

# CAMPAIGN FOR THE MARIANAS

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*U.S. Marine Corps.*

**CAMPAIGN**  
**FOR THE**  
**MARIANAS**



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# Foreword

This monograph is one of a series concerning important engagements of Marine Corps units in World War II. It has been prepared largely from special action reports, records, and accounts submitted by the various organizations that participated in the Marianas Campaign. The purpose of the monograph is to provide the reader with a factual account of the three operations that comprised the campaign: Saipan, Guam and Tinian. No attempt has been made toward critical analysis or evaluation.

In its present form, this monograph is tentative and subject to correction. It is realized that there are some inaccuracies; that the nature of the source material precludes the possibility of a full and well-rounded account. It is hoped that those readers who were present during the above operations and have certain knowledge of events that occurred, will forward their corrections, comments and constructive criticism to the Historical Division. In order that revision may be undertaken at any early date, all comments should be forwarded within 60 days after receipt of the monograph. Your cooperation in providing material for the revision of this monograph will help to insure a far more accurate account of the Marianas Campaign when the revised version is begun.

H. N. KENYON  
Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps  
Officer-in-Charge  
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Prepared by James R. Stockman, Capt., USMC

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Prepared by Phillips D. Carleton, Capt., USMCR

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Prepared by James R. Stockman, Capt., USMC

**THE STORY**  
**of the**  
**BATTLE FOR SAIPAN**

# THE STORY OF THE BATTLE FOR SAIPAN

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## Part I

### PRELIMINARY PLANNING, TRAINING, AND REHEARSAL

#### 1. The Plan

After the capture of Kwajalein Atoll in early February, 1944, a task force for the execution of the Eniwetok operation was immediately mounted at Kwajalein. By 22 February this force had completed its mission and captured Eniwetok Atoll. Plans as laid down in CinCPoa concepts for Central Pacific Areas were advanced about 90 days. Accordingly, by late February, plans for the capture of Truk were drawn up. It was decided not to execute these plans in early April and in their stead plans for the Marianas operation were adopted.

It was decided in order to capture the Marianas, and to deny their use to the enemy as well as put them to our own use, to land on the islands of Guam, Saipan, and Tinian. In order to accomplish this mission, it was indicated that two separate and designated landing forces would have to be utilized. Each of these landing forces would correspond to what amounts to a corps. The Third Amphibious Corps located on Guadalcanal was selected to form the Southern Landing Force, whose mission would be the capture of Guam. The Fifth Amphibious Corps located in the Hawaiian Islands was to capture Saipan and Tinian. This made obvious the necessity for a higher landing force Headquarters to command both landing forces. It was decided that the Commanding General, V Amphibious Corps, should have a dual command both as commander of all landing forces for the Marianas Campaign, under the title of Commanding General, Expeditionary Troops, and as Commanding General, Northern Troops and Landing Force (NTLF). The staff of the V Amphibious Corps was already organized to form two staffs in order to provide the Commanding General with a staff for each of his commands.

An Expeditionary Troops operation plan was received by NTLF on April 26; the mission assigned NTLF by this plan was: "To land on, seize, occupy, and defend Saipan; then be prepared to seize Tinian on order." To accomplish this mission the following task organization was designated:

#### Northern Troops and Landing Force

##### Corps Troops

H&S Bn, VPhibCorps (less dets)

Sig Bn, VPhibCorps (less dets)

##### Corps Arty

XXIV Army Corps Arty

PhibReconBn, VPhibCorps (less Co "A")

Hq Prov Engr Gp, VPhibCorps

MT Co VPhibCorps (less dets)

7th Field Depot (less dets)

Med Bn, VPhibCorps

31st Field Hosp (Army)

2dProvPortSurgHosp (Army)

3dProvPortSurgHosp (Army)

2d MarDiv (Reinf) (less 1st Bn 2d Marines)

4th MarDiv (Reinf)

**1st Bn 2d Mar, Co A PhibRecon Bn, VPhibCorps attached  
Saipan Garrison Force (TG 10.13)  
Tinian Garrison Force (TG 10.12)**

On the basis of this directive NTLF was activated, and on 27 April issued an operation plan to subordinate units. In turn, the divisions submitted tentative plans for approval without delay. Intelligence information indicated that the proposed landing of the First Battalion, 2d Marines (Reinforced), on Magicienne Bay on the night of Dog minus 1 was not advisable and was thus abandoned.\* On the 1st of May a Northern Troops and Landing Force operation plan was issued with only a few changes made in the preferred plan. This plan contemplated landing two divisions abreast on the western beaches of Saipan with Charan Kanoa as the dividing point between the two divisions. On the 3d of May the alternate plan was issued, which called for the landings to be made on the Black and Scarlet Beaches north of Garapan.

Shipping adequate to carry the necessary troops on this operation constituted a major problem. Once assembled, the giant convoy for Saipan had its own problems. The convoy must of necessity be preceded by naval vessels in sufficient strength to meet and defeat any element of the Japanese Fleet. In addition there would have to be a carrier force to provide planes for the neutralization of the islands. Accordingly, the following organization was set up:

#### **Task Organization**

The major task forces designated by Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas to participate in the Marianas operation were as follows:

#### **Fifth Fleet, Central Pacific Task Forces, Adm R. A. Spruance, USN**

Fast Carrier Task Forces, Task Force 58,

Vice Adm M. A. Mitscher, USN.

Joint Expeditionary Force, Task Force 51,

Vice Adm R. K. Turner, USN.

Northern Attack Force, Task Force 52, Vice Adm R. K. Turner, USN (1 May-15 July);

Rear Adm H. W. Hill, USN (15 July-14 August).

Southern Attack Force, Task Force 53, Rear Adm R. L. Conolly, USN.

Joint Expeditionary Force Reserve, Task Group 51.1, Rear Adm W. H. P. Blandy, USN

Expeditionary Troops, Task Force 56, LtGen H. M. Smith, USMC.

Northern Troops and Landing Force, Task Group 56.1. LtGen H. M. Smith, USMC (1 May-12 July); MajGen Harry Schmidt, USMC (12 July-12 August).

Southern Troops and Landing Force, Task Group 56.2, MajGen R. S. Geiger, USMC.

Expeditionary Troops Reserve

Task Group 56.3, 27th Infantry Division-afloat.

MajGen R. C. Smith, USA (1 May-24 June)

MajGen S. F. Jarman, USA (24 June-28 June)

MajGen G. W. Griner, Jr., USA (28 June —)

Task Group 56.4, 77th Infantry Division—

Alerted in Oahu after D plus 20, MajGen A. D. Bruce, USA.

\* It has been planned that the 1st Battalion, 2d Marines (Reinforced) would land in the Magicienne Bay area and proceed rapidly up to Mt. Tapotchau in order to secure that height and hold the commanding ground until our troops reached them. A large part of their equipment had been packed for air drops to be made after they had secured their position. Consequently when this battalion did go ashore as a reserve for the 2d Marine Division they were badly lacking in equipment.

Forward Area Central Pacific, Task Force 57, Vice Adm J. H. Hoover, USN.  
Shore Based Air Forces Forward Area Central Pacific, Task Force 59, MajGen W. Hale, USA.

**Submarines Pacific Fleet, Task Force 17, Vice Adm C. A. Lockwood, USN.**

**South Pacific Forces, Vice Adm J. H. Newton, USN.**

Commander-in-Chief, Southwest Pacific Area rendered support to the operation with long-range air search and attack missions.

Expeditionary Troops, Task Force 56, was composed initially of the following major units:

**Headquarters, Expeditionary Troops, Task Force 56**

**Northern Troops and Landing Force, Task Group 56.1**

LtGen H. M. Smith, USMC (1 May-12 July)

MajGen Harry Schmidt, USMC (12 July-12 August)

Corps Troops (Detachments V Amphibious Corps Hq Troops)

XXIV Corps Artillery, BrigGen A. M. Harper, USA.

2d Marine Division (Reinf), MajGen T. E. Watson, USMC.

4th Marine Division (Reinf), MajGen Harry Schmidt, USMC (1 May-12 July);

MajGen C. B. Cates, USMC (12 July —)

Task Group 10.13 (Island Commander and Garrison Force SAIPAN) MajGen S. F. Jarman, USA.

Task Group 10.12 (Island Commander and Garrison Force TINIAN) MajGen J. L. Underhill, USMC.

A similar organization was set up for the Guam phase of the Marianas operation but is not shown here.

The Task Organization of the Northern Attack Force, of which NTLF was a part, is listed as follows:

Northern Attack Force, Task Force 52, Vice Adm Turner USN.

Western Landing Group, Task Gp 52.2, Rear Adm Hill, USN.

Northern Landing Force, Task Gp 56.1, LtGen H. M. Smith, USMC.

Transport Gp Able, TGp 52.3, Capt. Knowles, USN.

2d MarDiv LF, TGp 52.3.4, MajGen Watson, USMC.

Transport Gp Baker, TGp 52.4, Capt Loomis, USN.

4th MarDiv LF TGp 52.4.4, MajGen Schmidt, USMC.

Tractor Flotilla, TGp 52.5, Capt Robertson, USN.

Control Gp, TGp 52.6, Commodore Theiss, USN.

Gunboat Support Gp, TGp, 52.6.5, Comdr Malanaph, USN.

Beach Demolition Gp, TGp 52.6.7, Comdr Harner, USN.

Beachmaster Gp, TGp 52.6.10, Comdr Anderson, USN.

LCT Flotilla Thirteen, TGp 57.6.14, LtComdr Tower, USN.

Pontoon Barge Unit, TGp 52.6.18, Comdr Anderson, USN.

Eastern Landing Gp, TGp 52.8 Comdr McWhinnie, USN.

Demonstration Gp, TGp, 52.9, Capt Morrison, USN.

Fire Support Gp One, TGp 52.17, Rear Adm Oldendorf, USN.

Fire Support Gp Two, TGp 52.14, Rear Adm Ainsworth, USN.

Carrier Support Group One, TGp 52.14, Rear Adm Bogan, USN.

Carrier Support Group Two, TGp 52.11, Rear Adm Stump, USN.

Transport Screen, TGp 52.11.2, Capt Libby, USN.

Minesweeping and Hydrographic Survey Gp, TGp 52.13, Comdr Moore, USN.

## 2. Training and Rehearsal

By the first week in May, all major training had been accomplished. Before the Saipan Operation both Marine divisions, the 2d and the 4th, had gained previous combat experience involving amphibious operations. The XXIV Corps Artillery was newly organized with its 155mm Gun Battalion formed from coast artillery units. Eight Amphibian Tractor Battalions were assigned; four of these were Marine and four Army. All of the Army units were well trained and one had been in combat. Two of the Marine units had combat experience but the other two were new.

With the final training and preparation for the rehearsal and final embarkation of the assault forces, the Garrison Forces were assembled. Major General S. B. Jarman, USA, was named Commanding General, Saipan Garrison Forces, and Major General J. L. Underhill, USMC, was assigned as Commanding General, Tinian Garrison Forces.

Since directives from ExTrPac and CTF 51 had been sent out calling for a rehearsal for the attack on Saipan, NTLF accordingly prepared a plan in conjunction with higher authority and parallel naval forces. For this rehearsal the east coast of Maui was chosen, but due to the habitation on that island, the D-day bombardment plan was scheduled to be carried out on the uninhabited island of Kahoolawe. This rehearsal plan was designed to emphasize ship-to-shore control of the some 700 LVTs (Landing Vehicles, Tracked), and to test the communication plan, as well as to afford the landing forces with as much training as possible in the limited maneuver area on the beaches. On 15 May this rehearsal commenced and it lasted until the afternoon of 19 May. Troops were boated up, formed circles, made approaches, and perfected transferring into LVTs from LCVPs and LCMs. Air and naval gunfire simulated their supporting exercises until 19 May, when the bombardment phase was rehearsed on Kahoolawe. On this day, assault units, embarked in LVTs, approached to within 300 yards of the beach, preceded by LCIs and LVTA4s. On 18 May a critique was held aboard the APA **Leonard Wood**.

The force returned to Pearl Harbor on 20 May.

## 3. Rehabilitation

From 20 May until 30 May the force remained in Pearl Harbor. Corps artillery, remaining corps troops, flame thrower light tanks, and other equipment and personnel were embarked. On 21 May an unfortunate accident occurred aboard an LST that was loading ammunition. Somehow a fire started and explosions occurred which spread to other LSTs; by dark six LSTs were lost. Among assault troops aboard there were 200 casualties. Considerable equipment was also lost. However, by 25 May all supplies, equipment, and personnel had been replaced, and the LSTs tractor groups sailed only 24 hours late.

During the rehabilitation period, troops were taken ashore for exercise and picnics and ball games were held. This period was also utilized for conference, in which details and arrangements of the attack plans were discussed and adjusted.

## 4. Movement to the Objective

The movement to the objective was in echelon. The first group to sail was Attack Group I, which included the embarked 4th Marine Division. This group sailed on 29 May. Attack Group II, including elements of the 2d Marine Division and NTLF Headquarters, sailed on 30 May. The LSTs loaded with LVTs and a portion of the assault units of the 2d and 4th Marine Divisions left on 25 May. All of the assault forces arrived at Eniwetok between 7 and 10 June. Here final preparations were made and the remainder of the assault personnel was loaded in LSTs. On 7 June the tractor groups left Eniwetok for Saipan. The rest of the force departed on 10 June. All assault elements arrived at the

target early in the morning of D-Day, 15 June. The movement was without event and went as scheduled. So far as is known, none of the elements of the Northern Attack Force were detected in their movement from Eniwetok to Saipan. It is understood that the carrier force covering the movement may have been detected, and because of that slight likelihood, it began its strikes earlier than planned.

## 5. Intelligence Prior to 15 June

Although our attacks on Kwajalein and Eniwetok had made the Japanese aware that we were striking in their direction in the Central Pacific, little was done by the enemy to prepare Saipan for its invasion.

NRLF intelligence states that a captured "Outline of the Defensive Plan of the Northern Marianas Force," dated May 20, 1944, disclosed "apprehension of a RED attack at any time," and acknowledgment that "We will complete our field positions by the first ten days in June and thereafter, we will rapidly construct permanent positions in strategic places and . . . complete strong field positions (which will make seizure points a back bone) by the middle of August." It is interesting to note that this same document disclosed that the Marianas and Bonin Islands were considered as a final defensive position of the homeland. It is also interesting that Vice Admiral Nagumo, Commander of the Japanese Central Pacific Fleet, in one of his orders stated on 14 June "It is a certainty that the enemy will land in the Marianas group either this month or next." We landed next day.

There is no question that strategic surprise was achieved. As proof of this we must consider that battery positions and fortifications on Saipan were incomplete and that many proposed constructions were not even started. It is safe to assume that the Japanese had expected us to attack Truk and consequently were surprised upon our landing on Saipan.

Estimates as to the strength of the defending force on Saipan varied but it was generally supposed that some 30,000 troops were there. This later was substantiated as being correct.

## 6. A Description of Saipan

Irregularly shaped, and with its long axis running north and south, the island of Saipan is roughly twelve miles long, five miles wide and has an area of approximately seventy-five square miles. It is one of the three largest of the Marianas group, the other two being Guam and Tinian. Saipan is of volcanic origin but subsequently, in rising out of the sea, became encrusted with coral formations and coral is to be found practically everywhere on the island. Ethnologically it falls into the Micronesian group along with the Carolines, Marshalls, and Palau. The original inhabitants of Saipan were of small stature, brown skinned with scanty beards and the oblique eyes of the Malay. Later German, Spanish, and Japanese blood intermingled with that of the natives.

Ferdinand Magellan in his world cruise from 1519-22 stopped in the Marianas group which he called "Ladrones" because the natives stole everything they could from foreign ships. Germany purchased the Marianas from Spain in 1899. After World War I, the Marianas were mandated to Japan and continued under her rule until wrested from her by the U. S. Marines and Army in June-July 1944.

The climate on Saipan is characterized by two seasons, the dry winter monsoon that begins in November and lasts through March, and the wet, summer monsoon that starts in April and ends in late October or early November. These two seasons' temperatures show little variance, but all other phenomena have marked differences. During the winter monsoon there is a great deal of fair weather broken occasionally by storms of short

duration. With the doldrum belt situated almost directly over Saipan, the summer monsoon brings thundershowers and the threat of typhoons. Over half the yearly total of 80 inches of rain falls during July, August, and September. Mean temperature for January usually has a high of 81° F., and a low of 72° F.; June has a high of 85° F., and a low of 75° F. Relative humidity varies from 78% in winter to 84% in summer.

Vegetation is plentiful but somewhat stunted, probably due to the shallow top-soil and its coral base. The sea breeze keeps the beaches from becoming too warm and the mountainous area around Mt. Tapotchau is high enough to be cold at night. In the higher regions, moisture condenses at night and forms mists that hang in the valleys. The trees of the island are some types of willows and pines and have never achieved any great height. In the approaches to the mountains are found tall grass and vines. There is some terracing and sugar cane has been introduced by the Japanese without too much success. The cane grows to a height about half that of cane found on the island of Hawaii. Some banana plants are grown and pineapple is cultivated. Mango trees are plentiful, and there are some limes, coconuts, breadfruit, and papayas. Practically every kind of vegetable with the exception of lettuce can be grown on Saipan. There is some cotton, tobacco, and maize grown.

The inhabitants, not counting the military, were principally of three groups: Chamorros, Koreans, and Japanese. It is interesting that the Japanese held all the positions of power as well as all the white-collar jobs, ownership of businesses and enterprise, while the Koreans and Chamorros occupied positions little better than that of peons. These Chamorros were descendants of the original inhabitants of the island, and with the exception of a few Germans, were the sole occupants until the Japanese began their occupation following the last war, when the island was mandated to them. The Koreans were brought in by the Japanese for labor.

The highest point on the island is Mt. Tapotchau. This mountain gradually breaks off in all directions and forms a series of ridges and hills. The best word for the terrain surrounding Mt. Tapotchau is "rugged." There are many sheer cliffs, deep ravines, and some plateaus. On the northern end of Saipan is Marpi Point; the area in its vicinity is bordered by a steep cliff two to three hundred feet high along the western shore, behind which lies a rolling plateau.

The southern part of the island consists mainly of a large plateau, bordered by hills and ridges; here the Japanese had constructed an airfield. Just inland from the western beaches and behind the town of Charan Kanoa is Lake Susupe, formed principally during the rainy season. Surrounding this lake is a large swampy area, a part of which was cultivated; rice and taro were planted in limited areas. There are no rivers on the island but two springs were found later north of Tanapag. The inhabitants had never drilled wells for their water supply but had caught rain water and stored it in cisterns. Our engineers were able to find good sources by drilling to a considerable depth.

The two cities of Charan Kanoa and Garapan had some well-constructed houses. For the most part these were made of wood and tile, although some masonry was used. Most of the better buildings of Garapan were made of concrete. A narrow-gauge railroad ran from Tanapag through Garapan to Charan Kanoa, then across to Aslito field where it turned north and continued on across Kagman Peninsula to the north.

While picturesque from a distance or height, Saipan upon closer observation presents a very rough and rugged interior, as was later borne out by the difficulty experienced in negotiating the terrain during the fighting. It was to offer the enemy excellent artillery, mortar, and machine gun positions, as well as observation posts.

## Part II

### 1. D-DAY

15 June 1944

Following four days of intensive air and naval bombardment, minesweeping off the westward shelf of Saipan, and reconnaissance of the preferred and alternate landing beaches by underwater demolitions teams, the 2d and 4th Marine Divisions landed on the beaches of Saipan on the morning of 15 June 1944. From daylight on, the ships stood off the western beaches and poured a tremendous amount of fire into known positions, enemy troop concentrations, suspected emplacements and roads. Planes from the carriers hovered overhead to form into striking groups. As they approached their targets, they peeled off, one at a time, to go into a steep dive, sending their missiles of death and destruction into the enemy's stronghold.

Japanese military doctrine dictated that the efforts of the island's defenders be devoted toward limiting the American beachhead by aggressive resistance on the beaches. Artillery and mortars must harass the landing craft as they approached the beach with the invaders. Riflemen, machine gunners, and mortar men would make every effort to keep the Americans from organizing on the beach and setting up a perimeter. Then when night fell the crowning blow would be struck: an all-out charge of the infantry with supporting tanks to overrun positions and crush the foe in his small defensive area. The inevitable result would be that the hated Americans would be thrown back into the sea with insufferable losses.

That this doctrine was never successfully implemented on Saipan may be attributed to a number of reasons. One, and probably the first in order of time, was that naval gunfire laid such terrific concentrations in an area parallel to the length of the beaches and extending from the water's edge inland for a thousand yards, that the Japanese were forced to abandon many of their prepared positions and retreat to the first high ground. Those who remained were broken into small pockets which formed a series of strongpoints, not necessarily coordinated, but capable of offering intense resistance to the first waves of troops. By doing this, the enemy wittingly, or unwittingly, deployed in a defense in depth. In certain areas such as Charan Kanoa Town, Government Pier, Agingan Point, and the swamp around Lake Susupe, the action turned out to be of a serious nature with a high toll of casualties resulting. The dive bombing and strafing of the carrier-borne planes also helped to disperse and keep down the enemy initially. The reader is not to assume, however, that the action of the Japanese in falling back from the landing beaches led to the beaches being undefended. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Some of the beaches whose waterlines were clogged with dead Marines and smoldering LVTs and LVTAs testified to the stubbornness and extent of the defense.

In the early morning hours, the transports moved silently into their positions for the ship-to-shore movement about to take place. On board their ships, the reserve elements of the two Marine Divisions withdrew from the rest of the force and prepared for their diversionary movement. The troops aboard the transports had breakfasted at an early hour and little remained to be done now except for the inevitable last minute preparations, and the checking and re-checking of men, arms, and equipment.

As the day dawned bright and clear, portions of the island were obscured by smoke, dust, and haze resulting from the bombardment. Between the troop-laden transports and the beach were the LSTs, the LCI gunboats, and the small control vessels. In addition there were destroyers firing pointblank at their targets, while cruisers and battleships softened up the beach from farther out. Behind the transports were the carriers and other cruisers and battleships. Thrown around the whole assembly of naval craft was a cordon-like line of picket ships—destroyers and their escorts.

Aboard the transports, the officers and men speculated soberly on the problems attendant to this particular operation. After jungle warfare and small atoll fighting, our troops were turning to something different. Many of the problems were familiar ones: the landing under fire, the beachhead to secure, and the same old enemy. In addition, Saipan presented the problem of a large operation which was to be fought on a comparatively large land mass. Plans called for making the initial beachhead, expanding and developing it until the Force Beachhead Line (including towering Mt. Tapotchau) was reached, and then a coordinated drive to secure the remainder of the island. Among the lesser new problems to be faced were: street-fighting in Garapan and Charan Kanoa; two airfields to be taken for our own use; mountain fighting; some jungle-like terrain, cane fields, grassy hills and wooded slopes; and hundreds of enemy civilians to be dealt with—a problem we had never faced on any sizable scale.

At 0600, the ships assigned to the diversionary movement moved slowly into positions northwest of Tanapag Harbor and lowered their boats to simulate a feint landing north of Garapan. This feint produced its desired effect; one Japanese infantry regiment was held in reserve north of Garapan to meet and repel this threatened landing. Meanwhile, off Charan Kanoa, thirty four LSTs with LVTs and assault elements of the 2d and 4th Marine Divisions embarked, moved up into position behind the Line of Departure. In addition, eight LSTs with artillery embarked in DUKWs aboard from the two assault divisions, two LSTs with AA aboard, and two LSTs, carrying Corps Artillery, laid off slightly behind the assault LSTs.

Transports lowered their boats and these formed into circles, while the LSTs disgorged their LVTs loaded with assault troops. At 0750, H-Hour was delayed for ten minutes and set at 0840 so that the boat waves could have more time in which to form. The firing ships continued their shelling and clusters of planes droned overhead. By now, some installations ashore were on fire and pillars of smoke rose from their locations. The landing beaches could be seen but faintly under the blanket of smoke and dust stirred up by naval gunfire and aerial bombs.

At 0815, the assault waves of troops in LVTs, supported by armored amphibians, crossed the line of departure and headed for the shore under the cover of the naval bombardment. Moving across the reef, they headed for their respective beaches across five to eight hundred yards of water that varied in depth between three and eight feet and lay between the reef and the shore. High surf broke and pounded at the reef, overturning some of the tractors while others sustained direct hits from Japanese artillery and mortars; the majority churned on toward the beach. From left to right the Landing Teams were: 2/6, 3/6, 3/8 and 2/8 (2d Marine Division), and 3/23, 2/23, 2/25 and 1/25 (4th Marine Division).



MT. TAPOTCHAU

MT. TIPO PALE

GARAPAN

REEF

CHARAN KANOA

ASLITO AIRFIELD

Aslito Airfield Area, Saipan



Charan Kanoa Beaches

Within ten minutes after H-Hour (0840), all of the first assault waves of both divisions were ashore. In another thirty minutes there would be nearly eight thousand troops ashore. Due to the ferocity of our naval barrage and the point-blank fire from the armored amphibians, the first waves caught little fire from the enemy until safely ashore, but as the fire moved on inland ahead of the troops, subsequent waves were caught in heavy artillery, mortar, machine gun, and small arms fire.

It had been hoped, and planned, that the first waves might stay aboard their LVTs and continue inland to the 0-1 line, where they would dismount and form a beachhead perimeter. Some units did go an appreciable distance inland in this manner but others were dumped out on the beach; some were pinned down immediately by enemy fire. Units in the center of the 4th Marine Division zone of action managed to reach the 0-1 line by 1040 but CT 23, under Colonel Louis R. Jones, was having difficulty on its left flank, just inland from Charan Kanoa. Far to the right, LT 1/25, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Hollis V. Mustain, was under heavy enemy fire. On the Division's right flank, it had barely a toehold on the beach, in some places less than twelve yards in depth, and was receiving enfilading fire from the area of Agingan Point. At the same time, artillery and mortar fire fell sporadically on the beach around Charan Kanoa, and the enemy was manning machine guns set up in the Sugar Mill.

Carried off course, between the reef and shore, the assault waves of the 2d Marine Division landed considerably north of their intended zones. As the troops organized under heavy fire and pushed the attack inland, expanding their lines as they went, it was necessary for right flank units to change their maneuver. LT 2/8, which was intended originally to land on Green Beach 2, landed instead on Green Beach 1 and had to turn and fight in two directions: to the east and inland to protect its flank (instead of front) while attacking to the south to clean out Afetna Point. Fire from this Point was enfilading the northern beaches. Because of the distance involved and the stubbornness of the Japanese defense, LT 2/8 was unable to reach the left flank of the 4th Marine Division and it was not until the next day that the two divisions had contact between their interior flanks. It has been stated in many reports that the divisions were not in contact until D+3, but Major William Chamberlin, who took over the command of LT 2/8 on D-Day when Lieutenant Colonel Henry Crowe was seriously wounded, has stated that on D+1 his battalion was in physical contact with LT 3/23. That contact was broken when the divisions moved around Lake Susupe (the boundary line between divisions ran through the lake) but the nature of the terrain in that area, low swampy ground, made impossible an enemy re-entrant between divisions.

On the left of the 2d Marine Division, CT 6 had landed to the left of its beaches and found itself almost on the 0-1 line. By 1130, Major General Thomas Watson's 2d Marine Division extended from north of Red Beach 2 inland, and southeast for about one thousand yards, then southwest to the radio towers, and on south to Lake Susupe. By mid-afternoon, the enemy was not only offering passive resistance in most sectors, but had started to initiate small counterattacks as well. The whole beachhead was alive with snipers.

Behind the 0-1 line and on the reverse slopes of the hills and ridges that ran south from Mt. Tapotchau in a curious system of corridors, cross corridors and compartments which followed an irregular pattern, the enemy placed his artillery and mortars; by late afternoon these were firing with devastating effect into the beachhead area. This was to continue for three days and nights.

In its zone of action, the 4th Marine Division was having plenty of trouble. With its flanks receiving enfilading as well as frontal fire, its beaches under artillery and mortar fire, and its advance observed directly by the Japanese on the high ground to the front of its center, the Division had its hands full. In spite of heavy opposition from the enemy, LT 2/25 (Lieutenant Colonel Lewis C. Hudson) moved across low ground, which offered virtually no protection, to the railroad embankment. To the left, LT 2/23 (Lieutenant Colonel E. J. Dillon) could move but slowly. Both of these battalions had had some of their troops carried three to four hundred yards inland but others were unloaded on the beach.

Everywhere—in both divisions—the main problem was to organize scattered units, tie them in with other units, and press the fight home to the enemy, despite the unyielding pressure he was exerting. This is difficult during the first few hours following an amphibious landing; it is this period when efficiency seems lowest. By late afternoon, both divisions had tanks ashore and were using them. The artillery regiments of the 2d and 4th Marine Divisions, the 10th and 14th, respectively, landed elements from mid-afternoon until nearly dark. Immediately upon going into firing positions, these artillery battalions that landed on D-Day engaged in counterbattery fire; in response, they drew heavy and devastating enemy fire.

While the landings had been successful, the situation at the end of D-Day did not warrant undue elation. The assault regiments were in fair positions, but the enemy held better positions; from his, the enemy had excellent observation of the entire beachhead area and, watching the Marines as they dug in for the night, could place his artillery and mortar fire where he pleased. That this was not done with heavier casualties exacted, was the result of his inferior artillery tactics. Coupled with his inability, or refusal, to mass his fires—or even to use battery fire—it is fortunate that our men found ground that lent itself easily to digging. In the sandy loam the men burrowed deeply, and this contributed in no small measure to many lives being saved.

Both of the reserve regiments of the two Marine divisions landed on D-Day. CT 24 (Colonel Franklin A. Hart) took up a position on the left flank of the 4th Marine Division to help keep that flank refused in the Lake Susupe area. CT 2 (Colonel Walter J. Stuart) landed its 2d and 3d Landing Teams. Early in the afternoon, LT 1/29 (Lieutenant Colonel Guy E. Tannyhill) came ashore to reinforce CT 8 (Colonel C. R. Wallace) and placed one company in the line prior to dark.

Throughout the night, the enemy initiated counterattacks at various points along CT 6's lines. Among the largest of these was one attempted at 2000, supported by tanks. In a column of platoons, the Japanese marched south down the coast road from the direction of Garapan with tanks in the lead. Just in front of the lines, they launched the attack with a waving of swords and flags while a bugle sounded "to the charge." Immediately the area was illuminated by naval star shells and 60mm mortar shells. Machine guns, bazookas, automatic rifles, 37mm guns, and small arms cut loose from everywhere, repulsing the Japanese and forcing them to withdraw. As they fell back, they were blanketed by artillery and naval gunfire which took a heavy toll. Many enemy tanks were knocked out during this fighting.

Our own tanks had done better during the afternoon of D-Day. A platoon of A/4th Tank Battalion got over to the 4th Division's right flank just in time to stop an enemy thrust from Agingan Point. With the aid of the infantry they were supporting, the tanks destroyed nearly two companies of Japanese and also ran over and crushed several enemy machine gun positions, according to LT 1/25.

Enemy shelling from mortars and artillery had taken its toll. Our rapid advance inland, as hoped for, had been slowed down by a tenacious enemy defense in depth. All hands prepared for the night fully cognizant of what to expect—the inevitable counter-attack in force to drive us into the sea. Foxholes were dug deep which contributed to the saving of many lives when the barrage of artillery and mortar rounds came crashing in. During the night unwelcome enemy visitors made frequent appearances and many Japanese were killed within our beachhead perimeter. Some of these were infiltrators, but many were lost and merely trying to find their way back to their own units after "holing up" during the day. Some of the intruders inflicted casualties on our own personnel. There were numerous foxhole fights with knives. It was not a night of rest or relaxation, just a period of waiting.

Dark though our situation was, there were many gains made which were as yet imperceptible. We had no idea, as yet, how devastating our naval gunfire had been or how it was to upset Japanese calculations. We had a small but firm hold on the beach. We had disrupted enemy communication. We had made him aware that no troops could be moved openly because of our complete air coverage. We still had plenty of reserve strength and our real fighting efficiency would start being realized on the next day when LTs and CTs could call into play all their supporting weapons.

Our scheme for a landing which would move rapidly to the 0-1 line on D-Day had not materialized. However, a firm beachhead had been established and the war of attrition had begun. At this time no clear-cut enemy lines had been found; heavy pockets of resistance made our progress difficult.

In spite of the fact that we had made a successful landing, the morale of the enemy was high. He was ready now to hurl us back into the sea. If that failed, reinforcements would come from Tinian or Guam. The Imperial Navy would soon arrive to drive our ships away and leave our troops without hope, alone and without support so that the Japanese could wipe us out once and for all; so believed many prisoners when interrogated at the close of this period.

During the night of D-Day, 15 June, two reports were received that materially altered future planning. Two of our submarines reported contacts with enemy forces moving from Philippine waters toward Saipan, obviously to attack our transports and hamper troops activities ashore.

Accordingly, plans were made for the disposition of naval forces at Saipan in the event of the approach of the enemy fleet, for the withdrawal of the Southern Attack Force (TF 53) from its advanced position toward Guam, and the augmentation of the Fast Carrier Task Forces, Pacific, by cruisers and destroyers of the Joint Expeditionary Force.

The decision was reached that unloading would continue at Saipan on 17 June, that as many transports as possible would be withdrawn at night and only those urgently needed would be returned to the transport area on 18 June; that the old battleships, cruisers, and destroyers of the bombardment group would cover Saipan from the westward; that the Southern Attack Force would be withdrawn to the eastward, and that certain cruisers and destroyer units of the Joint Expeditionary Force would be fueled and directed to join the Fast Carrier Task Forces, Pacific, on 17 June.

## 2. THE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF THE BEACHHEAD

16 June to 4 July 1944

D Plus 1—16 June

At 0545, the Japanese initiated a counterattack south from Garapan that ran squarely into the lines of CT 6. With infantry, supported by tanks, mounting the counterattack, the enemy struck quickly and succeeded in pushing back left flank units for about fifty yards, but with the arrival of five of our medium tanks, the Japs were driven back and the lines soon restored to their former positions. Since CT 6 was almost on the 0-1 line, it could advance little without causing a gap between it and CT 8. Attached to CT 6 was LT 2/2 (Lieutenant Colonel Richard Nutting) and CT 8 was reinforced by LT 1/29, enabling both CTs to use an extra battalion, but with the beachhead expanding and casualties mounting, the attachments did little to alleviate the situation caused by the rapidly expanding beachhead. It is interesting to note that during part of this operation, these two CTs were essentially "square" regiments. The tactical maneuverability that might have been gained was lost due to the wide frontages in the two CT's zones of action. Any movement on this day by CT 6 would necessarily depend upon CT 8. When the latter advanced, then it would be possible for the right flank landing team of CT 6 to move.

By 1000, the remainder of CT 2 landed and moved over to the left of the division zone where LT 3/2 relieved LT 2/6. Colonel Stuart's other landing team, 1/1 was being held in Northern Troops and Landing Force (NTLF) reserve. As will be remembered, LT 2/2 was already attached to CT 6. On the 2d Marine Division's right, CT 8 was busy cleaning out Afetna Point against light opposition. Tanks, supported by infantry, moved through the scrubby trees and heavy vegetation, mopping up snipers as they went, and by 1345 the area was secure as far east as Lake Susupe. The remainder of CT 8 met heavy small arms and mortar fire as it tried to push toward the first hills east of the radio towers and to the left of Susupe. Here the Japanese had every advantage and progress was necessarily slow while a steady stream of casualties poured to the rear. Evacuation was well-nigh impossible during the early morning hours for the enemy placed heavy artillery fire on Beaches Red 1, 2, and 3 as well as Green 1 and 2 and Blue 1. This fire denied our troops the use of these beaches for awhile and evacuation and unloading was held to a minimum.

