internal security of the ship, manning secondary gun batteries in action, and forming landing parties as needed. Seagoing Marines were called upon to demonstrate a high degree of proficiency in their assigned duties.

Assignment to sea duty, over the years, was always highly coveted, since it satisfied a Marine's basic requirements for travel and adventure, and carried the promise of some exciting action along the way, as part of a ship's landing party on foreign shores.

A Marine officer on board ship could anticipate assignment as the legal counsel or law officer for most courts-martial held on board and duty as a shore patrol officer. He also would have an assignment at a battle station, stand quarterdeck watches when in port, and be prepared to lead his detachment ashore when called upon to protect American lives and property.

A detachment consisted of two or three officers and 100 or more enlist-



Photo courtesy of Col Roy J. Batterton, USMC (Ret)

*LtCol Walter I. Jordan, commander of the Marine Detachment, American Embassy, London, briefs his officers on a winter day in London, 1942. From left are: 1stLt Fenton J. Mee,*

*Maj John B. Hill, Capt Roy J. Batterton, 1stLt Thomas J. Myers, Capt Walter F. Layer, and Marine Gunner George V. Clark. Nearly all Marines in Europe reported through the detachment.*

ed Marines on a battleship, one or two officers and 80 enlisted men on a heavy cruiser or carrier, and one and 45 on a light cruiser.

During 1941, the fleet was steadily and quickly augmented as the naval ship-building program got underway in earnest. Along with a massive recruiting program, reserve forces were called up. By November, there were 3,793 Marines serving in detachments on 68 naval ships. And the Atlantic Fleet was further enlarged at that time by three more battleships, *Idaho* (BB 42), *Mississippi* (BB 41), and *New Mexico* (BB 40); four light cruisers, *Philadelphia* (CL 41), *Brooklyn* (CL 40), *Savannah* (CL 42), and *Nashville* (CL 43); and the carrier *Yorktown* (CV 10).

### *Allocation of Forces*

The urgency of military events in early 1941 made it appear that, despite its Pacific orientation, the Marine Corps, as a ready, all-

volunteer force, would actually become part of the U.S. deployment to the Atlantic to join Allied forces in the campaign against Germany.

The prewar period was a difficult time in international relations, since the U.S. was coming under increasing

pressure from France and Great Britain to provide assistance. President Franklin D. Roosevelt was increasingly disposed to do so, but lacked both Congressional mandate and public support.

The terms of the armistice after the

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## Colonel Walter I. Jordan USMC

**W**alter Jordan became a Marine officer after graduation from the Virginia Military Institute in 1924. He served a tour in Nicaragua and another on sea duty before his assignment as the first commander of the Marine Detachment, American Embassy, London, July 1941 to November 1942.

This was the first organized unit of American armed forces to be sent to Britain during World War II. Colonel Jordan was in charge of the advance echelon when the ship carrying it was torpedoed and sunk on the way to En-

gland. While in England he was instrumental in arranging for the U.S. Marines to undergo joint training with the Royal Marines.

In 1943, Colonel Jordan received the Silver Star Medal for his leadership of a combat unit (2d Battalion, 2d Marines) in the Tarawa assault. For his services on the 4th Marine Division staff at Saipan and Tinian, he was awarded the Legion of Merit. As the commander of the 24th Marines at Iwo Jima, he received a second award of that medal.

He retired from the Marine Corps in 1946 and died on 16 October 1947.

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Photo courtesy of Col Roy J. Batterton, USMC (Ret)

*American Ambassador to the Court of St. James's, John Winant, gives instructions to orderly PISgt John H. Allen, Jr. Marines provided security for the Embassy following recommendations by its security officer, Maj John C. McQueen.*

fall of France in June 1940 forced that country to accept alignment with the Axis. This arrangement posed important questions on the future status of French territory in the Western Hemisphere. Of particular significance was the island of Martinique, which harbored major elements of the French fleet, plus more than 100 American-built aircraft that were in transit to Europe, and a storehouse of gold bullion.

Other Atlantic islands of strategic interest to the U.S. were those of the Portuguese Azores and Iceland. They appeared to be both strategically valuable and vulnerable. Marine forces were alerted in 1941 to the possibility of assignment to Martinique or the Azores. Protecting Iceland became a top priority as British intelligence reports revealed Germany's plans to attack Russia.

To help deal with these concerns and to facilitate amphibious training, the Commandant of the Marine Corps established a provisional corps in May, commanded by Major General Holland M. Smith. It included the 1st Marine Division and the Ar-

my's 1st Infantry Division. When the Amphibious Force, Atlantic Fleet, was commissioned at Norfolk, General Smith was the first commander of its ground component, Amphibious Corps, Atlantic Fleet. Through the efforts of General Smith's am-

*A Marine duty NCO checks in visitors to the American Embassy in London, while other Marines stand guard at the entrance and the check-in point.*

Photo courtesy of Col Roy J. Batterton, USMC (Ret)



phibious training staff, the 1st, 3d, 7th, and 9th U.S. Infantry Divisions were given amphibious training in time for the North African landings. When the call came in June 1941 for the first major deployment of American combat forces in the Atlantic Theater, it was the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, comprised of the 6th Marines and the 5th Defense Battalion, which was dispatched to Iceland.

The brigade landed there on 7 July and remained on occupation duty for 10 months, until May 1942. The details of the operation are covered in *Outpost in the North Atlantic: Marines in the Defense of Iceland*, another pamphlet of this series. The threat of German occupation of any of the Atlantic bases was greatly lessened on 22 June, when Hitler ordered his forces to invade Soviet Russia.

### *Assignment to London*

It is interesting to note that, when the 1st Provisional Brigade went ashore at Reykjavik, Iceland, it was met on the dock by Major Walter I. Jordan and members of his 12th Provisional Marine Company. These



Photo courtesy of Col Roy J. Batterton, USMC (Ret)

*London Marines also served as fire wardens during the Nazi air raids on the city, and were prepared to put out fires on the roof of their detachment quarters in Grosvenor Square in 1942. They were to remain here for the rest of the war.*

11 Marines were survivors of the torpedoing and sinking of the Dutch transport, *SS Maasdam*, by a German submarine 300 miles south of Iceland on 26 June. They were rescued and taken to Iceland on the *SS Randa*. The men had formed an advance detail of Major Jordan's unit, en route from the Marine Barracks in Washington for assignment in London. Reembarked on the *SS Volendam*, they finally reached London on 15 July, there to join forces with 48 other Marines, including three

officers, Captain John B. Hill and First Lieutenants Roy J. Batterton, Jr., and Joseph L. Atkins. These three officers had been embarked on another Dutch transport, the *SS Indraporia*, which made the crossing without mishap. The 59-man organization was designated the Marine Detachment, American Embassy. A second echelon arrived about six months later.

The table of organization for this detachment had been prepared in London sometime earlier by Major

John C. McQueen, at the request of Admiral Robert L. Ghormley, Assistant Chief of Naval Operations, who was in England at the time.

Major McQueen had been sent to London in the prewar period in 1940. He traveled in civilian clothes on a ship, *Duchess of Richmond*, and arrived in London during a German air raid. After reporting to the American Embassy, he went to Inveraray, Scotland, to observe the training of Royal Marines and especially to study the landing craft in use by the British. Marine Major Arthur T. Mason accompanied McQueen on this visit. Mason benefited from these contacts in his subsequent duty assignment to the combined operations section on the staff of the Supreme Commander Southeast Asia, Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten.

While McQueen was in London, he was concerned about the lack of security at the American Embassy at 1 Grosvenor Square and made some comments to that effect. The American Ambassador, John Winant, was so impressed that he gave McQueen the job of embassy security officer.

Before leaving to return to Washington, he was entrusted with a classified instrument to be delivered to the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI). He had some anxious moments en route home through the Azores, since it was considered to be a den of spies at that time. Upon arrival in New York, he was met, unexpectedly, by strangers in civilian clothes. He thought surely they were out to waylay him, only to learn that they were ONI security men. He was relieved when he delivered his precious cargo to Washington: a top-secret radar device invented by the British and specifications for its manufacture. It was greatly superior to equipment then in development in the United States.

McQueen was but one of a succession of Marine officers ordered to London during this period before the war and continuing throughout the

war. Most of them held the title of "assistant naval attache" (ANA) or "special naval observer" (SNO). The ANA designation enabled one to travel on a diplomatic passport and to enjoy many of its privileges, including immunity from arrest in the host country. An attache was a member not only of the official staff of the American Ambassador to Great Britain, but also of the diplomatic corps, composed of all of the foreign governmental representatives resident in London. An attache also could be accredited to the London embassy while being designated as ANA in other countries. This was the case with several Marine officers, who were accredited to London and assigned to Cairo and other capitals.

Once established in London, the Marine Detachment, American Embassy, under command of Major Walter I. Jordan, with Captain John B. Hill as executive officer, became the official reporting echelon for nearly all Marine personnel serving in Europe and Africa, including those on temporary duty and those attached to the OSS. The detachment was billeted at 20 Grosvenor Square, which was known at that time as the American Embassy Annex.

Major Jordan and Captain Hill both held the title of ANA and their duties took them to various parts of the United Kingdom as Special Naval Observers (SNOs). Jordan was the only detachment commander to carry this added title. None of the three officers who succeeded him in the post—Captain Thomas J. Myers, First Lieutenant Alan Doubleday, and Captain Harry W. Edwards—were so designated.

Initially, the detachment roster showed a strength of four officers and 55 enlisted men. Since this was the first embassy detachment in London for the Marine Corps, the enlisted personnel were selected with emphasis on intelligence and military bearing; many of them had previously served in the 1939 World's Fair



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A49691  
*Maj John C. McQueen was ordered to England in 1940 to observe the training of Royal Marines and to study the types of British landing craft. While in London, he was appointed Embassy security officer by Ambassador Winant.*  
 Detachment in New York. When the second echelon of the 12th Provisional Marine Company arrived in December 1941 with 2 more officers and 62 enlisted Marines, the strength swelled to 123. The two additional officers were Captain Walter Layer and First Lieutenant Thomas J. Myers.

Before departure from America, all members of the detachment were

*LtCol Jordan fostered good relations with the Allied services in England, and especially with the Royal Marines. A rifle match was held jointly with them at Portsmouth in 1942. According to the scoreboard, the Royal Marines won.*

Photo courtesy of Col Roy J. Batterton, USMC (Ret)



outfitted with a complete civilian wardrobe, purchased from the Hecht Company in Washington, D.C., with a government clothing allowance. It was U.S. policy, prior to the declaration of war, to have military personnel travel in civilian clothes when en route to countries which were at war.

The mission of the London detachment was to provide security for the American Embassy and to furnish escorts for State Department couriers. Sergeant John H. Allen, Jr., was assigned duty as orderly to the American Ambassador. The unit's billet on Grosvenor Square was close to the American Embassy, a very prestigious address in peacetime, but a tempting target in wartime. The Marines established their own mess, appointed an air raid precaution officer and, with the arrival of Harley-Davidson motorcycles equipped with sidecars, operated a courier service between the Embassy and various governmental staff offices in London. Warrant Officer George V. Clark organized the service, modeled after one that he operated in Shanghai, China, for the 4th Marines during 1937-1939.

As with all services, the immedi-

ate prewar era was a period of rapid expansion for the Marine Corps. Marine aviation, which would grow from 240 pilots in 1940 to 10,000 in 1944, focused much of its attention on the Royal Air Force (RAF), whose effective air defense in the Battle of Britain (1940) was one of the greatest military victories of all time. It had severely reduced the strength and combat efficiency of the *Luftwaffe*, the German air force, saved the beleaguered survivors of Dunkirk, and protected England from invasion. Many Marine aviators visited England and Egypt during this time, and what they learned from the RAF would have a profound effect upon the development of tactics and techniques employed by the Marine air arm during World War II.

Major General Ralph J. Mitchell, Director of Aviation at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, prior to World War II, was eager to have his officers and NCOs learn what they could from the British experience of fighting the *Luftwaffe*. He sent them as observers to Cairo and London and frequently as students or trainees to various training courses offered by the British.

*In 1941, MajGen Ralph J. Mitchell, Director of Aviation at Headquarters, Marine Corps, dispatched senior Marine aviators to observe and learn what they could from British air tactics against the Nazis in the desert war. Then-Col Roy S. Geiger, here in a postwar official portrait, was one of the first sent to Egypt.*

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) 303319



These practices began before America entered the war, and continued throughout the war. Most of those officers were given the status of ANA for Air, and assigned to the American Embassy in London. After June 1941, they were carried, for record purposes, on the muster rolls of the Marine Detachment in London.

Among the first arrivals, in April 1941, were Colonels Roy S. Geiger and Christian F. Schilt. They spent their time in Africa, observing British operations. Geiger was on board the British aircraft carrier *Formidable* while it was performing escort duty. By the time the carrier had reached its destination, it had lost all of its aircraft and pilots in combat operations protecting the convoy from attack by aircraft and submarines.

Brigadier General Ross E. Rowell and Captain Edward C. Dyer took the long trip around through China and India and arrived in Cairo a month later. Rowell was interested in the operational side of the RAF and he told Dyer to concentrate on the technical aspects, since Dyer was a communications specialist with an advanced electronics degree and had been assigned to the Navy Bureau of Aeronautics.

They met with top British military leaders: General Sir Archibald Wavell, Air Vice Marshal Arthur Tedder, and Admiral Andrew Cunningham, and found all of them extremely cooperative. In anticipation of American entry into the war, nearly all of the British commanders were very friendly and forthcoming with their military visitors. The only exception was General Bernard L. Montgomery, who had a reputation for not tolerating visitors at his headquarters.

