

FORTITUDINE

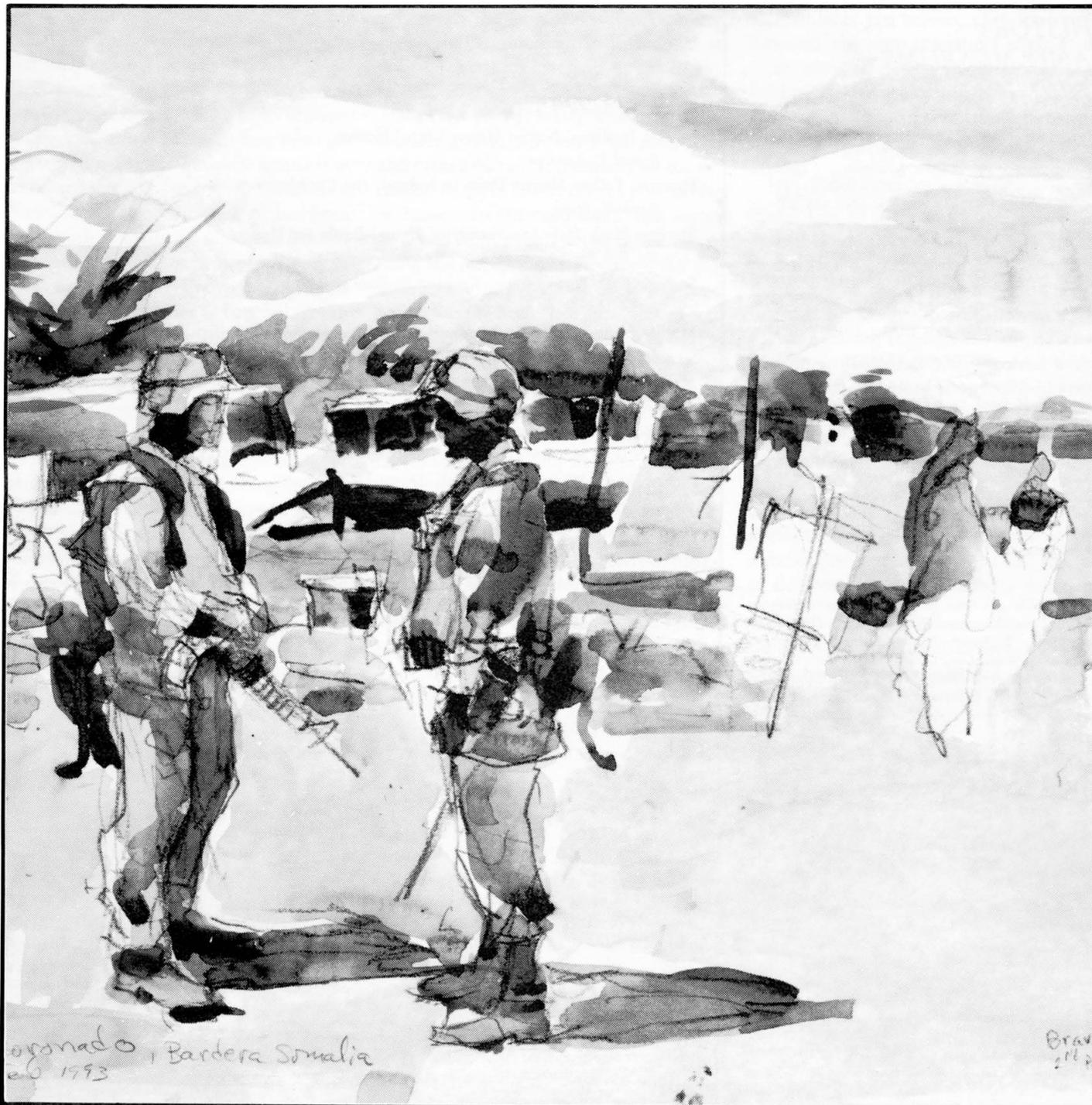
BULLETIN OF THE MARINE CORPS HISTORICAL PROGRAM

HISTORICAL BULLETIN VOLUME XXII

WINTER 1992-1993

NUMBER 3

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STORIED MARINE ARTILLERYMAN RECALLED IN FORT SILL DETACHMENT BUILDING NAMING . . . RELIVING AFTER 25 YEARS THE VIETNAM WAR'S BRUTAL 'BATTLE FOR HUE' . . . ON THE ROAD IN SOMALIA, MARINE HISTORIANS, ARTISTS RECORD THE CORPS' HUMANITARIAN MISSION . . . FLIGHT LINES: THOMAS-MORSE S.4 SCOUT TRAINER

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Marine Corps Historical Center
Building 58, Washington Navy Yard
901 M Street, Southeast
Washington, DC, 20374-5040
Telephone: (202) 433-3838, 433-3840, 433-3841

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Mr. Robert E. Struder
Senior Editor/Editor, Fortitudine

FORTITUDINE

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

Historical Bulletin Volume XXII

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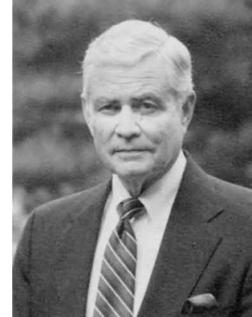
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THE COVER

Marines of 2d Platoon, Bravo Company, 3d Assault Amphibian Battalion, were taking part in Operation Coronado in Bardera, Somalia, on 10 February when they were sketched in pencil and watercolor by Col Peter M. Gish, USMCR, a senior member of the Marine Corps Combat Art Program. Col Gish and fellow artist LtCol Donna J. Neary, USMCR, were the first two combat artists to be dispatched to record the Marine presence in Somalia. In addition to the art program, operations of the Combined Joint Task Force Somalia were covered by some innovative programs developed by military historians, with Marine historians of Mobilization Training Unit (History) DC-7 taking the lead. A number of articles, and some of the interesting artwork brought back from the humanitarian relief program in the East African nation, appears beginning on page 12. Another History and Museums Division program, Commemorative Naming, is highlighted by discussion of the dedication of Wilburt S. 'Bigfoot' Brown Hall at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, by BGen Simmons, beginning on page 3.

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BGen Simmons

Fond Memories of 'Bigfoot' Brown

ONE OF THE Commemorative Naming Program actions this past year was the naming of the Marine Corps Detachment Headquarters at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, in honor of MajGen Wilburt S. "Bigfoot" Brown. Marines have been going to Fort Sill for gunnery instruction since at least the First World War. Gen Brown had been one of them; he had been there both as a student and as an instructor. Artillerymen are a brotherhood of their own and the rapport between the Army and the Marines at Fort Sill has always been superb. All things considered, it was almost inevitable that the Marine Corps Detachment headquarters facility, a one-story building, be named for Bigfoot Brown, but credit for pursuing the naming action must go to the detachment commander, Col Philip E. Hughes.

The date of the dedication was set for 27 August. Gen Brown's widow, Mrs. Martha Stennis Brown, asked me to make the dedicatory remarks and that pleased me

very much. Bigfoot Brown had been my regimental commander in Korea and at several other times we had served in the same places and I admired him greatly.

MajGen Fred F. Marty, USA, the commander at Fort Sill, was a splendid host and turned out a fine ceremony for the occasion. Fort Sill is a beautiful post in the Southwestern style and filled with history. It had been a cool, wet summer. Everything was unexpectedly green and the day was almost chilly. The post band was there and so was the distinctive showpiece of Fort Sill ceremonies, the half-section of horse-drawn artillery.

WHEN MY TURN TO speak came, I could almost see my old regimental commander sitting there in the front row, legs crossed so that a large foot with a large shoe could be seen moving up and down impatiently. In my mind's eye, he was wearing a loose set of green herringbone utilities stained with the dust of the

Korean hills. His helmet, chin strap unfastened, was worn at a jaunty angle so as to accommodate his ear to the handset of a field radio. Like most artillerymen he was a bit deaf. As I stammered through my introductory remarks I could hear him saying:

"Never mind the false humility, Simmons. Get to the point."

And the point was that we were there to dedicate the headquarters building in the name of one of the Marine Corps' finest and most beloved artillerymen.

After getting through the amenities I told an artillery story that involved both the Army and Marines, something that occurred on Okinawa near the end of the Second World War. Col Brown was then the commanding officer of the 11th Marines, the artillery regiment of the 1st Marine Division. For those in the audience who were not artillerymen, I explained that there is a technique that artillerymen like to use to demonstrate their virtuosity called a

Col Wilburt S. "Bigfoot" Brown, right, is congratulated upon taking command of the 1st Marines in Korea by outgoing commander Col Francis M. McAlister. Following the 25 May 1951

picture-taking, Col Brown told battalion commanders that he had aspired for years to the command of a Marine infantry regiment in combat and would issue his first order as such: "Retreat."



“TOT” or “time-on-target.” It is a shoot so planned that all shells impact at the same time regardless of the caliber or range of the guns from which they come.

I repeated the story as Gen Brown told it to us and as we taped it some 25 years ago:

“ONE NIGHT, JUST when the battle was nearly over,” Gen Brown recalled, “I asked the 96th Division about a TOT on a town in the south of Okinawa. The 96th went at it with a happy heart, and they got support from the 77th Division artillery . . . I got some help [too] from the 6th [Marine] Division and we used the Corps artillery of the III Phib-Corps and the Corps artillery of the XXIV Corps. So we ended up with a 22-battalion TOT”

“[A] time-on-target is always a pretty thing to watch The man that’s shooting says ‘Time on target—90 seconds after my mark. Stand by. Mark.’ Then everyone sings this chorus over their loudspeakers. Then, almost at once, the guns in the rear with the longest flight go bo-o-om! And then the guns up a little closer speak, and the other guns come in—boom—boom—boom—boom. And then the 105s and the 75s come in—boom—boom—boom—boom—boom. And God Almighty, this place is coming down. We had 22 battalions in this shoot, but I hadn’t told my division general or the Army general or any division general. . . .”

“If I had only been smart enough to do that, the Army commander would have been down there to have his picture taken. I could have probably become the Commandant of the [Marine] Corps. But instead, everyone in the island was wakened out of a sound sleep at 2230 when all this tremendous hassle started and they thought it was a Japanese counterattack. So instead of getting credit out of it, I caught hell from all sides.”

That was typical of Bigfoot Brown: doing the outrageous, endearing himself to his troops, telling a great story, and catching hell, if not from all sides, at least from the top.

He was a big man with craggy features and large hands and large feet. In appearance he always reminded me of a more roughcut version of the actor Walter Pidgeon. He also had an actor’s voice, a rumbling sort of voice that started deep in his chest, and he could use it well. It was in



Col Brown, second from left, receives the Legion of Merit from MajGen DeWitt Peck at 1st Marine Division Headquarters, Tientsin. The award cited Brown’s service as 11th Marines commander on Okinawa.

Nicaragua that he received the nickname “Bigfoot” and here is how he remembered the circumstances:

“Well, I do have this great big foot. It’s a size 14F With all the patrols I was doing my shoes all wore out The Army was supposed to have some large sizes in Panama. So I asked the quartermaster to get me some of those.”

THIS WAS IN 1927 and Lt Brown was then up in the mountains of northwestern Nicaragua at San Albino Mines near Jicaro. The Marine Corps was experimenting with aerial resupply. A trimotor Fokker would take the supplies from Managua to Ocotal and from Ocotal the remote hill stations would get emergency resupply dropped from two-place biplane Vought Corsair fighter-bombers. However, in this case, the pilot of the Fokker decided to make the drop himself.

As Gen Brown remembered it:

“Here was this big package of shoes for me Nothing would suit [Sid] Williamson then but that he should take

them up to the hill station and drop them himself He stuck a note to me on it and it said, ‘The Corsair couldn’t get off the ground with this load, so I had to risk my life to bring this up to you. Regards, Sid.’ ”

The story got touched up a bit as time went on and it emerged that the plane required two trips to deliver the shoes. This version of the story would send Gen Brown into a mock rage.

“It is a canard,” he would say, “It is not true that two trips were made. That Fokker was perfectly capable of carrying both shoes in one load.”

I first saw Gen Brown in October 1945, after the war’s end, and the place was the British Club at the end of Race Course Road in Tientsin. This imposing figure of a colonel was on the dance floor sweeping along his partner in a most impressive way. I guessed that he must be Col Brown, commander of the 11th Marines, and someone told me that, yes, I was right, this was the legendary Bigfoot Brown. I was not introduced that afternoon. In 1945 Marine colonels were not apt to have much to say in a social way to Marine captains.