Over in the 4th Marine Division's zone, General Harry Schmidt was preparing to push the attack on inland with the main emphasis in the center of the zone. The division's reserve, CT 24, was ordered to detach one LT, 3/24, to CT 25 to support that unit while another landing team, 2/24 was sent to an assembly area in the rear of CT 23 to furnish protection for its left flank when the attack commenced. CT 24, less its detachments, was committed between the other two regimental combat teams to continue the assault. Moving under hot enemy fire, and against spirited resistance, the division (with the exception of the left flank battalion) advanced in a partially coordinated drive until 1730, when it dug in generally along the 0-1 line. Its right flank was about one thousand yards southeast of Agingan Point and anchored on the beach, while its left flank bent back behind Lake Susupe. Its right center was on RJ 179, about a half mile from the edge of Aslito Field. Looking eastward, the men could see the heavy concrete buildings on the west edge of the airfield, whose walls showed gaping holes made by the main batteries of our battleships. The 4th Marine Division was in danger of over-extending its lines and General Holland M. Smith ordered CT 165 (27th Infantry Division) to land next day, to be attached to the 4th Marine Division.

While little advance had been made in the 2d Marine Division's zone, the various LTs were in much better positions than on the previous night. Front lines were consolidated, reserves deployed, rear areas had been cleaned out and all units had had opportunity to get food, water, and ammunition. During the day both divisions had used their supporting weapons (tanks, planes, artillery, etc.) to good advantage. Shore party activities on the beaches were well under way and supplies were being unloaded despite occasional harassing artillery fire from the enemy.

#### **D plus 2—17 June**

In the 2d Marine Division's sector, enemy activity had varied during the night of 16-17 June. An extremely heavy volume of artillery and mortar fire fell on the front lines of CT 8. The 10th Marines received heavy counterbattery fire which caused severe personnel casualties and damaged materiel. 4/10 had four of its guns put out of action and 2/10 had only three pieces in firing condition on the morning of 17 June. The enemy from his observation posts on the high hills, could spot the flashes as our guns fired and he was quick to place his own fire in the vicinity of our guns.

In the center of CT 6's zone, the enemy lashed out in a futile counterattack at 0345. Employing medium tanks, mounted with 57mm guns, and with infantry riding on the outside of the tanks, the enemy struck from the east and immediately met disaster. The attack was poorly coordinated and it seemed as though the tanks were not sure of themselves. Instead of attacking in force, the tanks, were fed in piecemeal offering excellent targets for our weapons. As each group of tanks approached—usually four or five tanks in the group—our bazookas, anti-tank grenades, 75mm self-propelled guns and 37mm "pea-shooters" had a field day. Despite the fact that the tanks actually ran over foxholes, the lines were not breached and when the attack ceased at 0630, twenty-four enemy tanks remained, destroyed and smouldering. It is believed that nearly all of the accompanying infantry were wiped out.

The attack of the 2d Marine Division was a little uneven on this day. On the right, CT 8 jumped off toward the 0-1 line and made good progress on its left but moved little on its right. Here the nature of the terrain virtually precluded forward movement. In the marshy land that surrounded Lake Susupe, men carrying machine guns, mortars, and ammunition found themselves sinking into muck up to their waists. The swamp turned out to be much larger than indicated on the map and was infested with snipers. East of the swamp was a hill, containing many enemy strongpoints, and next to it was a coconut grove that seemed alive with snipers and machine gunners. From this area, the enemy fired his mortars and his opportunity to observe our troops was practically unlimited. In the center of the zone and to the left of Laulau Road was a cliff, with the enemy occupying caves in its face. To the south of the cliff was a sharp, razor-backed ridge dotted with standing type foxholes carved out of solid coral.

CT 6 attacked at 0730 and advanced well against light enemy resistance. Since the direction of attack was largely to the north and up into the foothills of Mt. Tipo Pale, CT 6 ran the danger of over-extending its lines. Upon reaching the line 0-2, the regiment held up its attack and commenced to move all its units into the line in order to restore contact with CT 8 on the right flank. That night, its reserve consisted of the Regimental Scout Sniper Platoon. In the meantime, CT 2 advanced toward Garapan and anchored on the beach for the night with its front lines on 0-2 (coincident at this point with the Force Beachhead Line, a thousand yards south of the outskirts of Garapan). Its progress during the day had not been too difficult and it had succeeded

in gaining about four hundred yards. On the right of the regiment's front was a steep cliff covered with vegetation, from which the enemy could fire his mortars with perfect observation.

In the 4th Marine Division's zone, CT 165, now attached, moved through LT 3/24 and attacked along the coast to secure the nose southwest of Aslito Airfield. On its left was CT 25 who moved over a thousand yards up the approaches to the tableland of the airfield. These two combat teams were at the edge of the airfield when they dug in late in the afternoon. Left of the division's center, CT 24 fought its way over the broken ground to reach the 0-2 line. Its right flank peeled back along the village on the north side of Aslito Field. Resistance had been sporadic and as the advance was halted, patrols were sent out to the front. On the left of the division, CT 23 had made little progress. The big, partly bald, hill southeast of Lake Susupe was infested with the enemy and his fire from this area played havoc with the regiment as it tried to negotiate the swampy ground southeast of the lake. The end of the day found the division's center on the 0-2 line and its right flank anchored on the beach less than a thousand yards short of 0-2.

While the progress of the two divisions had not been startling on this day, many results had been achieved: the enemy had lost, once and for all, his golden opportunity to dislodge us from our positions; we had not been swept back into the sea. Until now, the enemy's retreat had been orderly and had followed a definite pattern. He had carried away his dead and wounded so that it was hard for our troops to see the amount of casualties we were inflicting. After this day, all this would change; dead Japanese, scattered where they were killed, would bear silent witness to the accuracy and volume of our overwhelming fire power. Both divisions now occupied better ground. Lines were stronger and positions better consolidated. Back on the beaches, a steady stream of supplies was coming in and being forwarded to the fighting units. The shore party personnel were still being subjected to some harassing enemy artillery fire but more infrequently than before. Just before dark, these men were surprised to see a VMO-2 plane land on the abandoned airstrip north of Charan Kanoa. Another plane landed on the beach road opposite Beach Yellow 1, south of the town.

The evacuation of wounded was well in hand. During the first two days, casualties came in so fast that collecting stations on the beach were overtaxed. The entire beach area was subject to enemy artillery fire and the doctors rushed the wounded out to the safety of the receiving ships and LSTs as quickly as possible. In the evacuation stations, each wounded man was given a quick examination and unless emergency treatment was necessary, he was dispatched on the next available LVT. In this terrific rush, scant attention was paid to where the man was sent, just so long as he was headed for further definitive treatment. As a result, many of the men who were casualties, found themselves a few days later at base hospitals, ranging from Guadalcanal to Pearl Harbor. The important thing is that the men were taken care of; it did not matter, at the time, that battalion, regimental, and division adjutants were going to be faced with a terrific personnel problem later.

Until the channels through the reef fringe were cleared, the LVTs did priceless work in this evacuation. On D-Day, after hauling a load of assault troops in, these amphibious tractors would haul a load of wounded back out to a hospital LST, or if the wounds did not demand emergency surgery, the casualties were transferred to LCVPs or LCMs and taken on out to transports, now transformed to emergency receiving

ships. The work of the doctors and corpsmen who worked on the beach, as well as those attached to front line units, cannot be praised too highly; their efficiency and concern contributed directly to the high morale maintained by the troops.

#### D plus 3—18 June

On the following morning, CT 165 was restored to the control of its parent organization, the 27th Infantry Division (Major General Ralph Smith, USA) which had come ashore on 17 June. With this new division in the line, the 4th Marine Division could devote its efforts to a drive to the north as soon as Magicienne Bay was reached. The area south-east of, and including Aslito Field, was left to the 27th Infantry Division. CT 25, on the right flank of the 4th Marine Division, moved out against moderate enemy resistance and by late afternoon had one of its landing teams on the cliffs above Magicienne Bay. In the center of the coordinated attack was CT 24 whose advance was regulated by CT 23 on its left. The front lines of CT 24, for the night, faced almost directly north, a little over a thousand yards south of, and parallel to, Laulau Road. CT 23 was in a rather difficult position on the division's left and had advanced only a few hundred yards. From its front, it received heavy mortar, machine gun and small arms fire. The enemy-infested hill to its left front had not been taken. By late afternoon the regiment's left flank was less than three hundred yards east of Lake Susupe. Here again, the argument comes up about the two Marine Divisions not being in contact; the 4th Marine Division, in its Special Action Report, speaks of the pocket of resistance that held up CT 23, as being a by-passed pocket in the 2d Marine Division's zone of action. According to the boundary between divisions set by NTLF, this enemy pocket was in the 4th Marine Division's zone. The commander of LT 2/8, which now faced the pocket from the northwest, has stated that his battalion was in physical contact with CT 23 on this day, that telephone communications with the adjacent landing team were maintained late in the afternoon, and that he, personally walked from his right flank man only a few feet to the left flank man of the left unit of CT 23. Furthermore, he goes on record, saying that he requested permission from his own regimental commander to clean this pocket out, but was refused on the ground that it was not in the 2d Division's zone of action, and hence not in his sector. His men were receiving the same type of fire from the enclosed area that was plaguing CT 23. By now the pocket had been partially encircled and it was impossible to use supporting weapons on it due to the proximity of friendly troops. It remained that it would have to be taken by foot troops.

Meanwhile, the 27th Infantry Division moved slowly in clearing out the Aslito Airfield area, lagging somewhat behind CT 25. Its left flank, by late afternoon, was almost to the edge of Magicienne Bay and was tied in with CT 25, whose right LT bent back slightly on the right. Over on the other extreme of the 27th Infantry Division's line, progress was limited due to the rugged terrain where the Aslito tableland broke off above the sea. The entire airfield was secured.

Just north of the east edge of Aslito Field there is a long ridge, whose long axis runs north and south for a distance of nearly one thousand yards; joining in, finally, with the foothills of Mt. Tapotchau. As troops approached the ridge from the west, they faced a steep cliff, broken occasionally by roads, trails, or erosion, and this cliff was pock-marked with enemy caves, holes, and gun emplacements. Trees and vegetation helped to conceal the enemy on this ridge. Both CT 24 and CT 25 had worked around this area, and from time to time, it seemed secure, but the Japanese kept slipping back to their caves and holes to fire at our troops. Tanks were brought up, many times, to fire directly into the

face of the cliff, and closed many caves. This ridge was to give trouble for several days. Each night, the enemy infiltrated back to the caves and harassed the Marines in the area. For days, the reserve battalions mopped up this area until finally it was clear.

During the night of 17-18 June, the lines of the 2d Marine Division received sporadic artillery and mortar fire. The enemy tried, in several small and isolated cases, to penetrate our lines but had little luck. On the boundary between CT 8 and CT 6, the enemy attacked in sizeable force at about midnight and overran two machine gun positions in the zone of CT 8 but this attack was hastily beaten back and the positions retaken. LT 2/2, on the right of CT 6, reported its line breached and contact with CT 8 lost, but regained contact by putting its mortar platoon in the line.

At 0430, it was reported that enemy barges had been sighted off Flores Point, apparently carrying troops for a counterlanding behind CT 2. These barges were taken under fire by the destroyer **Phelps** and by LCIs and LVTA(4)s. Some of the barges were sunk and the others were forced to turn back. The **Phelps** and one of the LCIs suffered slight damage from shore batteries above Garapan.

The only advance made by the 2d Marine Division on this day, 18 June, was in the zone of CT 8. The other two regiments patrolled vigorously to their front and consolidated positions while waiting for CT 8 to move up abreast, on the right, and join in a coordinated drive to the north. In the zone of CT 8, there was some bitter fighting in the area of Hill 240 and that ridge was finally secured. The razor-back ridge north of Laulau Road was taken by LT 1/29 (Lieutenant Colonel R. McTompkins) and the big cliff was worked over thoroughly. Over on the right, a coconut grove was taken and in it were found many enemy dead.

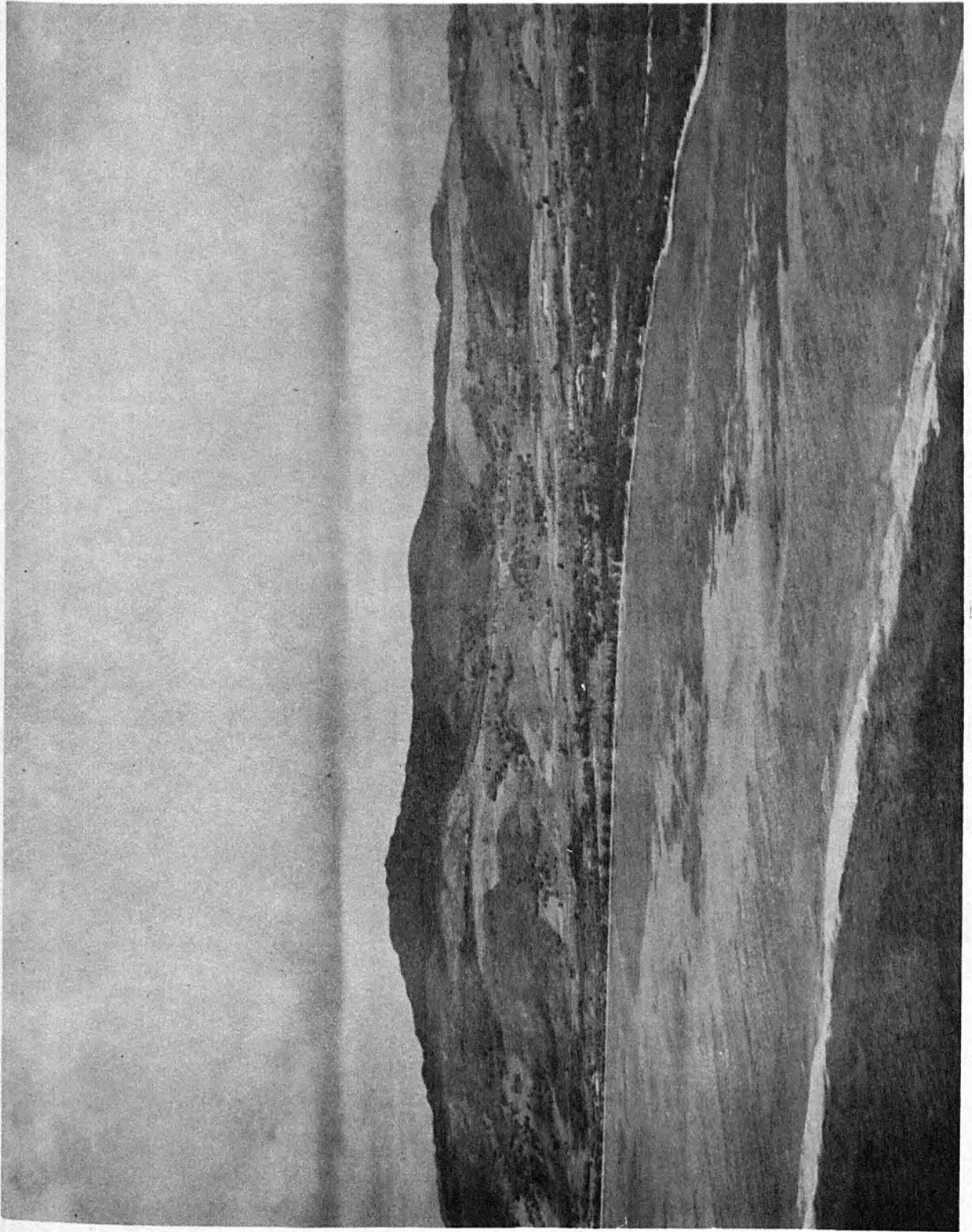
By this time, it was clear that, although the taking of the island might be a slow and tedious process, it was definitely assured. At last a part of the enemy's forces had been split. With the right flank of the 4th Marine Division resting on Magicienne Bay, the enemy remaining in the Nafutan Point area faced certain death. Cleaning them out in this particular area turned out to be a slow and lengthy process for the 27th Infantry Division. The heavy Corps Artillery was ashore now and working in deep support on Saipan, while some of its 155mm guns were firing at targets on Tinian to start softening up that island for its invasion. Supply and evacuation were running smoothly and on the beach, water distillation units were set up and functioning. But the price for all this was heavy: from both Marine Divisions we had lost over 5,000 men, killed, wounded, or missing.

#### D plus 4—19 June

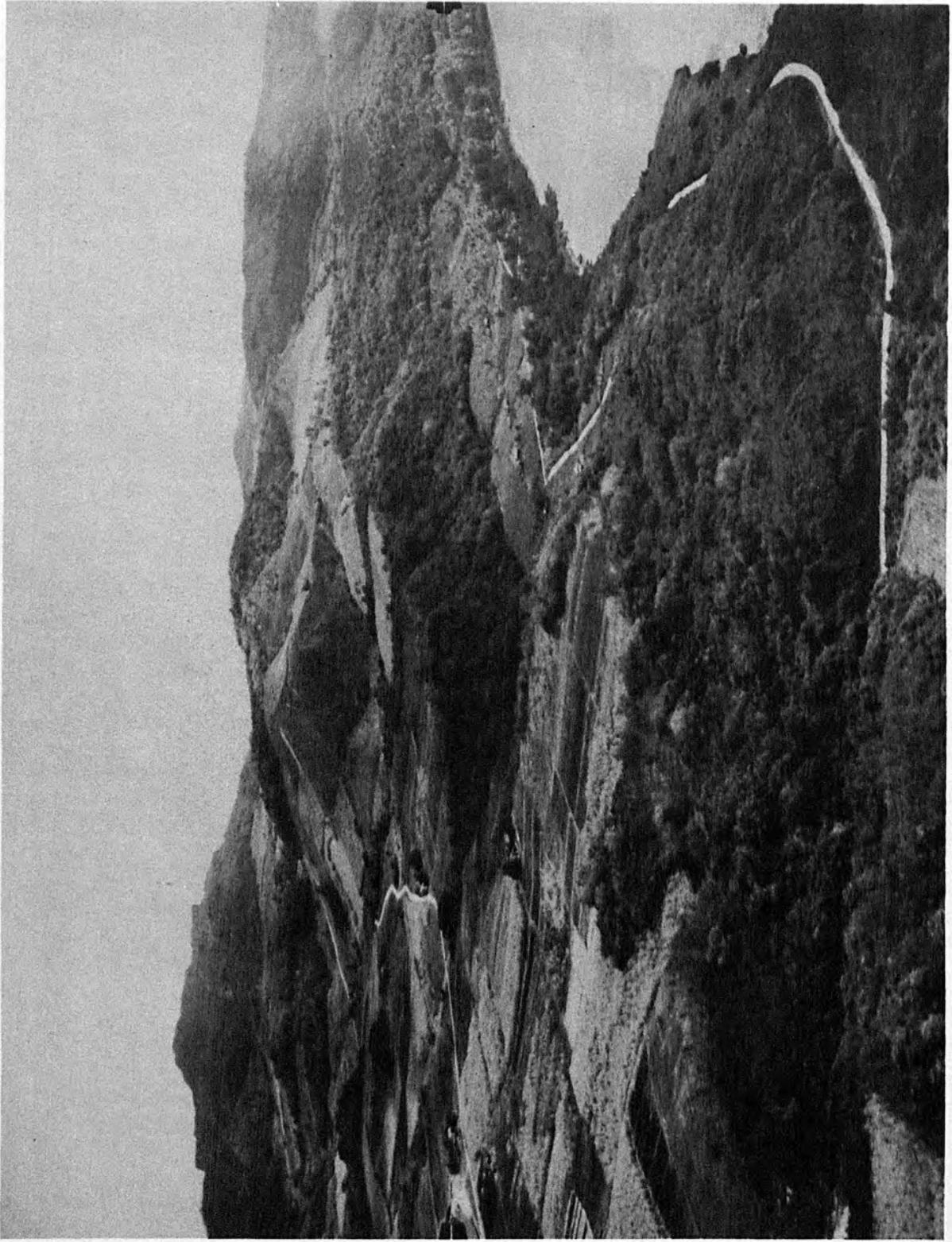
After the advance of 18 June, the 4th Marine Division found that reorganization was necessary and an early attack impracticable. At 1430, CT 23, supported by tanks and with LT 3/24 attached, jumped off in attack and by late afternoon had moved up over part of the troublesome pocket. Both of the divisions are in agreement that there was physical contact by the close of this day. CT 24 and CT 25 continued mopping up in their respective sectors, and strengthened their positions. In spite of the fact that the troops were virtually exhausted, their morale remained high.

Moving its left forward along Magicienne Bay and toward the southeast, the 27th Infantry Division gained nearly fifteen hundred yards in compressing the enemy resistance in the Nafutan Point area. On the right, the broken ground near the sea held the troops to shorter gains.

Mortar fire accounted for light casualties in the sector of CT 2 during the night of 18-19 June. Two platoons of LT 1/2 (Lieutenant Colonel W. B. Kyle) reinforced the lines in the left sector of CT 8. During the night, the Japanese set up a machine gun on a



Landing Beaches, 2d Marine Division



**Magicienne Bay Area  
(4th Marine Division zone of action)**

cliff to the left flank of LT 1/29 but it was quickly knocked out. A group of the enemy infiltrated to the command post of the Regimental Weapons Company of CT 8 and killed one officer before they were liquidated. Little advance was made by the 2d Marine Division on this day, 19 June. It was now ready to pivot its line in echelon, from CT 2 on the west beach, to CT 8 on the right, as the 4th Marine Division began to drive to the north. Steady attrition and expanding lines had limited the division's reserve to two platoons from LT 1/2. This landing team had finally been released to division from NTLF reserve.

Task Force 58 was now moving toward the path of the Japanese fleet discovered moving toward Saipan. On the day before, according to the plan mentioned before, most of the shipping off the west coast of Saipan retired from their unloading stations in view of the impending action with the Japanese naval forces. On 19 June, enemy planes attacked Task Force 58 from 1000 hours to 1500. One of our ships sustained a direct hit while several others had near misses. Fighting efficiency was promptly restored aboard all ships. During the day's aerial fighting, our planes shot down 358 enemy aircraft and destroyed 25 probables. Our own loss for the day was 25 planes. This action was subsequently named "the Saipan Turkey Shoot."

#### D plus 5—20 June

One 20 June, Task Force 58 located the Japanese Task Force and attacked, accounting for 14 ships sunk or damaged; these ranged from a battleship to destroyers and included several aircraft carriers. In addition, between 15 and 20 enemy planes were shot down. Our own planes returned after dark from this raid, and with fuel exhausted, many were forced to land in the water near their carriers. We lost a total of 95 planes, either shot down by the enemy or forced to land in the water.

On this day, Lieutenant General Holland M. Smith directed his divisions to continue the attack to the northeast simultaneously with an advance to the southwest to capture Nafutan Point. He ordered the 27th Infantry Division to relieve CT 25 on the right flank of the 4th Marine Division. This combat team's efficiency was virtually unimpaired and General Harry Schmidt decided to march it, when relieved, to the sector of CT 23 and have it pass through the lines of that regiment early enough in the morning to continue the attack alongside CT 24. To effect this passage of lines, CT 25 had to march between 8-10,000 yards prior to attacking. The 27th Infantry Division was late in providing the relief and, when once on its way, CT 25 had to stop and deal with little pockets of by-passed enemy.

At 1030, the troops were in position to attack. To the front lay a high hill, well defended by the enemy, called Hill 500. Prior to the attack, an intense time fire concentration, employing several battalions of artillery, was placed on the hill. Following this, smoke blanketed the entire hill and kept the enemy from observing the attacking troops. By 1200, the hill had been secured and the advance continued until 1600 when the 0-4 line was reached. On the right, CT 24 had run into difficulty going in the broken and rugged cliffs and escarpments facing Magicienne Bay. Here, the enemy resisted bitterly and flame-throwers and tanks had to be used to destroy him, or drive him from his positions. The advance for the day had gained 1,500 yards for the 4th Marine Division.

Concurrent with the forward movement of CT 25, the 2d Marine Division began its pivot in earnest. CT 8, whose front had faced almost due east, now reoriented its attack toward the north and up on the first foothills leading toward Mt. Tapotchau. As CT 8 moved, CT 6 took up the initiative again and swung its right flank units slowly around to the north. Only CT 2 remained stationary; with its left flank anchored on the beach, it would be the last CT to attack north. In the meantime, however, the regiment was not

idle. Patrolling to the front was continued and every effort was made to maintain contact with the enemy. Late evening found CT 8 on the O-4 line while CT 6 was well in advance of the line. The day's movement had narrowed the regimental front and now both CT 6 and CT 8 could release elements from the front line and put them in reserve.

#### **D plus 6—21 June**

On the next day, 21 June, both divisions turned to reorganization and resupply before the next drive was started. While this was carried on the enemy was not forgotten. The 4th Marine Division sent out patrols from CT 25 and CT 24 that covered distances to the front ranging from a thousand to fifteen hundred yards. Nowhere was any sizeable enemy force found in the division's zone; only isolated snipers occasionally harassed the patrols from caves or pockets of dense vegetation. Resistance was offered in the neighborhood of Chatcha Village out on Kagman Peninsula and it was felt that some difficulty might be found in clearing that area. The 14th Marines busied themselves during the day firing on targets of opportunity and suspected enemy positions.

Meanwhile, the 2d Marine Division followed out NTLF orders and patrolled vigorously to its front with negligible results except in the sector of CT 2 where an enemy outpost was found. When CT 8 had moved around Lake Susupe it had not had time to clean out thoroughly the swampy lowlands that surrounded the lake. Some patrolling had been done in that area but only when sniper fire became too bothersome. Infiltrating enemy had made a practice of slipping through our lines and locating themselves in the swamp. Since they were harassing rear elements, it was decided to clean the area out systematically. Two platoons from the 2d Division's Reconnaissance Company were assigned to mop up the swamp. The task was an arduous one, but the platoons managed to kill seven of the enemy at the expense of two casualties to themselves, when they saw that in order to do the job more thoroughly, a larger force would have to be employed. As a result, NTLF attached LT 1/106 to the 2d Marine Division with the mission of mopping up the area between the old radio station and the high ground east of Lake Susupe.

During the day, the 10th Marines fired counterbattery fire, as well as fire at enemy dumps, troops, and tanks. Both Marine divisions now had air spotters observing their artillery fire. The planes were furnished by VMO-2. Corps artillery was firing in deep support on Saipan as well as placing neutralizing fires on Tinian.

#### **D plus 7—22 June**

Enemy activity varied during the night of 21-22 June. Enemy bombers dropped a few bombs west of the 4th Marine Division's command post, but no damage to personnel or equipment resulted. Just after dark, the enemy succeeded in blowing up one of our ammunition dumps on Green Beach 1. There are many conflicting stories as to how this was done. One was that a sniper fired an incendiary bullet into the ammunition. Another was that an infiltrator armed with a demolition pack accomplished a suicidal mission. Regardless of how it was done, the fact remains that we lost an unestimated amount of small arms ammunition and a rather large amount of M43A1 81mm mortar ammunition. The latter was serious, since this light fragmentation type high explosive was of great value in inflicting casualties on any of the enemy who were caught in the open. Because of the sensitivity of its fuse, it was possible to get tree-bursts, which made many enemy positions untenable. When the result of this shortage became felt, many of the mortar platoons used captured Japanese 81mm ammunition and gave the enemy a dose of his own medicine.

On this day, 22 June, NTLF ordered the 4th Marine Division to continue the drive north with its objective being the 0-5 line, a distance of over three thousand yards. General Schmidt set an intermediate objective for his division, called O-4A, which would place it at the base of Kagman Peninsula. Upon reaching this arbitrary line, the attack was to be pushed on to 0-5, if time permitted. At 0600, after an intense artillery preparation, the division jumped off for O-4A with CT 24 on the right and CT 25 on the left. In reserve, CT 23 was ready to fill in between the other two regiments when the front widened. Using tanks, rockets, flame-throwers, and artillery, both CTs moved rapidly against light to moderate resistance, at first, but which increased when the O-4A line was reached at 1330 hours. From the high ground on its left front, CT 25 received heavy enemy fire. It was planned to continue the attack at 1445, but coordination with the 2d Marine Division was not effected until a late hour. Further attack was postponed until the next day and both CTs dug in for the night. The day's advance had netted approximately twenty-four hundred yards.

General Holland M. Smith now saw that it would be necessary to commit part of the 27th Infantry Division into the line, if the momentum of the attack were to be continued. Either the 4th Marine Division would have to break contact with the 2d in order to clean out Kagman Peninsula, or hold up as its left flank advanced in the rough eastern foothills of Mt. Tapotchau. If the present direction of attack was followed, it would soon have a frontage of over six thousand yards. General Smith's decision was to let the 4th swing to the east to destroy the enemy on the peninsula and when the two Marine Divisions broke contact, to feed in elements of the 27th Infantry Division to fill the gap. This division had been occupied with cleaning out Nafutan Point, cut off on 18 June by the 4th Marine Division, and had succeeded in compressing the enemy's area, but had not taken the Point. CT 105, less one battalion, was ordered to finish the job, while the remainder of the division was placed in Corps reserve, preparatory to joining the two Marine Divisions up north. LT 1/106 was busy mopping up the swamp area around Lake Susupe, under the direction of the 2d Marine Division. From 0830 to 1445, the landing team cleaned out the area, suffering two men killed and four wounded. Fifteen Japanese soldiers were killed and two, who were wounded, were captured. At the conclusion of the mission, the landing team reverted to control of its parent regiment.

In its zone of action, the 2d Marine Division attacked at 0600, making its main effort on the right on the approaches to Mt. Tapotchau. CT 8, on the right, was fighting over some of the roughest terrain yet encountered. The ground was cut up into a maze of hills, ridges, ravines, and valleys. There was no road net in this area and armored bull-dozers were used to provide a trail for supply and evacuation. Initially, CT 8 had two landing teams in assault but the widening front forced the regimental commander to commit a third. By 1300, resistance was heavy all along the line, with heavy mortar and small arms fire being received, and enfilading machine gun fire from a hill on the right front. CT 8 made no further advance for the day.

After CT 8 had moved out in the morning, it was possible for CT 6 to advance in continuation of the pivoting movement. The advance of CT 6 was rapid and it was soon seen that its lines would become overextended if the advance were continued, unless CT 8 could move up abreast. Small pockets of resistance were by-passed in order to maintain the momentum of the attack; the Regimental scout snipers were busy cleaning them out. On the right front of CT 6 was Mt. Tipo Pale and on this day it was held by enemy strong-points on its slopes. The following quotation is from the 2d Marine Division's Special Action Report:

"Enemy resistance became stronger as the advance approached Mt. Tipo Pale. Several strongly entrenched enemy positions, built around machine guns, halted the advance on the eastern slope. Company K, in this zone, moving around the west flank of Mt. Tipo Pale, outflanked this strongpoint while the scout sniper platoon attacked it from the east flank. This platoon, running into very strong resistance, was pinned down and finally forced to withdraw. This pocket, a series of 'finger' ravines, hemmed in by steep bluffs, with a very narrow zone where entry was possible, was contained by a reserve company of CT 6 and the last elements of resistance here were not overcome until two days later. The pocket was by-passed and, at 1330, the lines of CT 6 extended across the crest of Mt. Tipo Pale."

On the left of CT 6 and anchored on the beach, CT 2 made no advance but continued to direct aerial bombing, artillery, and naval gunfire on Garapan, systematically reducing the former capital of the island. This city, which once contained twelve or fourteen thousand inhabitants, had been left virtually untouched during the original softening-up process and on D-Day no fires were placed on it. Hope had been held that it would not be necessary to reduce it to rubble; intact, it would offer a fine prize and would provide housing and other facilities when the island was secured. During the first three days of the operation, the Japanese used the city as a forming-up area from which to launch counter-attacks against CT 2 and CT 6. It was then that General Watson's pleas were answered and permission was given to blast the city until it was destroyed in order to deprive the Japanese of its use.

While Tipo Pale was being assaulted, CT 2 patrolled to its front and during the day, as a defensive measure, laid minefields forward of its left flank. Also during this day, air strikes were made against Marpi Point Airfield on the northern end of the island and enemy installations on Tinian.

#### **D plus 8—23 June**

The night of 22-23 June found the enemy quite active. Along most of the front, there were instances of infiltration, sniper fire and mortar fire. However, there were no counter-attacks and 4th Marine Division night patrols made no contact with the enemy. From Tinian, enemy artillery shelled our areas south of Charan Kanoa but ceased when our 155mm gun batteries replied with counterbattery fire. The 14th Marines, 27th Infantry Division Command Post, and the 2d Marine Division Command Post received enemy artillery fire at 0500 and 0520. This fire seemed to come from Mt. Tapotchau and was stopped when counterbattery fire was placed in that region.

A coordinated attack was ordered by NTLF for this day, 23 June, calling for three divisions abreast: the 2d Marine Division on the left, the 27th Infantry Division to pass through left flank elements of CT 25 and attack in the center, and the 4th Marine Division to attack on the right to secure Kagman Peninsula. In executing the passage of lines from its assembly areas in the rear of the 4th Marine Division, the 27th Infantry Division failed to attack on time. The two Marine Divisions moved out at 1000, after waiting for the 27th, and in an hour's time had gained nearly three hundred yards. Finally at 1055, one battalion of the 27th moved out in attack. Other units of this division jumped off successively and without coordination as they arrived on the line. Little advance was made by this division, apparently because its CTs mistook the lines of supporting units of the 4th Marine Division for front lines. There was no contact with the 2d Division on the left. As a result the 2d and 4th Marine Divisions had to drag their interior flanks and move slowly to prevent serious gaps from occurring. Confusion resulted all along the line

from this, and the end of the period found that the 2d had progressed only in its center, while the 4th Marine Division's principal gains had been made on the right. By nightfall there was only a semblance of contact between divisions.

Under orders from NTLF, LT 2/105 was ordered to attack Nafutan Point at dawn. This LT had been removed from 27th Infantry Division control and was directly under NTLF. It failed to attack on time; in fact, it didn't start moving until 1300, after which little advance was made. All of the events of this day totalled up to a change in command for the 27th Infantry Division on the following day.

The advance of the 2d Marine Division found only light enemy resistance initially but as the day wore on, opposition stiffened in the zone of CT 8. This regimental combat team had lost contact with CT 106, left behind on the right, but continued to attack until LT 1/8, on the left, was stopped by heavy machine gun and mortar fire. On the right, LT 1/29 had secured the high ground considered a key position from which to assault Mt. Tapotchau, but had lost contact with LT 2/8 on the right. This landing team had been thrown in on the flank in an effort to maintain contact with LT 106. LTs 2/8 and 1/29 made contact late in the day but no further advance was made. On the right boundary of CT 8 was a ridge line, whose long axis ran north and south, which fell off to the east into a deep ravine. All four of the regiment's battalions were committed for the night. LT 2/8 was extended south on the ridge line to deny the right flank and during the late afternoon sent out a patrol to contact CT 106. The landing team commander led a patrol over into CT 106's zone and found the left flank company, which was persuaded to move over and tie in on LT 2/8's flank. When this was done, the company's right flank was no longer in contact with its battalion. At the same time patrols were sent out to the front and one enemy patrol was destroyed while two others were seen. CT 8 was considerably worried for fear that the enemy might attempt a counterattack between the two divisions. As a matter of fact, the Japanese did attack the left flank of CT 106 during the night but apparently overlooked the opportunity of breaking through between the two divisions.

The 4th Marine Division advanced on its right during the day, with CT 24 gaining about nine hundred yards. Its right flank now rested on the 0-5 line down the steep cliff facing Magicienne Bay. CT 23 was now attacking on the division's left but it ran into considerable enemy opposition; its advance was hampered by the failure of the 27th Infantry Division to keep abreast. To tie in for the night, CT 23 had to bend its left flank back to the line of departure for that day.

Elsewhere, the pressure on the enemy was stepped up. Air strikes were made on Guam, Rota, and Pagan Islands. A second squadron of Army P-47s arrived at Aslito Field to join those already there. All of our artillery spotter planes were operating from this field and on the following day the first P-61 Night Fighters would arrive. One cruiser worked over Garapan while two others neutralized targets on Tinian. Heavy artillery fire and air strikes had been called in on Mt. Tapotchau, the past few days, to soften up that formidable terrain.