The Marines were favorably impressed by a number of things which they observed, including: the organization of the war rooms; the RAF radio intercept system used to track the movement of all German aircraft; de-



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A401984  
*Col Christian F. Schilt was another Marine pilot sent to the Middle East. For bravery in January 1928 while flying with Observation Squadron 7-M, then-1stLt Schilt was awarded the Medal of Honor. He served in both World War II and the Korean War, where he was commander of the 1st MAW.*

ceptive use of dummy airfields, complete with dummy aircraft; the competence of British radio technicians and their ingenuity in salvaging material for operational repairs; and the effective air defense system employed by the RAF in the Western Desert.

Other Marine aviators who arrived in Cairo at this time included Lieutenant Colonels Claude A. Larkin and Walter G. Farrell, and Captain Perry O. Parmalee. All visited RAF squadrons in Haifa and Beirut as well as Egypt.

While in Egypt, Dyer contracted yellow jaundice and dengue fever and was to be hospitalized for a month. Once recovered, he caught up with Rowell in London, where they visited the RAF Coastal Command headquarters in Scotland and Bomber Command in England. They observed how the RAF used pathfinder aircraft to guide their bomber formations over German targets and how they employed saturation bombing to minimize losses.

Dyer enrolled in a three-week

course for fighter controllers at Stanmore where, for the first time, he was given detailed information about the use of radar. The Germans, as did the U.S., also had some radar equipment, but it was not nearly as sophisticated, or effective, as that developed by the British. Dyer next attended a British radar school and stood watches, as an observer, at various Fighter Command stations and ground control intercept stations, so as to become well indoctrinated in the system.

For his return home, Dyer embarked on a British aircraft carrier and that was, for him, the most disappointing part of the entire trip. He alleged that the British use of alcohol in their wardrooms adversely affected both their personnel and their flight operations.

Drawing upon his training and observations in England, Dyer was able to suggest changes in Marine aviation doctrine for employing intercepting aircraft more effectively. He also was able to adopt much of the RAF system of night interception in the subsequent development of training for night fighter squadrons in the Marine Corps.

Back in Washington, he shared his

*Two Marine aviators, BGen Ross E. Rowell, left, and Capt Edward C. Dyer took the long trip to the Middle East by way of China and India, and arrived in Cairo in May 1941. They both went on to England, where they observed British bombing tactics. Dyer attended fighter control and radar schools, learning ground control systems.*

Department of Defense Photos (USMC) 12631 and 11868

knowledge with others, especially his Naval Academy classmate, Major Frank H. Schwable, who later played a large role in developing a night-fighter program for the Marine Corps.

Dyer's visit to England was quickly followed by those of other Marine flyers in 1941 and 1942. They included Schwable and Major Lewis G. "Griff" Merritt. Schwable was directed by the Commandant of the Marine Corps to "get all the information you can on the organization and operation of night fighting squadrons, paying particular attention to the operational routine, squadron training, gunnery and tactical doctrine . . ." He also was told not to be concerned about the technical end of it, since that had been covered by Dyer. Schwable and Merritt also visited Cairo to observe British air operations in desert warfare.

When Schwable returned home in April 1942, he wrote a detailed report on his findings. He was convinced that the most essential qualification for a night fighter pilot was his desire to be one. He recommended that those selected should be fairly young but stable and conscientious, cool-headed but aggressive, and not



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) 68297  
*Maj Frank H. Schwable was directed by MajGenComdt Thomas Holcomb to go to England to "get all the information you can on the organization and operation of night fighting squadrons . . ." When he returned to the United States, he pioneered Marine Corps night fighter tactics and commanded the first such night fighter squadron in the Pacific*

quick-on-the-trigger or devil-may-care, as many a day fighter had been.

He and Dyer fought hard to obtain funding for the aircraft and personnel that would ultimately produce an effective night fighter capability for the Marine Corps. When the first Marine Night Fighter Squadron, VMF(N)-531, was commissioned on 16 November 1942, Schwable became its leader and it would achieve a fine combat record in the Pacific war.

The list of Marine aviators who visited Europe and North Africa operations continued. Lieutenant Colonel Francis P. Mulcahy and Major William J. Manley both spent nearly all of their time in Egypt. Lieutenant Colonel Field Harris and Major William D. McKittrick spent nearly four months, from August to November 1941, inspecting British aircraft facilities and equipment (much of which was American-made), debriefing bomber crews, and talking with staff officers. They also visited Palestine, Syria, and Cyprus.





Department of Defense Photo (USMC) 14569-A  
*Another pilot sent to the Middle East was Maj Lewis G. "Griff" Merritt, who had the unique experience, as a Marine, of being shot down by a Luftwaffe plane while a passenger in a RAF aircraft.*

Captain Etheridge C. Best went to England to study the communications control system in the RAF. He attended the RAF Day Fighter Controller Course and several courses regarding radar. He also visited most of the RAF units in England. Returning home in early 1942, he helped to pioneer the use of a ground control intercept system by the Marine Corps and became a deputy director of the Electronics Division of the Bureau of Aeronautics.

Prodded by an urgent request from Admiral William F. Halsey for a night fighter capability in the Pacific, the Marine Corps continued to send aviation personnel to England to observe and train with the RAF in order to learn its system of night fighting and radar control. Among the officers so assigned were Majors Frank H. Lamson-Scribner, William Via, Michael Sampas, Gooderham L. McCormick, Frank G. Dailey, and John Wehle.

Major Wehle, who was a Marine test pilot, took particular interest in testing various British aircraft. He was also charged to investigate the British glider program. He returned to the U.S. with a negative recom-

mendation, which probably helped to doom a Marine Corps glider program that was already underway.

Many distinguished ground officers also conducted productive visits to England as observers prior to America's entrance into the war.

Colonel Julian C. Smith and Major Jack P. Juhan arrived in London at the height of the German air blitz and spent some anxious moments in air-raid shelters. They collected a large amount of material on landing boats and tactics, enjoyed a number of high-level briefings, and toured the British amphibious warfare base at Rosneath, Scotland, where they had a visit with Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill. Their trips were followed by those of Colonel John T. Walker, Majors George F. Good, Jr. and Lyman G. Miller, Captains Bruce T. Hemphill, Eustace C. Smoak, Joe Smoak, and Charles Cox, and Warrent Officer Ira Brook.

During May and June of 1941, Major Good and Captain Hemphill traveled to England on a secret mission, along with some Navy civil engineers, to tour four base sites, two in Scotland and two in Ireland, and to advise the Marine Corps and the Navy as to their security requirements. They arrived in London on a Pan American Airways Clipper flight via Lisbon.

Their itinerary included a five-day stay in Londonderry, Northern Ireland, followed by a stop in Greenoch, Scotland. At the end of their reconnaissance, Major Good returned to Iceland to rejoin the 5th Defense Battalion, and Captain Hemphill escorted the newly arrived Marine embassy guard detachment to London before returning to Washington.

Majors Wallace M. Greene, Jr., and Samuel B. Griffith II, arrived together in England in 1941 with an interest in special forces, in anticipation of the establishment of similar organizations in the Marine Corps.

Greene attended the British Amphibious Warfare School and the Royal Engineers' Demolition School, while Griffith observed commando training. After their return—and based to a degree upon an impetus from the White House—Major General Thomas Holcomb, Commandant of the Marine Corps, authorized the formation of two raider battalions. Griffith became the executive officer of the 1st Raider Battalion and subsequently its commander.

The concept of having specialized units in the Marine Corps was a controversial issue and would continue to be so during the war. Commando training, however, was a focus of interest as the Marines noted the success the British commandos had, and they welcomed the opportunity to send Marines to England for that training.

On 7 June 1942, the London detachment designated two of its officers, Captain Roy T. Batterton, Jr., and Marine Gunner George V. Clark, and 10 enlisted men, to take the training. Captain Batterton later

*Then-Col Julian C. Smith, left, and Maj Jack P. Juhan arrived in England at the height of the German air raids to collect information on British landing craft and tactics, and to tour the amphibious warfare base at Rosneath, Scotland.*

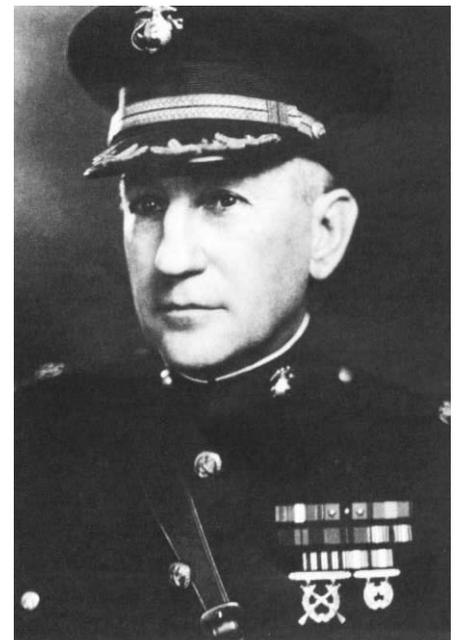




Photo courtesy of Col Roy J. Batterton, USMC (Ret)

*Capt Roy J. Batterton and Marine Gunner George V. Clark of the London detachment took 10 members of the detachment north to Scotland to begin a seven-week commando training course. They are shown here at Achnacarry, where they began their training. In the front row are, from left: PFC Edgar Reynolds, Capt Batterton, Cpl John Sudro, and Sgt George Allen. Middle row: Cpl Walter Kelly, PFC Michael Dunbar, PFC Donald Stoner, and Cpl Paul Cramer. Rear row: Sgt George Hudock, Marine Gunner Clark, PFC Taylor Collom, PISgt Way Holland, Sgt Curtis Tatum, and Cpl Henry Dozier. Another member, Sgt Robert Ryan, was not present.*

provided some interesting highlights of his experience during seven grueling weeks that summer (He considered the course to have been extremely valuable to him during his subsequent duty with the 4th Marine Raider Battalion in the Pacific.)

Batterton's Marine detail was assigned successively to four different commando units for its training at various bases in Scotland and England. Three were British Army Commandos (4th, 6th, and 9th) and one Royal Marines. A British Army commando averaged 500 men in size with a lieutenant colonel in command. There were six troops per commando, each commanded by a captain, and three sections per troop, each commanded by a lieutenant.

Their training began at Achnacarry, Scotland, where the Marines were quartered in Nissen huts. Their beds consisted of wooden slabs, laid across six-inch blocks with straw mats as mattresses. Their working

day was from 0830 to 1740, with time off only on Saturday afternoons. Training was in 40-minute periods allocated as follows: Bren gun, 16 periods; Thompson sub-machine gun, 4; grenades, 9; pistol, 4; foreign arms, 6; Garand rifle, 10; firing all weapons, 20; physical training, 21; bayonet, 6; climbing, 4. In addition, there were various course exercises, toggle bridging, field craft (scouting and patrolling), marching, map-reading, and two field exercises of 16 and 36 hours each.

A rapid, seven-mile march demanded the utmost endurance. On such a forced march, the British required that all men keep in step, all the time, at either quick- or double-time, to create the teamwork which is essential to achieving their objective.

On a toggle ride (called "Death Ride"), they crossed a stream by climbing a tree with the help of a 50-foot rope ladder, then sliding down a taut rope stretched down-

ward at a 30-degree angle from the tree to another on the opposite bank, by looping the toggle rope over the taut rope. A toggle rope is normally six feet long and half an inch in diameter, with a wooden handle spliced on one end and an eye spliced on the other end.

For descending from cliffs, they were taught a method called "absailing," which involves the use of a 100-foot length of 1/2-inch rope, looped first around a tree or a rock. The descent is made in bounds, and the rope section is brought along with each increment of descent.

In an assault exercise, performed in 10 minutes, they crawled under a barbed wire, ascended a log ramp in order to jump from an eight-foot height over a six-foot barbed wire obstacle, descended a cliff by rope, and finished with a bayonet charge!

In another such exercise, two-man teams were employed, one covering the other, to approach a dummy house while firing from the hip with automatic weapons, throwing grenades through the windows, searching the structure, then departing over a fence, down a ravine by rope ladder, and up the other side by rope, using grenades against surprise targets, and ending with a bayonet charge. They also practiced rowing a 30-foot whaleboat, followed by a cross-country run of two miles from and back to the boat.

Several of these assault exercises were conducted with live ammunition. The training schedule proceeded regardless of weather, which is frequently poor in Scotland. During training hours in the camp area, with few exceptions, everyone moved on the double.

For their 36-hour exercise, they embarked for a night landing on a simulated Norwegian coastal area. Upon landing they moved 15 miles to a viaduct, made preparations to "blow it up," and returned by a different route which was 35 miles cross-country. They organized a defensive



Photo courtesy of Col Roy J. Batterton, USMC (Ret)

*During their periods of training in Scotland, the London Marines were taught how to climb cliffs using mountaineering techniques. Similar skills are elements of training undertaken by present-day Marine Corps reconnaissance units.*

perimeter and signaled for a retrieval by boat.

During the course of the seven weeks of training, the Marines went from Achnacarry, Scotland; to Cowes on the Isle of Wight; to Portsmouth, England (where they embarked in preparation for a landing at Dieppe on the French coast); then back to Scotland to Lachailort and Helensburgh. Thereafter, it was a tired but physically fit, well-trained detail of Marines which returned to its detachment in London on 31 July. These Marines were soon transferred to the United States and assigned to combat units for duty in the Pacific, mostly to Marine raider battalions in which they could practice and share their lessons learned.

The senior British instructor was so pleased with the performance of this group that he sent a letter via Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, then head of British combined operations, to Admiral Stark at the head-

quarters of Commander, Naval Forces Europe, stating that "the Marines have undergone an arduous commando training with an exceptionally unconquerable spirit which never wavered during the course." He singled out for special praise the work of Captain Batterton and Marine Gunner Clark and three NCOs: Platoon Sergeant Way Holland, and Sergeants George J. Huddock and Curtis A. Tatum. This report pleased Major Jordan, as he had been instrumental in organizing an exchange of training between the Royal Marines and the Corps which would continue over the years. Captain Batterton and his detail were not the first group of Marines to receive this commando training, nor were they the last. It proved to be a beneficial training resource for the Marine Corps in the early stages of World War II.