IN CHINA THAT following summer something happened that came to be known as the An Ping Incident. Col Brown had his regimental headquarters in the old French arsenal outside of Tientsin. One of his missions was to send a truck convoy twice a week from Tientsin to Peking. On the 29th of July 1946, one of these convoys was attacked at a place called An Ping, about half-way between Tientsin and Peking. The second lieutenant commanding the patrol and several other Marines were killed. As soon as word of the ambush reached Brown he sent a motorized column, including several pieces of artillery, to the rescue.

Gen Brown later told me what followed in approximately these words:

“I was summoned to division headquarters and I went modestly expecting to learn that I had been recommended for the Navy Cross. Instead, they handed me this letter of reprimand. I told [the General] that if my mission was to spread sweetness and light, then he should take away my howitzers and issue me baskets full of rose petals.”

As he remembered the outcome of the incident:

“There was a tremendous outcry that followed this, and it was alleged that the Marines had taken the offensive against the Commies. Of course, when one puts 50 men against a battalion of a couple of hundred, I mean even the 11th Marines doesn’t start a fight under those circumstances. The President of the United States took it up and when the smoke all cleared away, I had a letter of admonition from [the Commanding General, Marine Forces, China] and it was decided that I had better be getting out of China.”

He reported in at Headquarters Marine Corps in Washington, and found that Headquarters, still upset over the fight at An Ping, was pondering his next assignment. The Air University, then just forming at Montgomery, Alabama, had asked for a Marine Corps instructor. It seemed to be an assignment in which Brown could do relatively little harm, so he was sent there in November 1946.

HE TAUGHT amphibious tactics, including coordination of artillery with naval gunfire and air support. He also had a prize lecture on the organization of the Navy. He would tell the class that, upon being assigned this latter subject, he had been “amazed to hear that the Navy had an organization.”

He had “always thought that it was like the Marine Corps.” The Marines, he believed, “stayed in a continual state of disorganization so they could be ready for anything.”

Behind the wit and clowning there was a carefully prepared, finely tuned, constantly revised lecture. In a serious moment, he once told me that for every hour on the platform, whatever the school, he would spend 40 hours in preparation.

This is a man who enlisted in the Marine Corps at Boston in the spring of 1918. Born in December 1900 and underage at 17, he managed an adjustment to his birth certificate to show his birth year as 1899 vice 1900. After recruit training at Parris Island he went as a private to France, where he joined the 20th Company, 5th Marines, in time for the St. Mihiel and Champagne offensives. In the latter, during the attack against Blanc Mont, he was wounded on 4 October. That took him out of action for the remainder of the war.

In the summer of 1920 he was discharged, as a sergeant, from the Marine Corps to take an appointment to the Naval

Academy. His stay at Annapolis was not a complete success. During the summer cruise in 1922 he had a problem with the shore patrol in Lisbon and again in Martinique.

As he put it: “. . . the Academy authorities then decided to drop me from the rolls for inaptitude, which was kind of them at that.”

He left the Academy in September, re-enlisted in the Corps, and in 1925 was commissioned a second lieutenant from the ranks. After finishing the Officers Basic School, he was assigned to his old regiment, the 5th Marines, in time to help guard the mails during an outbreak of train robberies. There were two tours in Nicaragua and several engagements against the Sandinistas, for one of which he received the Navy and Marine Corps Medal.

He returned from Nicaragua in 1929, went to Sea School at San Diego, and was assigned as the junior officer to the Marine Detachment of the new aircraft carrier, USS *Saratoga*. Barracks duty in Mare Island, California, and on Guam followed.

In 1935 he was assigned to the Base Defense Weapons Course at Quantico and his formal education as an artillery officer began. On graduation he was given command of an artillery battery of the 1st Marine Brigade.

Then in 1937 he was transferred to San Diego and given command of a 155mm gun battery in the 2d Marine Brigade. The

155mm of the time was the “G.P.F.,” a long-barreled French gun left over from the First World War: the “Grande Puissance Filloux” as he used to like to roll off his tongue.

IN 1939, now a captain, he went on board the USS *Pennsylvania* as the Marine Detachment commander. In those days of the old battlewagons, the Marines manned the secondary batteries of 5-inch guns.

In the summer of 1941, with the war clouds thickening, he returned to San Diego as a major to take command of the 4th Battalion, 10th Marines, of the new 2d Marine Division.

In March 1942, after the war had begun, he went off to serve as executive officer of the 8th Defense Battalion, which was sent to defend Wallis Island, west of Samoa.

He was returned to the United States as a lieutenant colonel in November 1942 with a persistent tropical skin disease. This caused his hospitalization until February 1943, when he was ordered to Fort Sill to attend the Advanced Artillery School. After completing the school he was detailed to the Troop Training Unit then forming at the Amphibious Base, Coronado, California. Serving as a team leader, he helped train four Army divisions and two Marine divisions in amphibious tactics and techniques.

While at Camp White, Oregon, training the 96th Infantry Division, he received his promotion to colonel. He celebrated

At the Fort Sill dedication ceremonies, the General's widow, Mrs. Martha Stennis Brown, accepts roses and other remembrances from a soldier in vintage uniform. The post joined in the honors by sending its ceremonial half-section of horse-drawn artillery.





Marine historian BGen Edwin H. Simmons addresses the audience at the dedication of Wilbur S. "Bigfoot" Brown Hall at Fort Sill. Gen Simmons drew on personal memories of Gen Brown, as well as information found in Brown's oral history interview.

his promotion with a wetting-down party held in a bedroom of a hotel in nearby Medford. He climbed up onto the bed, stooping to accommodate his height to the ceiling, and demanded of the well-wishers crammed into the room that he be treated with more respect by his subordinates, Marine and Army alike.

"Now that I am a colonel," he announced, "No more of this 'Bigfoot' nonsense. From here on I expect to be addressed in the British manner; that is, as Colonel Wilbur Scott-hyphen-Browne with an 'e' on the end."

DESPITE THIS DEMAND, the hyphenated Scott-Browne with an "e" on the end never caught on, and he continued to be Bigfoot Brown.

In October 1944 he went to Guadalcanal to take command of the 15th Marines, the artillery regiment of the 6th Marine Division, but found that the 15th Marines already had a commanding officer. After a few days of impasse, he was sent to the 1st Marine Division in the nearby Russell Islands to take command of the 11th Marines, in time, as said above, for the Okinawa operation.

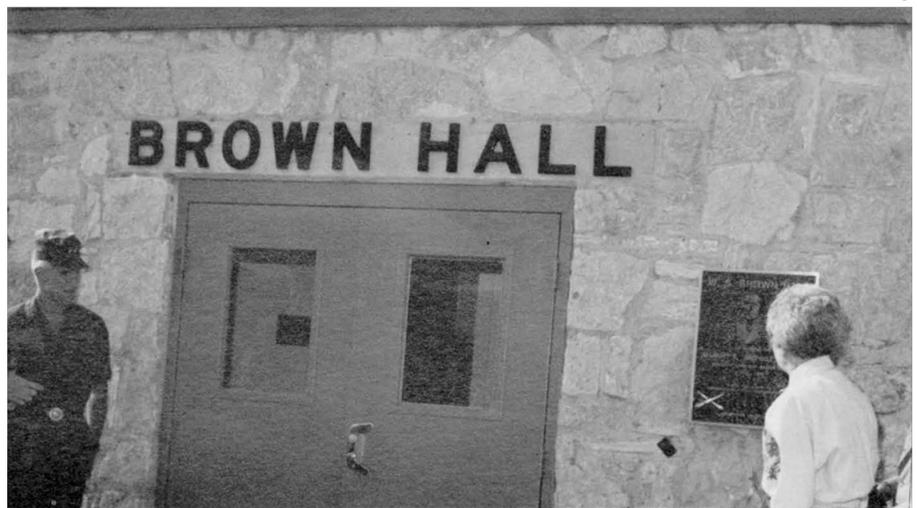
Despite the unannounced TOT on Okinawa and the An Ping Incident in China, and a few more almost equally scandalous episodes, he received a Legion of Merit with Combat "V" for outstanding service at Okinawa and a second such award for service in China. Possibly this was because he managed to fob off some of the blame for certain of his more outlandish escapades on his mythical identical twin brother, Philbert Brown, who seems to have spent most of his imaginary

service in the United States Air Force.

While at the Air University at Maxwell Field, Alabama, then-Col Brown met and married Martha Stennis of Mississippi. The newly married couple left Maxwell Field in 1949 for Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, where he took command of the 10th Marines, the artillery regiment of the 2d Marine Division.

He was so serving when he was sent to Korea in April 1951. His departure from Camp Lejeune was somewhat abrupt. The 10th Marines was providing drafts of replacements to the 11th Marines, then in the fight in Korea. By regulation no Marine under 18 years of age could go to Korea. While Col Brown was on Christmas leave, several 17-year-olds slipped through with a draft. The 17-year-olds thought it was a fine idea. but their parents did not. The division commander was

Fort Sill commander MajGen Fred E. Marty, USA, left, accompanies Mrs. Brown to remove bunting from the sign at the post's new Marine Detachment Headquarters, Brown Hall. Gen Brown had been at Fort Sill as both student and instructor of artillery.



determined that the battalion commander concerned be disciplined for the error. Col Brown, as regimental commander, was equally determined that the battalion commander not be disciplined. By the end of March the division commander was convinced that Brown was lacking in loyalty and demanded his immediate relief. Brown's orders to Korea were delivered to him on 31 March along with a bad fitness report. He rebutted the bad fitness report with a masterful statement that ended with this sentence:

"If it is considered disloyal to a leader, for me to speak up against an action of his, which I believe to be unjust, then I will be disloyal to any such leader, military or civilian, until I die."

He arrived in Korea just as the commanding officer of the 1st Marines, an infantry regiment, was wounded and he was given command of that regiment as a temporary thing. Our casualties had been high in that regiment and I, as a major, was briefly the acting commander of the 3d Battalion. It was the time of the Chinese spring offensive and the divisions on our right and left had given way.

THE BATTALION COMMANDERS or their operations officers were called back to the regimental command post to meet the new regimental commander and to get the new operation order.

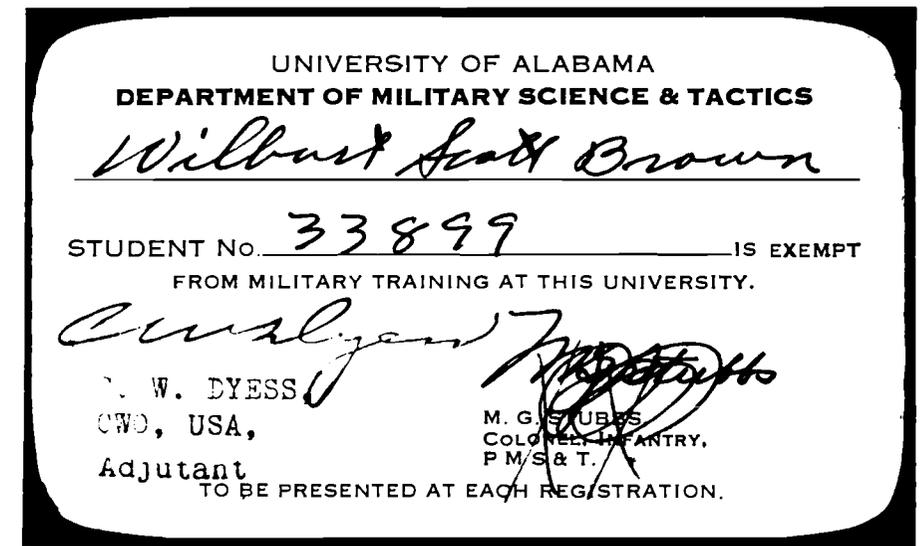
"Gentlemen," said Col Brown, "for 33 years I have aspired to the command of a Marine infantry regiment in combat, and now that I have that command, I will issue my first order: Retreat."

Well, we did not exactly retreat. We restored the line and advanced up to the edge of the Punchbowl. For the two months that he commanded the 1st Marines we were a particularly happy regiment. In July he was relieved by an infantry colonel and given command of the Division rear at Masan, a command he did not particularly like or want and which put him at some distance—literally and figuratively—from the division commander with whom he was having his differences. He was passed over for promotion to brigadier general, but did receive a well-deserved Silver Star for his leadership of the 1st Marines.