#### **D plus 9—24 June**

Enemy activity flared up again during the night of 23-24 June. Between the 27th Infantry Division and CT 23, the enemy lashed out in a futile tank-infantry counter-attack at 1945 hours. To the left front of the junction of the lines, there was a strong enemy pocket which the 27th had failed to clean out on 23 June. From this area came seven enemy tanks, accompanied by infantry, which attacked elements of both divisions. The Japanese were beaten back and all seven tanks were destroyed. From 0445, next morning, until 0515, enemy artillery, estimated to be about one battery of either 75 or

105mm guns, shelled the area of the 10th Marines. Direct hits were scored on the Fire Direction Center, killing the regiment's executive officer and wounding the R-2 and R-3. Communications were disrupted temporarily, but one of the battalions soon took over the duties of the FDC and a high degree of efficiency was restored.

Continuing the attack on 24 June, the 4th Marine Division moved rapidly in an attempt to secure Kagman Peninsula. An intermediate objective line, O-5A, was set before the attack and both CT 23 and CT 24 were on that line by 1630 but could not continue because of the gap on the left flank of CT 23 where the 27th Infantry Division lagged behind. LT 1/23, in reserve for the division, was committed to assist its parent regiment in covering the loose left flank.

Over in the 2d Marine Division's zone, CT 8 was having difficulty with the terrain as well as the enemy. Contact between LTs was hard to maintain, but despite increasing enemy resistance, an advance of about 700 yards was made. This put one company of LT 1/29 within machine gun range of the crest of Mt. Tapotchau. The movement of CT 6 was not rapid, since on its right, the thickly wooded ravines and cliffs made difficult the progress of the troops. It kept up with both CT 8 and CT 2 but found its frontage expanding again. LT 3/6 was covering about fifteen hundred yards and had five companies in the line, three of its own, and one each from LTs 2/2 and 2/6. In forty minutes, CT 2 advanced nearly five hundred yards on its left, but ran into heavy resistance from an enemy infested hill on its right front. By 1500, LT 1/2 had driven the Japanese off the hill and had occupied it, enabling LT 3/2 to continue its advance along the beach and inland, against scattered opposition. At 1625 an enemy counterattack was launched from Garapan, supported by seven tanks. Our troops opened fire from the 75mm SP guns and our medium tanks joined the fray. The infantry troops used bazookas and AT grenades. Six of the tanks were destroyed but the other one got away.

Nafutan Point remained in the hands of the Japanese; LT 2/105 made little progress on this day.

A conference between Admiral Spruance, Commander Fifth Fleet, Vice Admiral R. K. Turner, Commander Joint Expeditionary Force, and Lieutenant General Holland M. Smith, USMC, Commander Northern Troops and Landing Force, in regard to the situation on Saipan and the remaining phases of the Marianas Campaign, was held on 24 June 1944. As a result of the conference it was decided:

(a) That Major General Ralph Smith, USA, be relieved of command of the 27th Infantry Division by Major General Sanderford Jarman, USA.

(b) That the First Provisional Brigade (Reinforced) would be kept at sea in the Mariannas area as additional reserve for use on Saipan.

#### **D plus 10—25 June**

With CT 23 on the left and CT 24 on the right, the 4th Marine Division launched an attack on 25 June, that overran most of the remainder of Kagman Peninsula. In the first two hours, the division advanced about two thousand yards against light resistance. No large enemy group remained to defend the peninsula but, as the troops approached the eastern cliff area, progress became slow. The tortuous ravines and wooded valleys held numerous sniper pockets. There remained the inevitable mopping up along the beach. Late evening found CT 23 in contact with the 27th Infantry Division, which found forward progress slow in its sector.

Due to heavy enemy resistance and rugged terrain in its zone of action, CT 6 made few gains for the day. An enemy pocket developed in the center of the zone that was not overcome by nightfall. Nine of this regiment's ten rifle companies were in the line by the

end of the day. In the rear of CT 2's lines, some eighty-five Japanese, who had been bypassed, or had infiltrated, were killed. CT 2 advanced into the edge of Garapan and found few enemy to resist it, but many mines. The commanding ground on the right of this regiment's zone of action prohibited any further advance. To do so was to invite enemy fire with good observation; the ground was in the sector of CT 6.

After ten days of gruelling fighting, towering Mt. Tapotchau finally fell to the 2d Marine Division. This mountain, the key terrain feature on the entire island, lay in the zone of CT 8 and that regiment had assigned the taking of it, to its attached landing team, 1/29. This battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel R. M. Tompkins, was an extra battalion made up of troops from the three regiments of the division plus some officers and men from the old 2d Special Weapons Battalion. It was activated on Hawaii just prior to the Saipan operation. The way the top of Mt. Tapotchau was taken is one of the most unusual stories of the entire operation. On the morning of 25 June, all three companies of LT 1/29 were heavily engaged with the enemy and it did not appear that the day would see the mountain in our hands. During the morning, LT 2/8, now attacking on the right flank of LT 1/29, had worked a company partly up on the eastern plateau just off the crest. Upon learning of this, the commander of LT 1/29 dispatched his battalion reserve, a platoon from Division Reconnaissance Company which had been sent up to reinforce the landing team after it had suffered heavy losses, around the right flank to steal up the eastern side of the crest and occupy it. The platoon succeeded in doing this without losing a man; at the time, the Japanese apparently weren't worried about the crest and had left it unoccupied, while fighting on the slopes below. Then Lieutenant Colonel Tompkins disengaged two of his companies and led them in a single file around the right flank, following the path taken by the Reconnaissance platoon, and started up to the top. In the meanwhile his 81mm mortar platoon laid a screen of smoke and fire on the plateau just north of the L-shaped ridge that formed the crest of Tapotchau, and succeeded in screening the movement of the troops. By 2000 hours the companies were on top and dug in; not a man was lost in the undertaking. Contact was firm with LT 2/8 on the right, and the little valley on the left of the crest that separated Baker/29 from the rest of the battalion was covered by fire. Within an hour after the troops had dug in, the enemy attempted to regain the heights by attacking from the northwest, but this counterattack was easily repulsed. The mountain had been taken with a minimum loss of troops.

On this day Island Command assumed responsibility for the south part of Saipan. Unloading over the beaches was practically continuous. The little narrow gauge railroad that ran from Charan Kanoa up to Aslito Field was put to good use when gasoline and bombs were carried on its little cars, pulled by a hastily repaired midget locomotive.

Enemy activity was to diminish during this night. The most outstanding move was made about midnight, when LCIs commenced firing at some barges, apparently issuing from Garapan. One barge was sunk, one damaged, and the movement dispersed.

#### **D plus 11—26 June**

After a heavy artillery preparation massed on the Garapan-West Topotchau sector prior to King hour (0730) on 26 June, the 2d Marine Division led off in the attack which echeloned to the right. Shifting to the zone of the 27th Infantry Division after preparatory fires for the 2d Marine Division, our combined artillery laid down heavy barrages to enable that division to move. Only small gains in the sector of CT 6 were registered in the 2d Marine Division zone. CT 8 was strengthening its positions on Tapotchau.

Because of the nature of the enemy's positions which lay perpendicular to the lines of the 27th Infantry Division, it was difficult for that unit to move in its own zone of action, so it moved one CT into the 4th Marine Division's zone and attacked up the ridge lines.

Patrolling its area and outposting the beaches, the 4th Marine Division reorganized and resupplied while waiting for the other two divisions to come fully abreast before continuing the attack.

During the afternoon of 26 June a friendly aircraft, manned by an aerial observer, operating independently and without orders, conducted a strafing attack which resulted in eighteen casualties to our own troops.

At 1945, enemy aircraft, believed based on Rota, harassed the Saipan beachhead and transport area. Bombs were dropped on Aslito Field area resulting in one killed and four wounded. One plane penetrated the smoke screen over the transport area and launched a torpedo which struck the USS Mercury but failed to explode. Two of the ten raiding planes were destroyed by AA fire.

#### **D plus 12—27 June**

On 27 June, at 0430, the Commander, Air Defense Command, reported that enemy 50 calibre machine guns and 20mm guns were firing on Aslito Airfield. One P-47 was set afire and destroyed. All available engineers and Seabees at the airfield defended the field. At 0722, Jap patrols were reported continuing attacks against the airfield. By 0735, two companies of engineers had thoroughly reconnoitered the airfield and apparently had the situation under control. At about 0515, the 25th Marines, who were assembled about 3,000 yards north of the airfield in NTLF reserve, were attacked by Japanese, estimated to be a battalion in strength. This enemy group had broken out of Nafutan Point, which was being contained by LT 2/105, and according to unverified reports, was marching north in a column of twos when it ran into the 25th Marine's assembly area. After some confusion, about 300 of the enemy were annihilated by CT 25 during the early morning hours. The 2d Battalion, 14th Marines, killed another 100 Japanese in their area. Obviously the group which attacked Aslito Field was a part of this force. Others infiltrated over to the swamp near Lake Susupe where Corps Reconnaissance Battalion hunted them down.

This enemy escape from Nafutan relieved LT 2/105 of the worst of their assignment. On the next day the point was thoroughly mopped up and under control.

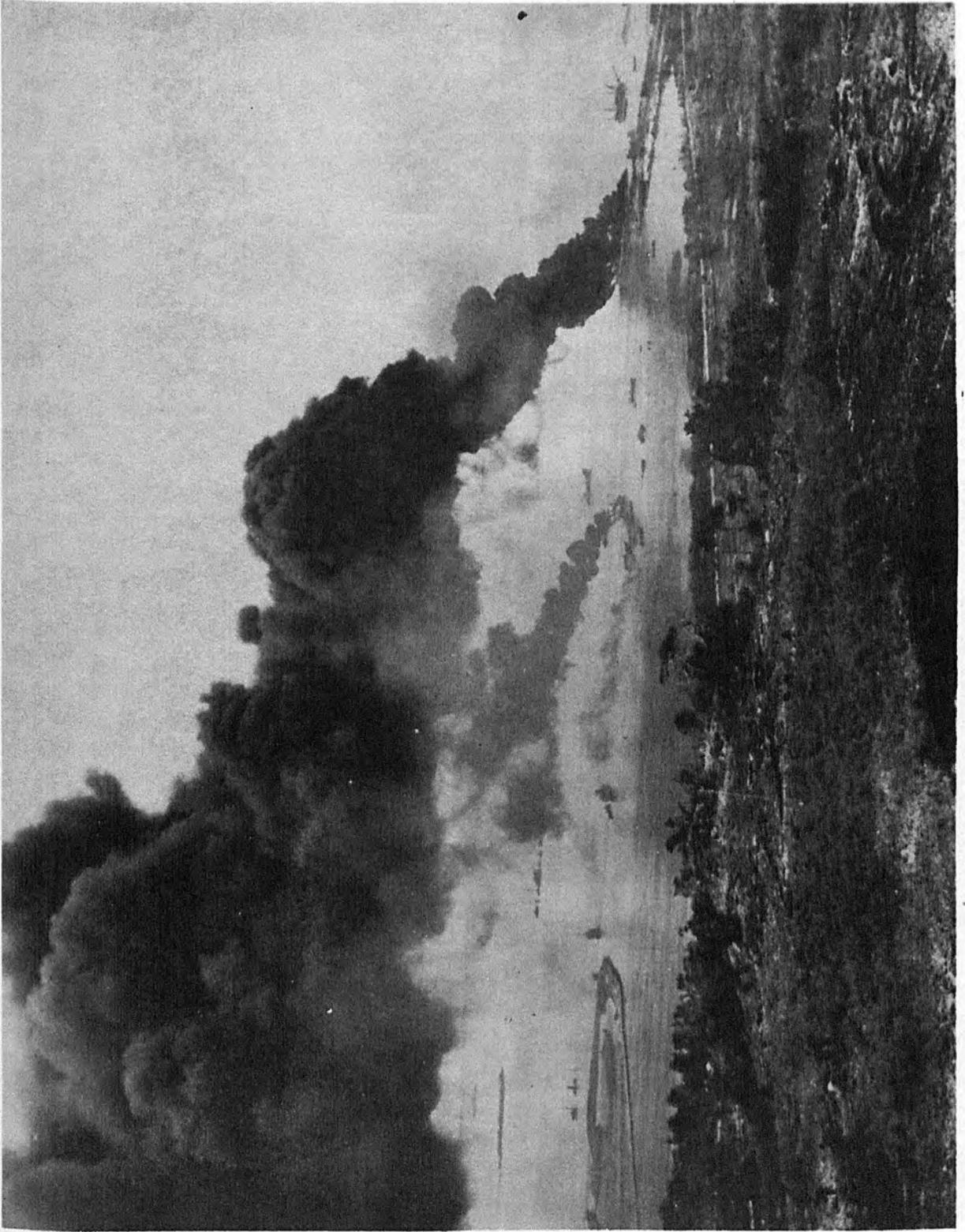
The attack for the day continued with the three divisions abreast, but the 4th Marine Division was late in attacking because of the enemy activity in its rear areas, as mentioned before. This made no difference, since the 4th Marine Division's lines were considerably forward of those of the 27th Infantry Division.

By 1630, CT 23 was on 0-6 but CT 165 (attached to the 4th Marine Division) was echeloned back to the left. Since the division had made gains up to 2,000 yards against light opposition, nightfall found it forced to cover a left flank of about 2,500 yards, while a front of about the same size was held. By committing the reserve LT of CT 165, and using two battalions from the division reserve, this line was covered.

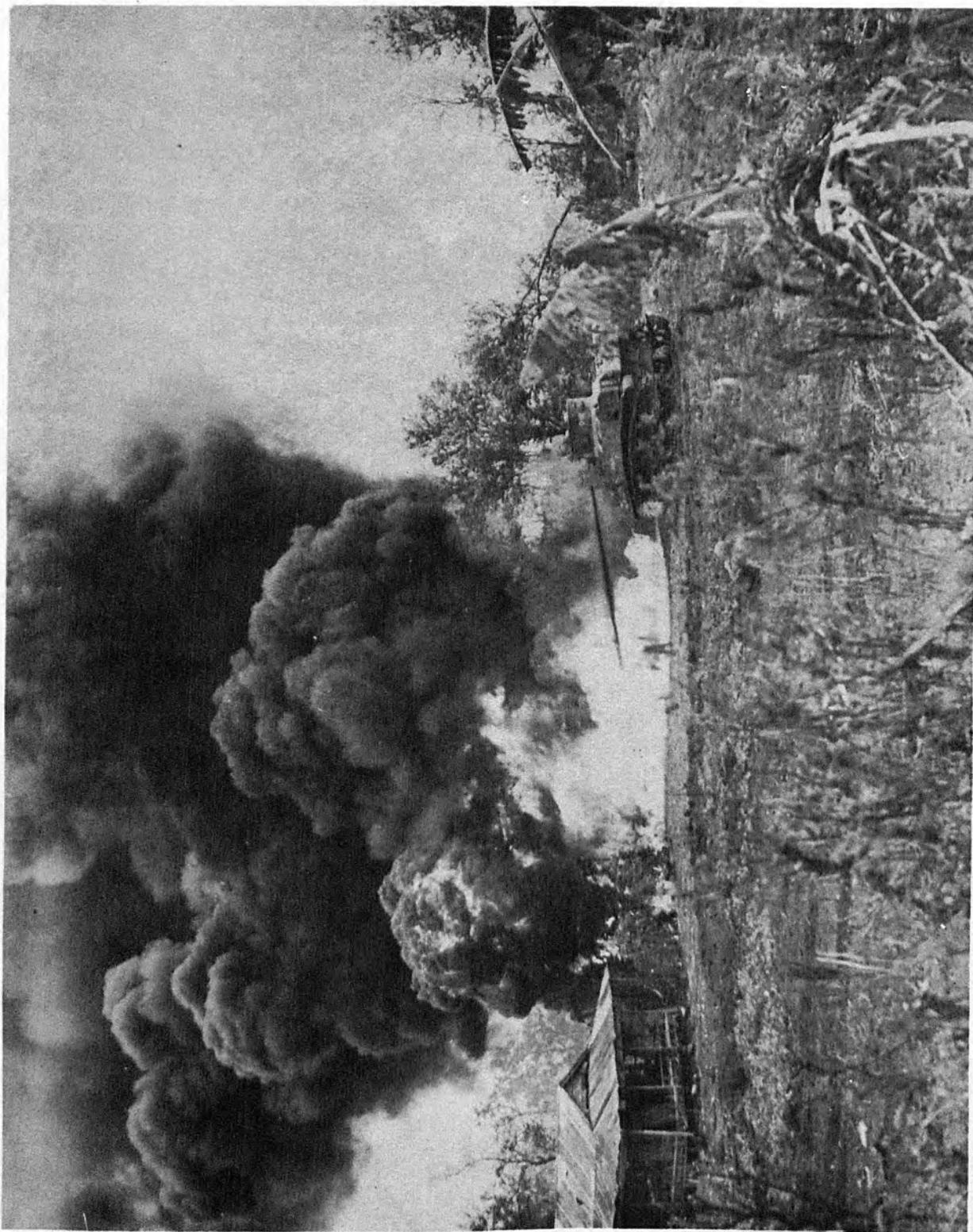
Very little advance was made by the 2d Marine Division. CT 6 gained about 300 yards against stiff opposition. CT 8 moved down on the plateau north of the crest of Mt. Tapotchau.

#### **D plus 13—28 June to D plus 15—30 June**

Only small gains were made during the next three days by the 2d Marine Division and the 27th Infantry Division. A few hundred yards each day were picked up by the former while moving through very rough terrain. In moving down off the high ground in the Mt.



Japanese Ships Burn in Tanapag Harbor



Marine Flamethrower Tank in Action

Tapotchau area, and the hills east of Garapan, pockets of stubborn resistance had to be worked over slowly and methodically. In both Division sectors the rugged terrain itself presented as much or more opposition as did the enemy. By 30 June, CT 2 and CT 6 were meeting light resistance and were ahead of CT 8 which was slowly fighting its way down off Tapotchau.

The 4th Marine Division continued improving its positions and conducted vigorous patrolling for about 1,000 yards to its front without meeting any opposition.

Casualties to date were 1,566 killed in action; 7,855 wounded in action; 984 missing in action. Total : 10,408.

#### **D plus 16—1 July to D plus 19—4 July**

On 1 July, CT 8 made good advances with its largest gain on the right in the sectors of LT 1/29 and LT 2/8. CT 6 made steady progress, although some isolated pockets of Japs in a ravine gave some trouble. Patrolling 1,500 yards to its front the 4th Marine Division made no contact with the enemy. CT 165 on the Division's left flank had some skirmishes on Hill 760. The remainder of the 27th Infantry Division ran into a little trouble in the morning but advanced during the day about 600 yards.

During the next three days the 4th Marine Division advanced roughly 3,500 yards against light opposition, and on 4 July, the front lines were in the shape of an inverted "V," with the left end some 2,000 yards north of Tanapag and an equal distance east from the western coast. The eastern extremity was a little short of the line 0-7(2).

The 2d of July saw a split in the center of the 27th Infantry Division's lines that created a gap of about 500 yards. However, no harm came as a result of this gap, and the attack was renewed on the following day at which time the division found five pillboxes blocking its path. After knocking out these pillboxes the 27th Infantry Division moved on against negligible resistance, and reported the enemy in full flight.

Meanwhile in the 2d Marine Division zone, resistance had varied according to the terrain. CT 8, moving down toward Tanapag, ran into some heavy pockets of opposition, but with the aid of rockets, tanks, 75mm SP guns, and flame-throwers, continued to advance without too much difficulty. Advancing simultaneously with CT 8, CT 6 ran into much of the same kind of resistance that was bothering CT 8. Although the enemy's back was broken, he still fought a more or less determined fight, consisting mainly of semi-isolated pockets organized into strongpoints manned by machine guns. Since this whole area was hilly and had numerous ravines, many of the enemy were able to resist from the caves that honeycombed the limestone formations. Moving through Garapan, CT 2 encountered some mines and a little street fighting, but had no difficulty in progressing concurrently with the unit on its right. On 4 July the 2d Marine Division had finished its sweep to the sea and now firmly held Garapan and Tanapag Harbor, and the Seaplane Base.

The city of Garapan, which was used as a forming up area by the enemy during the first three days of the campaign, had been systematically reduced to a mass of rubble by intensive artillery and naval gunfire shelling, as well as by air strikes. Practically nothing but a few pieces of walls and formations built of concrete were left standing. Wooded houses had been burned or blown to bits. Dead animals and civilians, as well as soldiers, dotted the area. Houses had been ransacked and clothing was scattered. A few burned automobiles and buses testified to the thoroughness of our work. Over the whole area hovered the smell of death. The city was completely destroyed.

The seaplane base at Tanapag was in an equally bad state of destruction. Burned and twisted girders marked where the hangar had been. A few burned and damaged planes littered the runway. Many well-constructed bomb shelters were found in this area. Here, as in Garapan, the stinking bodies of the defenders illustrated the half-hearted stand of the enemy. In attempting to defend this general area, the remaining enemy had accepted ultimate death, for their positions were valueless once we had gained the high ground that commanded Garapan and Tanapag. Their plight had been hopeless, and it seems that those who chose to defend Garapan and Tanapag must have done so of their own volition. Surely no commander would have sacrificed his troops so uselessly.

In the harbor off Tanapag, hulks of sunken and damaged ships provided hiding places for many snipers. The enemy force on Maniagassa Island was an unknown factor but could not be large. That place had received a thorough going-over.

On the little narrow gauge railroad north of Garapan were found naval guns in excellent condition. These guns had never been mounted or their fortifications constructed. Large stores of ammunition were also found in this vicinity.

The afternoon of 4 July saw the 2d Marine Division on the beach with its zone of action finished. The left elements of the 27th Infantry Division, after a gain of 1,600 yards, was also on the beach north of Tanapag. On the high ground overlooking the whole beach area was the left element of the 4th Marine Division, which extended into the 27th Infantry Division's zone of action. The latter division prepared to relieve part of CT 23 before starting the final drive to the north with the 4th Marine Division.

### **3. THE FINAL DRIVE TO THE NORTH**

**5 July to 9 July 1944**

**D plus 20—5 July and D plus 21—6 July**

With the 2d Marine Division, less CT 2, CT 6, 3/10 and 4/10, in reserve and assembled in bivouac area near Garapan, the 4th Marine Division and the 27th Infantry Division continued the attack to secure the island. The two above-mentioned artillery battalions displaced to positions near Mutcho Point under NTLF control to support operations in northern Saipan. The two combat teams were held in NTLF reserve.

While the boundary between divisions as set by NTLF had up till now divided the northern part of the island equitably as regarded the width and along the long axis of this part of the island, it was seen, however, that by changing the direction of the division boundary and projecting the left flank of the 4th Marine Division to the west coast at a point about half way between Flores Point and Marpi Point, there was a strong likelihood that some of the enemy might be cut off and pocketed. At least the route of escape for Japanese who were in front of the 27th Infantry Division would be blocked. Consequently the 4th Marine Division attacked on the 5th and 6th of July with this idea in mind. Without too much trouble the division made good advances on these two days, and occupied the high cliff that looked down on the coastal plain on the west coast, while the right flank of the division line was anchored far up the eastern coast. The efficiency of the division had dropped a little as a result of physical fatigue as well as from casualties. As usual, the rugged terrain was matching the enemy in offering opposition to our progress.

In the meantime the 27th Infantry Division was making limited gains, with its main effort on the high ground in the right of its zone that commanded the coastal plain. Heavy mortar, machine gun, and rifle fire was encountered by CT 105, and CT 165 received fire from snipers in the hulks offshore. Little movement could be made on the plain. The cliffs overlooking the plain were alive with enemy and had to be reduced slowly and methodically.

Late in the afternoon the 10th Marines in registering on Maniagassa Island hit an ammunition dump and the tremendous explosion that resulted cleared off the western one-third of the island. A blockhouse was disclosed in the center of the island.

Consistent with Japanese practice, the possibility of fanatical "all-out" charges in these last few days was anticipated by all units. In every Pacific operation when the enemy had been bottled up, he had lashed out in suicidal charges in an attempt to sell his life for the Emperor by taking as many American lives as possible, while losing his own. Having long realized that defeat was inevitable, Lieutenant General Saito, who had the overall command of the Japanese forces on Saipan, decided on 6 July that the time had come for a final gesture, a large-scale banzai attack. Surrender was unthinkable for these little yellow men; waiting for death, while "holed-up" in caves, was undesirable for the brave Sons of Nippon. Here then, was the time for the remaining defenders to strike, and to insure for themselves everlasting glory, by killing as many of the hated Americans as possible.

Consequently, Lieutenant General Saito sent runners out (communications having been practically non-existent since the first week of the operation) to notify his unit commanders to join him in a final conference at which time orders would be given for the last big attack. At approximately 0600, 6 July, he issued this order to his remaining commanders:

"I am addressing the officers and men of the Imperial Army on Saipan.

"For more than twenty days since the American devils attacked, the officers, men, and civilian employees of the Imperial Army and Navy on this island have fought well and bravely. Everywhere they have demonstrated the honor and glory of the Imperial Forces. I expected that every man would do his duty.

"Heaven has not given us an opportunity. We have not been able to utilize fully the terrain. We have fought in unison up to the present time but now we have no materials with which to fight and our artillery for attack has been completely destroyed. Our comrades have fallen one after another. Despite the bitterness of defeat, we pledge 'Seven lives to repay our country.'

"The barbarous attack of the enemy is being continued. Even though the enemy has occupied only a corner of Saipan, we are dying without avail under the violent shelling and bombing. Whether we attack or whether we stay where we are, there is only death. However, in death there is life. We must utilize this opportunity to exalt true Japanese manhood. I will advance with those who remain to deliver still another blow to the American devils, and leave my bones on Saipan as a bulwark of the Pacific.

"As it says in the 'Senjinkun' (Battle Ethics), 'I will never suffer the disgrace of being taken alive,' and 'I will offer up the courage of my soul and calmly rejoice in living by the eternal principle.'

"Here I pray with you for the eternal life of the Emperor and of the country and I advance to seek out the enemy.

"Follow me!"

July 1944  
C.O. Northern Marianas  
Defense Forces  
C.O. District Fleet

General Saito robbed his high-sounding order of some of its efficacy, however, by changing his mind in typical Japanese fashion, and turning to hara-kiri. He also robbed "the American Devils" of the opportunity of killing off one of the Emperor's faithful commanders. Believing himself to be too weak physically to lead his forces in this final charge, he attempted to take his own life, but apparently only made a token gesture. His devoted adjutant, using a lowly pistol, ended the old man's life with a well-placed shot in the ear.

#### **D plus 22—7 July**

At 0445 on 7 July, CT 24 received a "Banzai" charge and killed about 350 of the enemy, with a few casualties on our part and no penetration of the lines. These attackers were armed for the most part with grenades, bayonets on poles, pikes (so-called "idiot sticks") and a few rifles. During the night, at about 2200 hours, CT 105 had a small counterattack but had no difficulty repulsing it.

At about 0510 hours on the morning of 7 July, the 27th Infantry Division began to receive an all-out "Banzai" charge in the area extending from Matumska to Tanapag. This attack overran the 1st and 2d Battalions of the 105th Infantry Regiment and continued on in the direction of Garapan. Two artillery battalions of the 10th Marines, the 3rd and 4th, received the almost expended forward elements of the attacking enemy force. 3/10 fired all available ammunition, including air bursts and super-quick bursts from their 105mm howitzers, in an effort to stop the Japanese. Two batteries were forced to abandon their field pieces and fall back to better defensive positions, acting as infantry, until units of the 106th Infantry, the 27th Infantry Division's reserve, reached them at about 1500 hours. This battalion, 3/10, had 45 men killed and 82 wounded. It lost three of its artillery pieces from which the firing locks had been removed, but these were soon retaken. It accounted for over 300 enemy killed.

By dark about half of the ground lost during this counterattack had been retaken. The command post of CT 105 was surrounded by enemy, but held out in a pocket beyond our lines, employing regimental headquarters troops in the defense perimeter. Scattered troops from the 1st and 2d Battalions, 105th Infantry, which had been overrun, drifted back into our lines all day, while others waded out to the reef and were picked up by our destroyers. It is estimated that the strength of the enemy employed in this counterattack was between 2,000 and 3,000, most of whom were killed. According to prisoner of war interrogations, Lieutenant General Saito, who was in command of all forces on the island, had intended this attack to be the final stand, but due to communication difficulties, many groups of Japanese who were "holed-up" in the northernmost sector of the island, were evidently not notified and failed to participate.

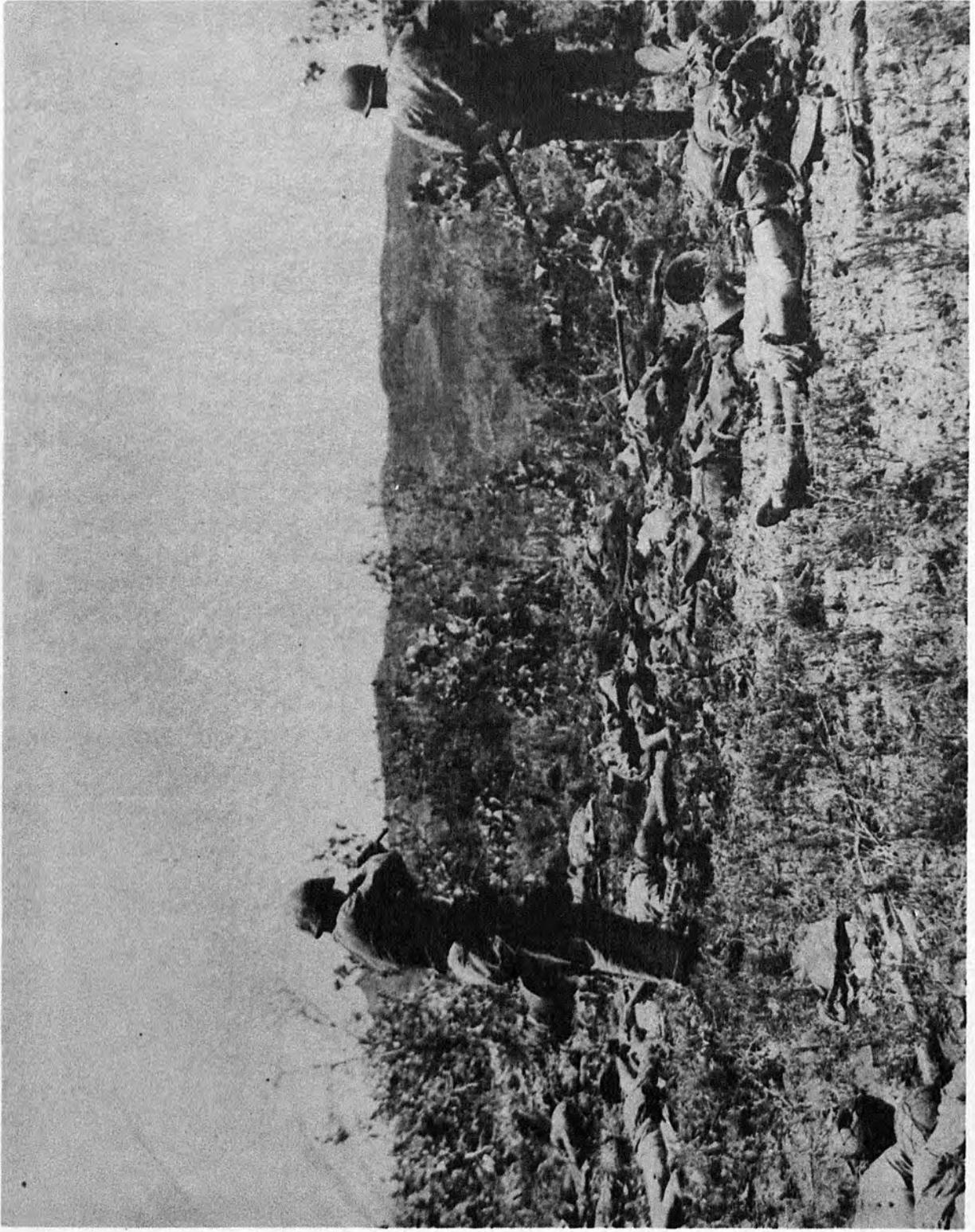
#### **D plus 23—8 July**

On 8 July, the 2d Marine Division, using CTs 6 and 8, effected the relief of the 27th Infantry Division in its zone of action, except for CT 165 which stayed in position, and commenced the attack at 1130. The last organized resistance in this sector was overcome by midafternoon of 9 July. The enemy pocketed in the area had destroyed themselves in suicidal rushes from the high cliffs to the rocky beach below. Many were observed, along with hundreds of civilians, wading out into the sea and permitting themselves to be drowned. Others committed hara-kiri with knives, or killed themselves with grenades. Some officers using their swords, decapitated many of their troops.

In the meantime, while the 2d Marine Division was relieving the 27th Infantry Division and mopping up in its zone, the 4th Marine Division was continuing the attack in its zone of action. CT 2 was attached to this division. With four CTs abreast on a 6,300 yard front, the 4th Marine Division attacked toward the northwest on the morning of 8 July.



Ground Captured by 4th Marine Division  
(Note Jap trenches in left foreground)



End of a Banzai Charge

Resistance was moderate but difficult terrain, road blocks, and enemy fire from caves slowed the advance, which at the end of the day was found to be 1,500 yards. On the following day the 4th Marine Division, with CT 2 attached, completed its drive to Marpi Point and the northern end of Saipan. Some small pockets of resistance were found, but these were largely by-passed and left for reserve elements to contain, and liquidate.

At 1600, 9 July, 1944, the Commanding General of NTLF announced that the island had been secured. Only mopping up was left to be done. It has been found since the Saipan operation that in terrain like that found on the island, many of the enemy will be by-passed or will elude the attacking force. This is only natural, since if the attacking elements are to maintain their momentum, they cannot possibly search out every nook, cranny, and cave. Add to this the inevitable infiltrations that occurred during every night of the fighting. Caves that were burned out with flame-throwers, or blasted with demolition packs on one day, were found to contain live Japs on the next day. The enemy was to be found on the island for months to come, sometimes singly, other times in small groups.

One of the most sickening stories of the war has come out of the Saipan campaign, namely the account of the hundreds of suicides in the Marpi Point area. In the closing days of the operation, hundreds of civilians, as well as soldiers, wantonly destroyed themselves, rather than fall into our hands, attesting to the thoroughness and degree of the Japanese propaganda, which pictured us as monsters, murderers, and butchers. Old men and women, young people, even children, waded out to drown themselves in the sea. Many flung themselves from the high cliffs of Marpi Point onto the rocks below. Some who wavered at the last moment were shot down in cold blood by Japanese soldiers, hidden in small caves in the sides of the cliffs. The commander of a YP boat said later that the progress of his boat around Marpi Point at this time was slow and tedious because of the hundreds of corpses floating in the water.

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# Summary

Even though the island of Saipan was declared as "secured" on 9 July, all the fighting was not over. Hundreds of the enemy remained hidden in almost inaccessible caves, wooded ravines, and mountainous areas and proceeded to carry on a form of guerrilla warfare that lasted for months. Our troops killed literally thousands of Japanese long after the island was secured. To illustrate the way in which the rugged terrain of the island lent itself to hiding, it might be pointed out that many civilian families, ranging from infants to septuagenarians, finally came out of the bush and surrendered as long as a month after the island was secured. Japanese soldiers living on surplus American rations, left behind by combat troops in their movement up the island, had no difficulty in existing. As often as not, these soldiers were killed wearing complete Marine or Army uniforms, and carrying our packs. However, the existence of these small groups did not materially affect our plans and the island was rapidly built into a fine base.