During May and June 1941, Major Gerald C. Thomas and Captain James Roosevelt followed one of the

most interesting itineraries of any Marine in the European Theater. On a special mission for President Roosevelt, they flew from India to Basra, Iraq, along with Brigadier William Slim of the British Army, arriving at a hotel that was filled with wounded soldiers. They flew from there on a British Sunderland flying boat to Suez, and on by car to Cairo, where they met two more Marine observers, Farrell and Captain Parmalee. After a briefing by the staff of Air Vice Marshal Arthur Tedder (later General Eisenhower's top deputy in Europe), they had a visit with General Sir Archibald Wavell, Middle East commander. Thereafter, they obtained requested transportation to Crete to deliver a message to King George, who had been driven from his throne in Greece by the Germans. Despite dire warnings of danger, they flew in a British flying boat to Crete, where they landed in the midst of a German air raid. Nevertheless, they completed their mission, which was to deliver the letter from President Roosevelt to King George, and then departed for Alexandria, Egypt.

From Cairo they flew to Jerusalem for visits with King Peter of Yugoslavia; the High Commissioner for Palestine, Sir John McMichael; and Abdul, the Regent of Iraq. They were nearly killed here during a strafing attack by German fighters. They had only sandbags for protection, since there were no dugouts to hide in because of the high water table in the area. By the time they returned to Cairo, the Germans had already invaded Crete and seized the island with heavy losses for the British defense force.

Returning to Cairo, they visited General Charles de Gaulle at his Free French Headquarters, then in Cairo, before leaving (along with Parmalee and Farrell) on a flying boat for Lisbon. Then-Captain Mountbatten also was a passenger on that flight. He had earlier lost his destroyer di-

vision in the battle of Greece, and he told them that his nephew, Prince Philip, was also a survivor of that action. At the end of that memorable trip, Major Thomas reported to the Commandant of the Marine Corps and requested to be returned to duty with troops.

The muster rolls of the Marine Detachment in London frequently included the names of "visiting" Marines. The number of visitors each month varied, as did their assignments and missions. In this category, OSS Marines were a most unusual group, mostly reservists recruited because they possessed highly specialized skills needed to carry out the organization's intelligence mission.

The OSS was established on 13 June 1942 as a successor to the Office of the Coordinator of Information (COI). Its director was Army Reserve Colonel William J. Donovan, a World War I hero and recipient of the Medal of Honor, whose reputation for fearlessness earned him the nickname of "Wild Bill." OSS was a strategic intelligence organization which functioned outside the military services to carry out missions assigned by the chiefs of the armed services.

In addition to its civilian personnel, OSS had the authority to recruit military personnel from all services. Marine officers assigned to this work were given a specialty of MSS: Miscellaneous Strategic Services. More than 35 Marine officers and a considerable number of enlisted Marines were assigned to duty with the OSS in Africa and Europe during the war. Their duties were so highly secret that even their award citations were classified and remained so until after the war. Captain Peter J. Ortiz, for example, was twice awarded the Navy Cross, but these citations were not immediately published. The Marine Corps personnel in OSS made significant contributions to the Allied war effort in Europe and throughout the world.

In October 1942, two COI/OSS

## General Franklin A. Hart, USMC

**B**y the time Colonel Franklin A. Hart arrived for duty in London in June 1941, he already had a distinguished record of Marine Corps service.

A student at Auburn University, class of 1915, Hart was a top athlete in football, track, and soccer. He served as a Marine officer in France in World War I, and later in the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua, followed by a tour of sea duty and another of shore duty in Hawaii.

As a Special Naval Observer in England during World War II, he participated in the Dieppe operation in July 1942 and remained in England until October on the ComNavEu staff.

In June 1943 he commanded the 24th Marines in the Marshall Islands and at both Saipan and Tinian, from which operations he earned the Navy Cross and the Legion of Merit. As assistant division commander of the 4th Marine Division on Iwo Jima, he received a Bronze Star Medal.

Subsequent duty assignments includ-



ed: Director, Division of Reserve, and Director, Public Information, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps; and Commanding General, Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island. After his last command as Commandant, Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, Lieutenant General Hart retired in 1954 and was promoted to general on the retired list. He died on 22 June 1967.

*Capt James Roosevelt, left, and Maj Gerald C. Thomas are shown at Shepherd's Hotel, Cairo, in May 1941, one of the last stops on Capt Roosevelt's mission for his father, President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Capt Roosevelt commanded the 4th Raider Battalion in the Pacific War, while Maj Thomas became G-3 and later chief of staff of the 1st Marine Division on Guadalcanal, and later commanded it in Korea.*

Photo courtesy of Mrs. Gerald C. Thomas



# Marine Detachment American Embassy, London, England

**O**n 15 July 1941, the Marine Corps established its first embassy detachment at London, England. It was commanded by Major Walter I. Jordan. Initial strength was approximately 60 officers and men, but this was doubled in size by December 1941 with the arrival of a second echelon from Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C.

The detachment was billeted in the American Embassy Annex at 20 Grosvenor Square. Initially, the duties of the detachment were primarily security and messenger service for the embassy. However, with the arrival of Admiral Harold R. Stark as Commander, Naval Forces, Europe (ComNavEu) on 17 March 1942, there was a realignment of duties to focus more upon the naval headquarters and less upon the embassy.

Major Jordan was succeeded by Captain Thomas J. Myers in October 1942. At that time the detachment was inactivated and its personnel transferred to Rosneath, Scotland, to establish a Marine Barracks at the U.S. Navy Operating Base at that location. The detachment was re-

established in London on 21 January 1943, and resumed its original designation and duties. Myers was replaced by First Lieutenant Alan Doubleday, who served until August 1944. He, in turn, was succeeded by Captain Harry W. Edwards, who remained in that post until April 1946, at which time the unit was given a new designation as the Marine Detachment, U.S. Naval Forces, Europe.

The detachment served as the principal administrative headquarters for Marines in Europe throughout World War II. Muster rolls for the unit reveal the names of the numerous Marine personnel who were sent to Europe and Africa for staff duty or as observers and trainees, both before the war and during the war. This included many Marines who served with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS).

Principal duties for the detachment included: ensuring security for the naval headquarters, supplying orderlies for flag officers, operating a motorcycle and motor vehicle messenger service between various military and diplomatic offices, supplying escorts for State Department couriers, and performing of ceremonial duties as required.

Marines were stationed at the American Legation in Tangiers, Morocco, a key listening post in Africa for the U.S. at the time. They were Lieutenant Colonel William A. Eddy and Second Lieutenant Franklin Holcomb.

Eddy was born in Lebanon of American missionary parents and was fluent in Arabic. He had earned a Navy Cross and two Silver Star Medals for combat action with the 6th Marines in World War I. Holcomb was the only son of the Marine Corps Commandant, General Holcomb. Both officers were designated assistant naval attaches for air and would play a prominent role in relations with the Vichy French, and in providing valuable intelligence for Allied landings in Africa. Robert D. Murphy, counselor of the American Embassy in Vichy, once commented that "no American knew more about Arabs or power politics in Africa than Colonel Eddy." In January 1943 they were joined in Tangier by Captain Ortiz. He was an American citizen but had served in the French

Foreign Legion early in World War II. Thus, he was well acquainted with the area.

Marine Reserve Lieutenant Otto

Weber also received an unusual assignment. A petroleum specialist as a civilian, he was ordered, under the auspices of the Office of Naval Intel-

*One Marine assigned to covert activities in Europe with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was Capt Peter J. Ortiz, who was twice decorated with the Navy Cross. Here he receives his first Navy Cross from Adm Harold R. Stark in London.*

*Photo courtesy of LtCol Peter J. Ortiz, Jr., USMC*





Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A412362

Sgt Charles L. Perry, a member of Capt Ortiz' OSS team, died when his parachute failed while jumping over the Haute Savoie region of France. Here, Capt Ortiz and the team members render honors at Perry's grave. From left they are: Capt Ortiz; Capt Francis Coolidge, USA; Sgt Robert E. Lasalle; Sgt John P. Bodnar; Sgt Frederick J. Brunner; and Sgt Jack Risler.

ligence (ONI), to report for duty in Cairo. From there he went to Asmara, Eritrea, where he stayed for several months, and finally he

returned to Cairo and served as an intelligence officer with the Army Forces in the Middle East.

As a result of the lend-lease to the

Royal Navy of 50 overage destroyers early in the war, the British made available to the United States bases on various islands in the Atlantic. Marine units were posted at several of these naval bases, where they remained throughout the war. They included: Marine Barracks in Bermuda, Trinidad, and Argentina, Newfoundland, and Marine detachments on Grand Cayman and Antigua islands and in the Bahamas.

## Colonel Peter J. Ortiz, USMC

One of the most decorated Marine officers of World War II, Colonel Peter Ortiz served in both Africa and Europe throughout the war, as a member of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS).

Although born in the U.S., he was educated in France and began his military service in 1932 at the age of 19 with the French Foreign Legion. He was wounded in action and imprisoned by the Germans in 1940. After his escape, he made his way to the U.S. and joined the Marines. As a result of his training and experience, he was awarded a commission, and a special duty assignment as an assistant naval attache in Tangier, Morocco. Once again, Ortiz was wounded while performing combat intelligence

work in preparation for Allied landings in North Africa.

In 1943, as a member of the OSS, he was dropped by parachute into France to aid the Resistance, and assisted in the rescue of four downed RAF pilots. He was recaptured by the Germans in 1944 and spent the remainder of the war as a POW.

Ortiz's decorations included two Navy Crosses, the Legion of Merit, the Order of the British Empire, and five Croix de Guerre. He also was made a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor by the French.

Upon return to civilian life, Ortiz became involved in the film industry. At the same time, at least two Hollywood films were made based upon his personal exploits. He died on 16 May 1988 at the age of 75.

### *After Pearl Harbor*

The Pearl Harbor attack on 7 December 1941, followed by a declaration of war on Germany and Japan, greatly accelerated the mobilization of U.S. naval forces in the Atlantic and Pacific Theaters. On 30 June 1941, the Marine Corps had 3,642 officers and 41,394 enlisted Marines, and was expanding at the rate of 2,000 enlistments a month. After Pearl Harbor, the enlistments exploded with 8,500 in December 1941, 13,000 in January 1942, and 10,000 in February. By June of that year, the

strength of the Marine Corps had more than tripled.

On 5 February 1942, the U.S. Navy established its first base on the European side of the Atlantic, in Londonderry, Northern Ireland, on the banks of the River Foyle. That forward base had become necessary because the fleet could not operate efficiently for any length of time more than 2,000 miles from a naval base.

Orders quickly followed for a Marine unit to provide security for this "naval operating base" (NOB) and the 1st Provisional Marine Battalion was organized in 1941 at Quantico, under command of Lieutenant Colonel Lucian W. Burnham. His executive officer was Major Louis C. Plain. In preparation, the Marines of that battalion received some rigorous and varied training, because one could not predict what duties their assignments would require of them.

The 400-man battalion left the U.S. in May 1942, on the *Santa Rosa*, a converted cruise ship of the Italian-American line, headed across the North Atlantic for a destination known to very few. A month later, an augmentation force of 152 enlisted Marines arrived on board the SS *Siboney*, led by Second Lieutenant John S. Hudson.

*Sgt Jack Risler, left, and Sgt John P. Bodnar, in Paris, look at the orders giving them top priority for a flight back home after their release from a Nazi prisoner of war camp in northern Germany.*  
Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A412365



Photo courtesy of Mrs. Mary Eddy Furman  
*Also assigned to the Office of Strategic Services was LtCol William A. Eddy, a well-decorated veteran of World War I, where he earned the Navy Cross and two Silver Star Medals. Born in Lebanon of missionary parents, Eddy was fluent in Arabic and acted as interpreter for President Roosevelt when he met King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia. Eddy was photographed with the king on board the destroyer Murphy (DD 603) while in the Red Sea. The naval officers shown here are not identified.*

Upon arrival in Ireland, the unit was designated the Marine Barracks, NOB, Londonderry, and assigned the mission to guard the dispersed facilities of the large base, which was about three miles from the city. Initially, the Marine Barracks was organized as follows: Headquarters and

Service Company, under command of Major James J. Dugan; Company A, commanded by Captain John M. Bathum; and Company B, with Captain Frank A. Martincheck in command. In late October 1942, another draft of more than 200 men, with Second Lieutenant James B. Metzger in

## Colonel William A. Eddy, USMCR

**A**nother distinguished scholar who made his mark as a Reserve officer in the Marine Corps was Colonel William A. Eddy.

Eddy became a Marine officer in 1917, after graduation from Princeton University. He saw action in France in World War I and received two Purple Hearts, a Navy Cross, the Distinguished Service Cross, and two Silver Star Medals.

Between wars, he became a professor of English at Dartmouth College and, in 1936, the president of Hobart College and William Smith College, both in Geneva, New York.

Returning for active duty with the

Marines in 1941, he served successively with the Office of Naval Intelligence, as naval attache in Cairo, Egypt, and later in Tangier, and finally he assumed duties with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Eddy was fluent in Arabic, having been born in Lebanon in a missionary family.

He was released from active duty as a colonel in August 1944 to accept an appointment as U.S. Minister to Saudi Arabia, where he served until July 1946.

He died on 3 May 1962 in Lebanon at the age of 66 while serving as a consultant for the Arabian American Oil Company and was buried in Lebanon.