HE RETURNED TO the States in November 1951 and was posted to Camp Pendleton as intelligence officer and post inspector of the Marine Corps Base. I was then at Camp Pendleton and I remember fondly that Mrs. Brown crocheted a pair of booties for my first-born child.

In May of 1952 he was transferred to the staff of the Field Artillery School at Fort Sill. He was so serving when a promotion board in, as he put it, a “fit of absent-mindedness,” selected him for promotion to brigadier general. Shortly thereafter he moved back to Camp Pendleton as Commanding General, Force Troops, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific.

Upon his retirement in 1953 he was advanced to the grade of major general by



University of Alabama compulsory ROTC relented in the case of new student Brown.

reason of his combat decorations, a wonderful old custom, abandoned some 30 years ago for legal reasons.

A well-read and learned man, he had not bothered to pick up any degrees, not even, if you would believe him, a high school diploma. He now entered the University of Alabama. He would soon tell a highly unlikely story of seeking exemption from compulsory ROTC on the grounds that he was an overage, retired Marine major general. I never quite believed that story, but at breakfast before the Fort Sill dedication ceremony, Mrs. Brown presented me with his exemption card.

He zipped through the requirements

for a bachelor's degree and master's degree in history. He became a teaching member of the faculty in 1957. He then went in pursuit of a Ph.D. This he achieved in 1963. His doctoral dissertation treated the British invasion of Louisiana in 1814 as an amphibious operation. It is indisputably the best and most analytic military history of that campaign, which we otherwise remember chiefly for Andrew Jackson's defeat of Sir Edward Pakenham at New Orleans.

GEN BROWN, now Dr. Brown, as a member of the history department of the University of Alabama, was just as beloved on the Tuscaloosa campus, and the subject of just as many stories, as he had been at Quantico, or Pendleton, or Lejeune, or Maxwell Field, or at Fort Sill.

Regrettably, he did not have many years to enjoy this academic pasture. He died, after a long bout with emphysema, in December 1968. His dissertation, slightly reworked, was published posthumously in 1969 by the University of Alabama under the title *The Amphibious Campaign for West Florida and Louisiana, 1814-1815: A Critical Review of Strategy and Tactics at New Orleans*.

But any recollection of Bigfoot Brown should not end on such a morbid note. At Fort Sill I told one more story, a personal one. That morning in Korea, after he had given his retreat order to the 1st Marines, he kindly asked me to stay behind to have lunch with him—lunch being taking a mess kit through the chow line and then sitting on opposite ends of his canvas cot.

As we talked, I thought he might

Marine Facilities' Names Honor Corps' Heroes

*by Robert V. Aquilina
Assistant Head, Reference Section*

It is Marine Corps policy to name facilities in honor of those Marines (and other members of the Naval Service) who have served the Corps with distinction. The Marine Corps Commemorative Naming Program was instituted to oversee this responsibility, and to ensure that names are selected in an equitable and just manner. The program is administered by the Reference Section of the History and Museums Division, in accordance with guidelines promulgated in SECNAVINST 5030.2 and MCO P5750.1G.

To date, approximately 650 facilities have been identified with commemorative names, and more than 450 individuals have been honored (many names are used at more than one facility). Marine commanders who have occasion to name property can submit names of candidates to the History and Museums Division (Code HDH-2), or can request that the Division recommend suitable names for specific facilities.

Since the inception of the Commemorative Naming Program, all naming actions have required, and continue to receive, the personal approval of the Commandant of the Marine Corps.

benefit as a newly arrived colonel from some of things I could tell him as a 29-year-old major who had been with the regiment since the Inchon landing. I began sketching in lightly some lessons learned, when he interrupted me.

"You know, Simmons," he rumbled, "When I was a young lieutenant in Nicaragua I came back to the company base after one of those long patrols and the company commander invited me to have dinner. The company commander fancied himself as a bridge player and after dinner there was a game, the company exec and the machine gun officer

against the captain and me. You know, the captain was not a very good bridge player and after he failed to make his bid, I said, 'If you will permit me, sir, I will show you how you could have made that bid.' Do you know, Simmons, I was back on patrol the next morning."

Suitably chastened, I went back to my battalion. A few weeks later I was slightly wounded. Col Brown came to see me, to assure himself that I was not seriously hurt.

"A pitcher that goes to the well too often," he said. "gets broken. You've been to the well often enough." He then went to the division commander to get a set of

special orders to send me home.

As I told that story to Mrs. Brown and the audience at Fort Sill, I could still see my regimental commander sitting there in front of me, just as I described earlier. As he was known to do in the course of an over-long critique of a field problem, he had taken off his shoe and was massaging that large size-14F foot. By so doing he would shift the focus of attention from the speaker to himself. In my imagination, I could hear him saying:

"Simmons, you have talked long enough. Sit down."

And so I did.

□1775□

Histories Follow Marine Units in Iceland, the Caribbean

by Benis M. Frank
Chief Historian

TWO NEW TITLES have been added to the list of History and Museums Division publications. The first is an occasional paper, *U.S. Marine Corps Operations in the Dominican Republic, April-June 1965*, by Maj Jack K. Ringler, USMC, and former Chief Historian Henry I. Shaw, Jr. This history originated in the request of then-Commandant Gen Wallace M. Greene, Jr., that an account of the deployment of Marines to the Dominican Republic be compiled shortly after the event, when the command diaries of the units involved became available. These documents were on hand in the summer of 1965, when a chronology was prepared using the diaries, message traffic, and other material, most all of which was still

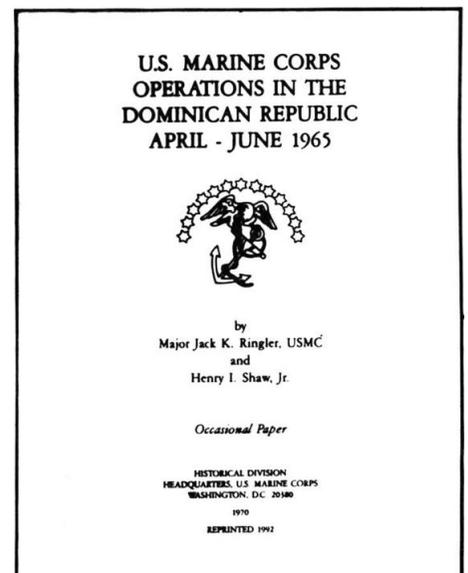
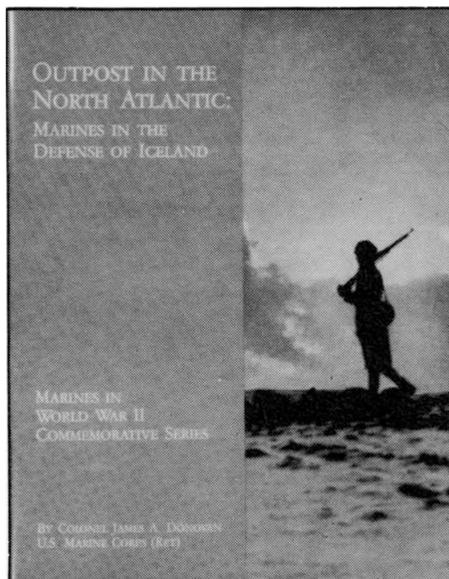
classified. The demands of historical reporting and writing about Marine Corps operations in Vietnam caused the incomplete narrative of this history to be put aside until 1969, when Mr. Shaw was available to finish it.

THE SECOND NEW publication is *Outpost in the North Atlantic: Marines in the Defense of Iceland*, written by Col James A. Donovan, Jr., USMC (Ret), who, as a second lieutenant, was a member of the 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, 1st Marine Brigade (Provisional) when it was deployed to Iceland in mid-1941 to join British forces to defend that country from a potential Nazi takeover. In *Outpost in the North Atlantic*, Col Donovan provides a good picture of life in a pre-World War II Marine infantry battalion as it prepared for war, and then deployment to an unknown destination. He tells of the brigade's eight-month stay on Iceland under conditions for which the Marines were not fully prepared, either in dress or equipment. He gives a good picture of the day-to-day conditions of the Marines on Iceland, how they trained in an unfamiliar environment, and how they were able to keep busy in the long, dark days of winter. Perhaps the highlight of this deployment was the day that Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill reviewed the Allied garrison.

As other pamphlets in the World War II 50th anniversary commemorative series, *Outpost in the North Atlantic: Marines in the Defense of Iceland* is available to Ma-

rines and historians by sending \$1.50 for postage and handling to the Marine Corps Historical Foundation, P.O. Box 240, Quantico, Virginia 22134. Veterans' organizations can obtain limited numbers of copies by writing to the Director of Marine Corps History and Museums, Marine Corps Historical Center, Washington Navy Yard, Building 58, 901 M Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20374-5040. Other interested individuals should mail \$3.75 to the Superintendent of Documents, P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15250. A finite number of copies of *U.S. Marine Corps Operations in the Dominican Republic, April-June 1965* is available to institutional addressees and can be obtained by writing to the Center at the above address.

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Marines Mark 25th Anniversary of Pivotal Battle for Hue

by Dr. Jack Shulimson
Head, History Writing Unit

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO this winter, U.S. Marines turned back the North Vietnamese massive onslaught on the city of Hue, the former Imperial capital of Vietnam.

On 30-31 January 1968, during the Vietnamese lunar New Year, the Communists mounted a surprise offensive throughout all of South Vietnam. Most of these attacks were by local Viet Cong units. There was one place, however, where the Communists committed first-line North Vietnamese units and that was in the one-month struggle for Hue. It is probable that in the battle for Hue the North Vietnamese attempted to achieve, with some prospect of success, a decisive victory that would result in the loss of the two northern provinces of South Vietnam to the Communists.

At the beginning of 1968, nearly three years after the commitment of large American combat forces, the U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), under Army Gen William C. Westmoreland, had intelligence of a massing of enemy divisions in the northern border region, especially in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) dividing the two Vietnams and in Laos near the isolated U.S. Marine base at Khe Sanh. Westmoreland prepared to reinforce the III Marine Amphibious Force (III MAF), under Marine LtGen Robert E. Cushman, in the five northern provinces in South Vietnam.

III MAF in January 1968 numbered more than 100,000 Marines, sailors, and soldiers, including two Marine and one Army infantry divisions. In mid-January, Westmoreland rushed yet another Army division, the elite 1st Air Cavalry Division, north. Worried about the Marine defenses at Khe Sanh and lacking confidence in the ability of the Marine commanders to control the situation, Westmoreland planned to establish a temporary northern forward headquarters under his deputy, Army Gen Creighton Abrams. Before he could implement this plan, the enemy launched his Tet offensive—everywhere but at Khe Sanh.

AS THE FORMER imperial capital, Hue was for many Vietnamese the cultural center of the country. It emitted a sense

both of its colonial and its imperial past. It was, in effect, two cities. North of the Perfume River lay the Hue of the Emperors with its ancient Citadel. South of the river was the modern city. The *Cercle-Sportif* with its veranda overlooking the river evoked the former French colonial administration.

The South Vietnamese had dismissed any notion that the enemy had the “capability” to launch a division-size attack against the city. Unknown to the allies, two enemy regiments, the 6th and 4th North Vietnamese Armies (NVA) were on the move. On 31 January, at 0223, a signal flare lit up the night sky above Hue. A four-man North Vietnamese sapper team opened the Western gate of the Citadel to the lead battalions of the 6th NVA. By daylight, most of the Citadel was in the hands of the NVA. At the Mang Ca 1st Army of Vietnam (ARVN) Division compound, an ad hoc 200-man defensive force managed to stave off the enemy assaults.

Across the river in southern Hue, much the same situation existed. The NVA maintained a virtual siege of the MACV

advisory compound. While the 4th NVA attack in the new city lacked the cohesion and timing of those in the Citadel, the NVA had control of most of southern Hue.

The first U.S. Marines to bolster the South Vietnamese in the city were from the newly formed Task Force X-Ray, a new command under BGen Foster C. LaHue, at Phu Bai, about eight miles south of Hue. LaHue had barely enough time to become acquainted with his new sector, let alone the fast-developing Hue situation. He later wrote: “Initial deployment of forces was made with limited information.”

WITH THIS “limited information,” Company A, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines received orders to relieve Hue. Although reinforced by four Marine tanks, the Marine company was caught in a murderous crossfire after crossing the An Cuu Bridge into the city. Among the casualties was the company commander.

The Marines reinforced the embattled company with the command group of the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines (LtCol Marcus

On 3 February 1968, aided by tanks in street fighting, Marines clear buildings at the University of Hue. LtCol Cheatham established a command post at the university.