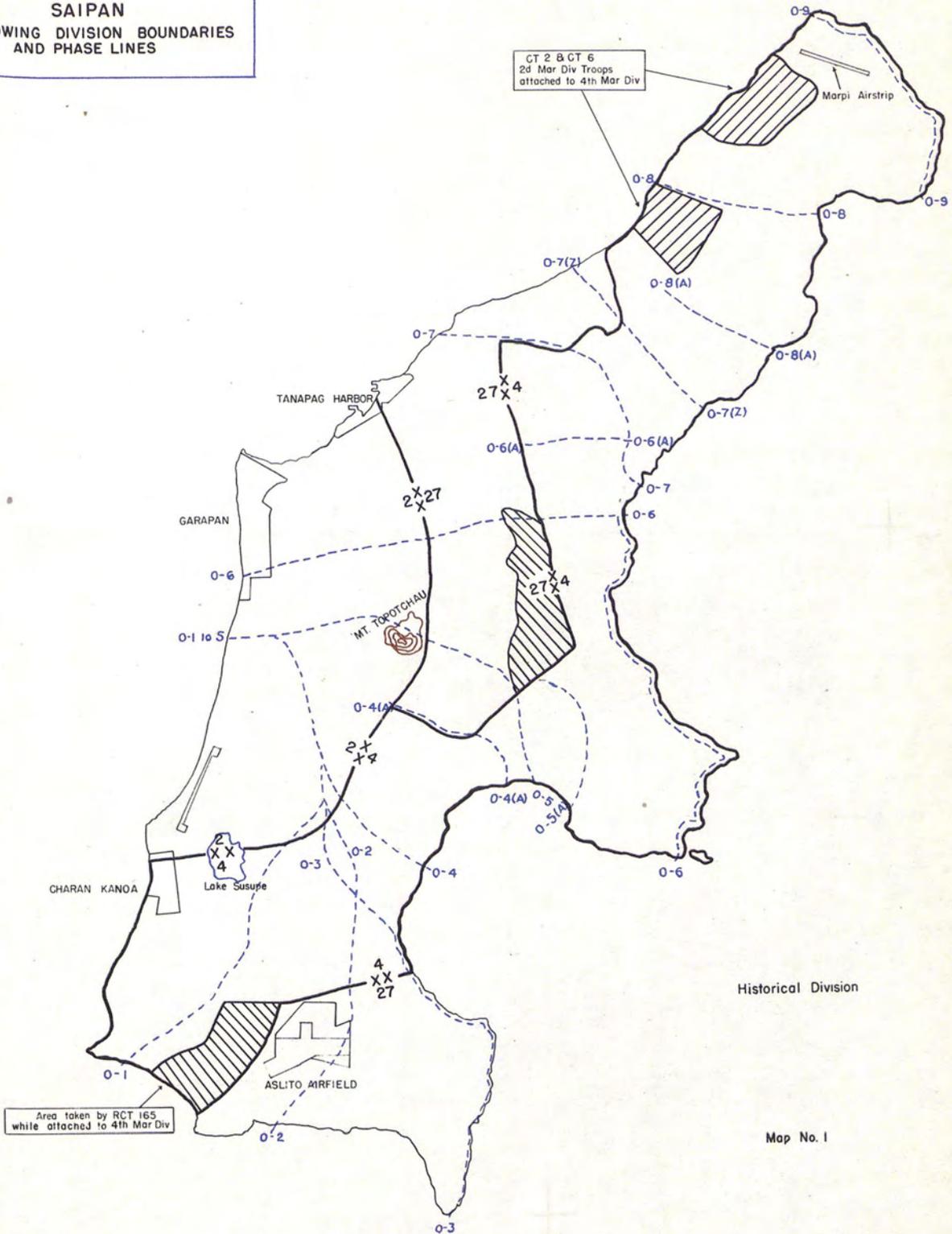
After Saipan had been secured, the only piece of land left in the area to be taken before the Tinian operation was tiny Maniagassa Island near Tanapag. On 13 July, 1944, CT 6 was ordered to capture the island. The 5th Amphibian Tractor Battalion furnished 25 LVTs and the 2d Armored Amphibian Battalion furnished 5 LVT(A) (4)s to transport the assault troops to the island. At 1105, LT 3/6 (less one rifle company, the 81mm mortar platoon, and elements of Bn Hqs) landed on Maniagassa Island. A fifteen minute artillery preparation was furnished by the 10th Marines. Within twenty minutes all troops were ashore and secured the island in short order. Very little resistance was encountered. One rifle company was left to garrison the island until relieved by garrison troops from Saipan Garrison Force.

Saipan, in one sense, was a proving ground. The tools of amphibious warfare slowly perfected from Guadalcanal through Tarawa, Kwajalein, Bougainville, and Eniwetok were forged in an even hotter fire at Saipan. The responsibilities incumbent upon an organization of landing forces for a campaign the size of the Marianas, in which two whole corps of mixed Army and Marine troops were used, were met and mastered under trying circumstances. Problems of ship-to-shore movement, communication, fire control, coordination of land, sea and air power, were met and from them new lessons were learned that would prove beneficial at Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

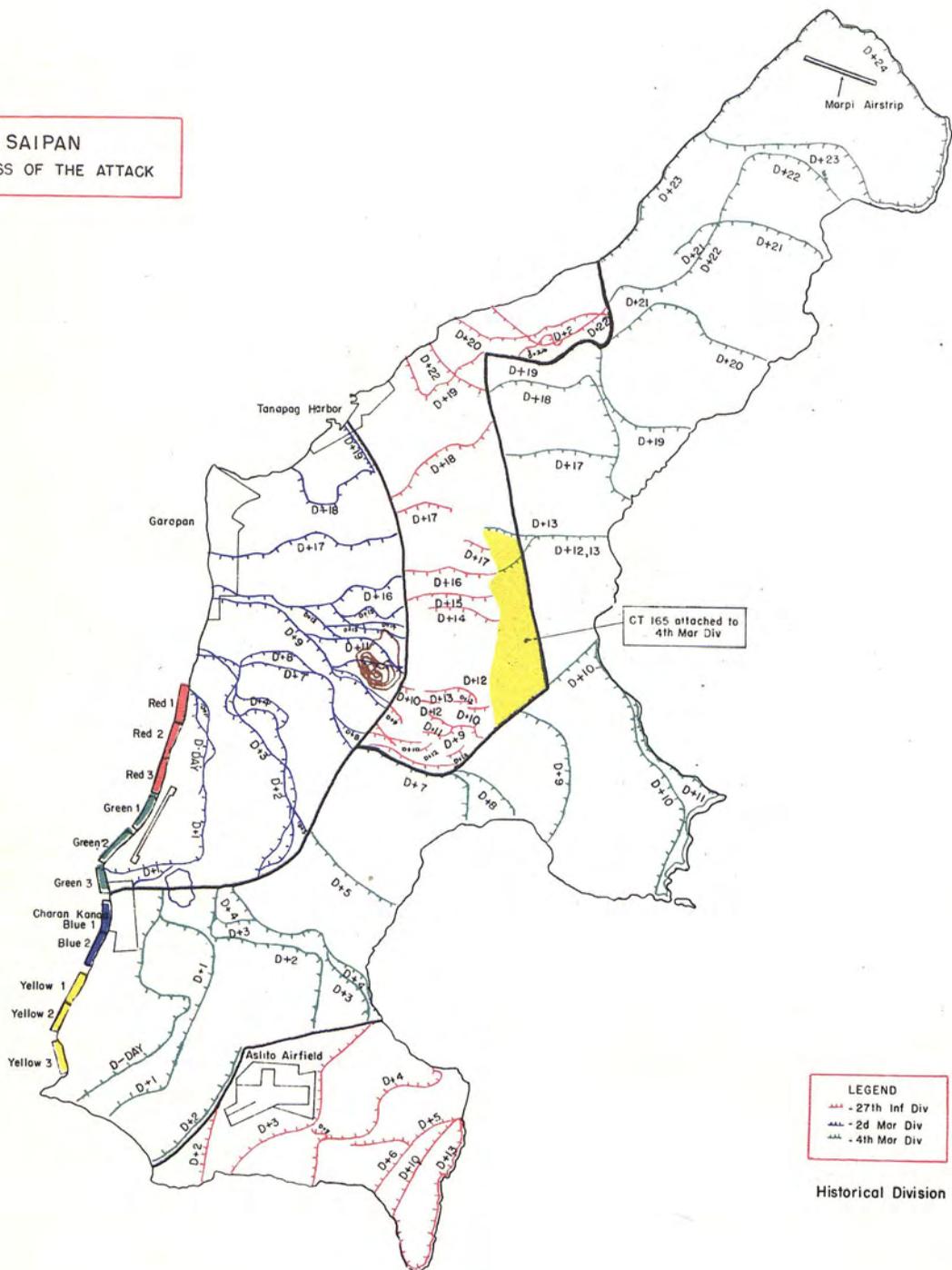
Our naval forces demonstrated their ability to hold off and engage enemy sea forces, while providing support at the same time for a landing operation that lasted over three weeks. The Navy also provided complete air cover and support from carrier based planes until fields ashore could be secured and put into operation.

The whole Marianas campaign was audacious; the Saipan operation as the first phase was a bold venture. In the successful completion of our task of taking Saipan, we not only provided ourselves with another base for future operations, but we broke into the Japanese defense periphery again. We deliberately took away one of his bastions of defense. We laid the rest of the Marianas open to immediate attack. We challenged and defeated the enemy's task force and substantiated our belief that his Navy, as a fighting force, was through. In taking Saipan we cracked the "hardest nut" of the Marianas campaign; Guam and Tinian were to fall easily now. We were providing ourselves with enormous "unsinkable" carriers from which our B-29s would mercilessly pound the industrial cities of Japan.

**SAIPAN**  
SHOWING DIVISION BOUNDARIES  
AND PHASE LINES



**SAIPAN**  
PROGRESS OF THE ATTACK



**LEGEND**  
 ■■■ - 27th Inf Div  
 ■■■ - 2d Mar Div  
 ■■■ - 4th Mar Div

Historical Division

The lessons learned at Saipan were as valuable as they were numerous. Saipan demonstrated the tactical efficiency and flexibility of the rifle companies, battalions and regiments under the new tables of organization. On 19 January, 1944, V Amphibious Corps received the new tables of organization and sent them out to subordinate units. Under these new tables the weapons company in the battalions were done away with, the regimental weapons company strengthened, the Special Weapons Battalion in Division Special Troops disbanded, and the platoons in the rifle company were given machine gun sections, while the 60mm mortars were placed in company headquarters. The 81mm mortar platoon was put in headquarters company of the battalion.

All of these changes tended to make each fighting unit a more or less self-sufficient team, with adequate organic firepower to handle most given situations. While on the one hand, this placed more responsibility on the company commander, at the same time it placed more fire power at his immediate disposal, and tended to minimize the amount of lost motion generated under the old system when units and weapons were merely attached. Properly trained, the rifle company under the new T.O. was a group prepared to fight as well independently as under battalion control if the situation demanded. By the same token, the battalion became more integrated and better coordination was possible. The same held true for regiment.

As a matter of necessity, appropriate space cannot be given in a monograph such as this, to the smaller units that comprised a part of the organization of the task force for the operation on Saipan. The importance of the work of motor transport companies, rocket detachments, amphibious tractor units, field depots and all the other units and echelons, which were such integral parts of the attacking force, cannot be overestimated, or too highly praised. However, if each was written up in detail this account would become a series of volumes. For the reader who desires more detail on subordinate units there is a wealth of material at hand compiled into reports and diaries.

It is equally impossible to give a full account, or even a partial account, of the thousands of lessons learned and recommendations made as a result of the Saipan operation. These are the subject matter for text books of the future. At best, this account of the Saipan operation is brief. Little has been said, for example, about the bravery, devotion to duty, and endurance of the troops who fought there. Their conduct was, as is said in the closing sentence of every Navy citation, "in keeping with the highest traditions of the U. S. Naval Service."

#### **Breakdown of Casualties for the Saipan Operation**

Although the below figures are not final, they do represent the best possible attempt to list our casualties in a complete breakdown of participating units available at this time.

This report was made by the G-1 Section of Northern Troops and Landing Force and submitted 10 August 1944.

	KIA		WIA		MIA		TOTAL	
	O	E	O	E	O	E	O	E
<b>2d Mar Div</b>								
RCT 2	11	170	28	827	1	15	40	1012
RCT 6	16	312	57	1308	0	32	73	1652
RCT 8	17	268	48	1188	0	29	65	1485
10th Mars	10	89	20	201	0	4	30	294
18th Mars	2	57	11	247	0	9	13	313
Div Trps	17	181	62	917	0	16	79	1114
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>1077</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>4688</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>5870</b>
<b>4th Mar Div</b>								
RCT 23	17	270	54	1392	1	53	72	1715
RCT 24	16	274	77	1437	0	30	93	1741
RCT 25	13	211	51	1340	0	46	64	1597
14th Mars	4	50	34	323	0	1	38	374
20th Mars	4	36	13	196	0	4	17	236
Support Grp	5	66	33	555	3	15	41	636
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>5243</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>6299</b>
<b>27th Inf Div</b>								
RCT 105	33	516	48	845	1	53	82	1414
RCT 106	14	165	47	719	0	0	61	884
RCT 165	15	168	31	667	0	2	46	837
Div Arty	5	18	11	44	2	2	18	64
Spec Trps	1	3	3	14	0	0	4	17
102d Med Bn	0	4	0	22	0	0	0	26
102d Engr Bn	0	18	2	50	0	13	2	81
1165th Engr Grp	0	0	1	14	0	0	1	14
773d Am Trac Bn	1	4	2	12	0	2	3	18
762d Tank Bn	3	17	4	57	0	0	7	74
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>913</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>2444</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>3429</b>
<b>XXIV Corps Arty</b>								
Hq & Hq Btry	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
145th FA Bn	0	2	6	8	0	0	6	10
225th FA Bn	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
531st FA Bn	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	4
532d FA Bn	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
477th Am Trk Co	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Corps Troops</b>								
Amph Recon Bn	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
18th Naval C.B.	0	1	1	37	0	0	1	38
121st Naval C.B.	0	12	2	60	0	3	2	75
7th Field Depot	0	4	0	25	0	0	0	29
AWS No. 5	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
98thPortSurgHosp	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>NTLF TOTAL</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>2920</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>12512</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>862</b>	<b>15762</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>3126</b>			<b>13160</b>	<b>338</b>		<b>16624</b>	

**Commanding Officers and Staffs  
for  
15 June, 1944**

**V Amphibious Corps**

Corps Commander	Lt Gen Holland M. Smith
Chief of Staff	Brig Gen Graves B. Erskine
C-1	Lt Col Albert F. Metz
C-2	Col St. Julien R. Marshall
C-3	Col John C. McQueen
C-4	Col Raymond E. Knapp

**2d Marine Division**

Division Commander	Major Gen Thomas E. Watson
Asst. Division Commander	Brig Gen Merritt A. Edson
Chief of Staff	Col David M. Shoup
D-1	Lt Col James T. Wilber
D-2	Lt Col Thomas J. Colley
D-3	Lt Col Wallace M. Greene
D-4	Col Robert J. Straub

**2d Marines**

Commanding Officer	Col Walter J. Stuart
Executive Officer	Lt Col John H. Griebel
R-1	Capt Leonard G. Hicks
R-2	Capt John L. Schwabe
R-3	Major Samuel D. Mandeville Jr.
R-4	Major Harold K. Throneson

**1st Bn, 2d Marines**

Battalion Commander	Lt Col Wood B. Kyle
Executive Officer	Major Wendell W. Andrews
Bn-1	Capt Robert J. Munley
Bn-2	1st Lt Charles Schultz Jr.
Bn-3	Major Charles P. Lewis Jr.
Bn-4	2d Lt Albert B. Cochrell

**2d Bn, 2d Marines**

Battalion Commander	Lt Col Richard C. Nutting
Executive Officer	Major Michael P. Ryan
Bn-1	2d Lt Albert S. Borek
Bn-2	1st Lt Monroe Morgan
Bn-3	1st Lt William B. Somerville
Bn-4	2d Lt James L. Dent

**3d Bn, 2d Marines**

Battalion Commander	Lt Col Arnold F. Johnston
Executive Officer	Major Benjamin T. Owens
Bn-1	WO (Com) Elbert E. Cameron
Bn-2	1st Lt Leonard M. Wood
Bn-3	Capt Richard Phillippi
Bn-4	1st Lt Adrian Mallia

## 6th Marines

Commanding Officer	Col James P. Riseley
Executive Officer	Lt Col Kenneth F. McLeod
R-1	Capt Philip J. Costello
R-2	Capt Donald V. Nahrgang
R-3	Major Loren E. Haffner
R-4	Major Cyril C. Sheehan

### 1st Bn, 6th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lt Col William K. Jones
Executive Officer	Major James A. Donovan Jr.
Bn-1	2d Lt Robert J. Vroegindewey
Bn-2	Capt George Azud
Bn-3	Capt Charles H. Triplett
Bn-4	Capt Donald K. Calkins

### 2d Bn, 6th Marines

Battalion Commander	Major LeRoy P. Hunt
Executive Officer	Capt Thomas Wheeler Jr.
Bn-1	1st Lt Francis T. Sweeney
Bn-2	1st Lt Paul A. Diehl
Bn-3	Capt Joseph E. Rowland
Bn-4	1st Lt William B. Abbott

### 3d Bn, 6th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lt Col John W. Easley
Executive Officer	Major John E. Rentsch
Bn-1	1st Lt Eugene R. Johnston
Bn-2	2d Lt Buster W. Miller
Bn-3	Capt Edward L. Singletary
Bn-4	2d Lt Berthold O. Fay

## 8th Marines

Commanding Officer	Col Clarence R. Wallace
Executive Officer	Lt Col Jack P. Juhan
R-1	Capt Lloyd E. Iverson
R-2	*
R-3	Major William H. Souder Jr.
R-4	Major Alfred E. Holland

### 1st Bn, 8th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lt Col Lawrence C. Hays Jr.
Executive Officer	Major Robert J. Oddy
Bn-1	Capt Warren H. Keck
Bn-2	1st Lt Warren H. Simpson
Bn-3	Major Daniel V. McWethy Jr.
Bn-4	1st Lt Richard J. Davis Jr.

### 2d Bn, 8th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lt Col Henry P. Crowe
Executive Officer	Major William C. Chamberlin
Bn-1	Capt John P. Sheehan Jr.
Bn-2	2d Lt John R. Day
Bn-3	Capt Arthur J. Rauchle
Bn-4	Capt Frank A. Stanton

### 3d Bn, 8th Marines

Battalion Commander	Major Stanley E. Larsen
Executive Officer	Capt Osborne K. LeBlanc
Bn-1	Capt Karl K. Keffer Jr.
Bn-2	2d Lt Laurence R. Dale
Bn-3	Capt William H. Pickett
Bn-4	1st Lt Karl T. Homer

### 1st Bn, 29th Marines

(attached to 2d MarDiv)

Battalion Commander	Lt Col Guy E. Tannyhill
Executive Officer	Major William S. Vasconcellos
Bn-1	Capt Arthur R. Hills
Bn-2	Capt Ernest P. Freeman
Bn-3	Major William W. McKinley
Bn-4	1st Lt John R. Gallagher

### 10th Marines

Commanding Officer	Col Raphael Griffin
Executive Officer	Lt Col Ralph E. Forsyth
R-1	1st Lt Russell C. White
R-2	Capt Robert W. Sullivan
R-3	Lt Col Howard V. Hiatt
R-4	Capt Edward R. Gilbert

### 1st Bn, 10th Marines

Battalion Commander	Col Presley M. Rixey
Executive Officer	Major Wendell H. Best
Bn-1	Capt Joseph R. Chalfin
Bn-2	Capt Robert M. Calland
Bn-3	Capt Michael J. Bo
Bn-4	Capt John W. Hull

### 2d Bn, 10th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lt Col George R. E. Shell
Executive Officer	Major Kenneth C. Houston
Bn-1	Capt John H. Brown
Bn-2	Capt Ralph E. Wyer
Bn-3	Capt Richard B. Cavanaugh
Bn-4	Capt Carl A. Neilsen

### 3d Bn, 10th Marines

Battalion Commander	Major William L. Crouch
Executive Officer	Major Wade H. Hitt
Bn-1	1st Lt Alfred Skowronek
Bn-2	Capt Gavin H. Young
Bn-3	Capt Alan H. Tully
Bn-4	Capt John J. Schwab

### 4th Bn, 10th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lt Col Kenneth A. Jorgensen
Executive Officer	Lt Col Harry N. Shea
Bn-1	1st Lt George C. Armes
Bn-2	Capt Timothy J. Stulb
Bn-3	Major James O. Appleyard
Bn-4	Capt Frederick W. Riggs Jr.

### 18th Marines

Commanding Officer	Lt Col Russell Lloyd
Executive Officer	Lt Col Ewart S. Laue
R-1	Capt Winfield S. Halton Jr.
R-2	Capt Murdoch J. McLeod
R-3	Capt Murdoch J. McLeod
R-4	Capt Walter J. Hulsey

### 1st Bn, 18th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lt Col August L. Vogt
Executive Officer	Capt Joseph G. Polifka
Bn-1	Capt Robert S. Rix
Bn-2	1st Lt Kenneth J. McGowan
Bn-3	Capt Joseph G. Polifka
Bn-4	Capt William V. Schwebke

### 2d Bn, 18th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lt Col Chester J. Salazar
Executive Officer	Capt Jerome R. Walters
Bn-1	Capt Edward L. Kropp Jr.
Bn-2	Capt Jerome R. Walters
Bn-3	Capt Jerome R. Walters
Bn-4	Capt Albert T. Watson Jr.

### 4th Marine Division

Division Commander	Major General Harry Schmidt
Asst. Division Commander	Brig Gen Samuel C. Cummings
Chief of Staff	Col William W. Rogers
D-1	Col Walter I. Jordan
D-2	Lt Col Gooderham L. McCormick
D-3	Col Walter W. Wensinger
D-4	Col William F. Brown

### 23d Marines

Commanding Officer	Col Louis R. Jones
Executive Officer	Lt Col John R. Lanigan
R-1	Capt Charlie J. Talbert
R-2	Capt Richard W. Mirick
R-3	Major Edward W. Wells
R-4	Capt Henry S. Campbell

#### 1st Bn, 23d Marines

Battalion Commander	Lt Col Ralph Haas
Executive Officer	Major James S. Scales
Bn-1	1st Lt Maurice Gross
Bn-2	1st Lt Claud B. Duval
Bn-3	Capt James R. Miller
Bn-4	Capt Kenion E. Edwards Jr.

#### 2d Bn, 23d Marines

Battalion Commander	Lt Col Edward J. Dillon
Executive Officer	Major Albert H. Follmar
Bn-1	*
Bn-2	1st Lt Marvin J. Raskin
Bn-3	Major Robert H. Davidson
Bn-4	Capt Donald P. Libera

#### 3d Bn, 23d Marines

Battalion Commander	Lt Col John J. Cosgrove
Executive Officer	Major Paul S. Treitel
Bn-1	1st Lt Mortimer B. Doyle
Bn-2	1st Lt Clarence J. Stines
Bn-3	Major Robert J. J. Picardi
Bn-4	Capt Harold Post

### 24th Marines

Commanding Officer	Col Franklin A. Hart
Executive Officer	Lt Col Austin R. Brunelli
R-1	Capt Kenneth N. Hilton
R-2	Capt Arthur B. Hanson
R-3	Lt Col Charles D. Roberts
R-4	Major Clyde T. Smith

#### 1st Bn, 24th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lt Col Maynard C. Schultz
Executive Officer	Major Robert N. Fricke
Bn-1	1st Lt Herbert I. Hines
Bn-2	Capt George D. Webster
Bn-3	1st Lt Gene G. Mundy
Bn-4	*

\* Not listed on muster rolls.

Battalion Commander  
Executive Officer

Bn-1

Bn-2

Bn-3

Bn-4

Battalion Commander  
Executive Officer

Bn-1

Bn-2

Bn-3

Bn-4

Commanding Officer  
Executive Officer

R-1

R-2

R-3

R-4

Battalion Commander  
Executive Officer

Bn-1

Bn-2

Bn-3

Bn-4

Battalion Commander  
Executive Officer

Bn-1

Bn-2

Bn-3

Bn-4

Battalion Commander  
Executive Officer

Bn-1

Bn-2

Bn-3

Bn-4

Commanding Officer  
Executive Officer

R-1

R-2

R-3

R-4

#### 2d Bn, 24th Marines

Lt Col Richard Rothwell

Capt Claude M. Cappelmann

1st Lt James A. Granier

\*

Capt Charles C. Berkeley

1st Lt Kinsey C. Torgesen

#### 3d Bn, 24th Marines

Lt Col Alexander A. Vandegrift Jr.

Capt Webb D. Sawyer

1st Lt George M. Gallion

1st Lt John H. Shmidheiser Jr.

Capt Webb D. Sawyer

1st Lt Oscar Harte Jr.

#### 25th Marines

Col Merton J. Batchelder

Lt Col Clarence J. O'Donnell

Capt George K. Dunn

Capt Charles D. Gray

Lt Col William F. Thyson Jr.

Major Arthur E. Buck Jr.

#### 1st Bn, 25th Marines

Lt Col Hollis U. Mustain

Major Henry D. Strunk

1st Lt Monroe R. Davis

Capt William C. Eisenhardt

Capt Fenton J. Mee

1st Lt John E. Ericson

#### 2nd Bn, 25th Marines

Lt Col Lewis C. Hudson Jr.

Major William P. Kaempfer

1st Lt Johnston Robinson Jr.

Capt John C. Witherspoon

Capt Victor J. Barringer

1st Lt William M. Masterson

#### 3d Bn, 25th Marines

Lt Col Justice M. Chambers

Major James Taul

1st Lt Norman C. Smyle

1st Lt Samuel R. Petetti

Capt James G. Headley

1st Lt John M. Fogarty

#### 14th Marines (15 June 1944)

Col Louis G. DeHaven

Lt Col Randall M. Victory

1st Lt Cecil D. Snyder

Capt Harrison L. Rogers

Major Frederick J. Karch

Major Richard J. Winsborough

**1st Bn, 14th Marines**

Battalion Commander	Lt Col Harry J. Zimmer
Executive Officer	Major Clifford B. Drake
Bn-1	WO William H. Woerner, Jr.(Arty)
Bn-2	Capt Raymond (N) Jenkins
Bn-3	Major Thomas Mc E. Fry
Bn-4	1st Lt Peter F. Rothermel IV

**2d Bn, 14th Marines**

Battalion Commander	Lt Col George B. Wilson, Jr.
Executive Officer	Major William McReynolds
Bn-1	WO Carl P. Haynes
Bn-2	1st Lt Robert C. White
Bn-3	Capt Jack H. Riddle
Bn-4	2d Lt. Thomas S. Burrowes

**3d Bn, 14th Marines**

Battalion Commander	Lt Col Robert E. MacFarlane
Executive Officer	Major Harvey A. Feehan
Bn-1	Capt David F. Lawless, Jr.
Bn-2	Capt Thomas V. LeFevre
Bn-3	Capt Benton H. Elliott
Bn-4	1st Lt Cecil E. Hinkel

**4th Bn, 14th Marines**

Battalion Commander	Lt Col Carl A. Youngdale
Executive Officer	Major John B. Edgar, Jr.
Bn-1	WO Lawrence C. Handzlik
Bn-2	1st Lt John C. Finegan
Bn-3	Major Roland J. Spritzen
Bn-4	Capt George J. Brookes, Jr.

**20th Marines**

Commanding Officer	Lt Col Nelson K. Brown
Executive Officer	Capt William M. Anderson
R-1	Capt Martin M. Calcaterra
R-2	Capt Carl A. Sachs
R-3	Major Melvin D. Henderson
R-4	Capt Samuel G. Thompson

**1st Bn, 20th Marines**

Battalion Commander	Major Richard G. Ruby
Executive Officer	Major George F. Williamson
Bn-1	*
Bn-2	1st Lt Michael P. Holowiti
Bn-3	Capt Martin H. Glover
Bn-4	Capt Donald C. Warren

**2d Bn, 20th Marines**

Battalion Commander	Major John H. Partridge
Executive Officer	Capt Howard M. Dowling
Bn-1	1st Lt Theophilus A. Pierce, Jr.
Bn-2	1st Lt Carlos G. Nadal
Bn-3	Capt George A. Smith
Bn-4	Capt Thomas D. Irvine

# **THE GUAM OPERATION**

## THE GUAM OPERATION

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

After we had taken Guam in 1898, we hardly knew what to do with it. The island had no economic value, the natives were not self supporting; the island had an excellent but small harbor that needed a great deal of dredging and blasting before it could be made a fleet base—and we already had a great harbor with natural fortifications at Manila in the Philippines. To defend the island properly would require a large garrison and expensive fortifications. To make of it an offensive base would be still more expensive. Since 1900 the question of what to do had been widely debated. By 1914, a Joint Planning Board of the Army and Navy for the Defense of Guam had prepared a thorough plan for its defense which called for artillery positions at all vulnerable points on the island, 50 airplanes and 4 dirigibles with sufficient personnel to man them, and an infantry regiment; the whole force to total 1074 officers and 23882 enlisted men. This plan naturally was never implemented. Later plans called for defense of only a limited area, that lying inshore from Apra Harbor and Orote Peninsula. Marines stationed on the semicircle of hills that lie inland were to attempt interdiction of the harbor after they had been defeated at the beach and make what desperate defense they could on the heights of Mt. Tenjo (where a stronghold was to be erected) until the U. S. Fleet could come to their rescue. Though some work was done on this plan, the funds and the manpower were never available to make more than half-hearted efforts. Later plans were more pragmatic and more realistic. Admiral Mahan was quoted approvingly<sup>1</sup>: "Neither strength no resources should be accumulated there (Guam) unless the whole is made so strong that it cannot be easily reduced. If Guam must fall to a surprise, or to a siege, better it fall a bare situation than provided with works and armament and supplies available for such a land force as Japan could spare it. Should Japan seize, she must also hold; and to hold she must provide that which we, the present owners, also need. Let us not by half measures contribute to her greater success."

The treaty of 1922 for the Limitation of Armament put an end to any further ideas for fortifying the island, and from 1922 on, the island remained only a fueling station garrisoned by Marines, inadequately housed for the most part and without proper funds for any except the most elementary needs of sanitation and necessary road making. Further study of the situation by strategists of the Pacific in the Marine Corps, who were well aware of Japan's threat, was on the possibility of the recapture of Guam which, they concluded, Japan would seize very early in her war with us before our fleet could be mobilized

So Guam remained in our possession; nothing was done to fortify it; the harbor remained small and unimproved. The average garrison was 400 or fewer Marines; and these Marines were given the wholesome but monotonous tasks of building roads with pick and shovel, of lonely policing, and of building their own barracks and setting up what few recreations they were to have. The 20,000 natives were restive under a regime that gave them little voice in their own government, little or no advance in economic status and that did not recognize their native speech as official. Our one notable contribution was in health. The Chamorrans<sup>1</sup> like other natives of the islands of the Pacific had contracted

<sup>1</sup>(a) Letter from the Secretary of the Navy to the General Board, dated 10 June 1920, with endorsements.

(b) Intelligence Section, Division of Operations and Training, U. S. Marine Corps: undated and untitled study of the situation of Guam and the possibility of its capture by Japan.

<sup>1</sup>While proud of the Chamorran tongue, the natives refer to themselves as Guamanians, not as Chamorros.

tuberculosis from the whites and had no immunity to it. Our medical department did much to alleviate suffering, and something to improve sanitation. Our period of rule had two things to be said for it: it was superior to the rule of the Spaniards before us, and it was to be preferred to the rule of the Japanese who followed us.

On December 8, 1941,<sup>1</sup> the Japanese landed with a sizeable force and took Guam in about four hours. Apparently one detachment, the smaller one, landed over the reef at Agana, walked ashore, and killed the small guard near the Governor's palace. The larger force cast anchor in Apra Harbor, and almost before the small landing force had killed the Marine Detachments at Piti Navy Yard and at Sumay, the ships had started unloading. The fate of the civilians who had lately been imported for the new defense works at Guam was unknown.<sup>2</sup>

From January 1941 to 21 July 1944, Guam was almost outside our ken. Intelligence sources gave us only slight information: that Japan was holding the island with a nominal garrison of only about 900 men, that no extensive efforts were being made to fortify it, so sure was Japan that her outer bastions, into which she had poured her men and resources, would hold us. Guarding Guam were Tarawa and the Marshalls, and the great sea fortress of Truk, that dominated all approaches to the Philippines and to the Marianas.

In the two and a half years of our absence from Guam the Marine Corps Schools had devised various plans for the recapture of Guam. The earlier plan, originating before the development of the new landing craft or the new landing techniques, proposed a main landing at the old Spanish port at the southern tip of the island and a secondary landing at Talofof Bay. The Northern and Southern Landing Forces were to pinch off the southern part of the island.<sup>3</sup> This plan was rejected as impracticable: it would leave the dominating portions of the island in Japanese hands and would provide no adequate position from which to attack or gain control over Apra Harbor and Orote Peninsula. At this period, attack on other portions of Guam appeared hopeless with the equipment that we then had. This early plan is in one sense an accurate measure of the distance we have traveled in two and a half years, and a comment on the speed with which we mastered the new demands of amphibious warfare.

Meanwhile the intelligence service was raking our files for all information we could gain on Guam. The results were meagre. There was a surprising difference of opinion among officers who had served on Guam. All early planning was done with Marine Corps School maps based on an early survey made by an engineering unit from the Philippines. In the end it was Commander R. F. Armknecht and Lieutenant Colonel F. A. Stephenson who compiled O. N. I. 99, the basis for our planning in the new attack on Guam. Commander Armknecht had been public Works Officer in Guam during the late thirties; Colonel Stephenson had served for a considerable period with the Marine Garrison on the island. They were able to bring many features of the map up to date.

Commander Armknecht compared the island to a peanut; the lower end of the nut was roughly comparable to the southern half of the island below Apra Harbor; the upper end of the nut comparable to the northern portion which twisted sharply north above the town of Agana. O. N. I. envisaged a necessary attack on the southern portion where the

<sup>1</sup>There is one day's difference in time between Guam and the United States. Dates given are based on United States time; that is, one day earlier than for Pacific time.

<sup>2</sup>This information was obtained from conversations with several officers on Guam who had gained their knowledge apparently from the natives. The picture is not clear.

<sup>3</sup>Information on the plan of the Marine Corps Schools for the capture of Guam was gained from Colonel J. A. Stuart, Commanding Officer of the 3d Marines, Guam.

majority of the native inhabitants lived. According to the Commander the northern portion was a raised coral reef, level, heavily wooded and nearly impenetrable. This northern portion was waterless, useless for tactical purposes, and moreover, unapproachable, since for most of its perimeter it was surrounded by high cliffs. O. N. I., while it gave much specific information, proved wrong in most of its prognostications. The landing was made in the northern half instead of the southern and at a point which Commander Armknecht declared unapproachable. When the men and officers of the 3d Division were being briefed for the final attack on the beaches below Agana, the Commander told them bluntly that the hills inland from the beach could not be scaled. These were the hills that the men of the 21st Regiment took early on the afternoon of D-day.

Guam is one of the so-called volcanic islands of the Central Pacific but that designation is incorrect. It has been raised and distorted by volcanic action, but like Saipan and Tinian, it is substantially coral. In past geologic ages volcanic action has raised and immersed the coral reefs that have clung about the sunken volcanic cones, but there has never been an active crater above the sea and the spread of lava above the coral reefs has been through fissures in the accumulated strata of coral and ocean sediment. There is no complete geological study of the island, but the theories of a Marine Corps officer based on a year's exploration seem acceptable. There were, apparently, two centers of underwater volcanic activity, one at Mt. Tenjo, near the center of the island, and one at Mt. St. Rosa near the northern end. From just below the town of Agana to the southern tip of the island runs a wide long ridge, whose highest point is Mt. Tenjo. This ridge, once a plateau, has now been eroded into numerous gorges, ravines and valleys; the few mountain peaks of Alutom, Chachao, and Tenjo are largely masses of sedimentary rock from which the superimposed lava has rotted and fallen away.

For the greater part of its length this central plateau of soft reddish clay is treeless except in the depths of its gorges and covered only with a coarse grass. It serves as pasture ground for what are apparently village herds in the same fashion as the highlands of Norway, and great stretches of it are called ranches. It is possible for an army to progress with some ease north and south along the plateau. To cross the island, however, one must follow the ridges parallel to the drainage system. These ridges invariably end in deep ravines. On the east coast of the island the plateau slopes gradually to heavy jungle; on the west coast below Agana and as far south as Agat Bay the treeless ridges break down abruptly to flat level basins. At some places bony cliffs parallel the shore; at others long sharp ridges come down like spread fingers almost to the beach. Rivers follow the ravines between these ridges, swollen during the rainy season, almost dry from January to June.