Photo courtesy of Col Roy J. Batterton, USMC (Ret)

*The motor pool detail of the London detachment in 1944-1946 used their Harley-Davidson motorcycles to provide courier*

*service for Commander, Naval Forces, Europe, and also furnished armed escorts for U.S. Department of State couriers.*

charge, arrived from the States on board the U.S. Army transport *Boringuen*. It became Company C. Meanwhile, several promotions took place in the unit—Bathum to major, Plain and Dugan to lieutenant colonel, four company officers to captain—and the battalion reorganized to add an additional company. Captain Donald R. Kennedy took over Company B and Captain George O. Ludcke received command of Company C.

Headquarters and Service Company was billeted at Springtown Camp, as was Company B, which was assigned to guard the repair facilities. Company C, which guarded the Quonset storage ammunition dump at Fincairn Glen (five miles outside 'Derry), was billeted on the grounds of an old estate called "Beech Hill." Company A guarded the Naval Field Hospital at nearby Creevagh, a couple of strategically located radio stations, and a major supply depot at Lisahally. Those Marines were billeted in Quonset huts on the grounds of "Lisahally House," an estate on the River Foyle.

The Marines were needed in Londonderry not only to protect the naval base from sabotage from German units which might have been landed by submarine, but also from local infiltrators. The Irish Free State (Eire), just across the border from Ul-

ster, maintained its neutrality throughout the war. With German and Japanese embassies in full operation in Dublin, there was the fear of sabotage attempts against Allied installations, prepared with the cooperation of militant elements of the Irish Republican Army (IRA). There were no IRA-supported

sabotage attempts, however, and history reveals that the number of voluntary Irish enlistments in the British Army from Eire equalled the number from Ulster, where the draft was in effect.

An interesting incident took place during this period, which underscored the high degree of cooperation

*U.S. Marines could be found in Londonderry at: 1) Lisahally, at the mouth of Lough Foyle, a guarded dock area; 2) Fincairn Glen, an ammunition dump; 3) Beech Hill, where units consolidated after moving from Springtown (Company A and Hq Company) and Lisahally (Companies B and C) in 1944; 4) main naval repair base, which serviced U.S. destroyers and Canadian corvettes on the North Atlantic run; 5) Springtown, original site of the headquarters and Company A; and 6) Creevagh Naval Hospital. Marine sentries also were posted at two radio transmitting sites.*

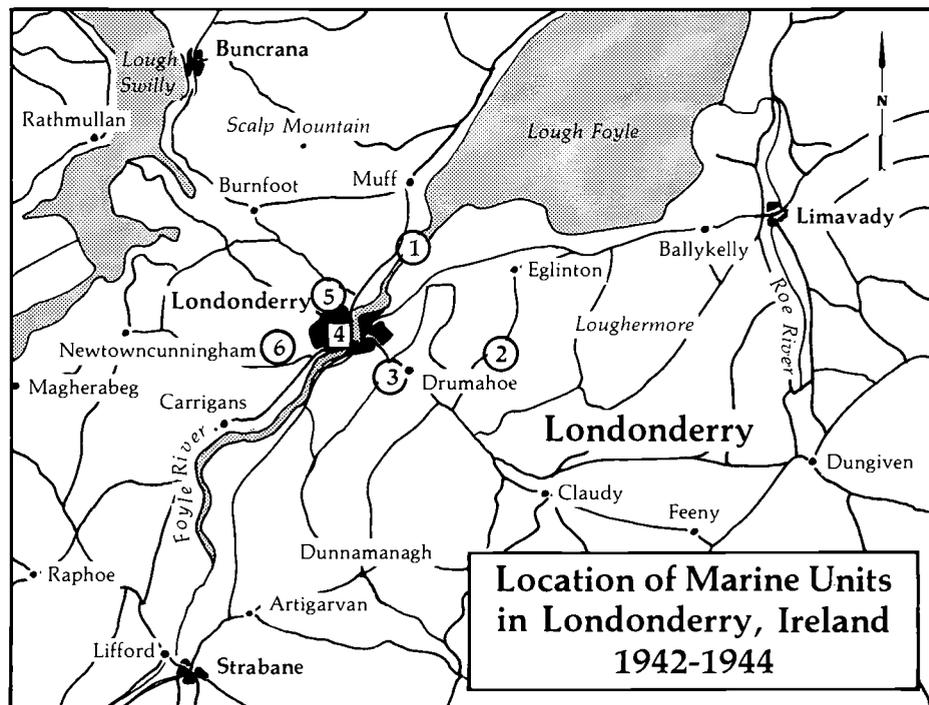




Photo courtesy of George O. Ludcke

*In June 1942, the Marine Barracks, Naval Operating Base, Londonderry, Northern Ireland, was established with the arrival of its Marine personnel. From left to right, the officers arriving at this time were Maj Louis Shoemaker, Maj John Bathum, Capt Frank Martincheck, and LtCol James J. Dugan. Their mission was to deter saboteurs, of whatever origin.*

between the two Irish governments. A New Zealand bomber crash-landed in Eire and its crew expected to be interned for the duration of the war by the Irish Free State. However, with the unofficial blessing of the Irish Government, the RAF with the assistance of a detail from the Marine Barracks, dismantled the plane and removed it and its crew across the border.

Major James J. Dugan, the barracks adjutant, was a colorful member of the original "Irish Marines," a nickname given to the Marines serving in Londonderry. He was a red-head from Boston who brought with him several members of his Boston reserve unit. He retained good rapport with the Irish and formed from the barracks drum and bugle corps a bagpipe band which became a trademark of this unit. The Marines were a welcome sight to this area, which had sent most of its young men off to war in 1939 in the British Army, and from which many never returned.

Since rain falls on average 240 days out of the year in this area, Marines learned quickly to do without clear days. They also learned to respect the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), which did a very efficient job of maintaining law and order in this historic city of 48,000 people. The Marines on shore patrol duty, commanded by Captain William P. Alston, established a good working relationship with the RUC, and also with Superintendent of Police Tom Collins, from Londonderry's neighboring County Donegal, who became a frequent guest at battalion social events.

Just as the "Irish" battalion arrived in Londonderry, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was relieved in Iceland by an Army unit and returned to the 2d Marine Division at Camp Pendleton. A continuing Marine presence was maintained in Iceland, however, with the organization of a Marine Barracks stationed at the Fleet Air Base in Reykjavik. This 100-man unit was initially com-

manded by Major Hewin O. Hammond. It would remain in Iceland until 22 October 1945, when it was disbanded.

Meanwhile, in London, Naval Forces Europe welcomed its commander (ComNavEu) on 17 March 1942, with the arrival of Admiral Harold R. Stark. He had been Chief of Naval Operations until he was replaced by Admiral Ernest J. King after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

The Marine Detachment, which had been on duty in London at the same location in Grosvenor Square since June 1941, became also a naval security detachment. However, it retained its American Embassy designation and continued to perform security duties for the Embassy. Additional duties included: providing security for the naval headquarters; supplying orderlies for several flag officers, including ComNavEu; and augmenting the motorcycle courier service linking the various military headquarters in London. In their ca-



Photo courtesy of George O. Ludcke

*The Lord Mayor of Londonderry, Sir Frederick Simmons, inspects a detachment from the Marine Barracks at a parade in 1943. With the Lord Mayor is Maj John Bathum, and to his rear is the barracks commander, Col Lucian W. Burnham.*

pacities as special naval observers, the detachment commander, Major Jordan, and his executive officer, Captain John Hill, continued to visit various Allied commands throughout the United Kingdom.

Colonel Franklin A. Hart, who had been on duty in London since June as an assistant naval attache at the American Embassy, now joined the ComNavEu staff as Chief of Naval Planning Section. Hart and Marine aviator Lieutenant Colonel Harold D. Campbell were assigned to duties as liaison officers to the Commander of Combined Operations, Vice Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten. These duties involved them in the planning and preparation for the combined British-Canadian forces' amphibious raid on 19 August 1942 at Dieppe, on the northeastern coast of France. They both observed this operation from the deck of a British destroyer, HMS *Fernie*.

The Dieppe landing was originally scheduled for 3 July. The elaborate amphibious raid was to involve more than 6,000 troops, mostly Canadian, and more than 250 ships. Royal Ma-

rine commandos, American rangers, and Free French soldiers also were to participate. Had it taken place on the scheduled date, three U.S. Marines would have participated as part of a Royal Marine commando, landing from HMS *Locust*. Captain Roy Batterson, Sergeant Robert R. Ryan, and

Corporal Paul E. Cramer were the three Marines who boarded the ship at Portsmouth, England, in preparation for a landing that was then postponed because of bad weather. After further postponements, their participation was cancelled, and they went on to complete their commando

*On the steps of Londonderry's historic Guild Hall, LtCol Dugan addresses an Ulster war bond rally in 1943, as his battalion commander, Col Burnham, listens.*

Photo courtesy of George O. Ludcke





Photo courtesy of George O. Ludcke

*During their stay in Northern Ireland and influenced by their surroundings, members of the battalion drum and bugle corps took bagpipe lessons and formed a pipe band. The adjutant,*

*then-Maj Dugan, a red-haired Bostonian, was chief booster. When the barracks was deactivated, the band returned to the States as a unit and performed in War Bond drives.*

training on 30 July, and prepared for reassignment in the States. In retrospect, we know that these Marines were fortunate to have missed out on the Dieppe raid, because it was a fiasco.

Planned as a surprise attack without benefit of air or naval gunfire preparation, it was designed to test Allied ability to assault and seize a port, to test new types of assault craft and equipment, and to continue to keep the Germans on edge as to Allied plans for a cross-channel invasion.

However, tactical surprise was not achieved and the landing party was overwhelmed. After five hours of heavy fighting, the landing force withdrew, suffering a loss of 3,648 men killed, wounded, missing, or captured. Possibly the best that can be said of this costly lesson is that it was a part of the price paid to help to ensure the highly successful landing at Normandy on 6 June 1944. There, unlike Dieppe, there would be no attempt to seize a heavily defended port, and the assault would be made in daylight, preceded and covered by the heaviest naval and air bombardment that could be devised.

Shortly after the Dieppe opera-

tion, Colonels Hart and Campbell returned to Washington, where they were able to draw upon their experiences in planning for amphibious operations in the Pacific. Hart was succeeded by Marine Colonel William T. Clement in October 1942. Clement, who had narrowly escaped capture by the Japanese at Corregidor, was assigned to the Intelligence Division of ComNavEu to work on naval planning for the cross-channel invasion of Europe. Admiral Stark, in a letter of 13 July 1943 to the Commandant of the Marine Corps, praised Colonel Clement for his work in setting up the Intelligence Section of ComNavEu.

### *Operation Torch*

A part of the high-level planning conducted by the American and British governments called for the formation of a military ring around Germany to be tightened as the war progressed. The occupation of French North Africa was seen as a first step in that process. It also would open the Mediterranean to Allied supply convoys and save the long haul around the Cape of Good Hope.

Rear Admiral H. Kent Hewitt became the Commander of Amphibi-

ous Forces, Atlantic Fleet (ComPhibLant) in April 1942, and the planning for the North African operation, to be known as Operation Torch, was begun in earnest.

During the planning, PhibLant expanded from a force of three transports to one of 28 transports, in anticipation of transporting 37,000 Army troops and 250 tanks, plus their combat equipment and supplies.

The operation called for U.S. forces to establish firm and mutually supporting lodgements in the Casablanca area of French Morocco, on the Atlantic coast of Africa, and simultaneously, with a combined American-British landing force, to seize the Oran-Algiers-Tunis area in the Mediterranean.

The objectives would be to seize control of the entire area of French Morocco, Algeria, and possibly Tunisia; to be prepared to take action against Spanish Morocco; and to facilitate air and ground operations against Axis forces in the western desert.

There were important political considerations involved, since this area was under control of the Vichy French Government. Its president,

Marshal Henri Petain, according to the terms of the French surrender, had agreed to collaborate with the Germans. It was known that the French Navy, represented by Admiral Jean Darlan, was intensely loyal to Petain and, under the watchful eyes of the Axis powers, would probably oppose the landing.

The Vichy French, especially members of the naval service, were known to be bitter toward the British Royal Navy, and hostile toward the activities of the Free French, represented by General Charles de Gaulle. Under these circumstances, it was impossible to predict the kind of reception the task forces could expect in French North Africa.

There was a slight American presence in North Africa during the period, working among the French in an effort to ease the way for the landing force. The two most prominent individuals were Robert Murphy, U.S. counselor accredited to the Vichy Government, and his principal military assistant, Marine Colonel William A. Eddy, who had been assigned to the American Legation in Tangier, Algeria, as an assistant naval attache for air in April 1942. Their diplomatic efforts helped to modify the resistance to the eventual landing operations. Eddy's assistant, Marine Lieutenant Franklin Holcomb, contributed to the cause by locating and smuggling out of Morocco two boatmen from Casablanca who were familiar with the complex hydrographic problems in the area. They helped to pilot the landing force.

Lieutenant General Dwight D. Eisenhower established his headquarters in London as Commander-in-Chief, Allied Expeditionary Forces (CinCAEF) on 14 August, in time to get involved with the planning for Operation Torch. Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham was given overall command of the operation. Colonel Eddy traveled from Morocco to brief Eisenhower and his staff on the operation. Eddy went on to

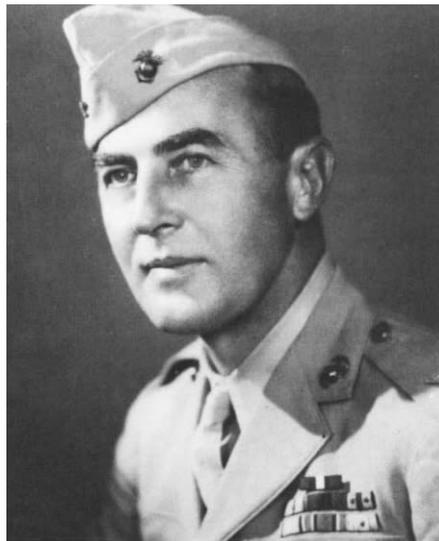
Washington to brief the service chiefs and President Roosevelt. Eisenhower, favorably impressed, appointed Colonel Eddy to be the senior military attache for Africa.