J. Gravel) and Company G, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines. Gravel's relief column reached Company A in the early afternoon. By this time, the enemy attackers had pulled back their forces. BGen LaHue remembered that reports came in that the 1st ARVN Division was "in trouble" and "we were ordered to go across the river to relieve some of the pressure."

Leaving Company A behind to secure the MACV compound, LtCol Gravel took Company G and attempted to cross the main bridge over the Perfume River. Two infantry platoons successfully made their way over, but then immediately came under machine gun fire. Gravel remembered, "we were no match for what was going on . . . I decided to withdraw."

This was easier said than done. The enemy was well dug-in and "firing from virtually every building." Company G lost nearly a third of its men, either wounded or killed, "going across that one bridge and then getting back across that bridge."

THE AMERICAN COMMAND still had little realization of the situation in Hue. In Saigon, Gen Westmoreland cabled Washington, the "Enemy has approximately three companies in the Hue Citadel and Marines have sent a battalion into the area to clear them out."

Gen LaHue soon realized the enemy strength in Hue was much greater than he had originally estimated. Shortly after noon, on 1 February, he called in Col Stanley S. Hughes of the 1st Marines and gave him tactical control of the forces in the southern city. Hughes reinforced the two Marine companies in Hue with Company F, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines.

In southern Hue, on 2 February, the Marines made some minor headway and Company H, 2d Battalion, 5th Marines reinforced the Marines in the city. The NVA, however, continued to block any advance to the west towards the Province headquarters building.

At Phu Bai, Col Hughes prepared to bring his headquarters and that of the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, under LtCol Ernest C. Cheatham, into Hue. On the morning of the 3d, Hughes established his command post in the MACV compound and held a hurried conference with his two battalion commanders. While LtCol Cheatham took control of his three companies already in the city, Gravel retained command of his Company A.

Establishing his command post at the University, LtCol Cheatham, like Gravel before him, made no headway against the enemy. The following morning, 4 February, Col Hughes decided to place the 1st Battalion on LtCol Cheatham's exposed flank and continue the push against the enemy defensive positions.

On the morning of the 4th, Company B, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines joined LtCol Gravel's command. That night, however, North Vietnamese sappers blew the An Cuu bridge, effectively closing the land route into the city. This left the Marine command only two alternatives to resupply the Hue forces—river traffic and helicopters.

One of the immediate problems was the inadequacy of the Marine maps. As the commander of Company G observed, "You have to raid the local Texaco station to get your street map," which located the principal buildings and prominent tourist attractions in Hue.

WITH LITTLE ROOM to outflank the enemy, the battalion had to take each block and each building "one at a time." According to Cheatham, "we had to pick a point and attempt to break that one strong point . . ." After a time, Cheatham and his officers noted that the enemy "defended on every other street . . ." The battalion would move quickly and then hit a defensive position.

On the morning of 5 February, both Marine battalions resumed the attack in a southwesterly direction toward the city hospital and provincial headquarters. On the right flank, Company H advanced along the river front. The 1st Battalion, 1st Marines secured the left flank. LtCol Gravel remembered, "The going was slow . . . We fought for two days over one building."

Using tear gas, Company H, on the afternoon of 6 February, finally overwhelmed the NVA defenders in the provincial headquarters. The capture of the provincial headquarters was more than symbolic. The building apparently had served as the command post for the *4th NVA Regiment*. Once the headquarters fell to the Marines much of the enemy organized resistance in southern Hue collapsed. Gravel recalled "He [the NVA] seemed to lose his stomach for the fight. . . . once we started rolling . . . the main force sort of evaporated . . . and left some

local force—rinky dinks When his defense crumbled, it crumbled."

BY 10 FEBRUARY, despite some occasional resistance, the Marines were in control south of the Perfume River. With the NVA still holding fast in the Citadel, Hue was now indeed two cities. North Vietnamese sappers had blown the main bridge across the river, literally dividing the city in half.

In clearing the modern city, the Marines took a heavy toll of the enemy, but at a high cost to themselves. The Americans had accounted for more than 1,000 enemy dead and took six prisoners. Marine casualties included 38 dead and more than 320 wounded. A Marine from 2d Battalion, 5th Marines remarked, "The stink—you had to load up so many wounded, the blood would dry on your hands. In two or three days you would smell like death itself."

While the Marines cleared the new city, a South Vietnamese offensive in the Citadel had faltered. By 8 February, BGen Ngo Quang Truong, the 1st Division commander, had inside the Citadel four airborne battalions and the 3d ARVN Regiment, which were able to hold their own.

About 10 miles to the west of Hue, the U.S. Army's 3d Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division was having about as little luck as the ARVN forces in the Citadel. Having run into well entrenched enemy forces, the 3d Brigade did not have the wherewithal to push the NVA out. During this period, the North Vietnamese command maintained its "own support area outside the western wall [of the Citadel]"

IN THE INTERIM, the South Vietnamese Joint General Staff sent reinforcements from Saigon to Phu Bai, the lead elements of a Vietnamese Marine Task Force. Gen Truong proposed to have the South Vietnamese Marines replace the battered Vietnamese airborne battalions in the Citadel. Although one company entered the Citadel on the 10th, the Vietnamese Marine commander refused to insert any more troops until the rest of his command arrived from Saigon.

Gen Truong also asked for a U.S. Marine battalion. On 11-12 February, the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, under Maj Robert H. Thompson, entered the Citadel to take over the southeastern sector. As did the

other 5th Marines battalion, the 1st Battalion remained under the operational control of the 1st Marines.

Apparently when the one Vietnamese Marine company came into the Citadel the previous day, the Vietnamese airborne units departed. Unaware of the departure of the Vietnamese airborne, Maj Thompson departed the Mang Ca compound on the morning of 13th to take over the new sector: "There was no Airborne unit in the area and Company A was up to their armpits in NVA." Within minutes the company sustained 35 casualties.

Much of the fighting centered around an archway tower occupied by the NVA along the Citadel's eastern wall. Finally after committing its reserve and the extensive use of supporting fires, including air, the battalion captured the tower on the night of 15-16 February.

FOR THE NEXT few days the 1st Battalion met the same close-quarter resistance from the enemy. In contrast to the enemy in southern Hue, the battalion discovered that the NVA units in the Citadel employed "better city-fighting tactics." As Maj Thompson wrote, the enemy "had everything going for him."

During this period, on the 13th, the Vietnamese Marine Task Force finally arrived in the Citadel and was assigned the southwest sector. In two days of heavy fighting, however, the Vietnamese Marine task force advanced less than 400 meters. In other sectors of the Citadel, other ARVN units were also at a standstill.

By this time, the enemy also had his problems. On the night of 16-17 February, the allies intercepted an enemy radio transmission, relating the death of the NVA commander in the city and the assumption of command of a new officer. The new commander recommended withdrawal but the senior headquarters denied the request.

In the Citadel General Truong prepared for the final thrust to capture the Imperial Palace. With the Vietnamese Marines on the western flank, he placed the 3d ARVN Regiment in the center. On the left flank, the U.S. Marine battalion renewed its assault. If the NVA in the Citadel were now fighting a rear guard action, they contested nearly every piece of ground.

Both Gens Abrams, who had established his new headquarters at Phu Bai, and Cushman shared a concern about

progress in the Citadel and the resulting American casualties. The *Washington Post* quoted a Marine officer: "We don't have enough men, . . . air support, or enough artillery to do this thing quickly . . ."

ON 20 FEBRUARY, Gen Abrams radioed Gen Cushman that he considered "the measures so far taken to be inadequate." He also sent a message to Gen Tolson of the 1st Air Cavalry to clear the approaches to Hue. Tolson was to "make personal contact with BGen Truong . . . and report personally to this headquarters with your proposed plan of action."

Despite the note of anxiety in Abrams' messages, the battle for Hue was in its last stages. By 22 February, after stiff resistance, the 1st Cavalry's 3d Brigade was within sight of the city walls.

In the eastern sector, the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines had once again taken the initiative. Despite heavy initial resistance, by the morning of the 22d, the Marines had reached the southeastern wall.

To the west of the American Marines, however, the North Vietnamese continued to hold out. Venting his anger at what he considered the slow progress of the Vietnamese Marines, Gen Abrams complained to Westmoreland that the Vietnamese Marines in the last three days "have moved forward less than half a city block," and even recommended their possible dissolution.

NOTWITHSTANDING Abrams' frustrations, the Vietnamese forces were on the offensive. At 0500 on the 24th, ARVN soldiers raised their flag over the Citadel and by late afternoon, South Vietnamese troops had recaptured the palace with its surrounding grounds and walls. Save for mopping-up operations, the fight for the Citadel was over. On 26 February, ARVN forces relieved the Marine battalion.

On the 29th, the 1st and 2d Battalions, 5th Marines conducted a sweep east and north of the city. The Marines uncovered "fresh trench work along the route of advance," but the search for significant North Vietnamese forces proved fruitless. LtCol Cheatham observed, "we couldn't close the loop around the enemy. To be honest, we didn't have enough people to close it." On 2 March 1968, the Marines closed out the operation.

The suddenness and the extent of the enemy offensive in Hue caught both the

South Vietnamese and American commands offstride. At first underestimating the strength of the enemy in Hue, the allies sent too few troops. Command, control, and coordination remained a problem until the last weeks. The activation of the MACV Phu Bai Headquarters added an additional unneeded layer of command from above. Task Force X-Ray, the 1st ARVN Division, and the 3d Brigade fought their own battles in isolation from one another. Outside of Gen Cushman of III MAF and Gen Abrams, there was not even an overall American, let alone a single, commander of the Hue campaign. Both Cushman and Abrams were at too high a level to focus much of their attention on the Hue situation. From his headquarters, Gen Truong controlled the South Vietnamese effort. As a Marine officer observed, the lack of an overall commander resulted in no general battle plan and competition for support. By the time a U.S. Army general became the Hue coordinator, "he didn't have anything to coordinate . . ."

THE BATTLE COST all sides dearly. All told, allied unit casualties totaled more than 600 dead and nearly 3,800 wounded and missing. Allied estimates of NVA and VC dead ranged from 2,500 to 5,000 troops.

Just as speculative were the size and number of enemy units in the one-month battle. Allied intelligence officers initially identified at least three North Vietnamese regimental headquarters. Later they confirmed battalions from at least four more NVA regiments. Allied intelligence estimated that from 16 to 18 enemy battalions took part in the battle. Some of these battalions were supposed to have been at Khe Sanh. From 8,000 to 11,000 enemy troops participated in the fighting for Hue in the city itself or its approaches. American intelligence officers believed that a forward headquarters of the *Tri-Thien-Hue Front* under a North Vietnamese general officer directed the Hue offensive.

Given both the resources that the North Vietnamese put into the battle and the tenacity with which they fought, it was obvious they placed a high premium on Hue. The North Vietnamese planners viewed Hue as the weak link in the allied defenses in the north. As a North Viet-

(Continued on page 24)

Somalia Task Force History-Keeping in Care of Marines

by LtCol Thomas A. Richards, USMC
Head, Historical Branch

THE FIRST U.S. Joint History Team ever to deploy went to Somalia on 4 February with LtCol Charles H. Cureton, USMCR, as its officer in charge. LtCol Cureton is a member of the History and Museums Division-affiliated Mobilization Training Unit (History) DC-7.

Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen Colin L. Powell, USA, approved the joint history program concept during the spring of 1992, as an extension of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, which directs more and improved interservice cooperation and understanding. With the concurrence of the Service chiefs, the Joint Staff issued *Memorandum of Policy No. 62: Guidance for the Joint History Program* on 15 May 1992, and followed that with an improved version of the same document on 23 November 1992. That "MOP" spawned the Joint History Program, and with President Bush's offer of humanitarian relief assistance for Somalia, the opportunity arose almost immediately to test its precepts.

The team, which consisted of six members representing all of the Services, assembled at the Pentagon on 2 February

and received two days of briefings about the program and the current operational situation in Somalia. Thereafter, it deployed to the U.S. Central Command Headquarters at McDill Air Force Base, Florida, for additional briefings. It arrived in Somalia on 6 February and, as of this writing, remains there. The team's duties while in Somalia included collecting documents, journals, photos, film, and files; conducting oral history interviews; and recording its own impressions of Operation Restore Hope.