North of Agana lies a mile or so of cultivated rolling country, which merges into a flat, jungle-covered plateau. In only one or two places have the high cliffs broken down in scooped-out hollows leading to sandy beaches with coconut groves behind them. Some of the cliffs drop abruptly to the water; below others are slopes of talus now covered with low brush and fallen masses of coral. This country has one or two small villages in it and a few rather primitive farms. Near its south end is the low forested hump of Mt. Barrigada; near the north end is the bare low ridge of Mt. Santa Rosa. Seen from the air this northern plain is level. For a man on foot it becomes rolling or broken into little defiles, sink holes, hollows and hills. Only two roads run north from Agana, both on the west coast.

Only after the start of the battle on Saipan and after the defeat of the Japanese fleet could we send planes over the island for a careful examination of the defenses. Aerial photography and, more important, a battle plan for Guam captured on Saipan, showed clearly the strategical concept of the Japanese for defense. This new knowledge sub-

stantiated earlier evidence and proved the practicability of our plan of attack. In their defense the Japanese had shown a nice appreciation of terrain—or had flattered us by following the plan of defense that we had once held. Their arc of defense stretched from Tumon Bay along the inland ridge and hills to the southern shores of Agat Bay. A battalion guarded each strategic point; other troops were apparently concentrated at assembly areas where the road net permitted them to be sent to spots where their support was needed. In the hills to the south and east of Agana was the Division Headquarters, a region of caves that were rapidly being enlarged and given concrete fortifications. Near the Headquarters was the Command Post of a regiment of artillery. Bays on the east coast which were possible sites for a beachhead landing had been protected by mines and machine gun pits.

The number of troops that the Japanese had on the island could be only roughly estimated. Prior to February the defense of the island was entrusted to a Naval Guard Force that may have reached a size of 2000, concentrated mainly on the Orote Peninsula. In February, seriously alarmed by our conquests in the Marshalls, the Japanese began to strengthen all their defenses in the Marianas and the southwest Pacific. By late May they had around 17000 troops on the island, most of them trans-shipped from Manchuria. Later information showed this estimate probably low. If the construction battalions, naval units, and air personnel were included, the total would be nearer 24000. There were two main Army units: the 29th Division, under Lt. General Takahin<sup>1</sup>, Sho, and the 48th Independent Brigade under Major General Shigematsu, Kiyoshi. There were probably five battalions of artillery, numerous AA units, and a good many coast defense guns manned by the naval units.

One thing was obvious from the survey, however. Like a bad chess player the Japanese had worked by the book, and had pre-determined just what we were going to do instead of making an impartial summary of the situation. Tumon Bay, for example, a few miles north of Agana, is an ideal landing place. The reef is not impassable; there are at least two miles of fine sand beach, and inland the shore slopes gradually upward. A good road leads back to one of the main highways on the island.

Moreover, there are few spots along the beach or beside it from which it could be put under enfilade fire. This bay had been carefully mined; obstacles and barbed wire had been set up in the water; machine gun pits of concrete and coconut logs commanded all approaches. Behind the beach was a careful network of trenches; and along the road that led inland were tank traps, more machine gun pits, and more mines—in the road and along the flat fields to either side. The place was a bristling horror. Other bays along the east coast were similarly fortified.

The Marine Corps had achieved a surprise in their choice of a landing spot by accomplishing what the Japanese thought to be an impossibility. The beaches below Agana on which the troops were to land are protected by wide reefs; inland the flat basin behind the beaches is protected by high hills which gave perfect protection for both mortar and cannon fire to the defenders and excellent observation. Agat Beach is also protected by reefs and is furthermore commanded by the cliffs along Orote Peninsula and islands in the bay from which accurate fire could be directed both on the incoming boats and on the beach itself. Half a mile inland rises the long line of the Mt. Alifan massif, and from behind this massif a road winds down to give the defenders an easy

<sup>1</sup>The name of the general is taken from the Intelligence Report of the Third Division. It is spelled exactly as it is there. Ordinarily a name of two characters like this would end in a vowel.

method of rushing up motorized troops. Naval bombardment had knocked out what few defenses there were along the beaches in both places. there were difficulties inland, from fixed emplacements. Orote Peninsula, however, was one great mass of fixed fortification.

Original D-day for Guam had been three days after the start of the Saipan operation.

On 15 June, Commander, Fifth Fleet set W-day (D-day for Guam) as had been tentatively estimated in planning for 18 June. However, on 16 June, Commander, Fifth Fleet cancelled W-day until further notice, and Commander, Joint Expeditionary Force directed that the preparatory strikes on Guam by the fast carrier forces of Task Force 58 be discontinued until further notice. This postponement was due to the imminence of a fleet engagement, and was later continued because of difficulties encountered in the assault of Saipan . . . . The experience of Saipan and late intelligence indicated that the Guam assault would be, if anything, more difficult than the one on Saipan. It was estimated that a more determined, and very probably, more strongly organized defense would oppose any landing attempt, that beach obstacles would be encountered, that the beaches would be defended and that the terrain inland would be utilized to its fullest extent; that the reef at Guam, which was not broken by any channels would handicap the ship-to-shore movement, and that there would be, as had been at Saipan, intense enemy artillery and mortar fire. The hill masses dominating the landing beaches provided very strong defensive positions from which to contest the initial landings and exploitation of the beachhead; the limited maneuver area and the inadequate road system of Guam lends itself to an effective defense by numerous small elements.<sup>1</sup>

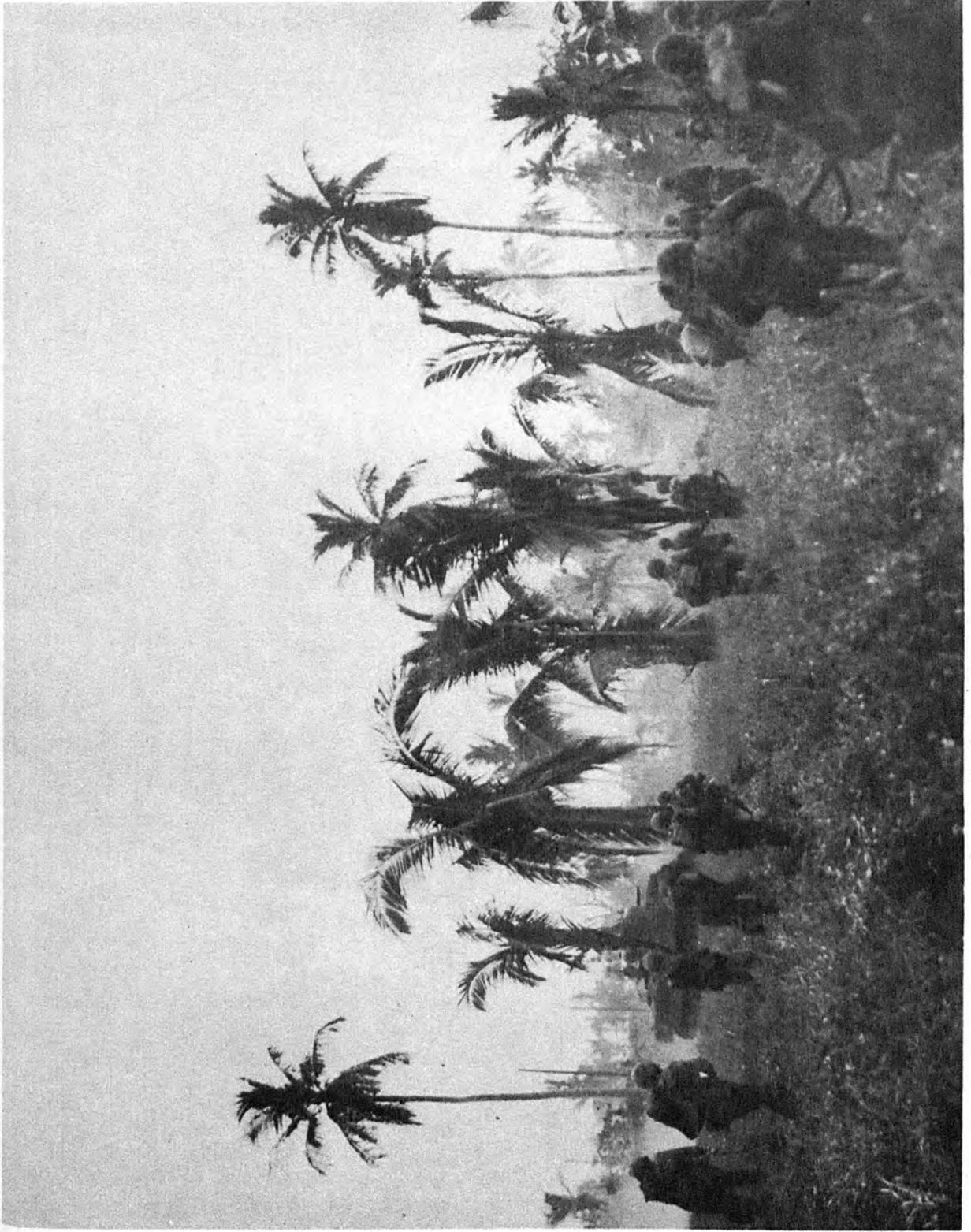
As a result plans were revised calling for an increase in the duration and deliberateness of the preparatory bombardment on Guam; to provide additional forces to augment Southern Troops and Landing Force, (77th Infantry Division was assigned to control of Southern Troops and Landing Force on 6 July 1944) and to alert still other forces in the event that unforeseen difficulties were encountered.

When it became clear that they would not be needed for reserve, first the Division, then the Brigade was sent back to the Eniwetok lagoon. During a stay of about ten days, the men were exercised briefly on some of the sandy islets around the lagoon, but the opportunities for movement were very limited. In all, the men spent nearly 50 days aboard ship (they did not arrive off Guam until the night of 20 July 1944) in crowded quarters and in intolerable heat with scant opportunity for bathing. All of the men developed prickly heat rashes, and in some of the ships various types of skin diseases spread from man to man. To some extent these conditions were the result of the inevitable crowding because there were too few ships. The 3d Division had used the same transports in all its operations, and they were old when the war began.

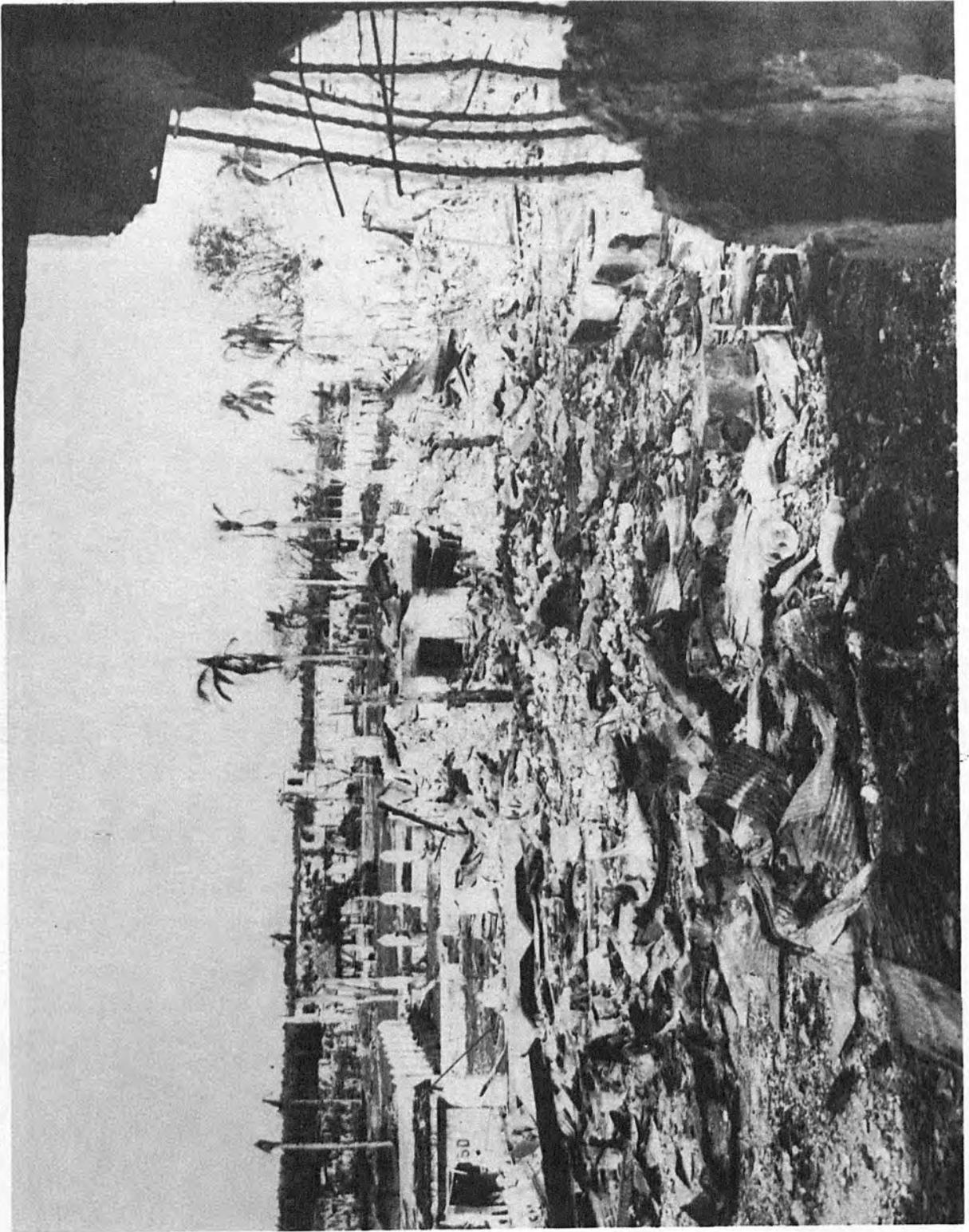
The 35 days' delay provided full opportunity for "softening" the island and preparing the beaches. Naval vessels went around and round the island shelling vulnerable spots and defended areas shown on the aerial photographs. The USS *Appalachian*, the flagship of the task force, thoroughly equipped for communications work, accompanied the naval firing vessels and coordinated all fires. Her officers kept careful account of the number of rounds fired on each target, and crossed it off only when it seemed apparent that it had been destroyed. This record check made the shelling tremendously efficient.

<sup>1</sup>From Special Action Report, Task Force 56. Enc. C, G-3 Report, pages 3, 4 and 5.

Earlier aerial maps had been marred by clouds. Now planes flew over the whole island and new photographs were made of the landing areas. Constant bombing raids kept the airfields neutralized. Possibly the most important work was being done by the underwater demolition crews of the Navy working off the Agana beaches and now Apra Harbor. LCI's and destroyers protected the men. During the night they went inshore on rubber boats and by swimming. By day they worked boldly on the reefs under the protection of the guns of the ships. One LCI went ashore on a reef and was guarded by another until a tug could pull it off under fire from shore batteries.



Tank-Infantry Attack on Guam



Battle Wreckage on Guam

## CHAPTER II

### THE LANDING OF THE DIVISION

The final plan for the attack had settled down to a dual and simultaneous assault by the First Provisional Brigade and the 3d Division. The First Provisional Brigade (the 22d Marines, reinforced, and the 4th Marines, reinforced) (305th Infantry attached) was to attack Agat Beach below Orote Peninsula. The 3d Division (the 3d, the 9th, and the 21st Marines, the 12th and the 19th), was to attack on the beaches below Agana. The objective was the defensive line of hills stretching from above Agana to Agat. Once we had this terrain the troops were to reorganize and then march north or south against the enemy. By that time we would have the essential portions of the island: the harbor, the airfield, and the principal town. An alternative plan had called for an attack by both the Brigade and the 3d Division on Agat, the 3d Division on the right of the Brigade, but this plan was never adopted.

The 77th Division, minus 305th Infantry, of the Army had been embarked at Hawaii and was to be the floating reserve for the operation. It landed on the Brigade's beach. The 305th Infantry was attached to Brigade for assault reserve.

To seize a final beachhead line, under normal conditions, is difficult enough. As the troops go inland and push out their perimeter, more and more troops are required to man it, defend it, and continue its expansions. Reserves are swallowed up, supply lines become stretched out, and the initiative may pass to the enemy. The beachheads at Guam demanded more complicated maneuvers than usual and expansion far beyond that of any normal or "book" beachhead. The 3d Division had to push to the north along a sea-wall, past high cliffs to seize Adelup Point below Agana; on its right flank it had to send down a whole regiment to make contact on the shore road with Brigade and at the same time to sweep the hills behind the shore of all enemy. The Brigade had to take the Alifan massif, extend its line far to the south along a flat beach plain, then leave the task of guarding the perimeter to the 77th Division and drive down Orote Peninsula to take the airfield. Two different beachheads were to be established nearly five miles apart, separated by enemy territory so that there could be no direct communication between the division and the brigade.

Like Saipan and Tinian, the conquest of Guam was under the Commander of the Fifth Fleet, Admiral R. A. Spruance, USN. The general command of the amphibious phase of the operation was under Vice Admiral R. K. Turner, Commander, Joint Expeditionary Force, Task Force 51. Rear Admiral R. L. Connolly, Northern Attack Group, Task Group 53 occupied a dual role: he commanded directly all phases of the amphibious operation at Guam and as the commanding officer of Task Group 53.1 handled the ship-to-shore movement of the 3d Marine Division. Rear Admiral L. F. Reifsnider, USN, Commander, Southern Attack Group, Task Group 53.2 was in charge of the First Provisional Brigade until it was established on the beach. There was a parallel and similar echelon of commands for the troops involved. The Commanding General, FMF, Pacific, Expeditionary Troops had as immediately subordinate to him Major General R. S. Geiger, USMC, Commanding General of the III Amphibious Corps. Major General A. H. Turnage, USMC, commanded the 3d Division; Brigadier General L. C. Shepherd, Jr., USMC, the 1st Provisional Brigade and its attached units.

The three regimental combat teams of the 3d Marine Division had, of course, been thoroughly briefed for their landing and knew their missions. They had studied the maps made from aerial photographs and relief maps; low oblique photographs had been taken of the whole shore area and provided for each battalion so that recognition of terrain could be easy and instantaneous. The 21st Regiment had introduced one new element in recognition that was partially adopted by the rest of the division since it proved so useful. On the oblique photographs and on their maps they had lettered each land feature for quick and easy reference and these features were then referred to by their phonetic names; Hill How, Peter Nose, Sugar Bluff.

The 3d Marines were to land on Red Beach 1 and 2 on the left flank of the beach. Their task was to take a long nose that ran down to the beach, and once in command of that nose to push north along the shore to take Adelup Point, sending tanks along the seawall, under the protection of troops on the high ground. Inland their three battalions faced difficult country. They had to seize two narrow grassy ridges that stretched almost to the beach and then drive through heavily wooded country till they reached a high bluff that extended to the left flank of the 21st Marines.

The 21st Marines were to drive inland nearly half a mile and seize a line of cliffs (those that had been called unscaleable), and hold them till the division was organized and ready for further attack. The 9th Marines were to seize and hold the low ridges inland from the beach so that a battalion of the regiment could push down the shore and seize Piti Navy Yard on the shore of Apra Harbor and Cabras Island that bounded the east side of the basin. After they had made contact with the Brigade, they were to turn inland and support the right flank of the 21st when the division drove inland.

This operation made no changes in the standard operating procedure of landing, but there were new vehicles, ships, and mechanisms to carry out approved methods—as there had been at Saipan. There were the LVT's, which had first been used as vehicles to carry supplies and casualties overland through swamps and boggy ground where no wheeled carriers could ever go. They had been perfected as landing craft to take troops in over reefs. There was now a sufficient number of them—as there had not been at Tarawa—to carry in not only troops but howitzers and supplies, and the transport and personnel LVT's had been supplemented by a battalion of armored LVT's (A 2's and 3's) mounting the 37mm gun and the 75mm howitzer which would precede the troop carriers to the beach. It seems incredible that the Japanese had not as yet realized their potentialities and learned to guard against them. All types of the new craft were there except the new LVT (4)'s, the carrier with the back dropping ramp for unloading artillery. The LVT's would carry ashore troops, supplies, and the 75mm pack howitzers. For the 105mm howitzers the Marine Corps had its first Motor Transport Battalion of DUKW's, two companies of which, with 30 vehicles to each company, had been attached to the 3d Division. These carriers had the miraculous power of deflating or inflating their tires at a touch, could negotiate reefs successfully, and operate ashore, where there was a road network, with the speed of ordinary trucks. For unloading the howitzers, the division was going to use an A frame attached to several of the DUKW's. A DUKW would drive directly to the artillery emplacement, the howitzer could be yanked out in a matter of seconds, and the gun rolled into position. Bulldozers were ashore early to dig the emplacements. These DUKW's were extraordinarily successful in their handling of artillery; the first guns were firing four hours after H-hour. The LCI(G)'s had been used at Saipan in their new role as gunboats, but they were to have a much wider use at Guam: the reefs were near enough to the shore so that they could fire their rockets suc-

cessfully and precede the first assault wave toward the shore. Originally the LCI's were to be used to carry assault infantry from shore to shore. They were now armed with five 20mm cannon and three 40's and their forward decks were packed tight with rocket frames. They were paper thin little ships with five feet draft. Originally designed for a crew of 2 officers and 26 men, they now carried a crew of 70 and six officers.

D-day, (21 July 1944) began according to schedule; the sea was quiet; the morning was misty, but soon the sun burned through and in the bowl of land behind the beach-head it was windless and very hot. At the reefs the landing boats transferred their cargoes of men to the LVT's which carried them ashore. Ahead of the first wave went the group of LCI's, loosing the booming barrage of their rockets on the beach in the interval after naval gunfire had ceased, pounding the shore with their batteries and then reversing their course and steaming back through the lines of incoming LVT's. The Japanese reply was similar to that at Saipan. After the naval gunfire had lifted and the first two waves were ashore, artillery fire began to search out individual targets along the beach and on the reefs, and mortar fire began falling steadily along the reefs in patterns that showed that the mortars were firing at previously estimated ranges. The shells marched up and down the reefs where men were struggling to get vehicles ashore in the two or three feet of water that low tide had left, but there were singularly few casualties. The Japanese were not firing their artillery in batteries but they were handling individual guns with extreme accuracy and, of course, with perfect observation. An LCI would start to dodge and turn in its retreat to the open sea, and behind it following the turn and twist of the stern rose the sudden fountains of water made by shells. The gun was more successful with the LVT's and the DUKW's. Apparently observers directed fire on one boat that they had picked out and followed it till it disappeared in the dust and smoke clouds of the beach or until they had sunk it. LCI officers standing close off-shore reported seeing one vehicle after another twist and turn cumbrously as it sought to confuse the gun crews high on the hill above them. There was no fire, or little from anti-boat guns on the two points or from coastal defense guns on the first ridges above the beach. Great 150mm howitzers and 8 inch coastal defense guns were later captured intact and apparently without having been fired. In the coral rock of Asan Point, however, there remained machine guns in caves that raked the water near the beach and a small piece that had escaped the naval bombardment.

On the division's left flank the 3/3 and the 1/3 landed first with the 2d Battalion in reserve. Both met immediate opposition on the beach. Where the 3d Battalion landed, the road ran almost on the beach itself, curving around the end of a great nose of land that towered above it. On the seaward side of the road there was a great monolith, with caves mounting guns. The road was mined. Before the battalion could advance against the ridge that was its objective it had to take the caves by assault and with the aid of flame-throwers. Next to it the 1/3 was held back. The nose coming down in front of it was rimmed with machine guns that could rake both the beach and both slopes of the ridge sloping down from it. The assaulting company (Able Company) was pinned down just above the flat rice paddy field from which it had taken off. Further to the right Baker Company drove up a steep hill above a coconut grove but was held in dense jungle above it. Charlie Company waited in reserve.

The 21st Marines landed in a column of battalions in the center of the bowl. The little town of Asan where they landed had been completely razed; the coconut grove along the beach had been knocked down and the trunks thrown across the road. The whole beach was a haze of smoke, dust and confusion. The 3d Battalion of the regiment landed first, got through the dust and debris as best it could and then proceeded forward to the first objective of the regiment. The basin in which the division landed is drained by the two forks of the Asan River. The east fork rises close behind the high cliffs that the 21st was to assault, swings across the basin and joins the main river where it empties into the sea near the west boundary of the beachhead. The west fork comes down the ridges that bound the west side of the basin. The east fork has cut out a deep little gorge behind the cliffs, cut its way past a little hill lying in its path and curled around a ridge lying to the west of the main river. The 3d Battalion was to seize the low height of land just above the gorge, spread out across the beachhead and hold. It went forward rapidly, answering fire, losing a few men, but not stopping to clean out entrenchments (there were very few of them) or machine guns or snipers in caves. By the middle of the morning it had secured its objective. The 2d Battalion came up more slowly behind it, passed through its lines and then organized for the attack on the cliffs above. As it climbed down into the gorge and went up the steep bare rock on the other side it came under mortar and rifle fire. The day had grown fearfully hot, the water in the two canteens that the men carried had dropped very low; the condition of the men was telling against them. It is frankly a wonder that they had the physical stamina to carry themselves and their loads up the cliffs. They could reach the tops of the cliffs and dig in, but when they tried to move they found themselves under raking fire from a ridge hardly fifty yards to their front which gave perfect defilade to mortars on its reverse slope and effective fields of fire from machine gun emplacements. Both their flanks were exposed as it was. They dug in and held, and the mortar shells began to fall as they were to fall for the next two or three days and nights. Their own mortar sections set up in the defilade behind the cliffs or in little eroded canyons in the face of the cliffs and fired in reply, but they had no vantage for observation and their fire had to be inaccurate. Casualties had to be evacuated down the cliffs and all supplies brought up them. Fortunately the men got water. The 21st Marines was using all the waterbags it could lay hands on: the long mutton-shaped plastic bags of the paratroops, and the new gallon and a half canvas bags of the army. Some of the 500 bags that had been brought in had been lost on the reefs, but enough for the moment were coming in. By D plus 1, furthermore, some of the difficulties of supply had been conquered. The engineers had rigged up two pulley hoists on the cliff tops so that casualties could be quickly lowered in the molded wire litters and supplies hoisted.

After the 2d Battalion had passed through their lines the 3d Battalion withdrew to the right and started up the Asan River ravine along the west fork. Their mission was to seize a high hill on the right flank of the 2d Battalion at the head of the ravine. The ridge above their heads was grass-covered and open to machine gun fire. The ravine up which they marched was wooded, but it was under accurate mortar fire from the hills above. They marched slowly up the ravine fighting rifle fire. At one turn in the ravine a hillock was crowned with machine guns, and the battalion waited while a platoon went up and cleaned them out. By nightfall they had reached their hill but there was a wide gap to their left between them and the 2d Battalion. The 1/21 went ahead through the flat rice paddy fields that lay behind the beach and into an assembly area behind the first rise of ground. During the rest of the day it cleaned out the area behind the front lines where there were numerous machine guns and a few riflemen.

On the right flank, the 9th Marines had also landed in a column of battalions. "K" Company of 3/9 had plunged across the road and toward a low ridge behind the rice paddies: it met heavy fire from the ridge and had to fight its way slowly to the top and along the edge toward the road. "I" Company had sent two platoons to Asan Point and with one platoon assaulted the ridge that guarded the road. It was held down by fire till the reserve company, "L" Company, came to its rescue and the two platoons worked up from Asan Point. By 1350 the battalion had secured its first objective: the ridge through which the road to the south passed. At 1415 the other two battalions of the regiment passed through the lines of the 3/9 and carried on the attack toward the second objective.

While the assault troops were moving toward the enemy, the artillery had come in and set up its guns along the stretch of flat fields, as close as it could to the protecting rise of ground that ran athwart the basin. The guns on the right, the 105mm howitzers, guarded the left wing of the division, one 75mm Pack Howitzer Battalion, 1/12, protected the 9th Marines. Another 75mm Battalion, 2/12, firing inland assisted the 21st Marines in the center. The DUKW's functioned very satisfactorily and performed another valuable service as well. The Asan river enters the sea under a heavy concrete bridge<sup>2</sup> which the DUKW's began to use as an assembly area. The 21st Regiment set up its first-aid station here under protection and began to use the DUKW's to evacuate casualties to the beach. Gradually the other first-aid stations became aware of the ease with which casualties could be evacuated and brought their patients in, until most of the stations were centered there.

Supplies had been coming regularly ashore; vehicles were directed to their proper dumps with a minimum of confusion, and the dozers of the engineers began their task which was not to cease even after the island was secured, of building roads. The 21st Marines had no road connections with the beach at all, and the dozers began to cut one; 3/21 was isolated and the engineers made the first cuttings on a supply road under the rifles of the 9th. The combat engineers divided amongst the battalions were blowing the caves that still had Japs in them.

By nightfall we had a precarious foothold on the island. The 3d Marines were still on the beach: 3/3 had broken the road block in front of it and had gone up the first ridge in front of it and over to a second. But the forward slope of that second ridge was strewn with dead Marines and beyond that ridge the men could not advance against higher ground, where machine guns picked off every man who showed his head. Able Company of the 1st Battalion had made two assaults on the bare ridge above it but each time had been driven back to the little gully near the foot of the ridge. One platoon had tried in the morning to outflank the machine guns on top of the hill by approaching up a brushy gully to the east of the ridge. The upper end of the gully was under constant fire from two or more guns: the platoon held for a time and then was forced to retire. Men had tried to crawl up the other side of the ridge and had crept to a position beneath the fire of the machine guns. The Japanese had rolled hand grenades down on them and finally forced them to break. An assault in the afternoon had got men actually on the ridge top, but they had all been killed by rifle fire from higher ground to the rear. 81mm mortars had thrown round after round into the position without effect. When the fire grew heavy, the Japanese retreated by communication trenches to caves in the rear

<sup>2</sup>This bridge was, however, apparently a registration point for enemy mortars. Survey crews from the artillery lost men nearby.

of their position and waited out the barrage. Naval gunfire, direct fire from the 20's and 40's of the LCI, and artillery fire could not reach up, over, and down with any accuracy to destroy the defenders. Baker Company, only a few hundred yards to the east was unable to make contact with the Japanese.

To an impartial observer, walking the lines at dusk, knowing only what he could see of what lay beyond the forward foxholes of the Marines, the situation would have been called precarious. Our lines had numerous gaps in them, a gap between 1/3 and the right flank of 2/21 of 150 yards, a gap between the right flank of 2/21, and the left flank of 3/21. Our supplies were coming ashore, but by no means in sufficient quantity as yet for any continued action. The enemy still held the high ground on three sides of the beachhead. He had batteries of artillery sited on the beach and excellent observation over the confused dumps on the beach. On the left flank of the division, he nearly had access to the beach itself under the protection of his own machine guns. The initiative that night was wholly his.

It is remarkable under those circumstances that the Marines were not hurled back into the sea. If today this impartial observer should return, view the cliffs and high ground behind the beach, and give his opinion on whether even the best troops could make a landing and stay there against determined defenders, his answer could only be, "No." Until files in Tokyo are opened it will be impossible to explain our amazing success. A tentative explanation is this:

1. In the first place, our landing at this place, marked "impossible" by the book, was a surprise. At the moment of landing the Japanese commander had probably little more than a battalion of infantry to the immediate rear of the beachhead. He was gathering his forces in as rapidly as possible: some had reached the spot by dusk, but the bulk of his forces were still distant.

2. More probably the 12th Marines, our artillery regiment, supplies the answer. Our guns had been firing since 1240, call fires for the most part, with Navy planes spotting for them. With the higher trajectory of the howitzers they could let salvos fall where the flat trajectory naval guns were helpless. They had searched areas behind our lines, attempted counterbattery work, and lent direct support to our troops. With nightfall their real importance on the beachhead was apparent. Very early in the operation they had learned the rhythms of the Japanese attacks. The Japanese had preceded their counterattacks by mortar and artillery barrages that were so skillfully dispersed that they could not be recognized as preliminary barrages by any one unit in our lines. An hour after such a barrage that had been delicately raised to a crescendo and then as delicately decreased, the Japanese attacked. The artillery forward observers learned to measure the intensity of the Japanese barrages and to tell which ones were the signs of the counterattacks. Fifteen minutes before such an attack was due, the artillery cut loose in that area with everything it had, and time and again knocked out an assembly of troops that was drawing near our lines. The artillery, too, could keep shells falling on the gaps in our lines. The miraculous precision of artillery fire was nowhere more evident than in this campaign.

With the artillery regiment must be bracketed the Special Weapons Battery of the 14th Defense Battalion which had landed with the first assault waves. During the first day and night they were using their anti-aircraft weapons in direct support of the

3d Marines; part of this group helped garrison Adelup Point after the night of its capture. Later, when the echelons carrying the heavier weapons of the battalion were put ashore, the battalion garrisoned Cabras Island and did effective work against Orote Peninsula.

The obvious places for the Japanese to attack during the night were the areas held by the 2d and 3d Battalions of the 3d Marines on the left flank, and the area between the 3d Marines and the 21st Marines. All the battalions of the 3d Marines were near the Beach; on their flank the Japanese still had machine guns in a commanding position. Moreover, the 2/3 and 3/3 fronted on Fonte River Ravine just above where it cut down to the sea. This ravine offered perfect cover and protection for advancing troops. The troops probably came down the Agana road despite the constant interdicting fires of LCI's or over the road that led from the east side of the island. During the night there were infiltrations and hard sudden rushes of men against the Marines' foxholes. The Japanese were still highly confident of their ability to resist and they fought skillfully and hard. The Naval Gunfire Officers of the JASCO kept the star shells placed so that they silhouetted the advancing masses of the Japanese and kept infiltration down. They also poured shells into the narrow valley beyond them. From this night on the JASCO detachments played an increasingly important role in the operation.

2/21 lay quiet under heavy mortar fire from the knee mortars.<sup>1</sup> Along their front hardly fifty yards away the road to Mt. Tenjo ran. From the ditch in this road the Japs could fire their mortars with considerable accuracy, or shoot their rifle grenades that burst in the air above the troops. The counterattacks never reached our front lines.

<sup>1</sup>Technically, of course, the Model 89 or 10 50mm grenade discharger. *Knee mortar* is an accepted term, however, even though the weapon is not a mortar, nor fired from the knee.



## CHAPTER III

### THE LANDING OF THE BRIGADE

At the other beachhead brigade had been having a rugged time during the day; they had met immediate resistance on the beach, particularly where the 22d Marines turned east through Agat Village toward the base of the Orote Peninsula. The Agat Beaches where the brigade was to land were more carefully defended than the Asan Beaches. The Japanese had judged correctly enough that the airfield on Orote Peninsula was to be one of our objectives, and they had methodically mined the reefs and the beaches, set up gun and machine gun emplacements on the beach and on Gaan Point, and prepared anti-boat guns on Neye Island near the base of the Peninsula. (This preparation had been made on general defensive principles and not after counter intelligence had disclosed any plans to the Japanese.) The Underwater Demolition Teams had done a notable job, but they did not discover one fact that delayed the landing. The inner edges of the reefs off the beach were heavy with silt washed down by the little river that came down midway of the shore, and the silt bogged down the DUKW's as they tried to cross; they had to be rerouted to portions of the reef where they could make the shore.

For the initial landing the 305th Infantry had been attached to brigade; the other two regiments of the 77th Infantry Division were the floating reserve. The brigade had two battalions of pack howitzers attached and one 105mm Army howitzer battalion. In addition two battalions of the III Corps Artillery were to land in support. All these guns, save those of Corps, were to be brought ashore in one company of DUKW's attached from the III Corps Motor Transport Battalion. Tanks were an organic part of the reinforced regiment. The 9th Defense Battalion was to guard the beach during the assault phase.