Meanwhile, it was determined that weapons training was needed for U.S. Navy boat crewmen who would be involved in the Algerian portion of the landing as part of the Eastern Task Force. In September 1942, Marine Corps instructors were brought in from Londonderry and London to establish a three-week training camp at the naval base in Rosneath, Scotland.

From Londonderry, Lieutenant Colonel Louis C. Plain and Captain William E. Davis led a detail of 25 enlisted Marines. The London Detachment sent First Lieutenant Fenton J. Mee and 15 enlisted men. At the end of the training period these three officers and 30 of the enlisted group were divided up into six teams and assigned to six different ships as a part of the landing force;

*Col William T. Clement, who narrowly escaped capture by the Japanese at Corregidor in Manila Bay, was assigned to work on the plans for the cross-channel invasion of France on D-Day, 6 June 1944. At the end of this duty, he was promoted to brigadier general and assigned as assistant division commander of the 6th Marine Division, then on Guadalcanal preparing for Okinawa.*

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) 522257



the remaining 10 enlisted men returned to their base in Londonderry.

On 31 October 1942, the Marine Detachment in London was disbanded and most of the unit transferred to Rosneath to establish a Marine Barracks there. Captain Thomas J. Myers, formerly a company commander with the unit in London, was placed in command. He was assisted by Lieutenants Frank R. Wilkinson, Horton J. Greene, Truman J. Lyford, and Alexander D. Cereghino. Lieutenant Weldon James was also present as a public affairs officer. Lieutenant Colonels Walter I. Jordan and John B. Hill visited Rosneath briefly before being reassigned to the States in November. Some key enlisted personnel remained in London on detached duty, to carry on their original assignments at ComNavEu.

Command of the Western Naval Task Force (TF 34), for the landing in Morocco, was given to Rear Admiral Hewitt. It was comprised entirely of U.S. forces. Two of his key staff members were Marine officers—Lieutenant Colonel Homer L. Litzenberg, as assistant operations officer, and Major Francis Millet Rogers as assistant intelligence officer.

Major General George S. Patton's Western Task Force provided the troops for the Morocco landings. Ships of the task force left from various east coast ports in late October 1942 and, once assembled in convoy, formed an armada of 100 ships, dispersed over the ocean in an area of some 20 by 30 miles. Yet it was said "that a flag hoist on Admiral Hewitt's ship, *Augusta* (CA 31), could reach the entire fleet in ten minutes."

The task force was heavy on firepower to counter the threat from the French capital ships *Richelieu* and *Jean Bart* (with 15-inch guns), and the possible intervention of German warships. Included were the new battleship *Massachusetts* (BB 59) (with nine 16-inch guns); the *Texas* (BB 35)



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A31943  
*Then-LtCol Homer L. Litzenberg served on the staff of Task Force 34 commander, RAdm H. Kent Hewitt, in Operation Torch, the invasion of North Africa. He later served with the 4th Marine Division in the Pacific War and retired after the Korean War as a lieutenant general.*

and *New York* (BB 34) (each with ten 14-inch guns); the carrier *Ranger* (CV 4) and four escort carriers; heavy cruisers *Wichita* (CA 45), *Tuscaloosa* (CA 37) and *Augusta*; light cruisers *Savannah* (CL 42), *Brooklyn* (CL 40), *Philadelphia* (CL 41), and *Cleveland* (CL 55); 38 destroyers; four submarines; and many lesser ships. Marine ship's detachments were on board all of the capital ships and the carrier.

Unlike the French army, the French navy had not been hammered by the

Axis and was still full of fight and prepared to resist. In France, the navy was responsible for coastal defense in the broadest sense, including coast artillery and offshore aerial reconnaissance. These activities were under the command of Vice Admiral Francois Michelier.

The convoy crossed 4,000 miles through submarine-infested waters at an average speed of 14 knots, in order to fulfill a scheduled D-Day of 8 November 1942. The principal operation plan called for a main landing at Fedala, 14 miles north of Casablanca, with secondary landings at Port Lyautey, 65 miles north, and at Safi, 125 miles south, of Casablanca.

H-hour was 0400 but there was confusion in the dark of night, so the first wave landed more than an hour late. Naval shore batteries supplied the principal opposition to the landing, supplemented later by strafing attacks by French aircraft. Many ships of the French navy were involved. Some were sunk by U.S. ships, others escaped. Several U.S. task force ships were lost to shore battery fire and German submarine torpedoes. However, fighting on shore in the Fedala area was over in a matter of hours. Colonel Litzenberg went ashore in this area and remained for a few days with General Patton's headquarters. By 11 November U.S. soldiers were in position to attack Casablanca, but since the

French defenders declared an armistice, that attack was cancelled.

Major Rogers, who was fluent in French and Arabic, went ashore at Fedala with the mission of arranging the berthing in Casablanca of Admiral Hewitt's flagship, *Augusta*. On D-Day, Rogers went into hostile territory to seek out French Vice Admiral Francois Michelier, to try to negotiate the surrender of all French military personnel in Morocco. He was subsequently used as an interpreter for peace negotiations with French officials and was awarded a Silver Star Medal for his courageous efforts. Rogers remained on Hewitt's staff throughout all of his subsequent amphibious operations in the Mediterranean area.

The landings in the Port Lyautey area were successful, but stiff resistance was later encountered and the shore batteries were not silenced until the following day. The town was taken on the 9th and the airfield the following day. An armistice was declared on the 11th.

The Safi landing found little resistance, except from shore batteries, and the Army tank units were ashore by the 11th, ready for their move on Casablanca. A party from the Marine detachment of the USS *Philadelphia*, operating under command of the Army 47th Infantry, landed at the Port of Safi on 10 November and proceeded to the air-

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## Major General Homer L. Litzenberg, USMC

**A**s a major, Homer L. Litzenberg was assigned to Headquarters, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet, and served in England during combined planning with the British on the conduct of the war. He also participated in the amphibious assault of Casablanca, French Morocco, in November 1942.

General Litzenberg was born in 1903 and began his service in the Marine Corps as an enlisted man. In 37 years of

service he proved himself to be a leader in combat with the award of the Navy Cross, the Army Distinguished Service Medal, three Silver Star Medals, and the Legion of Merit.

He served with the 24th Marines in the Marshall Islands and the V Amphibious Corps in the Saipan and Tinian campaigns.

As commander of the 7th Marines, he went to Korea on 1 September 1950, and

led that unit in the Inchon landing and the Chosin Reservoir campaign that followed.

Subsequently, Litzenberg served as the base commander of Camp Lejeune, and then as Commanding General, Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island; senior member of the Military Armistice Commission in Korea; and Inspector General of the Marine Corps, before his retirement on 31 May 1959.

He died on 27 June 1963.

# Colonel Francis M. Rogers, USMC

As a captain in the Marine Reserve, Francis Millet Rogers left his position as a Harvard University professor of foreign languages and civilizations to come onto active duty in World War II.

He was a student of western European languages and was particularly fluent in French and Portuguese. In 1941, he was assigned to the Amphibious Force, Atlantic Fleet (PhibLant) and established at Quantico what was possibly the first armed forces foreign language school on the east coast. When Rear Admiral H. Kent Hewitt was given command of the PhibLant in late 1941, Rogers joined his staff as an intelligence officer.

In this capacity he performed distinguished service in three landing operations in the North African theater of operations. These were: Operation Torch in Morocco, Operation Husky in Sicily, and Operation Avalanche in Salerno. In the Morocco landing on 8 November, Major General George S. Patton, Jr., as the landing force commander, awarded a Silver Star Medal to Major Rogers for his service in negotiations with French Vice Admiral Francois Michelier, which led to the surrender of Vichy French naval forces to the Allies.

After his return from overseas, Rogers was assigned to duty with the staff of Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Er-



nest J. King in Washington, D.C., until 19 October 1945 when he was released from active duty and returned to the Harvard faculty.

Colonel Rogers died on 15 August 1989.

port to guard that facility until relieved the following day.

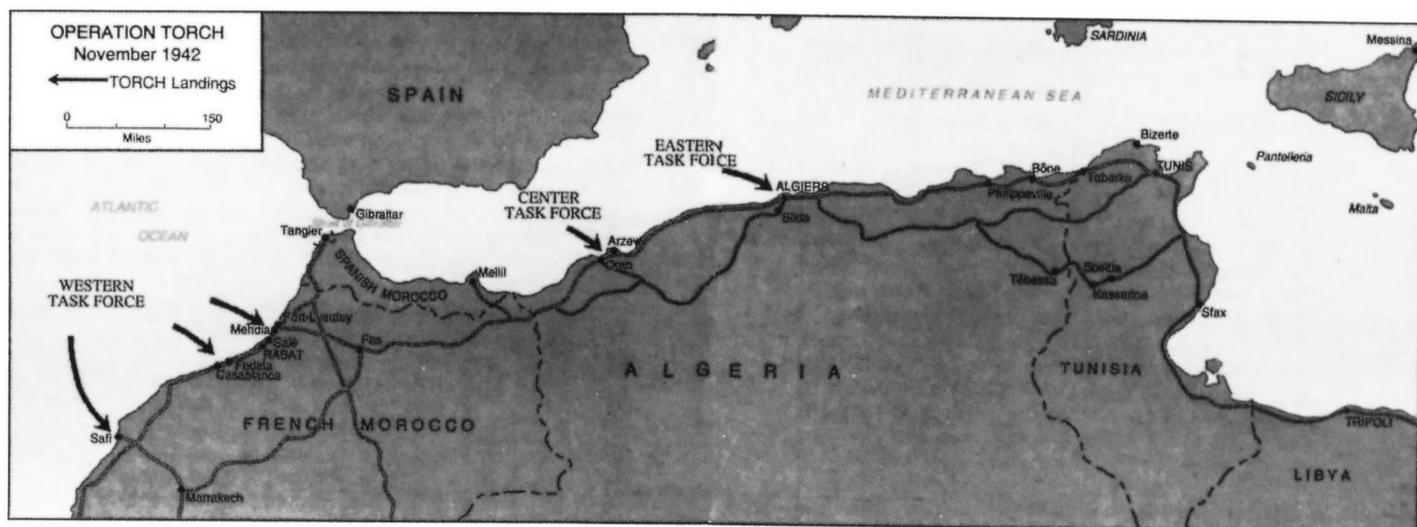
The Eastern Naval Task Force of Operation Torch was scheduled for a simultaneous landing over Algerian beaches in the Mediterranean. This force was assembled in the United Kingdom and consisted primarily of Royal Navy warships and Allied merchant marine transports. Unlike the U.S. Navy, there were no troop transports in the Royal Navy. The British simply leased merchant ships as needed and converted them to troop transports. The landing force consisted of 23,000 British Army and 10,000 American Army troops. Because of their perceived hostility

towards the British, it was hoped that the Vichy French would view this as an American operation and, therefore, offer less resistance. The Eastern Task Force, including the Marines from Rosneath, sailed from the United Kingdom on 25 October, bound for Algeria. The Center Task Force which had the mission of seizing and securing the Oran area of Western Algeria, had planned night landings at 0100 on 8 November in three localities: one southeast and north of Arzeu (20 miles east of Oran), a second 14 miles west of Oran, and the third about 27 miles west of Oran. By H-hour plus 2 there was also to be a frontal assault on the Port of

Oran by two British ships. Their mission was to breach a harbor boom chain and land onto the dock a commando unit which would seize French naval vessels in the harbor.

Little opposition was encountered in the three landing areas, except for some fire from coastal batteries and aircraft strafing. By the evening of the 9th, the ground troops held three of the important airfields in the vicinity, had captured 2,000 prisoners and 90 aircraft, and were ready to assault the city when a truce was called.

The U.S. Marines in the Arzeu landing party were in three groups: Lieutenant Colonel Plain with 11 enlisted men, Captain Davis (who



spoke French) with six Marines, and Sergeant Arnold Arrowood with six Marines. Upon landing, they found so many French ships lying at anchor that not enough officers were available to take them over, so the job was given to the enlisted Marines, with one man assigned to each ship, complete with its crew. Some sniper fire was encountered, but they were able to deal with it and suffered no casualties.

It was quite a different story for the six Marines on board HMS *Hartland*, which along with HMS *Walney*, both former U.S. Coast Guard cutters, had the mission of opening the Port of Oran. Running without lights at 0300, they were picked up by searchlights on shore and engaged by naval gunfire from French ships inside the harbor, coastal artillery on the bluffs, and machine-gun cross fire from the jetties. *Hartland* missed the boom on the first try and, in backing off for a second attempt, ran the gantlet of withering fire in an effort to come alongside the dock long enough to discharge its landing party. Marine Corporal Norman Boike, who was on board, reported "four-inch shells coming through the cutter's sides like blue flame." Their vessel was soon without power and adrift, and the dead and wounded were piling up on the deck and in the water. Although wounded himself, Boike was able to jump overboard with a raft and, along with First Sergeant Fred Whittacker and other Marines, sailors, and British commandos, who had initially been trapped below deck, rescue some of the wounded and make his way to shore. Both vessels sank with heavy losses, estimated to be 450 out of a total of 600 men who were on board. Two Marines were lost in this action (Privates First Class James Earhart, Jr., and Robert F. Horr) and the rest, along with all those who landed, were taken captive as they came ashore. However, they were released as soon as the armistice was signed.