BEFORE LT COL CURETON'S team could deploy, the Joint Staff and the Services had to coordinate the final details of the program and the logistical arrangements for the deployment. Meanwhile, Capt David A. Dawson, USMC, an infantry officer who currently is serving as a historical writer for the Marine Corps History and Museums Division, preceded LtCol Cureton into Somalia. Capt Dawson provided historical advice to the staff of Combined Joint Task Force Restore Hope, initially at Camp Pendleton and then in

Somalia, and simultaneously served as the initial representative of the Marine Corps' historical effort. He commenced the collection effort of both Marine and joint documentation.

On 18 December 1992, LtCol Dennis P. Mroczkowski, USMCR, also a member of MTU DC-7, followed Capt Dawson into Somalia and became the second Marine (and second person) to represent the Joint History Program in an operational environment. LtCol Mroczkowski was also "dual-hatted," serving additionally as the senior Marine historian. He built upon Capt Dawson's work, continuing the collection and oral history efforts. On 8 February, after welcoming LtCol Cureton and his team to Somalia and orienting them, LtCol Mroczkowski returned to the United States.

The joint history MOP provides for: a director, a new Senior Executive Service billet; a joint staff history office to be staffed by a combination of civilian historians and three "full-time support" (FTS) officers; history offices at each of the speci-

In Somalia in January, in a photograph by combat artist LtCol Donna J. Neary, USMCR, a Marine talking with an adult in Bardera, "The Italian Village," is quickly surrounded by curious

children. To fellow combat artist Col Peter M. Gish, USMCR, on his own visit, "some of the children seem too far gone to be saved, but most, with multiple daily feedings gain strength."





Col Gish, a renowned watercolorist, portrayed a pair of "Fast Attack Vehicles, 15th MEU, Somalia." In his journal, he describes an early morning ride "with an armed convoy from the airport to the Embassy, driving through littered, dirty streets, past rickety markets more filthy than I could have imagined, including a camel slaughtering area cleansed only by the hot sun and flies."

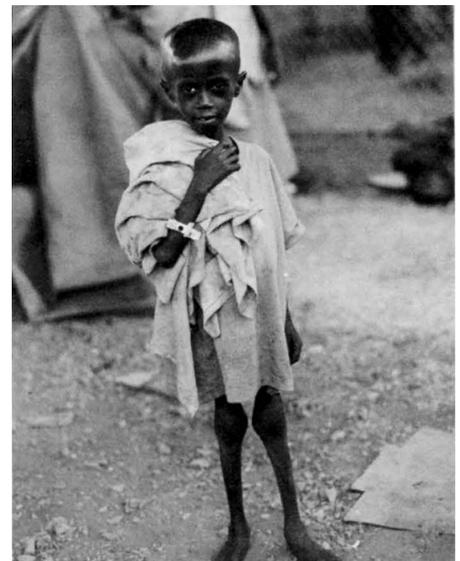
fied commands; Reserve joint history detachments; and a joint advisory committee, a new body which has not yet officially convened—though a group which functioned in this capacity has met several times to coordinate the details of the program. Officers to fill the three FTS billets will come, one each, from the Army, Air Force, and naval services, the latter billet to be a rotational one, with the Marines and Navy having alternating responsibility for filling it. The Joint Staff will ask each of the Services to provide representatives to serve in the Joint History Detachments.

A SECOND TEST of the program commenced on 13 February when a joint history team deployed to the Headquarters of the U.S. European Command to work on the historical effort for Operation

Provide Promise relief efforts in the former Yugoslavia. MTU DC-7 member LtCol Nicholas E. Reynolds, USMCR, represented the Marine Corps on that team.

These test deployments, which occur under actual operational conditions, provide invaluable lessons for the Joint History Program. The "after-action" reports submitted by the returning team members provide recommendations for refining the procedures for future deployments. Additionally, they provide valuable information regarding the training of future Joint History Detachment members, and also about the logistical requirements for future deployments. The team members will also contribute their observations to the documentation files for the exercises, from which will be written the joint histories of the respective operations. □1775□

Child photographed in Baidoa by LtCol Neary has more than hunger as a problem; he has measles. His bed is on the ground.





Marine Historians Tracked Somalia Force from Outset

by LtCol Thomas A. Richards, USMC
Head, Historical Branch

“WHERE IS MY HISTORIAN?” demanded Col Billy C. Steed, Chief of Staff of the I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF), of Col Marshall B. Darling, Deputy Director of the Marine Corps History and Museums Division. Col Steed was assembling his operational “team,” even as he planned for the deployment of the Joint Task Force headquarters and its subordinate units to Somalia.

LtGen Robert B. Johnston, Commanding General, I MEF, had recently received orders to serve as Commander, Joint Task

Force Restore Hope, and to organize the Somali relief effort. This was to be the fourth time that a Marine has served as the commander of an operational joint task force. Marines served as JTF commanders for Operation Sea Angel, humanitarian relief program following a typhoon in Bangladesh; Operation Gitmo, relief effort for Haitian refugees; and Operation Provide Relief, predecessor of Operation Restore Hope. Additionally, a Marine commanded the JTF which conducted the wargame exercise Cobra Gold-92 in Thailand last year.

Within a few days of the formation of the JTF, Col Darling had bidden farewell to Capt David A. Dawson, one of the Historical Branch’s writers, departing on

temporary duty orders to the CG, I MEF, at Camp Pendleton, California. Capt Dawson was the “point man” of the Marine Corps’ historical effort in Somalia which, as of the date of publication, continues.

WORKING UNDER THE auspices of the J-3, Joint Task Force Restore Hope, Capt Dawson set immediately about the task of organizing the historical program for the Somali relief effort. While still at Camp Pendleton, he received advice and assistance from Col Charles J. Quilter II, USMCR, who lives nearby in Laguna Beach. (Col Quilter commands Mobilization Training Unit [History] DC-7 and served as the I MEF

Above: The “noisiest, but most beautiful” campsites in Somalia belonged to Battalion Landing Team 219, writes Col Gish of the also steadily windy seaside locations.

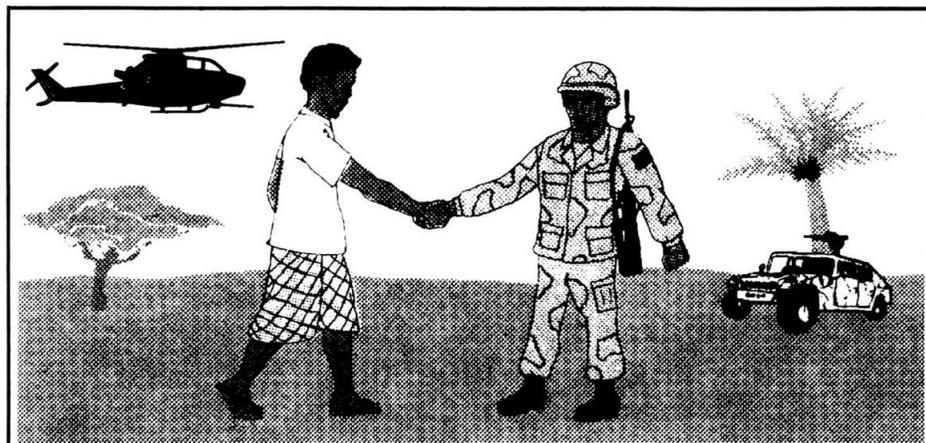
historian during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. The History and Museums Division will shortly publish his monograph entitled "With the I Marine Expeditionary Force in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.")

Following closely on the heels of the I MEF command group, Capt Dawson deployed to Somalia on 13 December 1992. In his capacity as the representative of the Director of Marine Corps History and Museums, Capt Dawson's duties included: serving as the "duty expert" on Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) Somalia* for the Marine Corps Historical Program; advising historians of subordinate units about the Historical Program; collecting documents, photographs, and oral history interviews relative to any and all aspects of Operation Restore Hope; and coordinating the submission by all of the Marine units in the CJTF of periodic "command chronologies" to the Commandant of the Marine Corps. Capt Dawson's initial duties also included serving as the Marine Corps's representative for the nascent Joint History Program.

AN INFANTRY OFFICER, Capt Dawson attended Kansas State University under the Marine Corps' Advanced Degree Program and will receive his master's degree in 1993. He reported immediately thereafter to the History and Museums Division. He has performed several functions in the Historical Section, including being the interim custodian of the Oral History Program, revising the *Marine Corps Historical Center Writing Guide*, and contributing to the on-going writing of the 1968 Vietnam history volume).

LtCol Dennis P. Mroczkowski, USMCR, reported to active duty on 14 December 1992. Three days later, after receiving Joint History Program and "current ops" briefings at the Pentagon, he departed for Somalia. Upon his arrival there, he assumed Capt Dawson's role at the headquarters of the CJTF. Capt Dawson moved on to perform similar historical functions for the 1st Marine Division, which is also the Marine Corps "component command," or Marine Corps Forces (MARFOR) Somalia. LtCol Mroczkowski departed Somalia on 8 February, after serving as the JTF

*The JTF was first redesignated as Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) Somalia; later, it was redesignated again as Unified Task Force (UNITAF)/Combined Joint Task Force Somalia.



WAXAANU XAGAN UNIMID IN AANU
DIFAACNO DADCA IDIN CAAWINAYA.



HA HOR-ISTAAGINA WADADA I

Flyer dropped by aircraft over Somali towns and villages was collected by LtCol Neary. It advises residents of the impending arrival of military convoys on friendly missions.

historian and the senior Marine historian for about eight weeks.

LtCol Mroczkowski is a member of MTU (History) DC-7 and served during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm with the 2d Marine Division. His manuscript, "With the 2d Marine Division in Desert Shield and Desert Storm," is about to be

published by the History and Museums Division.

LtCol Charles H. Cureton, USMCR, who reported for active duty on 2 February, succeeded LtCol Mroczkowski in Somalia. After receiving two days of briefings from the Joint Staff, LtCol Cureton deployed from Washington, D.C., via U.S.

Near Baidoa, in the village of Goof Guudud, young women watched the unloading of foodstuffs and, using appropriate hand gestures, asked the visiting LtCol Neary, well disguised by her layers of military and protective clothing if she also was a woman.



Central Command, as the officer in charge of the first Joint History Team ever to deploy. As of this writing, he and the team remain in Somalia, working at the Unified Task Force headquarters, collecting documents, papers, journals, photos, and films; conducting interviews; and recording their own impressions of Operation Provide Hope. He also served as the senior Marine historian in Somalia, coordinating and assisting the efforts of Capt Dawson

and the several Marine combat artists who deployed to Somalia.

LT COL CURETON ALSO is a member of MTU (History) DC-7, and served during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm with the 1st Marine Division as its historian. His manuscript, "U.S. Marines in the Persian Gulf, 1990-1991: With the 1st Marine Division in Desert Shield and Desert Storm," is pending publication by

the History and Museums Division. That monograph forms one of the series of six covering major forces engaged in the Gulf conflict—I MEF, 1st and 2d Marine Divisions, 3d Marine Aircraft Wing, Marine Forces Afloat, and Humanitarian Relief Operations in Northern Iraq and Turkey—all under the general editorship of LtCol Kenneth W. Estes, USMC. All are slated for publication in fiscal year 1994.

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Marines' Efforts, People's Dramatic Plight Drew Combat Artists to Somalia

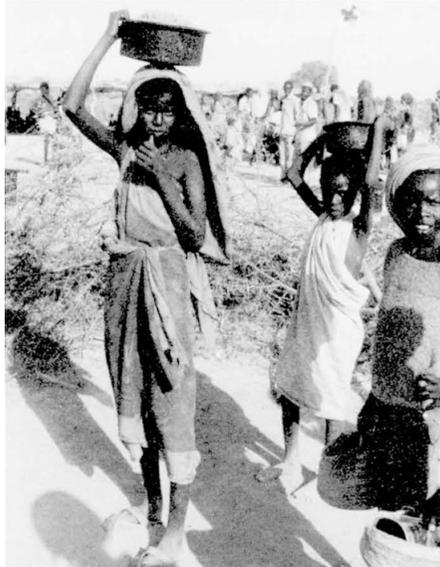
*by John T. Dyer, Jr.
Curator of Art*

ARTISTS' FIELD sketches, drawings, and on-the-spot watercolors; the subjects they focus their reference-gathering cameras on; and their finished studio products differ as they are filtered through brain, heart, fingertips, tools, and the sum of individual experience.

One of the products of History and Museums Division's assignment to Somalia of three Marine Corps Reserve artists (and of the preparations for sending a civilian artist) will be a major Washington, D.C., exhibit recounting the Marine Corps' experience in Operation Restore Hope.