The basic plan was to have the 4th Marines seize the western part of the shore to Bangi Point; they were then to drive inward toward the Alifan massif. The 22d Marines were to land on Beaches Yellow 1 and 2 and strike through Agat Village across the base of the Peninsula. A little river roughly divided the two beachheads. The 305th Infantry was to protect the right flank of the 4th Marines where a narrow, flat, coastal plain led down the beach for half a mile. Japanese troops could be brought up the coast along this plain from fortified positions farther south. 37 armored LVT's preceded the main wave of assault troops, left the line of departure at 0757, and arrived on the beach at 0832. They followed 9 LCI's who had turned 200 yards from the reef after shooting their rockets. The armored LVT's stopped at the reef to fire before going on, so the first assault waves landed almost simultaneously with them. Naval fire, rockets, and fire from the LVT's kept down defenders on the beach, but the guns on Gaan Point and Bangi Point had escaped naval fire and sank 20 LVT's from the leading waves. The LVT's were to proceed 1000 yards inland before unloading their troops, but as at Saipan, mines, obstacles, and unexpected terrain prevented them. On the 4th Marines' beach, hidden beneath a tangle of jungle, only now blasted open, was a little hill, its reverse slope filled with machine guns that held up advancing troops. On the right flank only a few yards in from the beach was Hill 40 which held up the advance there. The 2/4 on the 4th's left flank struggled with the beach hill; the 1/4 on the right flank slowly made its way up Hill 40. When 3/4 landed in reserve it came to the rescue of the 1st Battalion and took over the final assault of the hill. The other two battalions went inland across the flat plain and up into a series of sharp ridges that pointed down from Alifan. These

ridges were criss-crossed, covered only with grass. There were areas of low brush and coconut palms in the little valleys between them. The battalions went up the valleys or crossed from ridge to ridge in cross compartment fighting. They met rifle fire from carefully prepared positions on the ridges but not enough to hold up the troops. The BAR's could hold down enemy fire until the men with M1's got close. By early afternoon the objective for the day had been reached: the first high ground at the feet of the Alifan massif. The 2/4 lay just across Harmon road where it came down from a pass in the central island ridge. Their front, supplemented by a company of engineers, curved back toward the beach through a coconut grove just at the foot of Hill 40 which was lightly held. Early in the afternoon the 2d Battalion of the 305th had come ashore to strengthen the beach defenses. Five tanks lay in a little hollow just below Harmon Road, as satisfactory a place as any to spend the night. The 4th had a large area to defend and a thin long line to defend it with. They could expect attack from the road, a frontal assault from the Alifan ridge, and a flank attack down the plain. They got all three.

On the left flank the 22d Marines had had to fight their way in from the beach. The town of Agat, reduced to rubble with only stubbed off concrete and cascajo walls standing, had given the defenders who filtered back after the naval bombardment an effective position for a stand. Moreover, in the sector of the 22d Marines, the ground rose directly inland from the beach to the little plateau which ran down the Orote Peninsula. The tanks were dropped on the reef in the fifth wave, but it was more than an hour after H-hour, 0946, that they cleared the beach and started to lead the troops in the painful uphill work of driving inland. At 1500 a company of the 1st Battalion, 22d Marines, attempted to flank a little hill above Agat called Bob's Hill but were driven back by heavy machine gun fire from down the beach. After withdrawing to a series of trenches near the base of the hill, several other unsuccessful attempts were made to advance. Finally, in their usual inexplicable fashion, the Japanese with the machine guns that had driven the Marines off the hill, marched right toward our lines, carrying the guns with them. They were immediately taken under fire and liquidated and Bob's Hill was then taken without difficulty. By nightfall the 22d Marines were nonetheless alongside the 4th Marines on Harmon Road and their lines curved backward to the beach through Agat Village.

Naval aircraft during the day had maintained constant reconnaissance over the island. Concentrations of troops that they had spotted at Facpi Point and at the base of the Orote Peninsula had been destroyed by naval gunfire. Planes had also bombed what seemed to be motorized troops driving from Port Merizo toward the scene of battle. One of the very important missions of the planes was reporting to Corps the movement of troops. The Air Liaison Officers aloft were able to keep in contact with the ground and at the same time to report on such matters as the position and movements of the tanks. Preliminary bombardment, and the airstrikes and naval gunfire had so severed communications that parties of Japanese were isolated. It is reported that a group of 100 Japanese at Apra were ignorant of the landing in the bay below them until at 1600, 21 July, a straggler from Agat arrived to tell them.

The expected attack came that night, beginning with probing attacks along the lines. Troops were swarming out from caves in the Alifan massif, and as usual were shaping drives at the higher ridges that led down toward the beach. Small groups of Japs attempting to feel out our front lines and draw fire from our automatic weapons commenced activity in front of the 4th Marines at about 2230 hours. The flank resting on the beach received a knee-mortar barrage a half hour later and this was followed by an unsuccessful attempt to overrun our lines. Again at 0100 the enemy began a counter-

attack in an attempt to recapture Hill 40. A platoon of Marines defending the hill received heavy casualties and were driven back to the base of the hill where they reformed and took the hill only to be driven off again by more Japs. Two squads of reinforcements from the nearest platoon of Marines came over under fire to join the remnants of the platoon that had been driven off the hill and this group captured the hill once more. When dawn came 63 dead Japs were found on the hill and over 350 more between the hill and the beach. On the right flank at 0230, Japs tanks, supported with guns mounted on trucks and followed by foot troops, struck Marine positions northwest of Alifan. The point of his attack was well chosen; it was the dividing line between the two regiments, and effecting a breakthrough, he could retake Agat Village and be in a position to set up guns which would enfilade our whole beachhead. Using small arms, machine guns and bazookas, the Marines fought off the attack while our medium tanks along a nearby road fired on and destroyed the enemy tanks. The supporting Japanese infantry troops, after seeing their vehicles immobilized, gave up the attack and withdrew. On the lower slopes of Alifan still another counterattack was in progress with the Japs using machine guns and knee mortars, throwing grenades and screaming at the tops of their lungs. This counterattack was soon broken up and the survivors driven back.

In another counterattack at 0300 the Japs drove westward into our lines in such force that their momentum carried them to the edges of our pack howitzer positions about 400 yards inland from the beach. Small arms fires eventually killed off the attackers but the Marine casualty was very high.

In the sector of the 22d Marines the enemy tried several night attacks with little success although one group did penetrate as far as the command post of the regiment.

#### **D-day plus 1—22 July 1944**

The next day the 305th Infantry passed through the lines of the 4th and protected its left flank. Behind this southern shield of the Army the 22d Marines went forward across the base of the Orote Peninsula, still against an enemy that was sullenly retiring. The 4th Marines took, by order, the whole top of the Alifan massif and stretched to the west toward Facpi Point where high ground came down to the shore. This was a day of bitter fighting. The Alifan ridge was heavily fortified with trench systems and caves. It was thickly wooded, and from the northern side of the ridge rose numerous little rounded hills, where reverse slopes offered the enemy excellent positions for enfilade fire as our troops advanced. On this day, 22 July, Corps Artillery came ashore and set up its guns near Agat town. The pack artillery howitzers had been in action since D-day for counterbattery fire and direct support. By nightfall the lines stretched straight along the high ground at the base of the peninsula to the Alifan massif and then west along its top. Our right flank was still open, however, and that night there was attempted infiltration. Heavy naval gunfire and star shells protected the battalion; howitzers and mortar fire stopped any rushes. One company below a cliff stood under a rain of hostile grenades a good part of the night.

#### **D-day plus 2—23 July 1944**

On the 23d the rest of the 77th Division came ashore to take over the FBL of the 4th Marines on the following morning. The 305th had taken Maanot Pass and locked the door against any further penetration by the Japanese down the one good road across the island. The 22d Marines fought hard all day. They were attempting to secure the Agat road which runs past the base of the peninsula to join the coast road to Agana. This sector was characterized by low hills surrounded by rice paddies. Each of these hills was manned to form a strong point and all were mutually supporting. Tanks could not

be used effectively because of the soft rice fields and foot troops bogged down hip deep when they tried to negotiate this swampy terrain. The whole area was blanketed with machine gun, small arms and artillery fire. Men attempted to cross the paddies using the weeds along the edges for concealment but machine gun fire searched them out. They were under careful artillery fire and anti-tank fire that destroyed two of our tanks. Before dusk the troops were disengaged and withdrawn to a suitable defensive position on the line of hills to the rear of this area. During the night minor attempts at infiltration were initiated but infantry small arms and artillery fire deterred any successful movement. The advance closed perhaps a third of the peninsula base. They rested for the night along the road with the right flank refused. The 3/4 was moved to their rear and attached to the regiment for the night as reserve. During the night from 0200 to 0315 the regiment was under a series of counterattacks. Flares and the constant firing of our artillery and the firmness of the infantry held our lines.

#### **D-day plus 3—24 July 1944**

At 0900 the 22d Marines moved in a column of battalions around the beach side of this marshy area using some high ground just inland from the beach determined to outflank the Japanese positions. This move followed heavy preparations by aircraft, artillery and naval gunfire. Moving up the Agat-Sumay road under artillery and mortar fire the regiment used its tanks to blast out pillboxes and coconut log barricades and swung west to take the hills that overlooked the rice fields. Caves were closed with demolitions. Into the fight came five Japanese tanks which were taken under fire by our medium tanks and destroyed quickly. The whole ricefield area was overrun and the base of Orote Peninsula was reached by dark.

By nightfall the relief of the 4th Marines by the 306th Infantry had been completed and the 4th was moving into an area near Agat Town. The roads leading from the peninsula were now sealed off but the attack down the length of it could not be made until the narrow neck of the peninsula was entirely in our hands. The Commanding General of the brigade asked Corps to postpone the attack until the troops had had a day of rest and reorganization. For four days and nights they had been under almost continuous fire; they had been campaigning in rough mountainous country; they had suffered heavy casualties. The request was denied.

#### **D-day plus 4—25 July 1944**

The attack to close the neck of the peninsula was started by the 1/22 on the left and 3/22 on the right. 2/22 was left at the Atantana Road junction to patrol rear areas, and if possible make contact with the patrols of the 9th Marines; this contact was finally made at the Big Gautali River just north of them. They ran into a maze of supporting pillboxes and mortar and artillery fire. Heavy artillery fire of our own helped but it could not destroy the pillboxes. By 1300 the First Battalion on the left had suffered such heavy casualties that it was replaced by 3/4 and the 4th Marines were assigned to its sector. 12 enemy tanks were destroyed or set afire during the day. By late afternoon the Third Battalion on the right had succeeded in reaching the northern or harbor side of the Peninsula. Orote Peninsula was now completely sealed off and the attack down its length could be made. At 1700 an event similar to the one at Saipan occurred. The Japanese tried to make an amphibious assault on our rear; barges moved out into Apra Harbor toward the shore. The 14th Defense Battalion on Cabras Island and our artillery took them under fire and sank or scattered them. During the day air attacks tried to clear our flanks where guns were firing from Neye Island. The bombs had very little effect on the strongly entrenched positions. That night there was another counterattack on

the positions of the 3/22. The attack was made just after midnight by about a battalion on a very narrow front. There were two assaults only 300 yards apart, one thirty minutes after the other. The two drives never got beyond our front lines. The forward artillery observers had called down fires on the Japanese lines that cut back the depth of the drive and left the infantry to kill those who got through. 400 Japs were counted in front of the lines in the morning. This attack had probably no connection with the counterattacks launched at the 3d Division's lines during the same period. On the 26th, the attack was delayed by a sudden shelling that fell on the 22d Marines as they were about to start the attack. The suspicion that the fire was from our own ships momentarily took the heart

#### **D-day plus 5—26 July 1944**

out of the troops. Again heavy fire of our own artillery, bombing, and naval gunfire failed to dislodge the enemy. Inward from both the west and east coasts there was a swampy area, and as the troops pressed forward, very thick jungle. It was a battering advance; the troops kept the tanks behind them and called them on need, but mines often had to be moved before the tanks could come forward. The 4th Marines began to use a new weapon—the white phosphorous grenade. In the close space of a pillbox the effect was startling: the Japs had to come out. Mopping up operations showed peculiarity of defense: many of the pillboxes had basements which seemed to serve no useful offensive purpose except possibly to shelter some of the members from shell fire or to allow them to remain hidden for later infiltration. It may be also that the lower floor had been designed as an escape mechanism against flame throwers—or less romantically that they were simply storage chambers for ammunition.

At 1145 the 4th Marines at their own request had their zone of action broadened to take in the greater part of the peninsula. The battalions of the 22d were exhausted and depleted, and now had assigned to them the area east of the road which approaches Sumay from Piti Navy Yard. The two regiments converged upon one another at RJ 15 where the road from Agat met the road from Piti. Both regiments had swamps on their flanks where the resistance was comparatively light. On the right flank of the 22d Marines the swamp was so deep that it was by-passed completely. RJ 15 was to be the focal point of resistance: it was heavily mined; it was under constant fire from pillboxes on the ridges that ran across the peninsula just above it.

The two regiments dug in just below the junction for the night between the two swamps. There were no counterattacks; the enemy was grimly holding his last static line of defense with orders to stay there till he died. The fighting that day and the next was as rugged as any that the Marine Corps has ever seen. There was no room to maneuver in the dense, low, thorny underbrush and the progress had to be made by small assault units that preceded the tanks and used phosphorous grenades or flame throwers. As the 22d Marines progressed slowly they were harassed by fire from riflemen lashed to trees

#### **D-day plus 6—27 July 1944**

in the swamp that they had by-passed. This day's battle was the final test of the training of the individual Marine. He was making use of every modern weapon fitted to his need, but fundamentally every yard gained was the result of high intelligence and skill; extreme bravery was taken for granted.

Late in the afternoon, the situation had almost reached an impasse; we were going forward, but our casualties were heavy and the men were exhausted. After a careful probing of the enemy situation, the regiment massed all its tanks together with a platoon

of army tanks for a break-through. The attack was successful and the 4th Marines came up over a little ridge only to be faced by gently rising ground covered with coconut palms and heavily fortified. The first signs that enemy resistance was breaking came soon after this. At dusk a column of Japanese, nearly a company in strength came marching down the road behind a large battle flag carried by an officer. The first shot from a tank blew the officer and the flag into the air; infantry shot down the rest of the column. On the right the 22d Marines were beyond the swamp. In the more open ground the JASCO officers and the artillery observers could see more clearly; they called down air-strikes and artillery fire on the whole area before them and then attacked again. The Japs before the 22d Marines, broke and ran, and the 22d in pursuit took the high ground above the town of Sumay and enfiladed the whole remaining series of Jap positions.

The Marines now had full command of the roads; they could rush up supplies, equipment, and rations; and they could evacuate their wounded. They had maintained pressure on the enemy ever since they first hit the beaches; this was the first time that it had been lifted from them.

#### **D-day plus 7—28 July 1944**

Despite the gains made by the 22d Marines on the right, the 4th Marines had tough going on their left against many pillboxes of concrete and coconut logs. They made slow progress while the 22d took the old Marine Barracks and fought along the cliffs at the edge of Sumay. Late in the afternoon the 4th Marines behind massed medium tanks and a platoon of Army medium tanks smashed through the line on the edge of the rifle range and turned the whole line of enemy positions.

On the morning of the 29th 6 M-10 Army Tank Destroyers reported for the use of the brigade. By noon the 4th Marines were across the airfield and progressing steadily toward the end of the island. The last area of resistance was in rocky caves north of Sumay where the Japanese were prepared to stay and die. The caves had been dug in high on the cliffs that overlook the harbor and were armed to interdict Apra Harbor. They were almost inaccessible from the landward side. At the request of the 4th Marines, LCI's (G) fired 40

#### **D-day plus 8—29 July 1944**

and 20mm guns at the caves and LVT's were assigned for further bombardment. At 1600 the entire peninsula had been captured. At 1530 the American Flag was raised over the ruined Marine Barracks with appropriate ceremonies. Commanding officers of the Fifth Fleet, the Fleet Marine Force, the III Amphibious Corps, the 22d Marines and the 4th Marines were present.

On the 30th 3/22 was left to mop up the peninsula and the rest of the brigade moved to take over the FBL from the Army. Both Regiments bivouacked on the inner central ridge of the island and prepared to send out long patrols to cover the whole southern portion. The men of the brigade had fought constantly for nine days and nights in a continually moving attack. They had met a special detachment of the Special Naval Landing Force of the Japanese Navy in carefully prepared and fortified positions. They had killed 3,372 of them and captured 4. They had lost 279 killed in action; 1,525 wounded in action; and 152 missing in action at the close of the engagement. On the beachhead below Agana the conflict was as violent, but the Marines could not move forward till after the sixth day.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE BEACHHEAD IS EXPANDED

On the second day the lines of the 3d Division were still locked tight in conflict and there was very little movement and no advance except on the right flank. The 21st Marines could not move forward and expose still further their flanks. The 3d Marines were still attempting to get command of the high ground in front of them. After terrific preparations with direct fire by halftracks, tanks, and the 20mm and 40mm of the 14th Defense Battalion, the 1st Battalion again assaulted the ridge before them. Again the assaults were turned back even though men had reached the top. On its upper slopes the ridge was bare and men on the beach or even in the harbor could see the lines of riflemen

#### D-day plus 1—22 July 1944

creeping up, making the final rush and being cut down as they fired into the foxholes before them. On the left of the 1st Battalion, the 2d was also held up on its right. Easy Company was attempting to gain the shorter ridge beside Kipper's ridge of the 1st Battalion. Men fell and rolled down the grassy slope to pile in a heap at the bottom. At the end of the day Able Company of the 1st Battalion had lost all its officers and 80% of its men. A JASCO officer took command of the company.

To the left the 3/3 had stiff fighting, but it was moving ahead. Early in the morning the 2d and 3d Battalions saw the odd sight of a column of Japanese parading down the ridge in front of them behind a large battle flag. The struggle of the morning resolved itself into a conflict for a large gun emplacement. The Marines came up the ridge to take it. Japanese came down the long ridge above the emplacement to throw back the attacking waves. Before the Marines got control, the emplacement was filled with the bodies of Marines and Japanese. Once this point had been seized, the two battalions moved forward some 300 yards to the next ridge without much resistance. They suffered casualties from the rear. Later examination of the ground showed the neat round foxholes of the Japanese riflemen set on the reverse slope of the ridges, each still covered with the woven camouflaged cover of dried grass and weeds. Men had waited in these holes till the assaulting waves had passed and then fired carefully.

On the right flank the 9th Marines were pushing rapidly outwards against an enemy that was fleeing or ill-prepared to meet them. The 1st Battalion on the ridges back of the shore swept down without much trouble. The 2d Battalion fought its way into Piti Navy Yard and onto the causeway leading to Cabras Island. The causeway was mined; Marines, embarked in LVT's, landed and found the island free of enemy. Later that afternoon the security of the island was handed over to the 14th Defense Battalion which began to set up its guns, search-lights and radars on the island preparatory to counter-battery work on Orote Peninsula, and against Mt. Tenjo. This Battalion's long training in tracking and firing was producing astonishing results in accuracy.

For the rest of the day the 1/9 and 2/9, which had early advanced to their objective, cleaned up caves on the high ground and along the road. It was obvious that the strength of the enemy lay in the long arc of hills that ended with Mt. Tenjo; it was only when we assaulted that line—as the 3d and the 21st were doing that we met the full force of the enemy.

There was no change in the lines of the 21st Marines during the day except that at 1800 the 2/21 was withdrawn to division and the 1/21 sent up in its place to undergo the constant pounding of mortar fire. On the right of the regiment the 3d Battalion had its lines stretched tight; a platoon of the Divisional Reconnaissance Troops was thrown across the hills to make contact with the 9th.

#### D-day plus 2—23 July 1944

On the following day, the 23d, the 9th continued to make progress. On the division's left, the 3/3 and the 2/3 pushed ahead toward the road that led across their position; 1/3 still struggled on the beach and the 21st Marines continued to hold their lines. The 2/21 was moved from Division Reserve to the low ground below the front lines in support of the 1st Battalion. There was still a wide gap between the 3d Marines and the 21st. Behind the ridge that 1/3 was assaulting was a great wedge of territory, heavily wooded and with the contours of an underwater landscape. The rough coral was cut by narrow defiles, heaped boulders, and jagged cliffs. A patrol from the 21st trying to make contact with the 3d Marines was lost trying to make its way through the tangle and finally forced to return with its mission unaccomplished. The 3d Marines sent "C" Company up into these woods to encircle the position of the Japanese on the ridge it was assaulting, and suddenly resistance on the ridge was ended. Men walked up the slope where a few moments ago it was death to crawl, with the dazed look of sleepwalkers in their eyes. No advance could be made through the jungle behind this ridge and the next day the battalion by-passed the whole region and took its place on the high bluff beside the 21st. "C" Company took the whole day to traverse the 500 yards.

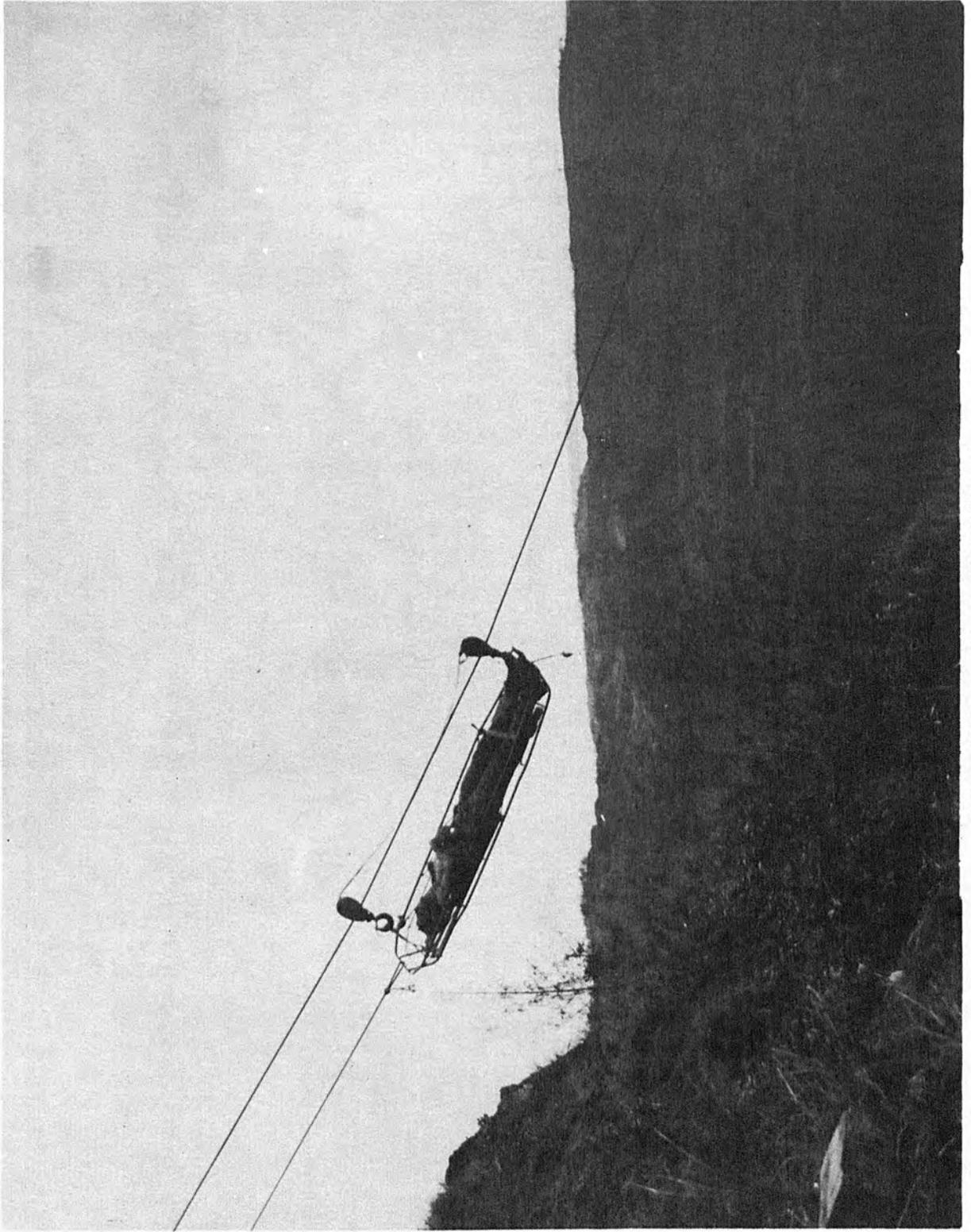
On the 24th occurred one of the most peculiar incidents of the campaign. Behind the cliffs on which the 21st was fighting, the Asan River began its course in a narrow, wooded little ravine. Until now this ravine had been only casually explored; the cliffs on which the 21st was fighting was actually one wall of it; on the other side a road wound up that was freely used by all troops—it seemed incredible that the enemy would still be lingering there. The 2d Battalion of the 21st, however, now sent a platoon up the bed of the ravine. At a bend of the brook the platoon was fired on and suffered heavy casualties. Further probing showed that the ravine was lined with fortified caves mounting many machine guns and that Japanese swarmed in the caves.

An endeavor to press the attack again resulted in more fierce fighting. A second air-strike failed to blow out the defenders. 2/21 moved on up past the ravine to take its line on the cliff and left Easy Company to mop up. The Company succeeded only by using automatic riflemen and machine gunners along the road on one side of the canyon to protect its advance. In all, 350 Japanese were killed in a bare hundred yards along a ravine

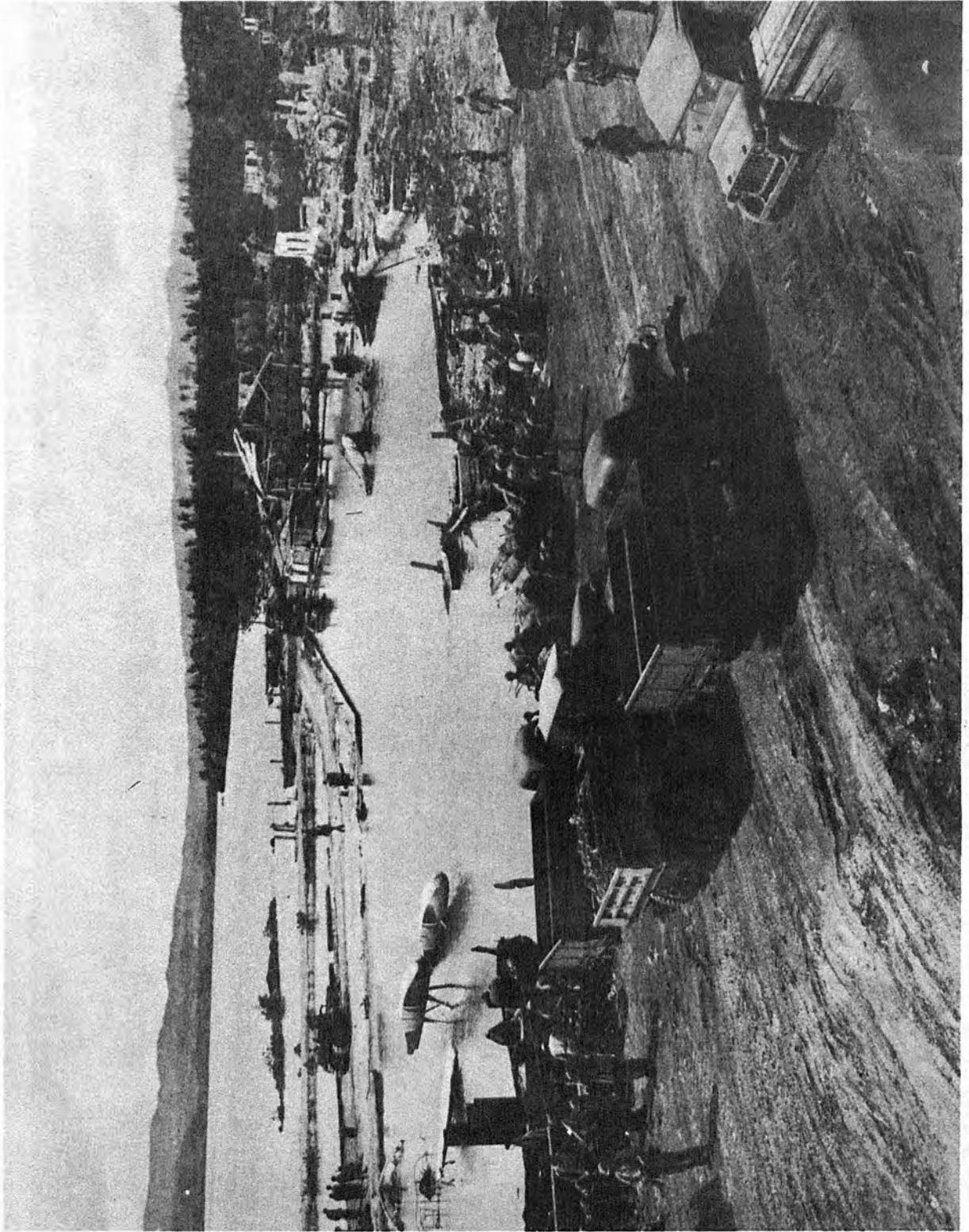
#### D-day plus 3—24 July 1944

bed formed by a little brook. It was odd that so many Japanese could have remained so close behind our lines undetected for so long, or could have restrained their fire when so many targets presented themselves. Only one explanation has been offered, and that is not official. Officers of the 2/21 who drove down onto the Tenjo Road found caves on the slopes that led back toward the ravine. They were convinced that the caves led clean through the hill, and that the Japanese had been hoping to keep these caves cleared and concealed so that they could be used as an avenue of attack on our rear areas when the decisive counterattack of the Japanese was mounted. The explanation seems fantastic; yet it is in accord with tactics used by the Japanese elsewhere, notably at Peleliu; it explains the apparent stupidity of the Japanese in trying to hold an untenable and useless position. Only when the caves were discovered did they rush reinforcements through from the rear cave tunnels.

The 25th was the day set for our attack; the line was intact from one end to the other. 2/9 had replaced the battered remnants of the 1/3, roads had been built up to our front lines so that supplies could be easily handled. On the left, patrols from the 9th had almost made contact with the 22d Regiment from the brigade.



Evacuation on Guam Was Difficult



**Pan-American Clipper Base Recaptured**

The immediate objective of the attack was to secure possession of the road that led laterally past our front positions to Mt. Tenjo from the town of Agana. Once the road had been secured, we would have control of a road network which could be effectively used to further our advance and serve as the base for further deployment north or south.

#### D-day plus 4—25 July 1944

On the left, the 3d and 9th Marines met immediate opposition as they dropped down off the cliff toward the road and then reorganized to cross the road and drive up the Fonte Slope. Where the 2/9 stood, they faced an arc of low bluffs on the far side of an open field. They struggled for a good part of the day to sweep across that field and blast the caves. Night came as they got up onto the higher ground to the rear of the bluffs.

The 21st rose and went forward over the ridge that had bounded their horizon for so long. Once they had beaten down the first flurry of fire they crossed the road easily and attacked their objective, a little hill rising at the end of a quarry beyond the road. Tanks had come up the road to pace the attack and the advance at first went rapidly. Then as the line moved forward through the hollow below the hill, field pieces opened up from a swamp to their left at direct ranges. The pieces firing were masked against our own artillery fire by the ridges above them, and had to be reduced by frontal attack of the infantry. Again the two battalions of the 21st moved forward, but beyond the hill in the quarry they were raked again by fire from great caves set into the crumbling banks of red clay of which the hill was composed. The official reports say that "the infantry accompanying the tanks was all killed or wounded, but the tanks managed to fire effectively at the caves and closed some of them." But the position was not tenable; for the night the battalions withdrew to the high ridge just in front of their former positions and again dug in. The difference was that now they were really on high ground; their horizon stretched across the island. It was something like coming up out of a hole in the ground. The men could look across a bare windy stretch of open country to a long ridge that stretched down to their left a mile to end in the rugged cliffs of Mt. Macajna. A trail led down that ridge to join at the mountain with an old Spanish road which elbowed down around the south edge of the Fonte Ravine and ended in the chief west and east road that led south from Agana over the Ylig Bay. Directly in front of the battalions ran the road to Mt. Tenjo, curving past fallen beacon towers and the ruins of cement buildings where a Japanese artillery regiment had had its command post. More than a mile to the right were long grassy ridges and above them the solid peak of Mt. Alutom, the thin grey crest of Mt. Chachao, and the higher summit of Mt. Tenjo, once to be the stronghold of the Marines, now the dividing line between brigade and division, already assaulted by the Army from slopes to the east and south.

On the extreme right of the 21st, 3/21 had moved forward to a high ridge beneath Mt. Chachao; in front of them were the long sharp buttresses below Chachao; from their OP's they could see the movement of enemy troops. The 9th Marines had taken a hill to their right rear, and then moved on to occupy another little summit 800 yards to their right; the gap had to be guarded by small outposts; the two battalions of the 9th were stretched thin and far. One of the battalion commanders had seen the danger of this extended line and passed up a request for further support, but by now the division was stationed on nearly 6,000 yards of front; there were no reserves. On the 23rd, the division itself had asked for further reserves from Corps, but had been told that none were available.

This was the night on which the Japanese had determined to attack. There was activity reported all up and down the lines; the Japanese were using flares to light all dispositions of their troops. The messages flowing into Division Headquarters spoke

of attempted infiltration all along the front during the first part of the night. On the left flank the 2/9 was under repeated attacks that hurled downhill at them. These attacks were stopped by the Marines and by the tanks that had remained in the lines overnight. On the right flank, more and more pressure was put on the outposts in the valley between the 3/21 and the 1/9.

At 0100 the 2/21 had a flurry of attacks, but from their new positions on the ridge they stopped them in their tracks with 60mm mortars and direct firing of machine guns across their front. At 0400 came the real attack; it was aimed at the 1/21 and driven home at a point where a deep draw in the cliff led down to a long nose that dropped almost to the beach. Men making the attack were loaded with explosives; it is probable that they were charged with the mission of destroying the vehicles and guns of the division that were parked near the mouth of Asan River. The enemy came on in a series of groups that by sheer shock action drove through the thin lines of the regiment. Baker Company was directly in their path and was wiped out except for seven of the combat troops. Behind the lines tanks began firing with their machine guns, but did not kill enough to stop the rush. The artillery was firing frantically in support, dropping its range bit by bit till finally it was firing at 5 miles below minimum range.<sup>1</sup> Five of our troops were wounded as the shells barely cleared the hill top, but the salvos stopped any advance of the Japanese reinforcing elements. Those who got through swept over the mortar section to the rear, besieged the battalion command posts, and pushed on down the nose that led to the shore. Though they had not stopped the charge, the men of the 1st Battalion had prevented its final success. The successive groups had been led by officers and these officers had fallen before our pieces. The division now brought out all its reserves: Headquarters troops of the 21st, members of the shore party, Motor Transport troops, artillerymen, and engineers, and formed a secondary line of defense. The remnants of 1/21 counterattacked and closed their lines again. As the dawn broke, the lines were intact; no avenue of approach for reinforcements for the Japanese remained. The space behind the lines was filled with little groups engaged in fierce skirmishes of their own, and with little bunches of Japanese, two, three or four who were apparently seeking safety and hiding. These the reserve line was hunting down and killing. The absence of officers apparently destroyed direction and organization; the tightening of our lines closed off hope of reinforcement. Some of the more emotional of the Japanese began to blow themselves up.

On the extreme right, the Japanese had attacked the 3/21 again and then rolled past their front and down through the gap between them and the 1/9. A group of Japanese had taken again the hill behind the 3/21<sup>1</sup> and was laying siege to the command post of that battalion which lay under its east slope. There were troops to the right and left of the battalion's front; and little help could be spared. One of the officers went down with 20 men and assaulted the troops swarming down on the command post from the high level top of the hill. They worked up the high eroded slopes and threw hand grenades, moved back and tried another slope. The attack in the darkness disconcerted the Japanese and relieved some of the pressure on the command post. Only seven men came back from the expedition, however. Once through, the Japanese had followed the ravines to the sea and tried to work up the coast to the beachhead. These troops were fewer in number; they were apparently staging only a secondary attack. Divisional Headquarters troops engaged them. The Divisional Hospital lay directly in their path; many of the

<sup>1</sup>Dog Battery, 2/12, fired 1,450 rounds in two hours, 200 more than a unit of fire.

<sup>2</sup>It is reported that the Japanese had secured and used the password to gain the hill.

patients had to be evacuated to the ships. During the night three battalion command posts were under siege. Just after daybreak the Fire Direction Center of the 12th Marines on the banks of the Asan River and ahead of the gun positions was brought under fire. The enemy captured one of the .50 calibre guns guarding Headquarters Battery. A patrol won back the gun pit, drove off the survivors, and with the aid of a tank pursued and killed them.