Horr was listed as missing in action and Earhart was buried in the American Cemetery which was established at Oran.

In the Algiers area, the landing took place as planned at about 0100, unopposed except by coastal forts. Coastal batteries opened fire on forces afloat and did some damage. The boom at the harbor was also rammed by two British destroyers, one of which suffered some damage, but nothing like that at the Oran harbor.

By 8 November, the city of Algiers had surrendered, and a friendly welcome was extended after all fighting had ceased. French Admiral Jean Darlan was taken into protective custody and issued the order to his forces for suspension of all hostilities in Algeria and Morocco, and urged all elements of the French fleet to join the Allied cause.

General Eisenhower was reportedly infuriated by the decision of the French to resist. To spare further casualties and speed the war effort, however, he agreed to negotiate with Darlan, in spite of the latter's notorious reputation as a Nazi collaborator. Their agreement permitted Darlan to become governor-general of French North Africa, in exchange for a promise to have the French Army lay down its arms. The agreement brought great criticism of Eisenhower.

The U.S. Navy established an operating and supply base in Oran, which soon became the most important base of its kind in North Africa. A Marine detachment was established at the base and Captain Davis and Lieutenant Fenton Mee, along with all of the enlisted Marines who had participated in the landing, became members of the detachment. Davis became the security officer and Mee was made detachment commander. Lieutenant Colonel Plain joined the Naval Force staff in Oran and remained until his transfer to the States a short time later. The detach-

ment remained in Oran until 12 March 1943, when it was disbanded and all personnel returned to the States.

The Marine Detachment, American Embassy, London, was re-established at ComNavEu on 21 January 1943, and Captain Thomas J. Myers was placed in command. The Marine Barracks at Rosneath was disbanded and its personnel transferred either to London or to Londonderry.

The detachment was reduced in size to 30 enlisted men. Two Marine lieutenants, Paul Cramer and Walter Pickerel, and a number of enlisted Marines, who had been under instruction at the Royal Marines Military School in Devon over the previous few weeks, were detached and returned to the United States.

On 3 February, the Navy established a new command, U.S. Naval Forces Northwest African Waters at Oran. Hewitt, now promoted to vice admiral, was placed in command, and as also Eighth Fleet commander directed to prepare for more landings in the Mediterranean.

It was intended that the seizure of Algeria and Morocco quickly lead also to Allied occupation of Tunisia, opening the Mediterranean coast for staging to carry the battle northward. However, the Axis made a strong stand in Tunisia and gave way only grudgingly against the combined forces of the British Eighth Army and American forces, led by General Patton and Major General Omar Bradley. German and Italian forces in Tunisia finally surrendered with some 150,000 men on 13 May. This serious loss for the Axis provided the Allies air and sea supremacy throughout the southern Mediterranean, and permitted a convoy route to be opened through to the Suez Canal.

The decision of the Allies at this point was to rule out an invasion of France in 1943, but they did agree (at the Casablanca Conference in Janu-

# Brigadier General Richard H. Jeschke, USMC

At the start of World War II, Colonel Richard H. Jeschke was the commander of the 8th Marines, and he led that unit in combat in the Guadalcanal operation.

After this action, Jeschke was flown back to Washington and sent to the Mediterranean in May 1943, to the staff of the VI Amphibious Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, as Force Marine operations and training officer. In this capacity he participated in the landings at Sicily with the Western Naval Task Force. He also participated in the amphibious assault

landing and subsequent operations in Normandy, France, from 1 June to 1 July 1944.

During this period, to keep the Force commander informed, Colonel Jeschke made frequent liaison visits to front-line Army combat units ashore, and was subsequently awarded the Legion of Merit for this service. France awarded him the Croix de Guerre. Colonel Jeschke retired in 1949 and for having been decorated in combat was advanced to brigadier general on the retired list. He died on 15 December 1957.



ary 1943) that the next move would be an invasion of Sicily. This operation would maintain pressure on the enemy. Operation Husky was set for 10 July.

General Eisenhower received his fourth star on 11 February and was designated the Supreme Commander, North African Theater of Operations, with three British subordinates: General Sir Harold R. L. G. Alexander (ground forces), Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew B. Cunningham (sea forces), and Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur William Tedder (air forces). Each had an American subordinate: Lieutenant General George S. Patton, Jr., U.S. Seventh Army; Vice Admiral H. Kent Hewitt, ComNavNAW, and Lieutenant General Carl A. Spaatz, Northwest African Air Force. Operational forces were divided, with Admiral Hewitt in charge of the Western Naval Task Force embarking General Patton's Seventh Army, and British Vice Admiral Sir Bertram H. Ramsey, commanding the Eastern Naval Task Force, embarking Lieutenant General Sir Bernard L. Montgomery's Eighth Army.

Operation Husky would employ an assault force consisting of four American divisions, four British, and one Canadian, against a defense force comprised of two German and six Italian divisions. However, the

enemy units were capable of quick reinforcement from the Italian mainland across the narrow Straits of Messina.

The bitter lessons of Dieppe and Oran were taken into account. The seizure of enemy airfields, rather than the assault of enemy ports, was selected as the first objective. The emphasis was still on achieving tactical surprise, which ruled out pre-landing air and naval bombardment; a decision which Hewitt did not favor.

The landing formation was both unusual and bold, with eight divisions landing abreast on a broad front, allowing only a minimal force in reserve and quite a distance removed. Measured in terms of the initial assault, it was to be the greatest amphibious operation ever to that date, involving a total of 2,800 ships and assault craft. Unfortunately, the landing forces had no integration of command for air support, either tactical or strategic, resulting in many problems for the landing forces in obtaining timely air support. The mistake was rectified in subsequent operations.

Vice Admiral Hewitt had under his command 580 ships and 1,124 shipborne landing craft to be employed in transporting General Patton's Seventh Army, which was divided among three attack forces.

These were TF 86, under Rear Admiral Richard L. Conolly, with light cruisers *Brooklyn* and *Birmingham* (CL 62) and eight destroyers for escort and gunfire support; TF 81, under Rear Admiral John L. Hall, with light cruisers *Savannah* and *Boise* (CL 47) and 13 destroyers; and TF 85, under Rear Admiral Alan Kirk, with light cruiser *Philadelphia* and 16 destroyers. Admiral Ramsey had 818 ships and 715 shipborne landing craft for his landing force, composed mostly of British and Canadian troops.

Rear Admiral Conolly had a most difficult task: that of moving some 25,000 men from Africa to Sicily in a fleet of landing ships, tank; landing craft, tank; and landing craft, infantry, which was designated JOSS Force. Travelling in a convoy of seven columns, they were slowed at times to a speed of two and a half knots by strong winds and heavy seas. This was the first shore-to-shore amphibious operation to make such extensive use of these landing ships. The Sicilian coastline presented a further complication. Because it was known to be fronted with false beaches which would prevent landing ships from placing their troops and equipment on the shore, pontoon causeways were brought along to bridge the gap. The newly developed amphibious truck, called DUKW, was

# Major General Robert O. Bare, USMC

In World War II, while serving on the staff of Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsey, Allied Naval Commander-in-Chief, Colonel Robert O. Bare worked on the planning of the Normandy invasion. He was later awarded the Bronze Star Medal while attached to British Assault Force J during the invasion.

A graduate of the Naval Academy, Class of 1924, Bare achieved early recognition as a distinguished rifle and pistol marksman in the Marine Corps.

After his return from England in 1943,

he served in the Palau and Okinawa campaigns in the Pacific in World War II. In the Korean War he was the assistant division commander of the 1st Marine Division and was awarded a Distinguished Service Medal and a Legion of Merit.

Bare held additional assignments as Director of the Marine Corps Development Center at Quantico and as Director of Personnel at Headquarters Marine Corps.

He died on 30 September 1980.



first employed in this operation and met with great success. False beaches presented no problem for the DUKWs, which could continue inland, as needed, with their cargo.

Vice Admiral Hewitt's Western Naval Task Force staged from ports in Algeria. General Patton and his staff were embarked on Hewitt's flagship, *Monrovia* (APA 31). Once again, Marine Major Rogers was on board as a staff member. On D-Day he went ashore and was given the job of supervising the loading of Italian prisoners onto LCIs. Colonel Litzenberg had been replaced for the landings on Sicily by another Marine officer, Colonel Richard H. Jeschke, who had served briefly in liaison with U.S. Army forces in Morocco.

The landings, on 10 July, were made in darkness at 0245 over an area embracing some 37 miles of shoreline in the Gulf of Gela. Once again the enemy was not surprised, but the landing ship force did remarkably well despite heavy surf and accurate gunfire. In some places the beach areas were mined and a number of vehicles were blown up. There was little combat air patrol over the target area.

On 20 July, the dictator Benito Mussolini was removed from power in Italy and Hitler ordered a withdrawal of Axis forces from Sicily.

The mountainous terrain assisted the enemy's ability to fight a series of rear guard actions in the direction of the Straits of Messina, where the retreat was a short run across in ferry boats to the toe of Italy. Allied forces tried to intercept this movement by leapfrogging along the coast in a series of amphibious landings, but they lagged too far behind the fast-moving enemy forces to cut them off or to inflict significant losses. In the space of six days and seven nights, ending on 17 August, the Germans had withdrawn to the mainland with 40,000 troops and the Italians 62,000, so an opportunity to capture a large enemy force was lost to the Allies. An important major objective of the operation, seizure of Sicily, was accomplished.

In June 1943, Marine Colonel Robert O. Bare arrived in London in civilian clothes, as prescribed by regulations (because he had a stopover in Foynes, Ireland), for special duty with ComNavEu. His special duty involved an assignment to the Office of the Chief of Staff, Supreme Allied Commander. The Supreme Commander to head this office (General Eisenhower) had not yet been designated, so the officer in charge was Major General Frederick Morgan, British Army, with the responsibility of conducting planning and preparations for Operation

Overlord, formerly Neptune, the cross-channel invasion to come.

Bare was detailed as "staff officer plans" in the naval section under Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsey. He had the task of selecting British beaches for practice landings and naval gunfire training. The area selected was Slapton Sands, near Dartmouth. The British government evacuated more than 3,000 citizens from the area.

In October Bare traveled on a British ship to the Pas de Calais area of France as part of a fake invasion force to test German reactions and to try to mislead them about Allied intentions.

Marine Colonel James E. Kerr also participated in the planning phase for Operation Overlord. He was assigned as a training officer on the staff of Commander, Landing Craft and Bases, Eleventh Amphibious Force, Europe. His duties involved the supervision of amphibious training of personnel for all landing ships and craft to be used in the invasion. Both Kerr and Bare remained through all of the planning phases for Overlord and then participated in the landing.

Meanwhile, in the Pacific, the Guadalcanal operation (August 1942) had revealed to the Marine Corps the need for an adequate night air defense capability. Marines who served in the Pacific reported the

constant presence of Japanese aircraft buzzing over the combat areas at night, keeping everyone awake. They collectively earned the nickname "Washing-Machine Charlie."

To provide for future night air operations, a cadre of aviation personnel, including six officers and five enlisted men, was sent to England in February 1943 for training with the Royal Air Force (RAF). Lieutenant Colonel Edward W. Montgomery was in charge of the group and was the primary liaison with the RAF. Lieutenant Colonels Guy Morrow and Marion M. Magruder were designated to obtain detailed knowledge of the British fighter control and direction system, including facilities, personnel, and equipment, and to facilitate the acquisition of the equipment by the Marine Corps. Major Peter D. Lambrecht and Captain Homer G. Hutchinson, Jr., were selected for operational training as night fighters, and Captain Edward Hicks was to be trained as a night fighter ground air controller. The five NCOs were assigned to train as airborne intercept radar operators (ROs).

The five aviators of the group were initially assigned to RAF Station Coltishall for three weeks of flight training in Bisley and Blenheim aircraft. They wore dark goggles and read fluorescent instrument dials to simulate night instrument flying.

Lambrecht and Hutchinson were then sent to RAF Station Cranfield for operational training with the twin-engine Bristol Beaufighter, and in employing airborne radar to intercept enemy aircraft at night. Great emphasis also was placed on the ability to visually identify various aircraft types to help avoid firing on friendly planes. At this point the two officers were joined in the cockpit by their Marine ROs, Sergeants Nestor Tabor and Pete Hales, now qualified as radar operators in the British airborne intercept system.

When this phase of training had



Photo courtesy of BGen Homer J. Hutchinson  
*Marine pilots Maj Peter D. Lambrecht, left, and Homer J. Hutchinson are shown with Wing Commander L. N. Hayes, commander of RAF Night Fighter Squadron 256, at RAF Station Ford in Sussex from which they flew missions in May 1943.*

*Maj Hutchinson stands in front of the Bristol Beaufighter in which he fought.*

Photo courtesy of BGen Homer J. Hutchinson, USMC (Ret)



been completed, the two USMC teams were sent to Sussex on 6 May to join RAF Night Fighter Squadron 256. They were immediately assigned to night combat air patrol over the English Channel. It was here that Hutchinson learned to appreciate the ability of RAF ground controllers; these technicians had the difficult job of keeping friendly bombers and fighters separated in a crowded air space, while attempting to pick up enemy intruders. Lambrecht, Hutchinson, Tabor, and Hales, spent three weeks at this station flying night combat air defense missions against the *Luftwaffe*.

Lieutenant Colonel Montgomery subsequently served as the first commander of Marine Aircraft Group 53, a night-fighter group, from 1943 to 1945. Lieutenant Colonel Morrow became the first commander of a Marine night-fighter operational training detachment in 1943. Lieutenant Colonel Magruder commissioned and commanded VMF(N)-533 in 1943 and Major Hutchinson was his executive officer. Major Lambrecht commanded VMF(N)-541 in 1944, and in August 1952 was killed in action while flying a night-fighter combat mission in Korea.