Col Peter Michael Gish, USMCR (Ret), Vietnam veteran and veteran combat artist, whose most recent assignment was to Operation Provide Comfort for Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq and Turkey, landed in Somalia in December 1992. LtCol Donna J. Neary, USMCR, noted for

A young girl visiting the Bardera feeding center filled the pot atop her head with the food and then posed for LtCol Neary.

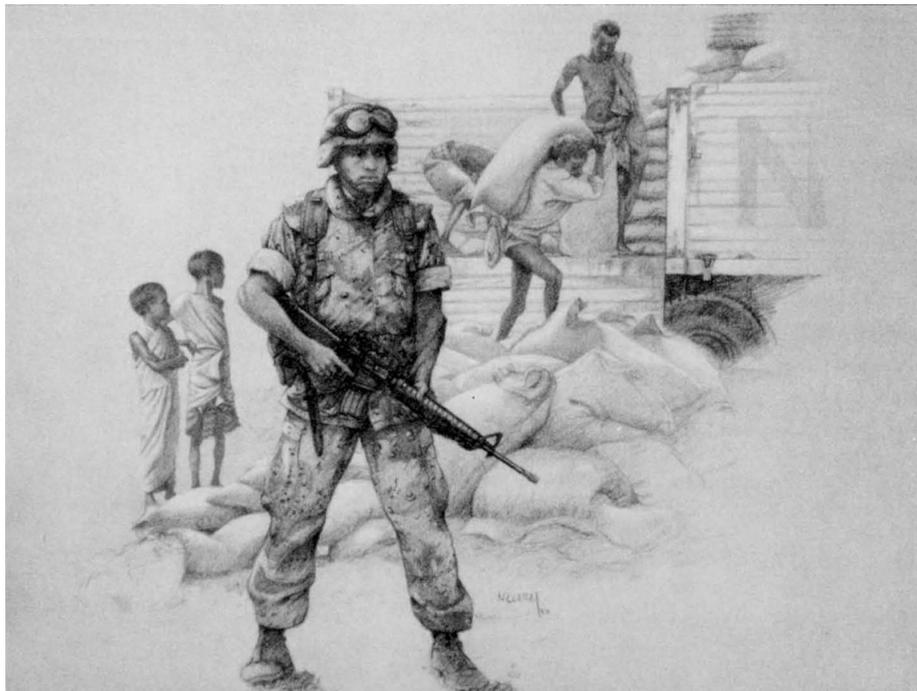


her highly detailed paintings of historical subjects and as the artist for the plate series *Marine Corps Uniforms, 1983*, joined Col Gish in January 1993. Capt Burton Moore, USMCR, a Vietnam veteran and a wildlife artist of national repute, teamed with them in Somalia in early February. Col Gish and LtCol Neary have returned to the U.S. and are working up finished pieces in their respective studios.

WO Charles Grow, USMC, who produced fine paintings and drawings, now in the Museum collection, from his experiences of the war in the Persian Gulf, was in Somalia with the Joint Combat Camera Team, attached to the Combined Joint Task Force Somalia, and is preparing new art from his African experience.

James A. Fairfax, civilian head of the Marine Corps Museums' Exhibits Unit, another Vietnam veteran combat artist and

In this scene by LtCol Neary, a Marine stands guard while Somali villagers unload bags of grain from a UN convoy truck. "No matter what village we were in, the villagers unloading the trucks would chant and sing" while the work progressed, she wrote.



retired Marine master sergeant, is preparing for the possibility of going to Somalia, also for the combat art program. □1775□



One of many pencil sketches made by Col Gish is this figure from a full sheet, "Refugees—The Sick and Starved at Bardera."

Gish Found Color Beautiful, People Lovely and Graceful

by Col Peter M. Gish, USMCR

Col Gish, a longtime member of the Combat Art Program, kept a journal during his stay in Somalia. Below are some entries from the period 29 December 1992-21 February 1993—Editor

Mogadishu

After two days of travel in a C-5, I spent my first night in a tent at the airport being introduced to the wind, blowing sand, and noise which would be features of life here. (The Battalion Landing Team 2/9 of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit had the noisiest, but most beautiful, sites between the airport and the sea.)

In the morning I rode with an armed convoy from the airport to the Embassy, driving through littered, dirty streets, past rickety markets more filthy than I could have imagined, including a camel slaughtering area cleansed only by the hot sun and flies.

But the color is beautiful, especially the brilliant orange saffron yellows, scarlets, bright blues, and violets in many intricate patterns worn by the women. The people, too, are lovely and graceful with fine features.

Life here is rougher than I'd anticipated—no showers, laundry, or hot chow, only blowing sand, MREs, and a water bull, but I am now able to shave out of a cup at first light and be ready in cam-

Col Gish pauses in Kismayo for some hand games with youngsters. He found Somalians to be "lovely and graceful" and "handsome, erect people with welcoming smiles."



Combat artist Col Peter M. Gish, USMCR, was sketched in Somalia by fellow combat artist and portraitist LtCol Donna J. Neary, USMCR, as Col Gish painted in watercolors.

mies, boots, web belt, cameras and camera bag, plus my Alice-pack full of watercolor paper, art supplies, and my French folding easel. For overnight excursions my cot, mosquito netting, and poles also have to be carried. Nevertheless, I manage to be ready to move out by 0600, catching a con-

voy to the airport or port for travel into the interior.

Baidoa

We spent a windy night at the Mogadishu port, up at 0330, and departing while it was still dark to avoid possible hostile fire. The long convoy of UN trucks loaded with packs of grain rumbled out of the city, and in the early dawn I was surprised by the amount of traffic coming toward town on foot and by donkey. Load after load of fresh-cut firewood and straw and other products were carried by women and pack animals. The women carried huge loads on their backs, headbands gripped in their hands. We passed camel herds and fields of corn and areas more verdant than I'd thought possible. I wondered why the people were starving.

One of our LAVs had a battery explode and we had to wait for a replacement. Back underway we passed through drier areas, past a prominent rock cliff seemingly heaved up by the desert, towering over a village, and finally in the late afternoon entered the streets of Baidoa.

As the convoy turns into the dusty vil-

lage roads people alongside are smiling, waving, and sometimes applauding the arrival of the relief column. They are handsome, erect people with welcoming smiles and again the brilliant colors; and frequently a baby strapped to the back or the hips of a woman. There are not many signs now of starvation, seeing these handsome, healthy people walking barefooted through the African dust. But tomorrow the convoys will go out to the feeding centers where malnutrition and disease are very much in evidence.

Bardera, 'The Italian Village'

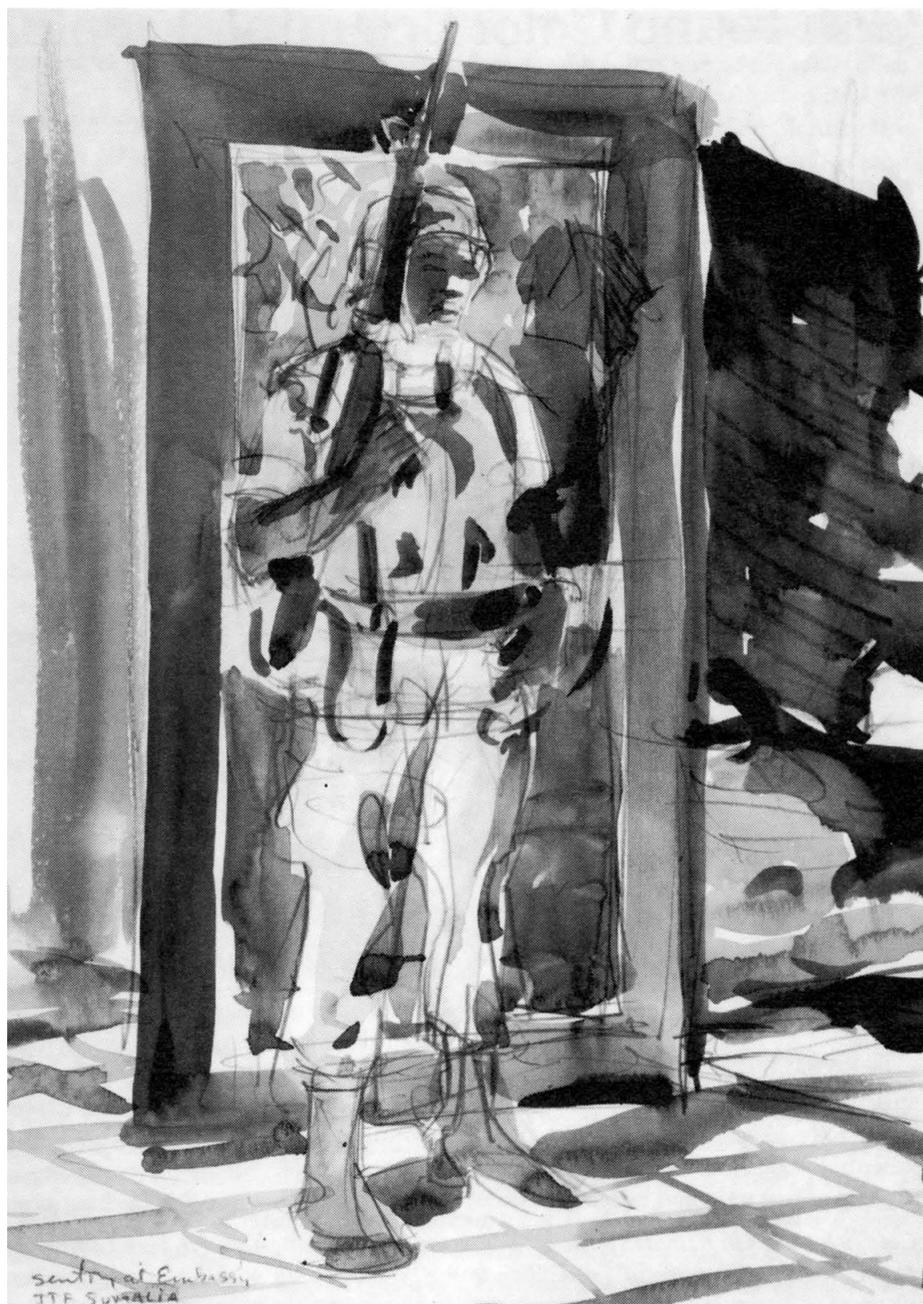
The human suffering here is appalling. I take pictures and sketch, feeling that I am intruding on these poor people, yet this my mission. This is at the heart of our operation.

Two women have been left out of the green plastic-roofed shelter. They are too far gone to be helped, skeletal, unable to hold down any nourishment, pleading with their eyes, muttering through phlegm, indecipherable. I cannot respond to them, not knowing their language. Some of the children seem too far gone to be saved, but most, with multiple daily feedings gain strength. Some who have been in the camp for a while are sporting "Friend of the USMC" tee shirts provided by Camp Pendleton.

Oddur

Just between the runway and the French positions is a large circular well. As with others in the village it is stepped up, made of stone and concrete. The figures of men and women drawing water are most color-

Fascinated by the plant life as well, Col Gish painted Somali trees near Oddur.



In Mogadishu, above, Col Gish drew a Marine sentry posted at the U.S. Embassy.

ful and the splashed water shining on the stone levels reflects the ultramarine blue sky late in the day. This next to the ochres, scarlets, and blues of the dress, and the exotic shapes of camels passing is spectacular.

The villagers do not easily admit refugees, who are camped outside, their stick hovels scattered about in a barren landscape with sparse, dry vegetation. Along the roadside are thousands of mound-graves, stark reminders of how bad it was.