By mid-morning the lines were again intact; all organization of the Japanese who had penetrated had been destroyed; the three command posts of the regiment were once more free from siege, but for the rest of the day lone riflemen and little groups had to be methodically hunted out of ravines, caves and hollows, and systematically killed. The Japanese had shot their bolt. From this moment on the initiative passed to the Marines and was never again lost. All evidence pointed to this break-through as the great tactical blow by which the Japanese hoped to stop our drive. They had thrown at least ten battalions at us. It is reported that soon after this, a message was sent to Tokyo by the Commanding General of the Japanese forces suggesting surrender, but in reply he was told to fight to the last man. But even in this blow which had been carefully planned and well executed with main and secondary attacks, there were indications that the Japanese thought their situation hopeless. Many of the dead Japanese had canteens filled with saki, and empty saki bottles strewed the assembly areas they had left.

#### **D-day plus 5—26 July 1944**

On the division's left flank, the 3d Marines with the 2/9 attached, continued their attack up the hill; they were approaching the tableland above the Fonte Ravine and though the right flank of the 2/9 remained floating, the terrain protected them from envelopment. On the right flank, the 9th Marines moved forward to a hill that protected the flank of the 3/21. On the 27th the attack was to commence that would give us command of the whole central portion of the island; i. e., of the long ridge that ran north from Mt. Tenjo. We had to fight uphill until we had gained that, but from now on against diminishing resistance.

The beachhead of the 3d Division had had one peculiarity from the landing on until the final ridge had been seized. It was a beachhead locked in by terrain so that there was no room for maneuver and all advances had to be made by frontal assault. On the right flank, the 9th Marines had had freedom to strike down along the coast, and had then been brought up on the perimeter line where the opposition was comparatively slight. It would have been theoretically possible for the division to have used this regiment as a spearhead for a turning movement that would sweep down the Tenjo road in front of the 21st Marines and take the high tableland above Fonte Ravine from the rear. Such an attack would have relieved the 21st Regiment of its precarious position on the edge of the cliffs and would have neatly boxed the Japanese on the tableland. The answer must be that the division was set to do a job that demanded half again as many men as it had. From the very beginning of its drive toward the highland it was without reserve and had to hold as best it could an arc of defence 6,000 yards long. There could be no question of maneuver outside that arc. To pull one regiment outside and endeavor to use it as a turning force would have been to have it commit suicide. Like the projected diversionary movement of the 1/2, the 2d Division, on Mt. Tapotchau from Magicienne Bay, it would have accomplished nothing except its own annihilation.

The attack of the 3d Marines with the 2/9 attached was the only regiment that moved forward on the 26th against any massed forces of the enemy. The hillside above them was being defended desperately by troops brought up the Fonte Ravine and thrown forward to encircle the great command post on the hill crest with its half completed dugouts and underground chambers. Resistance ahead of the 2/9 was especially severe. The attack went slowly forward during the morning behind tanks that lent confidence to the men, and released them from the tension that held them when an infantry line moved against hidden positions and concealed machine guns with hope of discovering them before they had opened fire and caused a casualty. (On Saipan the saying grew up that it took one casualty to find a cave, and two to subdue it). The tanks had become the infantry's cannon; their machine guns moving forward in the great turrets took the place of the heavy Brownings firing between gaps or on the flanks of the advancing troops. When the four tanks first rolled up to the line of the 2/9 as they had started their drive, the men cheered and shouted. At noon the whole regiment stopped, dug in, and waited. The divisional attack was to start the next morning. 2/9 was headed uphill directly toward the Japanese divisional Command Post in the quarry at the top of Fonte. The Japanese fought them viciously all the way and counterattacked from below when they had obtained their objective. Accidents of terrain to some extent isolated them from battalions to right and left and made the fight all their own. They used skillfully every weapon at their disposal; they pounded the front of the hill with 81mm mortars, dropped artillery shells on the top, and the JASCO team kept naval guns dropping high explosives on the reverse slope. An officer of the 2/9 said wryly, "At that we might not have licked them, if they hadn't kept coming down hill to us." This is one of the few examples of Japanese beneficence.

#### **D-day plus 6—27 July 1944**

On the 27th the lines were straightened but there was still heavy resistance from caves that had to be laboriously cleared. On its front the 1/21 found a cave containing three Japanese and a large number of cases of Japanese whiskey. The Japanese would not surrender and a delicate problem arose of saving the whiskey and disposing of the Japanese. Grenades, demolitions, or tank fire could not be the answer. Somebody finally solved the problem with white phosphorous. The 28th saw the beachhead line secured. The 3d Marines finally mounted the summit of Fonte Hill and dug in facing Fonte Ravine; the 21st Marines faced another group of caves on the reverse slope of the hill that had

#### **D-day plus 7—28 July 1944**

held the old beacon towers. Tanks blasted the defenders back into the interiors, and bulldozers closed the entrances. The 3/9 made a driving attack on Mt. Chachao and secured the last height to link with the army from the south that had taken Mt. Tenjo without a struggle.

The picture of the day's battle disclosed a strange variety of attitudes by the Japanese. The Japanese around their Division Post had fought until they were killed, and fought skillfully, but the area in front of the final protective line of the regiment was littered with masses of equipment thrown away by fleeing units. In the battle of the caves on George Hill, curious things happened. A Jap came to the entrance of a cave as a tank wheeled up in front of it and threw a grenade that cracked harmlessly on the turret. As the great barrel of the 75 swung around and upward toward him, he stooped and continued to throw pebbles. From some of the caves the Japs continued to shoot fanatically; in others they committed hara-kiri before the tanks approached. On the right flank they defended their last stronghold, Mt. Chachao, stubbornly till the last man was killed. This drive on the mountain was a beautifully executed movement by the 3/9.

Mt. Chachao is a narrow ridge of rock rising in a long arc perhaps two hundred yards long from the central ridge. Below it the ridge drops in one long sweep nearly to seacoast level. A hundred feet below the summit of the mountain, the road to Mt. Tenjo runs through a cut that has been leveled out of the slope. The Japanese had planted a heavy cement casement directly in the center of the summit; the rest of the cliff was a series of foxholes and machine gun nests protected by logs. At either end of the summit, circular emplacements guarded the road. A company of Japanese manned the positions. The battalion went up the ridges to the road nearly half a mile to the north of Chachao. The road was flanked with screening defenses and the assaulting companies took the positions almost in their stride, sweeping forward along the road with the fire teams deployed and firing rapidly and accurately. Artillery held the defenders down until the infantry came close. The battalion opened its ranks to let following tanks through. They swung down the road and around the peak to prevent retreat and add their heavy guns to the siege. The battalion clung close to the face of the mountain, drove along in column of companies until they had covered the length of the summit and then started to rush the top. They were to some extent protected from direct fire by the steepness of the slope. But they got their first foothold by getting men up near easy grenade range of the top, and then passing grenades up to them to toss over. The battalion killed a whole company of Japanese who occupied strong entrenchments atop a peak that was in itself a formidable fortification.

By the end of the 28th, the 3d Division had achieved its objective and was in complete command of the center of the island. The 9th Marines held the southern sector of the ridge; the 21st Marines held the long ridge to the west and north of Chachao, and the 3d Marines held the high ground that dominated Fonte Ravine. The only focal point of resistance was Fonte Ravine; there were night skirmishes along the lip of the ravine, but the JASCO officers poured nearly a thousand rounds of naval gunfire into the ravine

#### **D-day plus 8 and 9—29 and 30 July**

during one night, and the resistance ceased. For the next two days, the division rested and patrolled. They met only scattered groups of enemy: stragglers, deserters, or little groups who were determined on a last futile and desperate gesture. Phase I was finished.

Certain interesting things characterized this first phase of the operation of the division that there has been no opportunity to discuss.

1. The Division had satisfactorily solved the always pressing problem of water and rations. The 19th Engineers had tapped the water sources of Agana, and also managed to use some of the piping. On D-day plus 1 they were getting sufficient water. A problem of food was harder. "C" and "K" rations, though nutritious enough, are neither appetizing nor effective over any prolonged period. 10-1 rations cannot satisfactorily be used unless troops are stationed in a bivouac area. Ordinarily foods in bulk cannot be served since there can be no provision for cleaning mess gear, and dirty mess gear is an invitation to dysentery. The Division Bakery section was getting out bread to the troops by D-day plus 5; the 21st Regiment had thrown the personnel of its galleys together and was getting out doughnuts and coffee to all its troops by D-day plus 2—it had got coffee to casualties on D-day plus 1. From D-day plus 3 it managed to get something hot to the men twice a day. The first issue of clothing could not be made till D-day plus 12.

2. The Provisional War Dog Company which had accompanied the division since its inception had now decisively proved its worth. At Bougainville, in the jungle, the dogs had not been satisfactory. In the past eight days they had been especially valuable. The system of teaching them to work only on a leash had not worked out efficiently for patrol work, but for those eight days on the beachhead they had performed a new service. The

dogs had been trained to "alert" at the sight or sound of a Jap. Tied at the edge of a foxhole with running end of the leash in the Marine's hand they had give sufficient warning of the approach of creeping Japs. It had been difficult to teach them to remain silent and not give away the position of the front lines. Men were eager to have the dogs with them in their foxholes and competed for them. When the reserve companies were cleaning up the beach areas after the break-through, the dogs frequently scented the Japs where they were hidden in caves or ravines and directed the troops to them. Several were killed in this early phase of the operation.

3. The Marianas Campaign was the first in which the JASCO teams had been put into full operation; atoll operations had been comparatively simple because the terrain of the islands was flat and observers hardly had to move off the beach. The newly developed teams had fully proved their worth. The NGF officers<sup>1</sup> in a country of ravines, gullies, ridges, and hills that were usually not marked on the target maps needed to move with the forward lines and to use all their skill in map reading and their knowledge of terrain for their call fires. For the operation the 3d JASCO remained only an administrative unit: for early call fires there was a JASCO group on the beach. Later a NGF team had been assigned to each battalion, and the battalion team had been used at the discretion of the battalion commander. A ship had, moreover, been assigned to each battalion to supply call fires against directed targets or to provide star shells. The brigade on D-day night had called for naval gunfire on the Alifan massif barely 200 yards in front of the troops. The shells had destroyed not only advancing Japanese but also machine gun emplacements and hasty fortifications from which they were sallying. The 9th Regiment had called for fires on a column of Japanese advancing along a road 1000 yards to their front. The shells had broken in and over the column and destroyed it. Though direct fire at an enemy in defilade was not always possible with the flat trajectory weapons of the ships, call fires had broken lines of communication and interdicted lines of approach. It is probable that heavy shelling in the Fonte Ravine had prevented reinforcements from arriving to help the defenders of the Japanese Division Headquarters.

Air liaison had been less successful principally because direction remained far away on the carrier, because there were insufficient planes and no planes immediately on station. The time lapse between the call for a strike and the strike itself averaged for the operation one hour and 48 minutes. And there were difficulties of terrain. Naval pilots working from a map that showed none of the features that loomed huge on the ground—where a few feet of elevation were strong vantage points to the machine gunners of the Japanese—made errors in their bombing. At least three times casualties were caused to our own troops.

<sup>1</sup>These Naval Gunfire Officers were taken from two sources. One group was composed of ensigns of the navy assigned to JASCO because of their knowledge of naval gunfire; the other group consisted of young Marine officers who had had field artillery training. The tendency seems to be to train the Marine officers in naval gunfire and make the JASCO a wholly Marine group.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FINAL DAYS

Probing by the First Brigade had shown that there was little opposition to be expected in the south of the island. As the brigade finished mopping up on Orote Peninsula, it was planned to withdraw them to the center of the island to hold a line to the rear of the Division and keep the whole southern area under deep patrols of at least two days' duration. One company (Able) from the 22d Marines was to make a long patrol entirely around the southern coast of the island and return to the holding line. It was to be supplied with provisions by two DUKW's that would follow where there were roads and take to the water where there were none. The 4th Marines were establishing patrol bases through the middle sector and sending patrols from them.

The patrol of Able Company had its difficulties. One of the DUKW's bogged down on the sand and had to be broken out by an LVT; later it developed engine trouble and had to be left behind. LCM's were to run down to appropriate places along the coast with resupplies of ammunition and rations, but the roughness of the sea prevented them from being used. Finally the second DUKW had to be abandoned. The patrol was kept under observation by plane and in communication through radio. Rations were dropped in sufficient quantity. Few if any enemy were discovered. The patrol ran into empty emplacements and abandoned pieces. The long marches were exhausting to troops taken fresh from the lines but the men had compensations. The land was comparatively untouched by the war; many of the villagers had returned to their homes. They welcomed and feasted the Marines. A bearded Marine would awake in his foxhole and find a native by him waving off the flies while he slept. The patrol had the singularly pleasant experience of being regarded and worshipped as liberators.

#### D-day plus 10—31 July 1944

On 31 July 1944, the drive down the north of the island started. Intelligence reports on the conditions of the enemy and on the points of his later assembly were still meagre. It was obvious, however, that his withdrawal had not been orderly. The whole area leading down to Mt. Macajna was spotted with bivouac areas strewn with all sorts of gear, from mess kits to haversacks. In the advance the center of the island was to be the dividing line. The 77th Division, USA, was to take the right half and the 3d Marine Division the left. The 3d Division advanced with three regiments abreast, the 3d on the left, the 9th on the right. On the left flank, the 3d Marines cleaned out a few caves on the banks of the Fonte Ravine in front of them and took the deserted town of Agana. The town was rubble, but the streets in it and the roads leading from it were heavily mined with sunken aerial bombs; one battalion leader met his death by the explosion of one under his jeep as he left the town. The 1st Battalion of the 3d on the right of the regiment had to advance through a huge swamp to the rear of the town. On the left flank of the 21st, the 1/21 sent one platoon down the bottom of the upper reaches of the ravine where it parallels the ridge leading to Mt. Tenjo. From protecting outcrops on the side of the ravine, high over the platoon's heads, the intelligence officer of the battalion controlled their march by radio, and directed them to targets. By nightfall the regiment was resting along the road that leads from Agana to Ylig Bay with the 9th Marines and the Army on its right flank. Coming down from the slopes of Mt. Macajna, the 3d Battalion had passed through an area where great stores of food and supplies were heaped. Here one curious incident occurred, illustrating the confusion of the enemy. Across a wide area strewn with supplies the advance elements of the battalion saw a small group of Japanese led by an

officer and carrying a battle flag coming toward them. They at first thought that the enemy was coming in to surrender, but when the Japanese interpreter called to them, they huddled together, and then hastily retreated. Apparently they had mistaken our troops for some of their own. The enemy's communications had so broken down that dispersed forces were already out of control and lost. This confusion was to grow increasingly during the rest of the operation and after organized resistance had ceased. Rumors drifted among the wandering groups of Japanese soldiers that survived that Tumon Bay was still in Japanese hands or that Ylig Bay was to be an assembly area. All September was to be marked by the forlorn but determined little treks of these groups up and down the east or the west coast.

#### **D-day plus 11—1 August 1944**

On 1 August the 21st came up through the swamp alongside the 3d Marines, the 9th Marines and the Army came abreast and the advance continued. The 21st Marines were pinched out by the narrowing front. Two battalions went into reserve, and the 3d continued as reserve for the 3d Marines, moving back and forth behind the lines of their battalions. They picked up a group of Japanese Naval personnel who had apparently wandered from the airfield. The Divisional Reconnaissance Troops had made a hasty motorized patrol in front of the Division and run the length of the Tiyan airfield without experiencing more than hasty gunfire. That evening the 9th Marines took the airfield with little opposition.

Intelligence received from prisoners of war and from other sources indicated that the Japanese were retiring rapidly before our troops and preparing to make a stand farther north on the wooded slopes of Mt. Barrigada<sup>1</sup> just north of a road which there ran from side to side of the island. To the west of Barrigada lay a critical road junction in the township of Finegayan; the road north from Agana here forked; the left branch ran along the coast to Ritidian Point, and not far from the road junction forked again to send a road up the middle of the island. The right fork of the road from Agana led north, in a long curve to the slopes of Mt. Santa Rosa, a bare peak, but heavily surrounded with wooded country. At Santa Rosa, if anywhere, the remnants of the Japanese force could

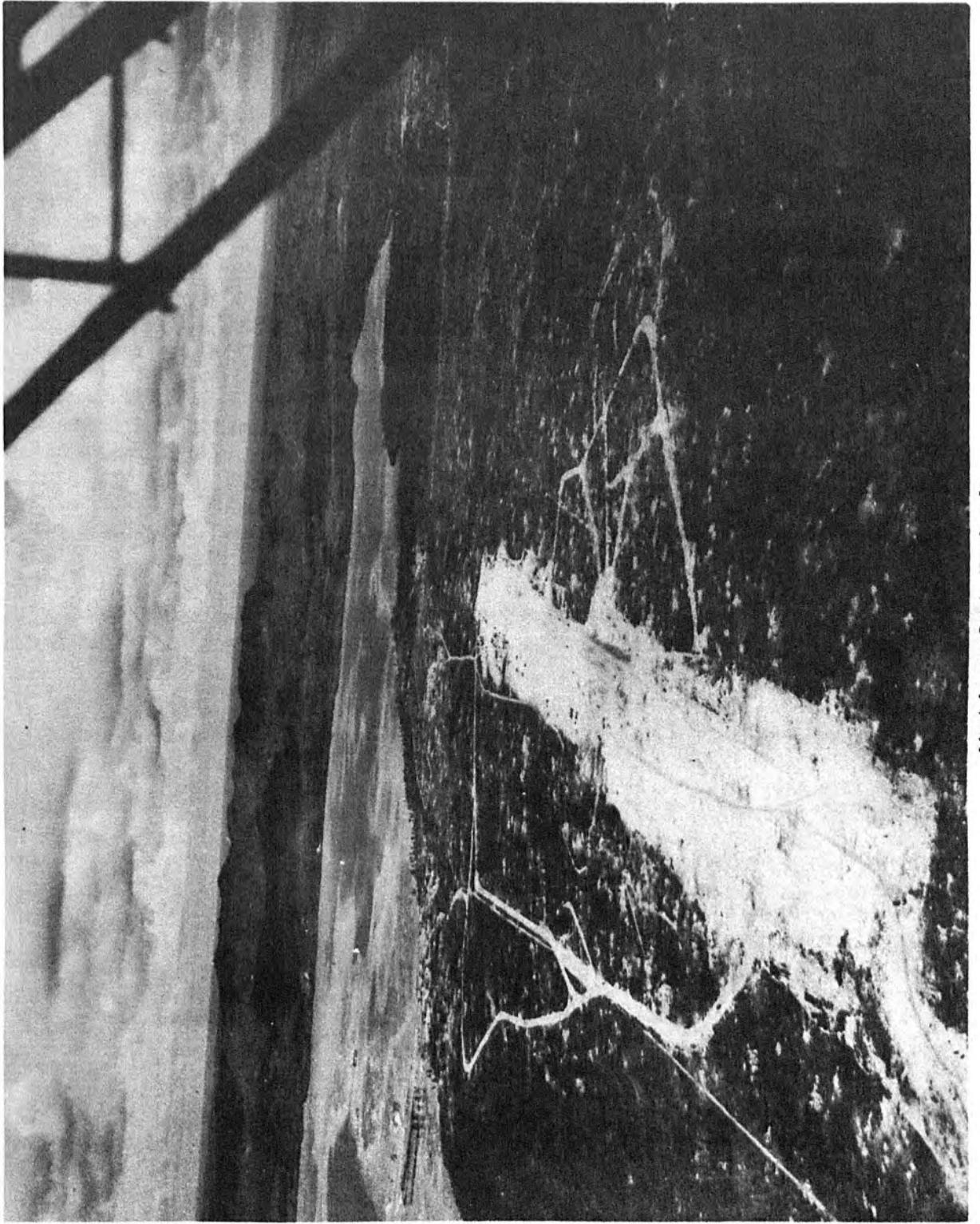
#### **D-day plus 12—2 August 1944**

a stand. On the 2d of August the three regiments moved forward toward this road junction with very little opposition. Except on the road, the going was heavy through a low but close jungle. Mt. Barrigada was in the Army sector.

This rapid advance began to tax the transportation of the division. It had come ashore with the same proportion of its total transportation that it had used at Bougainville: 50%, but combat losses and operational defects in the vehicles, which were already old, had further cut down the efficiency of the transportation.

The success of the operation on Guam depended on an amphibious technique developed for the same purpose for which it had been used at Saipan and Tinian: to keep continual pressure on the enemy by constant advances that would never permit him to organize or reestablish his communications. Holding this pressure meant continual advances by the troops, driving till dusk and digging in on the farthest line of the advance; it meant using all the powers of the air arm and naval gunfire to disorganize the enemy. It meant deep support of troops by artillery fire (the 155's) and also direct support by Divisional and Brigade artillery. To make accurate call fires, artillery had to be close to the advancing line and had to displace frequently. Moreover, the artillery battalions had to have at all times completely accurate knowledge of the front lines. The 12th Artillery

<sup>1</sup>See Map.



Airstrip on Orote Peninsula

first moved its batteries up to the foot of Macajna Mountain, later displaced forward four times. Corps Artillery moved up to give deep support from the Agat beachhead to above Agana and finally to Tumon Bay. During the last march down the island, the III Corps dropped concentrations on Barrigada Mountain and on Mt. Santa Rosa where intelligence had information that the enemy was trying to form his lines. At both places the concentrations successfully drove back the Japanese.

The warfare continued to be amphibious throughout the whole pursuit down the island. The 12th Artillery had first moved its batteries to a position behind the high bench at the foot of Mt. Macajna, and there fired in direct support of the advancing troops, and continued to fire interdictionary and harassing missions. It placed its fire on places like Barrigada where it was suspected that the Japanese might assemble; it brought down its fire on stretches of road where artillery pieces of the enemy might be located. Moreover, a little later the III Corps Artillery moved up to the Tumon Bay area to give deep support the length of the island. The 12th Artillery was to displace five times during the course of the operation toward the end of the island. Battalions were accompanied down the coast by destroyers who could arch fire into the center of the island, and by the little LCI(G)'s that used rockets, and 20 and 40mm guns on the cliffs and caves along the beaches. The 12th Artillery Battalions massed fires in front of the lines at night, did counterbattery work when the Japanese artillery pieces opened, and cleared roads in front of the advancing columns. The Grasshoppers of its observation squadron were swooping around over the northern part of the island and constantly reporting any gatherings of enemy troops. They now had Tiyan Airfield as their base. VMO-1, the First Marine Observation Squadron had been landed from carriers and had performed invaluable services during the whole operation.

As the columns went along the coast they had destroyer fire on call for each battalion and the LCI (G)'s streaming close inshore to observe the cliffs and fire at call rockets or their 40 and 20mm guns.

#### **D-day plus 13—3 August 1944**

On the morning of the 3d of August the first battalion of the 9th approached RJ 177, companies "A" and "B" in assault and "C" in reserve. They held the left flank of the regiment; the road marked the regimental boundary between the 9th and the 3rd. In the heavy low jungle at the edge of a coconut grove along the road "B" Company ran into brisk fire from what was estimated to be a platoon of Japs. The company took the positions under assault behind two tanks. The Japs had machine guns mounted to guard the road and riflemen in position behind them. At the end of the firefight "B" Company found that it had killed 115 enemy or nearly a rifle company. The firefight disclosed pretty clearly that the Japanese were posting an outguard to more formidable preparations for defense of the important road junction. At 1600 an armed and motorized patrol, a company of tanks, and Item Company of the 21st in trucks preceded by two half tracks of the Division Reconnaissance Company went through the lines of the 9th. Their mission was to take the road to the left at RJ 177 and push on toward Ritidian Point at the northwest of the island. They missed the turn and drove straight ahead. 500 yards down the road the leading half track was stopped by a fallen tree, fired, and was answered by fire from the right side of the road. Before assistance could reach the track from the tanks, it was disabled by a 37mm gun in the jungle to the left of the road. Further probing showed the road block was of formidable depth and width, and the patrol withdrew. That night the 1/9 took up position at the forks and on a cross trail leading to the east. The regimental weapons company protected the left

flank at the cross roads. During the night two medium Japanese tanks cruised down the road, despite repeated firing by a 37mm gun, crushed a trail of the gun and turned off to the west in the rear of the 3d Marines' lines, They did not fire on our troops and were not hit. Somehow they got back to their own lines.

In the morning Companies "A" and "C" resumed the attack on either side of the fork. By midmorning they had crossed the road, and Company "B" was committed on the left flank. The attack was proceeding in the zone of action of the battalion but directly parallel to the direction in which anti-tank guns were sited.

At 1430 the attack was disrupted when two B-25 planes strafed and bombed our lines along the roads. At 1700 the two companies on the left were replaced by the 1/21 and 2/21, and the companies of the 1/9 were thrown into support of "A" Company where the fighting had been fiercest. In the morning "B" and "A" Companies struck back toward the road in a flanking attack. Tanks came on either side of the road and blasted one after another of the heavy weapons. It was savage blind fighting in thick low scrub with no vision beyond a few feet. In the brush and tangle one of our tanks stopped and sent out a patrol. A sergeant came crawling back with the whispered news that a camouflaged Japanese tank was only fifteen yards away. The confusion was made worse by another strafing by our own planes. Company "A" was relieved by "C" at noon and by 1800 the two companies had swept over the whole ground covered by the block and the line was closed for the night by putting "A" Company on the right flank, and "K" Company of the 9th on the left flank. In all, 346 Japanese were killed. This unit was composed of the Imperial Marines.<sup>1</sup> (That is, the Special Naval Landing Force). With the destruction of this group the last determined resistance ceased, though all three regiments were to meet fading opposition along the roads.

During the day the two battalions of the 21st that had relieved the companies of the 9th continued outward from the angle made by the two roads. Along both roads they met machine gun fires from secondary road blocks and knocked out the guns with their attached tanks.

On 6 August the battalions stopped beating the bush and began to advance only along the trails and roads in their zones of action. This new method of procedure had been determined upon by division after the discovery that the Army had been progressing by bounds in its region and had outdistanced the Marines. There had been a good deal of difficulty keeping contact; on August 4, a tank patrol from the Army had struck at a road block that the 9th Marines had established below Dededo and wounded 7 men before they could be stopped.

The advance northward in parallel zones of action had been guided by the comparatively straight line of the east coast. As the 3d Marines approached the cliff their zone of action widened tremendously to their left. Corps had been shuttling brigade forward in preparation for this moment, and on the 7th the 22d Marines and the 4th Marines took their positions on the flank of the 3d Marines to sweep to the cliffs at Ritidian Point. As the advance began down the road all three regiments found a similar pattern of defense. Tanks and field artillery pieces, 75's or 105's were camouflaged alongside the roads, each manned by a small crew. Frequently they fired only a few shots and then fled. Their targets were the troops rather than the tanks. This method of defense was exasperating rather than effective, but it delayed advance and caused casualties. Sometimes a gun hidden far up the road fired occasional shells along the road, which dropped unexpectedly on troops at mess or in reserve. Tanks preceded the troops and could take out the battery

<sup>1</sup>Though the name *Imperial Marines* is often used in official documents, it is incorrect.

after it had fired. The most effective way found to get ahead was to have artillery observers perched on the tanks and calling down fire along every stretch of road that might conceal a tank or gun.

At 0730 on the 7th of August the First Provisional Brigade attacked in its zone of action with the 4th Marines in assault and the 22nd Marines in reserve. Resistance was light and by 0910 the 4th Marines had advanced so rapidly that Brigade ordered the 22d Marines forward to a new assembly area in rear of the 4th. A new objective another thousand yards distant was assigned to the 4th Marines and the attack continued. Later in the day the 22nd Marines moved into position on the left of the 4th and the Brigade prepared to attack next morning with two regiments in assault.

On the 8th of August only moderate resistance was encountered and by late afternoon our patrols were moving in the areas of Ritidian Light and Machanao Mountain with little opposition.

Next morning the brigade attacked at 0730 to seize the northwestern coast of Guam. In the vicinity of Ritidian Light the 3rd Battalion, 22d Marines descended the cliffs and patrolled the coastal plain in the 22d Marines sector. At the same time patrols from the 4th Marines reached the northern coast within their zone of action. Only slight resistance from scattered enemy groups was encountered by the two regiments and these groups were quickly overcome.

At 1800 the brigade announced that all organized resistance in its zone of action had ceased. Southern Landing Force directed that vigorous patrolling be carried out on the 10th of August. This was done and the few scattered enemy pockets were quickly eliminated.

By the 8th all troops were rapidly approaching the coast. The 21st Marines were in reserve patrolling an angle of territory left between the 3d and the 9th who were both approaching the cliffs by trails that were supposed to intersect a thousand yards or so before the two regiments reached the cliffs. Behind the battalions of each, bulldozers from the 19th were widening and clearing the trail. Early in the afternoon the Second Battalion of the 3d Marines found that their trail abruptly ended. They knew only that the trail over which the 9th was approaching was a mile or more beyond them. Patrols pushed out in the early afternoon and found a way to the 9th's trail and the 2/3 pushed down and back along the trail to make contact with the 9th. Behind them bulldozers started to clear a road for the final advance. The road on which the 2/3 was proceeding was a final escape route for the Japanese, and the battalion worked, fighting as it went. Toward evening it ran against more solid opposition. After the battalion had fought through a banana grove at a bend of the trail it dug in for the night in a rough circle. One rim of the circle fronted on the trail; the other nearly touched a low wooded hill at the edge of the thick jungle. In the early evening the area was shelled and one man was wounded; these were probably our own shells. In this area the map was inaccurate.<sup>1</sup>

Toward midnight, watchers at the trail side of the bivouac heard motors starting up around the bend of the trail. Presently a tank came down the trail. A machine gun popped away harmlessly at it but killed accompanying Japanese infantrymen. The tank moved on, and opposite the bivouac area stopped, and faced the Marines. Other tanks followed it till finally five tanks were lined up directly on the perimeter. The last of the tanks had crushed the edges of several of the outer foxholes.

<sup>1</sup>The Survey Section of the 12th Marines had been extraordinarily well trained by a coast and geodetic specialist with many years experience who, though a civilian, had been loaned to the Navy. This section worked prodigiously on Guam on the target areas. The very accurate fire control exercised by the artillery is in large part due to them. See survey items in the Special Action Report of the 12th Marines in Bougainville.

The battalion had two bazookas with it, both of them with ruined batteries. It had two bazooka shells. It had no other weapons which could possibly damage a tank save grenades.

The battalion commander decided on a strategic withdrawal. He was in communication with all of his companies and made arrangements for them to leave in single file from left to right around the perimeter. His own headquarters he took to the edge of the hill. Officers stood at either side of the trail and directed the companies till they stood in three separate ranks. The battalion commander led the way on a compass azimuth to the point where the rest of the battalions of the regiment were bivouacked and reached there by early dawn.<sup>1</sup> In the new day the battalions of the regiment went down the trail cut by the bulldozers, joined with the 9th, and with the aid of our tanks knocked out the tanks that fought back along the trail. Artillery call fires drove the enemy over the cliffs. Several of them were found abandoned at the top of the cliffs. Both regiments reached the cliffs in the afternoon. On the tenth the battalions found their way down the cliffs to the brushy region along the shore and met the last organized resistance from two platoons of Japanese.

#### **D-day plus 20—10 August 1944**

Organized resistance ended on this day—the 10th. All regiments had out patrols. On the 11th the regiments returned to bivouac areas. But the island had not been conquered. Regiments would not move into rest and training areas for nearly two months. Battalion patrol boundaries laid out up and down the north end of the island and patrols went out from companies day by day. For nearly two months the division was to kill nearly 40 Japanese a day. For this period the battalions lived under combat conditions; their food was better, but the tents had not arrived; the roads were deep mire now that the delayed rainy season had started in earnest; there were difficulties in getting water to the various bivouac areas.

The battalions met varying types of resistance and set up various types of defense. The brigade used ambushes successfully along the trails in the bush. The 3d Regiment had an observation post that covered the beach area and kept expert riflemen on watch. The 2d Battalion of the 21st, posted up near Ritidian Point, had several night attacks and lived behind an apron fence of barbed wire. In these northern groups, blackout regulations were observed as carefully as during combat. Half tracks with loudspeakers and Japanese interpreters were sent out along the trail seeking to get the Japanese to surrender, but the results were meagre. Soon after combat the 77th Division massed in the center of the island for further training and the brigade was withdrawn and transhipped to Guadalcanal. The defense of the island was committed to the 3d Division and to the 9th and 14th Defense Battalions.

The patrols as they went out day by day throughout the rest of August and the first of September found increasing evidence of disorganization among the troops they met. Food was becoming a problem (though groups were found well supplied with C rations, and American rifles); weapons were growing rusty and useless. Here and there the patrols ran up against small well-organized groups apparently led by officers who put up a determined resistance and who led a satisfactory guerilla existence. These groups learned how to live near but not in the deserted houses of the natives, how to fight a clever disengaging action, and how to move around the island to avoid detection. Regimental com-

<sup>1</sup>A member of the battalion reported one interesting addendum to this withdrawal. There was one man who didn't get the word. He had been fast asleep when the troops drew away, awoke only as the Japanese began to drift over the foxholes pillaging, but managed to get away and rejoin his company. "There's always some . . . who doesn't get the word."

mand posts near the rear areas found that such groups often lurked close to them, near enough to be inside the initial limits of patrols. One difficulty the patrols found was that the Japanese troops who survived were retreating to the low ground, rough and heavily wooded, that lay between the cliffs and the sea. It was difficult to move through this territory without disclosing one's presence, and while observation posts on the cliffs could spot camp fires below them it became more and more difficult to bring the enemy troops to bay.

The Division made use of the naval arm to help them in this last phase. The group of LCI(G)'s attached to the amphibious force for the operation had been kept on constant patrol round the north end of the island, principally at first to prevent escape of fugitives from the island to Rota Island nearby. These ships kept reporting seeing Japanese ashore and asked permission to fire upon them. It was determined to coordinate their use with that of Marine patrols. As each ship set out on its vigil a JASCO team was sent aboard it to maintain contact with Marine patrols along the shore and below the cliffs. The LCI(G)'s were also given permission to fire on targets of opportunity. The results were unusually successful. The LCI's could contact patrols at fixed places along the shore, could evacuate wounded or sick Marines, or take on board civilians and prisoners of war. More important, they could work in close harmony with the patrols, firing at suspected concentrations or caves, supporting the attack of patrols. As an increasing number of civilians began to come to the shore to surrender, some of the LCI's were equipped with loud-speakers which Japanese interpreters used with considerable success in getting greater numbers to give up.

This improvised use of an amphibian arm proved unexpectedly successful. The skippers and crews of the LCI's were very skillfully cooperative in working with the Marines and enthusiastic over a program that made them an important part in the final subjugation of the island. They saved lives; they made the final work of patrolling very much easier; they relieved more than one patrol that was under heavy fire.

By the end of September the final subjugation of the island was in sight, regiments began to make preparations for the assembly of their battalions and movement to the divisional area. The new replacements were coming in, and the vigorous patrolling was giving them excellent practices in small unit combat. In the center of the island the divisional operations officers were laying out combat ranges, and districts for maneuvers; the final phase of the operation was to commence: training for the next one.