Another group of Marine officers who arrived in London at this time, on a secret mission, came from the Plans and Policies Division of Marine Corps Headquarters. They included Lieutenant Colonels James P. Berkeley, Edward Hagenah, Harold O. Deakin, Norman Husa, and John Scott. All spent a week in London on the way to the U.S. Naval Forces Northwest African Waters Command to take part as observers in the next invasion, which would be the landing, designated Operation Avalanche, at Salerno, Italy on 9 September 1943. While in England, they spent their time with opposite staff numbers in U.S. and British organizations. Berkeley, for example, a communications officer, visited the Royal Navy School of Signals at

Eastleigh and the British Army Signal Center at Cheltenham; Deakin went to Devon to view amphibious training.

The decision for the Salerno operation had been agreed upon at the Trident Conference in Washington, D.C. on 12 May 1943, as an effort to take Italy out of the war and to engage as many German divisions as possible prior to a major cross-channel invasion. Unfortunately, the two-month delay between the landings on Sicily and Salerno would enable the Germans to bring 13 divisions into Italy with their top leadership, Field Marshals Erwin Rommel, in the north, and Albert Kesselring, in the south. The Italian surrender on 8 September seemed to have little effect on the German occupation force and its determination to prevent a rapid conquest of Italy.

The command structure for Operation Avalanche was much the same as in previous operations in North Africa, with Vice Admiral Hewitt as the Western Naval Task Force Commander. Marine Major Rogers was once again on board Hewitt's flagship, the *Ancon* (AP 66), as a staff officer. Under Hewitt was a largely British Northern Attack Force under Commodore G. N. Oliver (with the British X Corps), and a mainly American Southern Attack Force under Rear Admiral John L. Hall (with the U.S. VI Corps). The leading force was the U.S. Eighth Army under command of Lieutenant General Mark W. Clark.

Rear Admiral Conolly was again in charge of the JOSS force of landing ships. The five Marine officers from Washington were embarked with this force at Bizerte, Tunisia, each on a separate LST carrying British troops.

Colonel Berkeley said that his LST, which landed about H-hour plus 2, immediately came under fire from German artillery and was so damaged that it had to withdraw for repairs to its elevator mechanism be-

fore returning to unload. As a result of this experience he gained great respect for German artillery and its ability to mass artillery fire on a target. Lieutenant Colonel Deakin landed at 0340 in an assault boat wave with a battalion from the Royal Hampshire Regiment.

Air support was better organized than for the previous Operation Husky as a result not only of consolidated control but also the presence of escort carriers. H-hour was set at 0330 and there was no naval gunfire preparation in the interest of achieving surprise, but there were heavy casualties in early waves from both beach defenses and aerial attack. Later waves had the benefit of some excellent naval gunfire support, which helped to break up a German armored counterattack against the beachhead. Major Rogers was assigned duty as liaison officer between the *Ancon* and the British X Corps commander, Lieutenant General Sir Richard McCreary on HMS *Hilary*.

After the landing operation, all five Marine officers returned to Palermo, Sicily, on Admiral Conolly's flagship, *Biscayne* (AGC 18), for a short visit with two Army generals, George S. Patton and Lucian K. Truscott, Jr. Lieutenant Colonel Berkeley recalls the visit with some grim humor. He said they began to discuss the value of naval gunfire at the landing and Patton interrupted with a comment that naval gunfire was "no damn good." Truscott disagreed, reminding him that naval gunfire "saved us at the landings in Sicily." From there they flew to Oran to brief Admiral John Hall, and then returned home on 23 September.

It may well be that naval gunfire support and air power made the difference in the success of the Fifth Army at Salerno. However, by staying on station, the Navy paid a heavy price. The *Luftwaffe* attacked with a newly developed radio-controlled glide bomb, sinking a



Photo courtesy of Col Richard Jeschke, USMC (Ret)

After the Normandy D-Day landing on 6 June 1944, Marine Col Richard H. Jeschke, second from right, who was an observer at the landing, went ashore with LtGen Omar Bradley, left and MajGen J. Lawton Collins, second from left. The officer on the right is unidentified. After the war, Gen Bradley became Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1949.

number of vessels, and damaging the U.S. cruisers *Philadelphia* and *Savannah* and the British battleship *Warspite*. The bomb which struck the *Savannah* killed an entire U.S. Marine gun crew manning one of the turrets.

This costly campaign was concluded when the Germans began a withdrawal on 16 September and Allied forces entered Naples on 1 October. Military analyst J. F. C. Fuller considered Salerno to be "the most absurd and senseless campaign of the entire war."

The delay at Salerno only compounded the problem for the next amphibious assault in Italy, scheduled for 8 November but delayed until 21 January 1944. This was the Anzio operation, called Shingle, which would turn out to be one of the costliest operations of the war with more than 5,000 members of the landing force killed.

There was great controversy in the planning phase among the Combined Chiefs about the wisdom of making this landing. In the end, Prime Minister Churchill prevailed with the argument that unless Rome was

taken, Italy would never be free of German domination.

### Operation Overlord

At this juncture, General Eisenhower was appointed the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) and, even though he had expressed grave reservations about the Anzio operation, his new responsibility took him out of the Mediterranean area and back to London to head up the planning for Operation Overlord.

By this time, the Chief of Staff, Supreme Allied Commander (COS-SAC) staff had already grown to 489 officers, 215 of them American. As a part of this staff, Rear Admiral Alan G. Kirk was given command of the Western Naval Task Force. Assigned to Kirk's staff was Marine Colonel Jeschke as assistant planning officer and Force G-3. He had previously taken part in the amphibious landing at Sicily and then returned to England for duty with the U.S. First Army. With Eisenhower's arrival, COSSAC was absorbed into his new SHAEF headquarters.

By 30 May there was a total of

1,526,965 U.S. troops in the United Kingdom and more than five million tons of supplies and equipment. Of these American forces, 124,000 were naval forces with some 15,000 attached to combatant ships, 87,000 to landing and beach craft, and 22,000 to the various naval bases established in the U.K. Marines still had their detachment in London and the two barracks in Londonderry and Iceland, and the many ships' detachments with the Atlantic Fleet.

Surprise and deception were still the order of the day, and this accounted for a great deal of the success of the Overlord operation. Not only was the enemy kept guessing about the date (6 June), but he was also deceived as to the target area (Normandy).

H-hour for the airborne landings was 0130, 6 June, with approximately 13,000 paratroopers dropping in the Cherbourg area. Their jump was in support of the Force U troops landing over a nine-mile stretch of beaches on the Cotentin Peninsula, named Utah. Twenty-six assault waves were scheduled to land, starting at 0630.



Photo courtesy of Herbert C. Merillat

*Capt Herbert C. Merillat, center, observed the 6 June D-Day landing of Canadian forces over Juno Beach with Royal Navy Lt Hugh Ashworth, left, and Royal Marine Lt. George Hardwick from the deck of a British landing craft, LCG-1007.*

When there was a delay in the landing schedule, Rear Admiral Don P. Moon, in command of Force U, sent Marine Colonel Kerr, a member of his staff, in a patrol craft to take control and to report on how the operation was working. Kerr reported that Red Beach was clear so that waves on Green Beach, which were held up, could be diverted. This landing went so well that by the evening of D-Day most of the units had reached their objectives with surprisingly low casualties. A principal factor in this success was the heavy and accurate naval gunfire on targets inland.

The landing at Omaha Beach was quite a different story. This was performed by Force O, under command of Rear Admiral John L. Hall. It was here that the Germans were able to inflict some 2,000 casualties on the landing force of 34,000.

Among the Marines who participated in this landing were Colonel Jeschke and Lieutenant Weldon James, who was an observer on the flagship *Texas*, which furnished much of the naval gunfire support.

The U.S. Army V Corps, which landed at Omaha, had so much opposition that it was unable to link up

until the following day with VII Corps, which landed at Utah and had moved quickly inland.

On the eastern flank of Omaha was the British assault area. Stretching toward Caen, it was considered a key to the defense of Normandy and was the area where Germany launched its major counterattack. Two Marine officers were with the British forces in this area. Captain Herbert C. Merillat, a combat correspondent, was an observer with the Royal Marines in a landing craft, guns, large (LCG). This vessel had the mission of knocking out German pillboxes from close inshore. Colonel Bare, on board the *Llangibby Castle*, was attached to the British Assault Force J with the 3d Canadian Division, which went ashore near Courselles-sur-Mer. This force landed at 0810 after a naval bombardment that lasted nearly two hours, and it was able to move rapidly inland with fairly light casualties. However, once the Germans were finally convinced that this landing was not a feint for a major landing elsewhere, they launched some heavy counterattacks that prevented the Allies from seizing Caen until nearly a month later, well behind their planned schedule.

The miracle of Operation Over-

lord was its sheer size and complexity. On D-Day, 130,000 troops alone were landed against tough opposition. Nothing like it had ever been done before. But after seven weeks of fighting the deepest penetration was only 25 to 30 miles on an 80-mile front.

Bare, who had served in England over the past year as a staff officer with ComNavEu and COSSAC, was most impressed with British ingenuity in the preparations for Operation Overlord. He described the development of such equipment as floating docks, flexible oil pipes, floating breakwaters, artificial harbors, and a sunken ship shelter as "just unbelievable." This equipment was a salvation for the landing force, enabling it to project its strength, totally more than one and half million men, onto the Normandy beaches with sufficient power to sustain itself.

Colonels Bare and Kerr arrived back in London on the same day that the Germans launched their first V1 buzz-bomb attack on the city. They returned to Washington on the *Queen Mary*. Bare was transferred to the Pacific to become chief of staff of the 1st Marine Division for the invasion of Okinawa.

A Marine successor on the staff of ComNavEu was Colonel Paul D. Sherman. He joined in July as staff officer, plans, with the Allied Naval Commander-in-Chief, Expeditionary Force, in time to make the landing in southern France, near St. Malo, as a member of Navy Task Force 125 on 29 August 1944. It was called Operation Dragoon. Initially it was called Operation Anvil, subsequently changed to Dragoon, reportedly because Mr. Churchill was dragooned into accepting it.

Captain Merillat and Lieutenant James also participated in this operation as observers. Merillat was on the battleship *Nevada* (BB 36), which had the mission of knocking out some 340mm guns on the heights

protecting Toulon, and James with Combat Division 5. Major Rogers was assigned to the cruiser *Brooklyn* as an interpreter for the commander of the French II Corps, General Edouard de Larminat and his staff.

Two cruisers, the *Philadelphia* and *Augusta*, provided gunfire support for French Army troops on the western outskirts of Toulon. Four days later these ships sent landing parties ashore, which included their Marine detachments, to accept the surrender of German forces on the islands of Pomegues, Chateau d'If, and Ratonneau in the Bay of Marseilles. Some 730 Germans were taken prisoner in these operations. Overlord and Dragoon were the two main operations in the invasion of Europe in which the U.S. Navy played a leading part.

It is appropriate here to mention another Marine officer who had a most unusual assignment on the continent. John H. Magruder III served as a civilian with an ambulance unit in India in 1939, attached to the British Army. Returning home in 1941, he was commissioned in the Marine Corps. Having lived in Holland for some years, where his father, Captain John H. Magruder, Jr., USN,

*Another Marine who served in Europe was John H. Magruder III, who was assigned as a liaison officer to Gen Bernard Montgomery's Twenty-first Army Group in the Liberation of Holland.*

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A407625



Photo courtesy of George O. Ludcke  
*Irish war brides of Londonderry Marines leave for the United States on board the Marine Haven in September 1944, a month after their husbands left Ireland.*

was naval attache, he was fluent in Dutch and was assigned as a liaison officer to the British Army which, in turn, assigned him to General Montgomery's Twenty-first Army Group. He participated in the liberation of Holland and was decorated by the Dutch government. He also served in the Pacific War later.

Colonel Sherman, after the invasion of southern France, was assigned to duty as the U.S. Naval Representative on the SHAEF staff in France. From there he went to Naval Forces, Germany, and finally to the G-4 Division of Headquarters, U.S. Forces, Europe.

### *Changing of the Guard*

On 18 August 1944, the Marine Barracks, Londonderry, was disbanded after two years of service. Its original commander, Colonel Burnham, had been replaced the previous year by Colonel Shaler Ladd, and several of the officers who came to Ireland with the battalion had already rotated back to the States.

It was a historic farewell as the battalion marched down the Strand, led by its own bagpipe band playing a favorite Irish air, "The Wearin' of the Green" (a song that seemed as appropriate for the Marines as it was for the Irish). As the unit boarded

ship at Lisahally pier and headed down the River Foyle bound for the Atlantic, the U.S. Navy Band played the "Marines' Hymn" for a final salute. One month later a ship bearing 35 Irish brides of American Marines left Londonderry bound for the U.S., and the name of the ship that transported them was *The Marine Haven!*

An 80-man Marine detachment, under command of Lieutenant Chester A. Goodwin, Jr., took the place of the battalion. Its mission was much more limited – to provide security for the Naval Radio Station, which was a key communications facility for all naval operations in this theater. This detachment would remain at Londonderry until disbandment on 12 November 1945.

A rotation of command at the embassy detachment in London in August 1944 brought this writer to that post, to succeed First Lieutenant Alan Doubleday. The author embarked on the *Queen Elizabeth* in New York in company with some 17,000 troops. Officers were billeted six to a stateroom. The ship traveled without escort in a blackout condition, at an average speed of 32 knots. The crossing was made in three and a half days without incident, in spite of the continuing presence of German U-boats. The procedure at that time permit-



Marine Corps Historical Collection

*On 31 December 1943, after a seven-year tour as Commandant of the Marine Corps and a 44-year Marine Corps career, LtGen Thomas Holcomb retired and was appointed Minister to South Africa, where he served 1944-1948.*

ted any ship, which could travel at a speed of 16 knots or faster, to travel without escort since it was assumed that it could outrun a submarine.