Despite the harshness of life and the heat, these colors are gentle and lovely, ideally suited to watercolor and pastel

□1775□

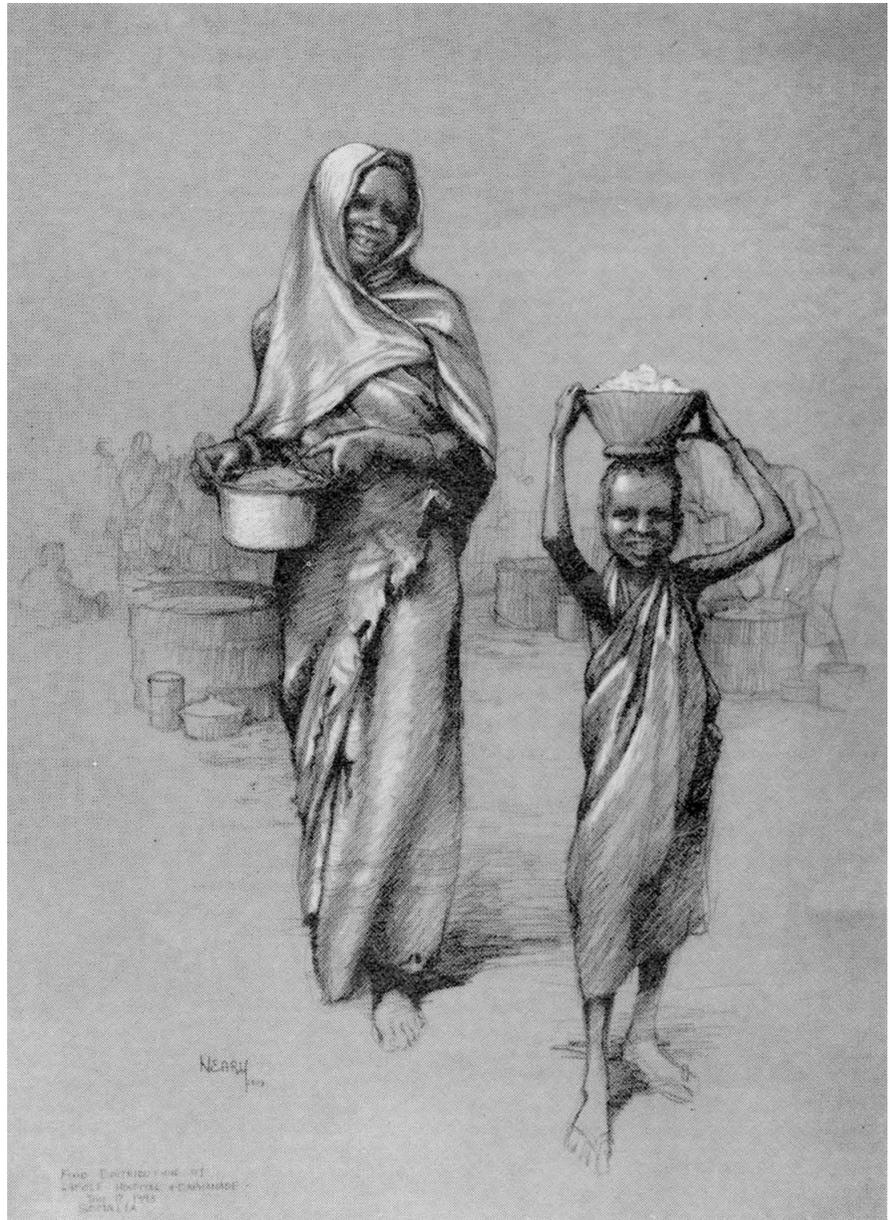
Neary Sketch Wreathed by Small, Dusty Fingerprints

MARINE CORPS combat artist LtCol Donna J. Neary, USMCR, is newly returned from Somalia, where she recorded her observations, made pages of pencil and pen-and-ink sketches, and took scores of photographs of Marines and allied forces in Operation Restore Hope.

During her tour LtCol Neary hitched rides with Marine convoys and subsequently visited nearly every location where Marines worked to end the famine that has afflicted the people of the East African country. She also toured bases established by Australian and Belgian troops.

A portion of the sketches she made are of Somalis, and one drawing, made in the courtyard schoolroom of an orphanage, is decorated with the small, dusty fingerprints of children who wanted to see or feel the paper; school supplies have been unavailable for many months. In one village, women who congregated to watch the unloading of foodstuffs pointed fingers toward LtCol Neary with laughter. Finally they made hand gestures to suggest female curvature, obviously to ask if she indeed was a woman, heavily encumbered as she was by "chocolate chip" utilities and the various layers and appurtenances of Marine field gear.

LtCol Neary's previous Marine Corps assignments have included NATO exercises in Norway and Korea. In 1991 she *LtCol Neary wears familiar gear of Marines in Somalia: helmet and goggles.*



The LaFole Hospital and Orphanage was used as a food distribution center. There LtCol Neary saw a woman and a child who vividly seemed to express restored hope.

produced the widely displayed color print illustrating the various uniforms worn by Marines for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. She also is the artist of the print set *Marine Corps Uniforms 1983*, a prominent feature of walls at all Marine Corps posts and stations.

An artist of both national and international reputation, LtCol Neary has produced paintings for the Queen's Own Highlanders and the Scots Guards in Britain, as well as for many U.S. Government agencies and facilities. Her paintings have been published on the

covers of numerous books and magazines, including *Saturday Review*, *The Washington Post Magazine*, *Common Cause*, *Regardie's*, and *Naval Institute Proceedings*. Others of her works have appeared in Time-Life Books' series *Echoes of Glory*, *Civil War*, and *Enchanted World*, as well as Boston Publishing's *Vietnam Experience* series. She also has illustrated articles in *Smithsonian* and *Washingtonian* magazines. Her current project is a series of limited edition prints based upon her paintings of Civil War subjects.

Marine Historian Inspects Yugoslavia Civilian Relief Operation's Zagreb Forward Headquarters

WITH A FINAL destination of Zagreb in the former Republic of Yugoslavia, a Marine Reserve historian was assigned to a Joint History Team gathered in February in Washington, D.C., and transported to the headquarters of the U.S. European Command (EUCOM) in Vaihingen, Germany, in support of the emergency civilian assistance program, Operation Provide Promise.

LtCol Nicholas E. Reynolds, USMCR, a member of the History and Museums Division-sponsored Mobilization Training Unit (History) DC-7, joined Air Force and Army Reservists to form the team, which first met on 11 February in the office of Willard Webb, chief of the Joint Staff Historical Office at the Pentagon. The team heard briefings on the background of Provide Promise and met briefly with Gen Colin L. Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who described his interest in the writing of joint histories of joint operations, as opposed to histories

Mentioned in Passing

Medals Expert Blakeney, SgtMaj Crawford Die

by Benis M. Frank
Chief Historian

Jane V. E. Blakeney

Jane V. E. Blakeney, longtime head of the Decorations and Medals Branch of Headquarters Marine Corps, died on 14 January at the age of 94.

Mrs. Blakeney is best known to military historians and medals collectors as the author of *Heroes, U.S. Marine Corps, 1861-1955*, published by the author in 1957. This is an invaluable semi-official record of Marine heroes and the awards with which they were decorated in the period indicated by the book's title.

Mrs. Blakeney enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1918 and was sent to Washington to work in the decorations and medals branch. She was discharged in 1922, but remained on the job as a civilian employee for the next 34 years, retiring as branch head in 1956 after a total of 38 combined years with the federal government. She was universally acknowledged as an expert in her field and in 1953, the Marine Corps Reserve Officers Association recognized her with the Non Sibi Sed Patriae award, the first woman to receive it. Her husband,

which focus on the contributions of individual Services to joint operations.

THE TEAM ARRIVED at EUCOM on 13 February and was met by the command historian, Dr. Bryan van Sweringen. He asked the team to create an operational archive of key EUCOM documents on Provide Promise, to interview principal staff officers planning for the operation, and to prepare a subteam to travel ahead to Yugoslavia.

Chosen to be a member of the subteam, LtCol Reynolds set off for Zagreb on 26 February, to visit Joint Task Force Provide Promise (Forward), collocated with a U.S. Army medical unit, the 212th MASH. There he conducted interviews with key personnel, including the task force and MASH commanders.

The team returned to Stuttgart, Germany, on 27 February and to the U.S. on 1 March, to begin organizing their observations for official reports. □1775□

Maj Arthur Blakeney, died in 1947. Mrs. Blakeney was buried in Arlington National Cemetery on 21 January.

SgtMaj Leland D. Crawford

Retired Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Leland D. "Crow" Crawford, 63, died of cancer at his home in San Diego on 16 February. SgtMaj Crawford, a native of West Virginia, enlisted in September 1951. He served in Korea as a rifleman and artilleryman. SgtMaj Crawford also served two tours in Vietnam, where he received two awards of the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart Medal.

He had several tours as a Drill Instructor, first at Parris Island and then at San Diego. He was the Sergeant Major of the 1st Marine Division until he was selected as Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps in August 1979.

Funeral services were held for SgtMaj Crawford at the MCRD, San Diego Post Chapel, 19 February, following which he was buried with full military honors at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery. □1775□

Awards Citing Combat Prowess Are Presented To Persian Gulf Marines

by Ann A. Ferrante
Reference Historian

A FINAL UPDATE of awards from Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm was recently released by the Military Awards Branch of Headquarters Marine Corps.

The following numbers of awards have been presented to Marines for exceptional valor and performance in Southwest Asia: Navy Cross, 2; Distinguished Service Medal, 8; Silver Star, 14; Legion of Merit, 70; Distinguished Flying Cross, 21; Bronze Star, 509; Defense Meritorious Service, 1; Meritorious Service, 201; Air Medal, 1,949; Joint Service Commendation, 6; Navy Commendation, 3,296; Joint Service Achievement, 5; Navy Achievement, 5,075; Air Force Commendation, 5; Army Commendation, 4; and Army Achievement, 114.

The two Navy Crosses were awarded to LtCol Michael M. Kurth of Waukegan, Illinois, and Capt Eddie S. Ray of Los Angeles, California. Their bravery is reflected in the following excerpts from their award citations.

DURING OPERATION Desert Storm, LtCol Kurth commanded Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369. On 26 February 1991, as the 1st Marine Division attacked north to prevent Iraqi forces from escaping, LtCol Kurth's repeated acts of bravery in providing close-in fire support to embattled Marines helped to collapse the Iraqi defenses. With visibility nearly impossible due to hundreds of burning oil field fires, and with total disregard for his own safety, he flew under and perilously close to high-voltage powerlines.

Capt Ray commanded Company B, 1st Light Infantry Battalion, Task Force Shepherd, 1st Marine Division. On 25 February 1991, an Iraqi mechanized division counter-attacked elements of the 1st Marine Division west of the flame- and smoke-engulfed oil fields in Southeastern Kuwait. Capt Ray repeatedly maneuvered his light armored vehicle company in harm's way, skillfully integrating his light armored infantry weapons to decisively defeat main Iraqi counterattacks. □1775□

Commandant Opens Pentagon World War II Exhibit

by *Kenneth L. Smith-Christmas*
Curator of Material History

REMARKING THAT THIS World War II campaign is too little known and studied, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen Carl E. Mundy, Jr., dedicated a new exhibit on the Central Solomons operations on 19 February. The exhibit had been installed in the ceremonial Corridor A of the Pentagon by the Museums Branch during January.

Sponsored by the Department of Defense's World War II Anniversary Committee, the exhibit is the third to be shown in the 55-foot-long Pentagon case. Each branch of Service has volunteered to mount an exhibit which focuses on the anniversary of a six-month period of World War II. These exhibits emphasize campaigns which have special significance for each Service, but yet are explained in the context of the entire war, with an emphasis on joint operations.

The Navy Museum was the first institution tasked, and it opened with an exhibit covering the first six months of the war after the attack on Pearl Harbor. By May 1992, the Marine Corps had been scheduled to follow the Army's treatment of the six-month period between July and December 1942. While assisting the Army's Center of Military History for their presentation on the Guadalcanal campaign, the Marine Corps Museums Branch formalized its own approach to the subject and started the in-depth research and planning for the Central Solomons exhibit.

THE TIME PERIOD allotted to the Marine Corps corresponded with the Central Solomons campaign in the spring and summer of 1943. This island-to-island campaign was launched following the fight for Guadalcanal to establish new air bases from which the major Japanese base at Rabaul on New Britain could be attacked. Codenamed Operation Toenails, the action centered around a series of small islands between Guadalcanal and Bougainville, and opened with the seizure of the Russell Islands in February 1943. By the end of the summer of 1943, Marines and soldiers had seen several months of hard fighting and had eliminated the Japanese defenders on the large islands of



At the Central Solomons exhibit dedication, Marine Commandant Gen Carl E. Mundy, Jr., left, is assisted by MajGen John P. Condon, USMC (Ret), a veteran of the Pacific air war, and LtGen Claude M. Kicklighter, USA (Ret), of the Anniversary Committee.

Rendova and New Georgia, while firmly establishing antiaircraft defenses on Vella Lavella and other smaller islands. All of the fighting was done in much the same setting as the Marines had found on Guadalcanal: a steaming, almost impenetrable tropical rain forest.