Also embarked were a number of Marine replacements bound for London; all were Pacific war veterans. Many of the ship's passengers were Army Air Corps pilots returning for a second or third tour of combat duty. This was probably the reason why so much money was being wagered in wardroom card games. One soldier was even caught trying to cheat a few Marines with crooked dice in a crap game. He barely escaped being thrown overboard for his efforts, and was given a court-martial on board and convicted.

The ship docked in Greenoch, Scotland, just across the River Clyde from Gourock. The saying there was: "If you can see Gourock, it's going to rain; if you can't see it, it's raining."

This writer traveled to London by train and, just as he arrived, a V1 buzz-bomb passed over the train. That was an introduction to what

would become an almost daily occurrence in the months ahead. Buzz-bombs were used by the Germans to devastate large areas of London, only to be replaced (on 8 September 1944) by even more deadly V2 rocket bombs. These travelled at such high speeds and high altitudes that there was no defense against them at the time.

The author was lodged temporarily in the top floor of a large hotel and quickly discovered that it was not a preferred location. No one with knowledge of the threat from buzz-bombs wanted to be on an upper floor.

The detachment was billeted as a unit in Grosvenor Square at the headquarters of ComNavEu, quite vulnerable to rocket attacks. The Marines had many close calls and suffered some minor injuries from concussion. The Marine detachment was the only military organization to be billeted together, enabling it to provide security for the naval headquarters and the embassy if needed.

The detachment maintained its military proficiency with small arms by frequent visits to the pistol range at Wormwood Scrubs, a British prison on the outskirts of London. It was also able to assist naval personnel in small arms qualification prior to their transfer to duty stations in Europe. For rifle marksmanship training, members of the detachment were sent to the range in Londonderry. The London detachment also occasionally exchanged personnel for disciplinary reasons or simply as a change in type of duty. The detachment operated the Navy brig in London, and furnished orderlies for a number of flag officers, such as those in charge of communications and intelligence. At least two men were on duty with Admiral Stark's office, another with a British flag officer, another with the chief of staff of ComNavEu. Later in the war, Marines were sent to Paris to perform a similar service for Commander,

Naval Forces, France, and in Germany for Commander, Naval Forces, Germany. Every effort was made to replace the men who had not yet performed service in the Pacific, but that became difficult when a flag officer expressed a strong interest in retaining the orderly assigned to him. Admiral Stark's reliance upon Sergeant Francis M. Connolly, who served as his orderly for more than three years, was an example.

The detachment also performed a regular schedule of drills and ceremonies, and a weekly parade in the square with a small Navy band was always well attended. As the Marines wore dress blues, civilians looking on seemed to be cheered by this touch of color in what was otherwise a very drab military scene.

The detachment was given a Christmas present on 12 December 1944 when it was invited to a concert by Army Air Corps Major Glenn Miller and his orchestra at the Queensbury All-Services Club. During the evening, he paid a special tribute to the detachment as representatives of the Marine Corps. This turned out to be the last performance of his life. On a flight to Paris the following day, his plane was apparently shot down by the *Luftwaffe* and he was never heard from again.

The detachment participated in a very special occasion on 16 September 1945 when the Commandant ordered it to deliver, with appropriate ceremony, a set of Marine colors to the Royal Welsh Fusiliers (RWF), whose regimental headquarters was located in Wrexham, Wales.

A color guard was selected, which included Platoon Sergeant Floriano P. Sampieri, Sergeant Ray Fitzgerald, and Privates First Class Matthew Ryan and Marvin Bullard. They traveled to Wrexham, where they paraded with an RWF unit to the parish church and presented the colors. The colors are still displayed there in commemoration of the close association between the two services: The

RWF is the oldest military organization in Wales, with a long history of foreign duty, especially during the Boxer Rebellion in China, where it fought alongside the U.S. Marine Corps.

On display at the Royal Welsh Fusiliers' regimental chapel was the original score of John Philip Sousa's march, "The Royal Welsh Fusiliers," which he composed and delivered to the regiment in person on 26 June 1930, just two years before his death. The Marine color guard also paid honor to the grave of Elihu Yale, the Welsh founder of Yale University, who is buried in Wrexham.

At the time of this author's arrival in July 1944, one month after the D-Day landing in Normandy, London was a city of considerable devastation. German buzz-bombs were a daily occurrence, and in daylight they were clearly visible as they came lumbering over like large trucks in the sky, setting off a siren warning system in the danger area. As each landed the result would be nearly a square block of destruction, frequently with many casualties, since the target area was so well populated. Yet, in spite of this danger and the many shortages caused by the war, there seemed to be a great spirit

among the people, as they seemed to know they would eventually win out.

London was also a city of people in uniform. It appeared that half the population wore some type of uniform, many from countries that were hard to identify. There were quite a number of Dutch Marines, who had escaped to the United States and been trained at Camp Lejeune and wore the regular American Marine green uniform with their own insignia. Their frequent failure to salute American officers resulted in complaints to the detachment commander, which was a difficult problem for him to resolve.

The London Marine detachment muster rolls continued to carry the names of many Marines who were listed for reporting purposes only. Their duties covered a wide range of activities. Most were highly classified, especially those with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) performing clandestine services on the Continent. Two of these, Sergeant Charles Perry and Platoon Sergeant Frederick J. Brunner, were killed in action in Europe. Another OSS Marine was Lieutenant John Hamilton (movie star Sterling Hayden), who was awarded the Silver Star Medal

for his work with guerrilla forces in Yugoslavia.

The muster rolls of the detachment also listed Captain Marvin C. Ross, who was assigned to the G-5 section of the SHAEF staff, representing Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives, with a mission to help salvage and preserve the art treasures of Europe. Another was a Marine colonel, Wethered Woodworth, who had served in France in World War I. He was a field commissioner in the U.K. in the headquarters office of the Army-Navy Liquidation Commissioner. There was also Lieutenant Alan K. Magary, who was on the staff of the Naval Technical Mission, Europe. Marine Captain John Dickson was shown as an intelligence officer with ComNavEu. He was a German linguist, whose wife was a former member of the Berlin Symphony Orchestra.

One of the most prominent members of the group was Marine Lieutenant Edward T. Dickinson, Jr. He was an expert on factories who was given the responsibility, prior to D-Day, to develop plans for the sabotage of key factories in occupied Europe, and subsequently to pinpoint targets for destruction by guerrilla forces.

*The Marine Detachment, American Embassy, London, poses in Grosvenor Square in January 1945. Maj Harry Edwards, the detachment commander, is on the left of the rear row, while PISgt Floriano P. Sampieri, senior NCO, is on the right.*

Photo courtesy of LtCol Harry Edwards, USMC (Ret)



There also was Lieutenant Colonel John M. Maury, Jr., an assistant naval attache for air in the American Legation at Murmansk, Russia, representing the War Shipping Administration. Murmansk was the port to which large amounts of supplies were sent, starting in 1941, in support of the Russian war effort. It was the shortest route over the Arctic Circle and around the North Cape of Norway, but to use it was extremely dangerous. German submarines and aircraft, floating mines and horrible weather conditions took a heavy toll of Allied shipping, in spite of the protective presence of Allied warships. On one such convoy early in the war, the American admiral in command disappeared from his flagship, the *Washington* (BB 56), under mysterious circumstances. It was presumed that he had been washed overboard in the dark from his flagship. The convoy could not stop or slow down, however, because of the submarine threat, and he was listed as lost at sea.

When Admiral Hewitt arrived in 1945 in relief of Admiral Stark, as ComNavEu, he soon found fault with his Navy security personnel and promptly assigned to the Marine detachment all security duties for the entire headquarters. And when he left on an inspection trip to the Mediterranean to visit the cruiser *Helena* (CL 50) and the battleship *Missouri* (BB 63), he took with him the detachment's senior Marine NCO, Platoon Sergeant "Sam" Sampieri, and one other Marine.

Shortly after the fall of Berlin, Coast Guard Commander J. Skelly Wright and the Marine detachment commander paid a liaison visit to two German cities, Bremerhaven and Berlin. They learned that they were the first members of their respective services to visit those two cities since the end of the war. At the time of this visit, both cities were almost completely devastated.

They returned to London to join

the celebration of V-E Day, on 8 May 1945. By this time everyone was so thoroughly fed up with blackouts, food rationing, buzz-bombs, and the war in general that the whole city seemed to erupt with joy and relief. This was tempered only by the knowledge that British military forces in Europe fully expected to be deployed to the Pacific to join in the fight against Japan. Of course, they were spared when the Japanese surrendered just three months later. V-J Day called for a repeat celebration, since that meant the world war had finally ended.

At the time of the author's departure from London, in April 1946, the name of his organization was changed. It would no longer be the Marine Detachment, American Embassy, but rather Marine Detachment, U.S. Naval Forces, Europe.

With the war's ending, it seemed like more than a change of name for the London detachment, but rather the terminal point for an organization that had been the focus of nearly all Marine activities in the Europe-

an theater over an historic five-year period (1941-1946).

The unit muster rolls during that turbulent time reveal the names of many Marines who participated, either as Special Naval Observers, Assistant Naval Attaches, staff officers, trainees, or combatants. Many of the officers shown on those reports were in the ranks of lieutenant, captain, and major at the time, but went on to become colonels and generals before the end of the war, and one, Major Wallace M. Greene, Jr., became the 23d Commandant of the Marine Corps.

For its part, the London detachment received recognition for its wartime service in the form of service streamers for the detachment colors:

American Defense Service Streamer with one Bronze Star

European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Streamer

World War II Victory Streamer

National Defense Service Streamer with one Bronze Star (Korean War)

*Maj Harry Edwards looks on as his detachment Marines supervise ComNavEu staff members firing their pistols at targets located in Wormwood Scrubs, London.*

*Photo courtesy of LtCol Harry Edwards, USMC (Ret)*



## Sources

Research sources for this monograph were principally books and records on file at the Marine Corps Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard. Primary sources included: Muster rolls of Marine Corps units serving in the Atlantic Theater, 1941-1946, and the Marine Corps Personal Papers Collection, especially the papers of Gens Thomas Holcomb, Holland M. Smith, and Wallace M. Greene, Jr.; LtGens James P. Berkeley, Julian C. Smith, and George F. Good, Jr.; BGens Frank H. Schwable and James Roosevelt; and Col John H. Magruder. Also the Marine Corps Oral History Collection, especially the interviews with Gen Gerald C. Thomas; LtGens Robert O. Bare, James P. Berkeley, George F. Good, Jr., John C. McQueen, Francis P. Mulcahy, and Julian C. Smith; MajGens August Larson, Omar T. Pfeiffer and Wood B. Kyle; and BGens Harold O. Deakin, Edward C. Dyer, and Frank C. Schwable. Also bibliography files on various Marine officers and enlisted personnel; a draft manuscript (1989) entitled, "Herringbone Cloak-G.I. Dagger, Marines of the OSS," by Maj Robert E. Mattingly, USMC; *A Chronology of the U.S. Marine Corps 1935-1946*; and Benis M. Frank and Henry I. Shaw, Jr., *History of U.S. Marine Corps Operations in World War II*, vol V, *Victory and Occupation* (Washington: Historical Branch, G-3 Division, HQMC, 1969).

Another important source was valuable commentary to the author from: LtGen James P. Berkeley; MajGen Jack P. Juhan; BGens Homer G. Hutchinson, Jr., and Harold O. Deakin; Cols Roy T. Batterton, Jr., John B. Hudson, and Bruce T. Hemphill; Capt Herbert C. Merillat; and Chief Warrant Officer George V. Clark. Acknowledgments are also due for the valuable contributions of a former Marine officer, George O. Ludcke; and those of Mrs. Sheila Ackerland-Lobasco, the daughter of former Marine Col Francis M. Rogers.

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## Errata

The following changes should be made in the World War II 50th Anniversary commemorative pamphlets, as noted:

*First Offensive: The Marine Corps Campaign for Guadalcanal*, p. 14, the officer listed (31) should be Maj Robert O. Bowen.

*Time of the Aces: Marine Pilots in the Solomons*, p. 14, Robert L. Smith should be John L. Smith; p. 33, Sadai should be Sasai.

*Up the Slot: Marines in the Central Solomons*, p. 33, in the photo caption, Army Air Force Col Fiske Marshall should be Marine Corps Col Fiske Marshall.

*Breaching the Marianas: The Battle for Saipan*, pp. 4-5, the quote attributed to Maj James A. Donovan was made by Capt Carl W. Hoffman and was derived from his oral history transcript.



## About the Author

Lieutenant Colonel Harry W. Edwards, USMC (Ret), was in charge of the Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, from 1952-1955. He also served on the board of the *Marine Corps Gazette* and as an editor of the *Old Breed News* for the 1st Marine Division Association. In 1940 he graduated from the University of Minnesota and in May 1941 received his commission in the Marine Corps as a member of the 5th Reserve Officers Course. His 21 years of service included duty with the 1st, 2d, and 3d Marine Divisions. As a regimental staff officer with the 3d Marines, he participated in the amphibious landing on Bougainville in the Solomons, 1 November 1943. From 1944 to 1946, he commanded the Marine Detachment, American Embassy, in London. In the Korean War, 1951-1952, he commanded the 3d Battalion, 7th Marines. He was awarded a Bronze Star with Combat V. He taught in the Senior School at Quantico, and was a member of the Advance Base Problem Team 1955-1958. He served on the Joint Staff in Tokyo, Japan, 1958-1960, and was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal. He retired on 1 April 1962.



WORLD WAR II



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