Since the Marine Corps' contribution to the actions were in direct support of a larger Army force, this simplified the requested emphasis on joint operations. In his remarks at the dedication, Gen Mundy also would note that "we . . . tend to think we invented it, but as we see here, this was 'jointness' in its classic sense." The Marine Corps units involved often were the Raiders and the defense battalions.

Plans called for the exhibit to be broken down into three distinctive sections. The area in the center would address the history of the campaign, with a reference to other significant events of World War II which occurred during the same period. Flanking on the right would be a section on the Marine Raiders, and on the left, a section on the history of the defense battalions. In the center section, oversized photographs were used to illustrate the North Africa campaign, the bombing of Germany, the battle for the Atlantic, and the Casablanca conference. The photographs are backdrop to a 50-inch by 50-inch model of an F4U Corsair. The Corsair was chosen to symbolize the air war against Rabaul, and it was at this time that the aircraft first appeared in the Pacific. The Marine Raiders display includes such

rarities as Raider knives and boots, a M1897 trench shotgun, and a captured Japanese light machine gun.

Sand, with broken sea shells, was used along with dried tropical foliage as a "floor" to the exhibit to create a tropical beach atmosphere in the two side sections of the case.

SINCE THE EXHIBIT case is so large, it was possible to place crew-served weapons in the areas between the major sections. Two significant weapons from the period were included in the exhibit: a Japanese Type 92 heavy 7.7mm machine gun and a Boys .55 caliber anti-tank rifle. The Boys rifle was carried by Marine Raiders in the early part of the war.

The M1 rifle and the 1941 utility uniform were worked into the area dedicated to the defense battalions. Text labels on the various weapons used by these battalions are supported by enlarged photographs of the guns and an array of inert ammunition, from the 90mm antiaircraft round to a belt of .50-caliber machine gun cartridges. While most of these artifacts came from the Museum's collection, the U.S. Army Ordnance Museum at Aberdeen Proving Ground came through at the last minute with a needed complete 90mm round.

The exhibit will remain on display until the end of July, when it will be succeeded by an exhibit mounted by the U.S. Air Force. □1775□

Thomas-Morse S.4 'Scout'

by Michael E. Starn
Curator of Aviation

THE "SCOUT," ALSO known as the "Tommy," was designed and produced by the Thomas-Morse Aircraft Corporation shortly after the United States entered World War I in 1917. The prototype was evaluated as a fighter by the Army and Navy but not accepted. After modifications were made to the airframe, and the original Gnome rotary engine was replaced by the more dependable Le Rhone, the resulting S.4B and, later, S.4C variants, along with the Curtiss JN-4 "Jenny," were widely used by the Marine Corps, the Navy,

and the Army for training fighter pilots. Because of its success as an advanced trainer, the Scout became one of the most famous single-seat aircraft built in the United States during the war.

William T. Thomas, who founded the Thomas Brother's Airplane Company, Inc., in 1910, had emigrated to America initially to assist Glenn Curtiss in the design of aircraft engines. He was soon joined by his brother, Oliver W. Thomas, and B. D. Thomas (no relation) who became their chief engineer. The combined experimental ef-

forts of the three Thomas's culminated in the production of a successful pusher biplane later that year.

Merging with Morse Chain Company of Ithaca, New York, the Thomas Morse Aircraft Corporation incorporated in 1917. Determined to produce a single-seat aircraft, for the purpose of training pursuit pilots, Thomas-Morse started from scratch instead of starting with an obsolete or war-weary design, as was being done by most foreign governments. Though not too surprisingly, the S.4 empennage and wing design reflected B. D. Thomas' earlier work with Sopwith "Camels."

During the summer of 1917 flight tests of the S.4 at the Army Experimental Air Station at Hampton, Virginia (now Langley Field), revealed the need for numerous modifications. This resulted shortly thereafter in the production of an entirely new "Scout," the S.4B.

In early October, 150 S.4B aircraft were ordered by the Army Signal Corps. Although the new airframe proved to be sturdy during aerobatics, its 100-horsepower Gnome engine proved to be a serious problem due to excessive right-hand torque, difficulty in starting, high rate of castor-oil leakage, and the resultant fires. Being tail heavy, the S.4B was prone to ground loop on landing. Its flight controls were difficult to operate in the cold because of control cable contraction.

Refinement of the S.4B led to its eventual success and the U.S. War Department's order of 400 aircraft of a yet newer version, the S.4C. The S.4C showed marked improvements in the control system, was armed with a camera gun, and was driven by the more dependable 80-horsepower Le Rhone engine.

Being powered by rotary engines, the "Scout" had some potentially dangerous flight characteristics common to all like-powered aircraft. Pilots were cautioned not to attempt a right-hand turn during a climb-out after takeoff, and to enable them to pull-out, never to attempt a right-hand power-on spin at less than 4,000 feet of altitude. □1775□



A "Tommy Morse Scout" powered by an 80-horsepower LeRhone engine, was photographed at Marine Flying Field, Miami, Florida, in 1915. Because of the Tommy's success as a trainer, it became one of the most popular single-seaters built in America.

Technical Data

Manufacturer: Thomas-Morse Aircraft Corporation, Ithaca, New York

Type: Fighter-pilot training

Accommodation: Pilot

Power Plant: Le Rhone 80 hp

Dimensions: Length, 19 feet 10 inches; wing span, 26 feet 6 inches; height 8 feet 10 inches

Weights: Empty, 940 pounds; Gross, 1,330 pounds

Performance: Max speed 97 mph; climb to 7,500 feet in 10 minutes; Landing speed, 45 mph

Armament: Principally a gun camera

July—December 1943

*by Robert V. Aquilina
Assistant Head, Reference Section*

Fortitudine's World War II Chronology continues with planning for 1943 Central Pacific operations, which would begin later in the year in the Marine assault on Tarawa.

1 Jul—The Navy's V-12 program, designed to recruit and train college students for future service as line officers, was launched; 11,500 Marines were to be included initially in the training.

3 Jul—In New Georgia, the Southern Landing Group of the Munda-Bairoko Occupation Force landed troops of the Army's 172d Infantry, 43d Division, on Zanana Beach.

5 Jul—The Northern Landing Group, commanded by Col Harry B. Liversedge, made a secondary landing on New Georgia, and established a beachhead at Rice Anchorage on the north coast.

10 Jul—Marine Corps Air Station, El Centro, California was commissioned.

11 Jul—The 1st Marine War Dog Platoon arrived in the South Pacific where the dogs would serve on Bougainville, as scouts, messengers, and night security guards with the 2d Marine Raider Regiment.

20-21 Jul—The Northern Landing Group (including the 1st Marine Raider Regiment, the 4th Raider Battalion, and the Army's 3d Battalion, 148th Regiment) unsuccessfully attacked Bairoko Harbor, then withdrew to Enogai, covered by one of the heaviest air strikes of the Central Solomons campaign.

25 Jul—The final attack by the New Georgia Occupation Force opened with destroyer and torpedo and dive-bomber support. Marine tanks from the 9th Defense Battalion, joined (3 Aug) by those of the 10th and 11th Defense Battalions, supported the infantry advance.

6-7 Aug—In the Battle of Vella Gulf, U.S. Navy forces defeated

As heavy black smoke pours from a burning fuel dump to the rear and broken, shredded palms give evidence of preparation fire, Marines on Tarawa await orders to press the attack inland.



a Japanese attempt to reinforce the Central Solomons area.

14-24 Aug—At the Quebec Conference (Quadrant), the line of advance for the Central Pacific offensive was delineated from the Gilberts, to the Marshalls, to the Marianas, and then to the Carolines.

16 Aug—The 4th Marine Division, commanded by MajGen Harry Schmidt, was activated at Camp Pendleton, California. It was the only Marine division during World War II to be mounted and staged into combat directly from the United States.

25 Aug—Bairoko Harbor was captured on New Georgia, ending Japanese resistance on the island.

25 Aug—The V Amphibious Corps was activated at Camp Elliott, California.

28 Oct—The 2d Parachute Battalion landed on Choiseul Island in a diversionary raid prior to the Bougainville operation.

1 Nov—The 3d Marine Division (Reinforced) landed in assault on Bougainville at Cape Torokina as part of I Marine Amphibious Corps. Despite prior bombardment by both ships and planes, the invasion force met heavy fire from Japanese defenders. Nevertheless, by nightfall, the Marines had 14,000 troops and 6,200 tons of supplies ashore.

2 Nov—In the Naval Battle of Empress Augusta Bay, Task Force 39 turned back a Japanese naval attempt to counterattack the Cape Torokina landing.

5 Nov—In the Bismarcks, Task Force 38, covered by Grumman Hellcat F6F fighters from Aircraft, Solomons, flew the first carrier-based air strike from Rabaul, causing heavy damage to Japanese warships, and preventing another sea attack on the Bougainville beachhead.

8 Nov—The 3d Marine Brigade was deactivated at Apia, Western Samoa.

9 Nov—MajGen Roy S. Geiger relieved LtGen Alexander A. Vandegrift, the newly appointed 18th Commandant of the Marine Corps, as Commanding General, I Marine Amphibious Corps.

16 Nov—Tactical Group I was activated under V Amphibious Corps for the Eniwetok (Marshalls) operation.

20 Nov—Following a massive preliminary bombardment, the 2d Marine Division (Reinforced) landed in assault on Betio Island, Tarawa atoll, as part of the V Amphibious Corps. Heavy Japanese fire accounted for many landing craft attempting to reach the beach, and there were 1,500 Marine casualties at the end of the first day's fighting.

28 Nov—MajGen Julian C. Smith, commanding the 2d Marine Division, announced the capture of Tarawa atoll.

15 Dec—Army XIV Corps assumed control of the Bougainville operation from I Marine Amphibious Corps.

26 Dec—Following a light naval and air bombardment, the 1st Marine Division landed in assault on Cape Gloucester, New Britain. While meeting relatively light enemy resistance, the Marines encountered an exceedingly difficult terrain in the dense, tropical rain forest that covers most of the island. □1775□

OFFICIAL BUSINESS



Marines Defended Hue in Historic Clash 25 Years Ago

(Continued from page 11)

name author wrote: "the enemy knew nothing of our strategy; by the time our forces approached the city of Hue, the enemy still had not taken any specific defensive measures."

ONCE IN HUE, the Communists established their own civil government and their cadres rounded up known government officials, sympathizers, and foreigners. After the recapture of Hue, South Vietnamese authorities exhumed some 3,000 bodies thrown into hastily-dug graves. The North Vietnamese admitted the tracking down and punishing of "hoodlum ringleaders," but denied killing innocent civilians.

The struggle for Hue initially was a near thing. Only the failure of the North Vietnamese to overrun the Mang Ca and MACV compounds permitted the allies to retain a toehold in both the Citadel and the new city. This enabled the allies to bring in reinforcements, albeit piecemeal. A Marine commander observed that the enemy had oriented his defenses to fend off forces coming into the city in strength and that the Americans "fought him from the inside out." Even then, if the enemy had blown the An Cuu Bridge on the first day, the Marines would not have been able

to bring their initial battalions and supplies into the city.

Fortuitously, the 1st Air Cavalry Division was in position to commit eventually a four-battalion brigade to the battle. The 1st Cavalry commander remembered that Gen Truong told him that if "I could ever get the Cav to the walls of Hue, the enemy would 'bug out.'" The problem was that it took 22 days for the 3d Brigade to fight its way there.

ALTHOUGH THE Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese harassed ship traffic in the Perfume River, they made no serious attempt to close the waterways. Even with the An Cuu Bridge closed for over a week, the Marines had stockpiled

In 1968, men of Company C, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, wage a firefight in the streets of the ancient imperial capital.



and brought in enough supplies by boat to support operations in both the Citadel and southern Hue. If the enemy cut both the water and land lines of communications, the outcome of the struggle for Hue would have been less predictable. Although desiring a general uprising during Tet, the Communists realistically may have had in mind a more limited and attainable goal. They perhaps hoped that the capture of Hue would result in the defection of the Southern Vietnamese forces and the loss of other population centers in the two northern provinces of South Vietnam. Such a result would have cut the allied lines of communication and left the 3d Marine Division isolated in fixed positions bordering the DMZ and Laos. This would have left the Communists in a strong position for obtaining their own terms. In any event, Tet served as a bench mark for both sides, forcing each to reassess his strategy. The United States determined the extent of its commitment to Vietnam and began turning more of the war over to the South Vietnamese. After August 1968, the Communists scaled down their large-unit war, probably out of both weakness and the expectation that the Americans would eventually withdraw. Tet taught both sides that there was to be no quick fix. □1775□