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## TASK ORGANIZATION FOR THE CAPTURE OF GUAM\*

- (a) The Southern Attack Force, Task Force 53, commanded by Rear Admiral R. L. Conolly, USN, was assigned the task of capturing Guam. The next superior echelon was Commander, Joint Expeditionary Force, Task Force 51. Task Force 53 was composed of the following major elements:
- (1) Guam Support Air Commander, Commander Miller, USN.
  - (2) Northern Attack Group, Task Group 53.1, Rear Admiral Conolly, USN.  
TransDiv 2, Captain Baker, USN.  
TransDiv 8, Captain Talbot, USN.  
TransDiv 24, Captain Buchanan, USN.  
LSD Div 1, Commander Martin, USN.  
Tractor Group 3 (16 LSTs, 9 LCI(G)s) Captain Carter, USN.  
(3d Marine Division, Reinforced, embarked)  
BatDiv 3 (30BB), Rear Admiral Weyler, USN.  
CruDiv 6 (2 CA, 1 CL), Rear Admiral Joy, USN.  
DesDiv 49, Captain Thompson, USN.  
DesDiv 90, Commander Taylor, USN.  
DesDiv 94, Commander Nevins, USN.  
DesRon 48, Captain Bottom, USN.  
DesRon 1, Captain McLean, USN.  
(Total 28 DD)  
CarDiv 22 (3 CVE) Rear Admiral Ragsdale, USN.  
CarDiv 24 (2 CVE) Rear Admiral Stump, USN.  
In addition there were the APDs, DMS, YMS, AMs, PCs, SCs, and service and salvage elements.
  - (3) Southern Attack Group, Task Group 53.2 Rear Admiral Reifsnider, USN.  
TransDiv 4, Captain McGovern, USN.  
TransDiv 6, Captain Brittain, USN.  
LSD 3  
(1st Provisional Marine Brigade, Reinforced, embarked)  
CruDiv 9 (2 CA, 1 CL), Rear Admiral Ainsworth, USN.  
DesDiv 50, Commander Crommelin, USN.  
DesDiv 89, Captain Earle, USN.  
(Total of 13 DD)  
Tractor Group 4 (16 LSTs, 9 LCI(G)s), Commander McFall, USN.  
In addition there were lesser elements similar to those of the Northern Attack Force.
  - (4) Bombardment Group Two, Task Group 53.15, Rear Admiral Ainsworth, USN.  
(Consisting of all fire support units listed in (2) and (3)).
  - (5) Southern Attack Force Reserve Task Group 53.19 (with 77th Infantry Division embarked.) Captain Knowles, USN.
  - (6) Defense Group Two, Task Group 51.3, Lt. Dewar, USN.
  - (7) Garrison Group Three, Task Group 51.6, Commander Guthrie, USN.
  - (8) Garrison Group Four, Task Group 51.7, Captain Lustie, USN.

\*From Special Action Report, Task Force 56, Enc "C".

(b) Embarked initially in the force flagship, **USS Appalachian**, with Admiral Conolly, Major General R. S. Geiger, USMC, Commanding General **Southern Troops and Landing Force**, Task 56.2. His command was immediately subordinate to Commanding General, **Expeditionary Troops**, Task Force 56. Southern Troops and Landing Force was composed of the following major elements:

- (1) Corps Troops (Detachments III Amphibious Corps Headquarters Troops).
- (2) III Amphibious Corps Artillery, Brigadier General P. A. del Valle, USMC.
- (3) 3d Marine Division (Reinforced), Major General A. H. Turnage, USMC.
- (4) 1st Provisional Marine Brigade (Reinforced) Brigadier General L. C. Shepherd, Jr., USMC.
- (5) 77th Infantry Division (Reinforced), Major General A. D. Bruce, USA.
- (6) Task Group 10.11 (Island Command and Garrison Force Guam), Major General H. L. Larsen, USMC.

#### CASUALTY REPORT FOR GUAM\*

(Marine Corps Personnel Only)

	Officers	Enlisted	Totals
Killed in Action	77	1020	1097
Died of Wounds	14	351	365
Wounded	244	4477	4721
Missing	0	17	17
Combat Fatigue	5	499	504
	340	6364	6704

\*Prepared by Casualty Division, Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps.

The staffs of Division, Brigade, regiments, and battalions that are here listed are, except where noted, taken from the strength reports for 31 July and presumably are an accurate list of the staffs as the operation began.

### III AMPHIBIOUS CORPS

**Staff:**

Corps Commander	Major General Roy S. Geiger
Chief of Staff	Colonel Merwin H. Silverthorn
C-1	Colonel William J. Scheyer
C-2	Lieutenant Colonel William F. Coleman
C-3	Colonel Walter A. Wachtler
C-4	Lieutenant Colonel Frederick L. Wieseman
C-5	Colonel Dudley S. Brown

### III CORPS ARTILLERY

**Staff:**

Commanding General	Brigadier General Pedro A. del Valle
Chief of Staff	Colonel John A. Bemis
A-1	Warrant Officer (PD) David G. Garnett
A-2	Major James H. Tatsch
A-3	Lieutenant Colonel Frederick P. Henderson
A-4	Major Frederick W. Miller

### III CORPS MOTOR TRANSPORT BATTALION

**Staff:**

Commanding Officer	Major Franklin H. Hayner
Battalion Executive	Major Kenneth E. Murphy
B-1	
B-2	1st Lieutenant Harvey W. Tennant
B-3	
B-4	Captain Norman D. Kent

### THIRD MARINE DIVISION

**Staff:**

Division Commander	Major General Allen H. Turnage
Assistant Division Commander	Brigadier General Alfred H. Noble
Chief of Staff	Colonel Ray A. Robinson
D-1	Lieutenant Colonel Chevey S. White
D-2	Lieutenant Colonel Howard J. Turton
D-3	Colonel James A. Stuart*
D-4	Lieutenant Colonel Ellsworth N. Murray

### 3d Marines

**Staff:**

Regimental Commander	Colonel William C. Hall
Regimental Executive	Colonel James Snedeker
R-1	Major John E. McDonald
R-2	Captain John W. Foley, Jr.
R-3	Major John A. Scott
R-4	Major Grant Crane

\*C. O. 3d Marines, 29 July 1944.

**3d Marines  
First Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Major Henry Aplington II
Battalion Executive	Major John A. Pitak (KIA)
B-1	2d Lieutenant Charles R. Weissgerber
B-2	1st Lieutenant Arthur C. Vivian, Jr.
B-3	Captain John B. Erickson
B-4	2d Lieutenant George J. Edelmann, Jr.

**3d Marines  
Second Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Hector de Zayas (KIA)
Battalion Executive	LtCol William A. Culpepper
B-1	1st Lieutenant Matthew J. Coyle, Jr.
B-2	1st Lieutenant Willis L. Kay
B-3	Major Howard J. Smith
B-4	1st Lieutenant John F. Price, Jr.

**3d Marines  
Third Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Ralph L. Houser (WIA D-day)
Battalion Executive	Major Royal R. Bastian, Jr.
B-1	Captain William R. Bradley
B-2	2d Lieutenant Howard G. Munce
B-3	Captain Paul T. Torian
B-4	2d Lieutenant Joseph N. Hektner

**9th Marines**

Regimental Commander	Colonel Edward A. Craig
Regimental Executive	Lieutenant Colonel Jaime Sabater
R-1	Captain Charles H. Henderson
R-2	Captain Douglas Whipple
R-3	Captain Evan E. Lips
R-4	Lieutenant Colonel Frank Shine

**9th Marines  
First Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Carey A. Randall
Battalion Executive	Major Harold C. Boehm
B-1	Warrant Officer (Gen) Douglas W. Driggers
B-2	1st Lieutenant William R. Shockley
B-3	Captain Francis H. Bergtholdt
B-4	Captain Robert R. Fairburn

**9th Marines  
Second Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. Cushman, Jr.
Battalion Commander	Major William T. Glass
B-1	Captain Luther S. Kjos
B-2	2d Lieutenant "J" "T" Newman
B-3	Captain Laurance W. Cracroft
B-4	1st Lieutenant Harold L. Shepard

**9th Marines  
Third Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Walter Asmuth, Jr. (WIA D-day)
Battalion Executive	Major Donald B. Hubbard
B-1	1st Lieutenant George B. Robinson
B-2	2d Lieutenant George M. Skinner
B-3	Captain Calvin W. Kunz, Jr.
B-4	Captain Charles A. Reid, Jr.

**21st Marines  
(30 June 1944)**

**Staff:**

Regimental Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Arthur H. Butler
Regimental Executive	Lieutenant Colonel Ernest W. Fry, Jr.
R-1	Captain Walter R. White
R-2	Captain Blair A. Hyde
R-3	Major James H. Tinsley
R-4	Captain Norman S. Chase

**21st Marines  
First Battalion  
(30 June 1944)**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Marlowe C. Williams
Battalion Executive	Lieutenant Colonel Ronald R. Van Stockum
B-1	2d Lieutenant Joseph Y. Curtis
B-2	1st Lieutenant Anthony A. Frances
B-3	Captain Leslie A. Gilson, Jr.
B-4	1st Lieutenant James E. Garner

**21st Marines  
Second Battalion  
(30 June 1944)**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Eustace R. Smoak
Battalion Executive	Major Lowell E. English
B-1	Captain James A. Michener
B-2	1st Lieutenant Thomas E. Norpell
B-3	Captain Andrew Hedesh
B-4	2d Lieutenant George B. Hinde

**21st Marines**  
**Third Battalion**  
(30 June 1944)

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Wendell H. DuPlantis
Battalion Command	Major Edward A. Clark
B-1	2d Lieutenant Coleman C. Jones
B-2	1st Lieutenant Daniel W. Marshall
B-3	2d Lieutenant James C. Corman
B-4	1st Lieutenant Herbert J. Radtke

**12th Marines**

**Staff:**

Regimental Commander	Colonel John B. Wilson
Regimental Executive	Lieutenant Colonel John S. Letcher
R-1	Captain Edwin M. Gorman
R-2	Major Oliver E. Robinett
R-3	Lieutenant Colonel William T. Fairbourn
R-4	Major Lytle G. Williams

**12th Marines**  
**First Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Raymond F. Christ, Jr.
Battalion Executive	Major George B. Thomas
B-1	2d Lieutenant Charles E. Goodale
B-2	1st Lieutenant Ira E. Elsham
B-3	Captain Luther A. Bookout, Jr.
B-4	Captain Joe "T" Ridgway, Jr.

**12th Marines**  
**Second Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Donald M. Weller
Battalion Executive	Major Henry E. W. Barnes
B-1	Captain Norman V. McElroy
B-2	1st Lieutenant Vernon K. Ausherman
B-3	Major William P. Pala
B-4	Major Michael V. DiVita

**12th Marines**  
**Third Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Alpha L. Bowser, Jr.
Battalion Executive	Major Claude S. Sanders, Jr.
B-1	1st Lieutenant William G. Reid
B-2	Captain Richard M. Backensto
B-3	Captain Wilbur R. Helmer
B-4	Captain Curtis W. Reimann

**12th Marines  
Fourth Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Bernard H. Kirk
Battalion Executive	Major Thomas R. Belzer
B-1	2d Lieutenant Laurie P. Mallard
B-2	Captain George W. Carrington, Jr.
B-3	Captain Lewis E. Poggemeyer
B-4	Captain William V. Borcharding

**19th Marines**

**Staff:**

Regimental Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. Fojt
Regimental Executive	Lieutenant Colonel Edmund M. Williams
R-1	Warrant Officer John J. Beaumont
R-2	Captain Clarence B. Allen, Jr.
R-3	Major George D. Flood, Jr.
R-4	Julius S. Conrad

**19th Marines  
First Battalion**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Walter S. Campbell
Battalion Executive	Major Virgil M. Davis
B-1	1st Lieutenant Felix D. Kuzmicki
B-2	Captain Thomas M. Brown
B-3	Captain Arthur J. Wardrep, Jr.
B-4	Captain Charles L. Carleton

**19th Marines  
Second Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Major Victor Simpson, Jr.
Battalion Executive	Major Howard A. Hurst
B-1	Captain Jack R. Edwards
B-2	1st Lieutenant Waldemar Meckes
B-3	Captain James R. Ovington
B-4	Captain Robert R. Logan

**3d Tank Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Hartnoll J. Withers
Battalion Executive	Major Holly H. Evans
B-1	1st Lieutenant Norton E. Curry
B-2	1st Lieutenant Robert B. Jeter
B-3	1st Lieutenant David M. Graham
B-4	1st Lieutenant Clyde C. Mahaffey

**3d Amphibious  
Tractor Battalion**

**Staff:**

Commanding Officer	Lieutenant Colonel Sylvester L. Stephan
Battalion Executive	Major Erwin F. Mann, Jr.
B-1	Captain Louis Saltanoff
B-2	Warrant Officer John K. Butler
B-3	Captain George M. Foote
B-4	1st Lieutenant Chester E. Francis

**14th Defense Battalion  
(30 June 1944)**

**Staff:**

Commanding Officer	Lieutenant Colonel Robert C. McDermond
Battalion Executive	Lieutenant Colonel William F. Kramer
B-1	1st Lieutenant Joseph C. Schwalke
B-2	Captain Elmer Eaton
B-3	Lieutenant Colonel Jack H. Brown
B-4	Captain Stanley H. Griffith

**FIRST PROVISIONAL MARINE BRIGADE**

**Staff:**

Commanding General	Brigadier General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr.
Chief of Staff	Colonel John T. Walker
B-1	Major Addison B. Overstreet
B-2	Major Robert W. Shaw
B-3	Lieutenant Colonel Thomas A. Culhane, Jr.
B-4	Lieutenant Colonel August Larson

**22d Marines**

**Staff:**

Regimental Commander	Colonel Merlin F. Schneider
Regimental Executive	Lieutenant Colonel William J. Wise
R-1	Captain Alfred H. Benjamin
R-2	1st Lieutenant Chauncey B. Chapman, Jr.
R-3	Lieutenant Colonel Horatio C. Woodhouse, Jr.
R-4	Major Frederick A. Seimears, Jr.

**22d Marines  
Pack Howitzer Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Major Nathan C. Kingsbury
Battalion Executive	Major Alfred M. Mahoney
B-1	Captain Stewart L. Leonard
B-2	Captain Phillip P. Santon
B-3	Captain Robert T. Gillespie
B-4	Captain Bernard J. Swanson

**22d Marines  
First Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Walfried H. Fromhold
Battalion Executive	Major Crawford B. Lawton
B-1	1st Lieutenant Eldon W. Autry
B-2	1st Lieutenant Edwin E. Rives
B-3	Captain Charles P. De Long
B-4	1st Lieutenant James E. Winters

**22d Marines  
Second Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Donn C. Hart
Battalion Executive	Major Robert P. Felker
B-1	1st Lieutenant Anthony J. Castagna
B-2	2d Lieutenant Antonia S. Nocita
B-3	Major John A. Copeland
B-4	1st Lieutenant Robert R. Carey

**22d Marines  
Third Battalion**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Clair W. Shisler
Battalion Executive	Major Earl J. Cook
B-1	2d Lieutenant Buenos A. W. Young
B-2	1st Lieutenant Hugh T. Crane
B-3	Captain Samuel A. Todd
B-4	2d Lieutenant Louis V. Schreiner

**4th Marines Reinforced  
(30 June 1944)**

**Staff:**

Regimental Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Alan Shapley
Regimental Executive	Lieutenant Colonel Samuel D. Puller (KIA)
R-1	Captain Charles L. Lamb
R-2	Major Clyde P. Ford
R-3	Major Orville V. Bergren
R-4	1st Lieutenant Noble W. Ferren

**4th Marines Reinforced  
First Battalion  
(30 June 1944)**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Major Bernard W. Green
B-1	2d Lieutenant Charles O. Diliberto
B-2	2d Lieutenant Allen A. Cass
B-3	1st Lieutenant Clinton B. Eastment
B-4	1st Lieutenant Lee F. Bennett

# GUAM

1:62500

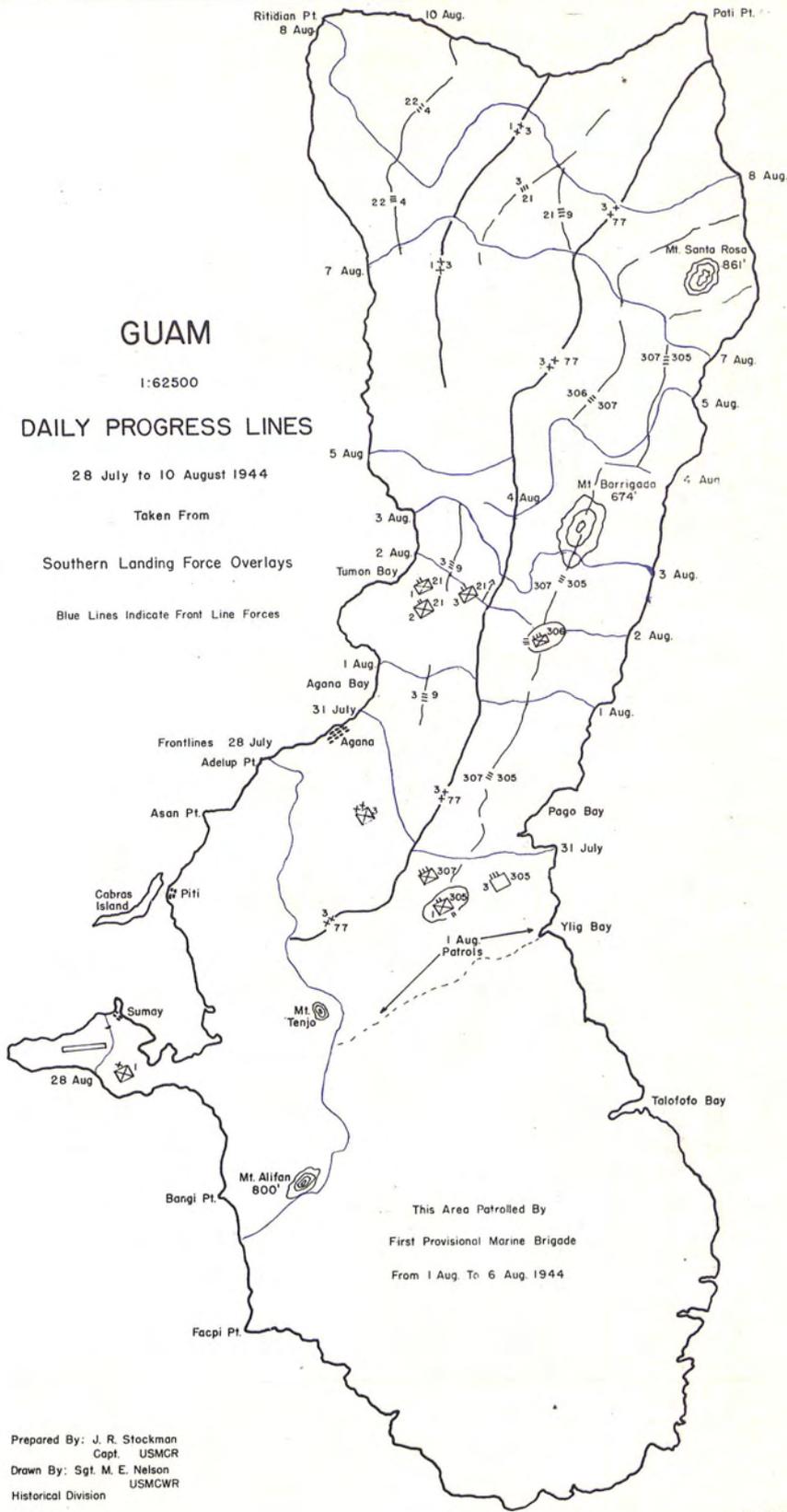
## DAILY PROGRESS LINES

28 July to 10 August 1944

Taken From

Southern Landing Force Overlays

Blue Lines Indicate Front Line Forces



This Area Patrolled By  
 First Provisional Marine Brigade  
 From 1 Aug. To 6 Aug. 1944

Prepared By: J. R. Stockman  
 Capt. USMCR  
 Drawn By: Sgt. M. E. Nelson  
 USMCWR  
 Historical Division

**4th Marines Reinforced  
Second Battalion  
(30 June 1944)**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Major John S. Messer
Battalion Executive	Major Roy J. Batterton, Jr.
B-1	2d Lieutenant Arthur C. Fix
B-2	2d Lieutenant James E. Brown
B-3	Captain Lincoln N. Holdzkom
B-4	1st Lieutenant Francis L. White

**4th Marines Reinforced  
Third Battalion  
(30 June 1944)**

Battalion Commander	Major Hamilton M. Hoyler
Battalion Executive	Major Hugh J. Chapman
B-1	1st Lieutenant Edward A. Harwood
B-2	1st Lieutenant Chester S. De Vore
B-3	Major Anthony Walker
B-4	2d Lieutenant Herman J. Engel

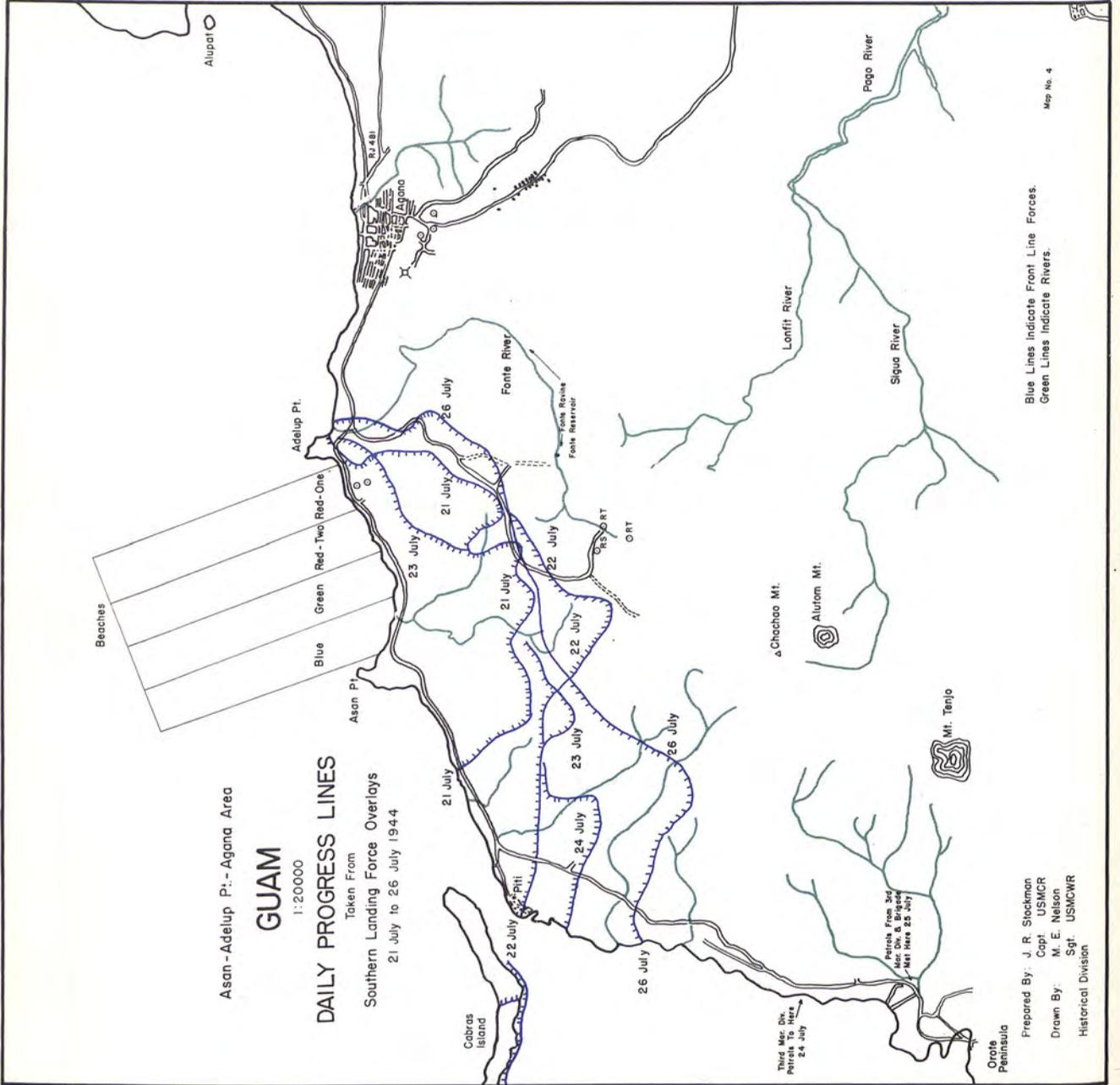
**4th Marines Reinforced  
75mm Pack Howitzer Battalion  
(30 June 1944)**

**Staff:**

Battalion Commander	Major Robert H. Armstrong
Battalion Executive	Major Thomas C. Jolly, III
B-1	1st Lieutenant James H. Boyd
B-2	2d Lieutenant Spencer V. Silverthorne, Jr.
B-3	Captain Henry Matsinger
B-4	1st Lieutenant Allen B. Doveton

**9th Defense Battalion**

Commanding Officer	Lieutenant Colonel Archie E. O'Neil
Executive Officer	Lieutenant Colonel Frank M. Reinecke
B-1	Major Benjamin J. Beach
B-2	Major Alan R. Miller
B-3	
B-4	1st Lieutenant Henry R. Heath



Asan-Adelup Pt.-Agaña Area

# GUAM

1:20000

## DAILY PROGRESS LINES

Taken From

Southern Landing Force Overlays

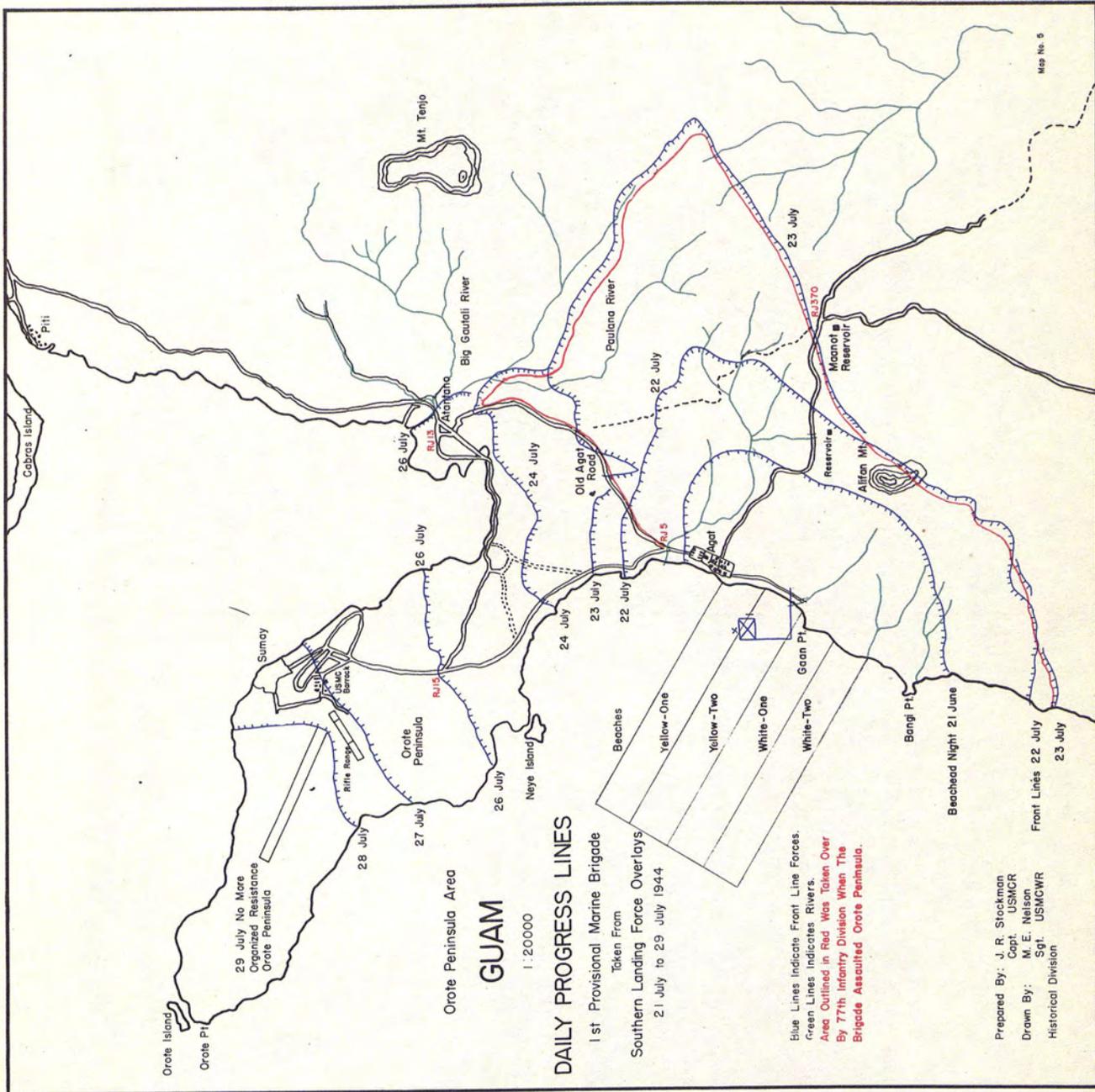
21 July to 26 July 1944

Orote Peninsula

Prepared By: J. R. Stockman  
 Capt USMCR  
 Drawn By: M. E. Nelson  
 Sglt USMCWR  
 Historical Division

Blue Lines Indicate Front Line Forces.  
 Green Lines Indicate Rivers.

Map No. 4



# GUAM

1:20000

## DAILY PROGRESS LINES

1st Provisional Marine Brigade  
 Taken From  
 Southern Landing Force Overlays  
 21 July to 29 July 1944

Blue Lines Indicate Front Line Forces.  
 Green Lines Indicate Rivers.  
 Area Outlined in Red Was Taken Over  
 By 77th Infantry Division When The  
 Brigade Assaulted Orote Peninsula.

Prepared By: J. R. Stockman  
 Capt. USMCR  
 Drawn By: M. E. Nelson  
 Sgt. USMCWR  
 Historical Division

# **THE TINIAN FIGHT**

## THE TINIAN FIGHT

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# Part I

## INTRODUCTION

Since the detailed account of the planning for the Marianas Campaign has already been mentioned, no attempt will be made here to summarize the initial planning. The actual landing on Tinian (which was Phase 3 of the Marianas Operation) was, of course, contingent upon the success and time factors involved in the capture of Saipan. With the landing on Saipan, several factors immediately became obvious which altered the overall concept of the capture of the Marianas. The proposed landing on Guam, scheduled to take place three days after D-day on Saipan, was called off pending imminent naval action as a result of the approach of Japanese naval forces from the Philippine area. Stubborn and intense resistance on Saipan had made necessary the employment of the 27th Infantry Division (Army), which had been in Expeditionary Troops Reserve. Since this division had to be committed, it was felt that the 77th Infantry Division, mounted at Oahu, should join the Southern Troops and Landing Forces in preparation for the assault of Guam. Our success in the engagement with the Japanese Naval Task Force, since called the "Saipan Turkey Shoot," and the reinforcement of Southern Troops and Landing Forces alleviated the need for support from Northern Troops and Landing Forces, so W-day (the day for the landing on Guam) was set for 21 July 1944.

While the fighting on Saipan was going on, plans were being made for the landing on Tinian. The date was set for 24 July and was carried out according to plan.

Unique among all the amphibious operations in the Pacific, the Tinian Operation comes as close to being a model or ideal operation as any. The choice of landing beaches was made after a great deal of study, consideration, and actual reconnaissance. There were three possible landing areas on Tinian. The best one was located on the western side of the island in the vicinity of Sunharon (Tinian Town). The beaches here were excellent, were wide with a gentle slope, and the reef had numerous openings, but it was obvious that the Japanese expected us to land on this beach and they had prepared to give us a warm reception. The beach was heavily mined; guns of various calibers were set up and camouflaged at vantage points so that they were able to deliver devastating frontal and enfilading fire on the beach. The landing here would have been little less than suicidal.

On the east side of the island and about opposite Mt. Lasso, there was another possible landing area with fair beaches, but here again the enemy had prepared heavy defenses on the high ground and would have been able to deliver murderous cross-fire. The only remaining landing area consisted of two small beaches on the northwest end of the island. One of these beaches was about 60 yards wide and the other around 150 yards wide. Lying off the shore was a coral reef formation that precluded the possibility of running landing boats into the beach where they might drop their ramps. LVTs and DUKWs would have no trouble negotiating this reef, and LCMs and LCTs could drop their ramps on the reef at low tide and unload vehicles.

These northwestern beaches were chosen for several reasons; (1) We expected to achieve tactical surprise, meeting very little enemy resistance. (2) The distance from Saipan for shore-to-shore movement was less. (3) Assault troops could gain initial support fires from gun batteries located on the southern end of Saipan. (4) The airfield could be secured at an early date and be put to our own use.

Tinian lies about two and three-fourths miles southwest of Saipan. It is roughly ten one one-half miles long in a north-south direction and has a maximum width of five miles. Its area consists of approximately eighteen square miles. On the north end there is considerable high ground culminating in Mt. Lasso which is a little over 500 feet in height, but through the center of the island going south, most of the ground lies rather flat and smooth to rolling. Again on the south end there is a high plateau which is surrounded by steep cliffs and escarpments.

The rolling farm land in the center of the island produced mainly sugar cane and vegetables. There was a fair system of roads, particularly a north-south road that led from Tinian Town to Ushi Point Airfield. For the defense of Tinian, the Japanese had a force of about 9,000 military personnel. The backbone of this force was the 50th Infantry Regiment, a unit that had seen duty in Manchuria. It was commanded by a Colonel Ogata. Attached to this regiment was the 1st Battalion of the 135th Infantry, whose parent regiment was on Saipan. Naval personnel made up the 56th Keibitai (Naval Guard Force) under Captain Oya. These troops found on Tinian were well disciplined, good marksmen, and were in excellent physical condition.

Between 12 and 24 July the 2d Marine Division and the 4th Marine Division were occupied principally with planning, re-equipping, and re-supply. No rehearsal was considered necessary prior to the landing, and no training was conducted other than to test-fire new weapons and re-calibrate old ones.

Since aerial bombardments and surface shelling of Tinian occurred simultaneously with that on Saipan on 11 July 1944, it might be said that the "softening up" process began on that date. Because of its duration and deliberate destructiveness, the bombardment of Tinian exceeded any other preparation in the Pacific War up to this time. Continuous air and surface bombardment of targets on Tinian, with interdicting and harassing fires, was called throughout during the Saipan Operation. As soon as the XXIV Corps Artillery was landed on Saipan, it put one battalion to work on Tinian targets. When Saipan was secured, additional 105mm and 155mm batteries were lined up almost hub-to-hub to intensify the Pre-Jig-day shelling.

Task Force 52 harassed Tinian both day and night all through the Saipan Campaign, and after 9 July this too was intensified. Carrier-based aircraft from both Task Force 52 and Task Force 58, plus planes based at Isely Field (Aslito) on Saipan, were directed by Commander, Support Air, in strikes on known installations and defenses on Tinian. B-25 medium bombers joined in the aerial support during the assault phase. A new technique was employed for the first time in the assault on Tinian with notable effectiveness. Fighter strikes were conducted employing Napalm-gasoline, belly tank incendiary bombs.\*

On the nights of 10-11 and 11-12 July, 1944, the V Amphibious Corps Reconnaissance Battalion conducted reconnaissance of Yellow and White beaches. LCRs (Landing Craft, rubber) launched from APDs approached to within 400 yards of the beaches, from where scouts swam the remaining distance and accomplished their mission without casualty or detection. Valuable information was gained. Naval Underwater Demolition Teams reconnoitered the reef and beach areas off Tinian Town as well as White beaches on the night of 23-24 July.

\*SAR Task Force 56, Enc. C, G-3 Report, P. 3.

Many opportunities never before enjoyed were afforded us in the preparatory stage of the Tinian Operation. From Saipan continuous aerial reconnaissance was maintained. Officers about to take part in the landing were able to fly over and study the landing beaches and inland terrain, visually familiarizing themselves with the lay of the ground before ever setting foot upon it.

For the first time in the Central Pacific we were about to attempt a shore-to-shore amphibious operation.



## **Part II**

### **PLANNING**

On July 12th Major General Harry Schmidt, USMC, assumed command of Northern Troops and Landing Force and Major General C. B. Cates assumed command of the 4th Marine Division. Major General T. E. Watson remained in command of the 2d Marine Division.

On July 13th the plans for the attack on Tinian had been completed and approved and Northern Troops and Landing Force Operation Plan 30-44 was issued. The 4th Marine Division was assigned to make the assault landing with the following mission: "4th Marine Division (Reinforced) land at How-hour, Jig-day on Beaches White One and Two, seize objective O-1; then on division order, make the main effort in the direction of Mt. Lasso and seize the Force Beachhead Line. Reorganize and prepare for further operations.\*

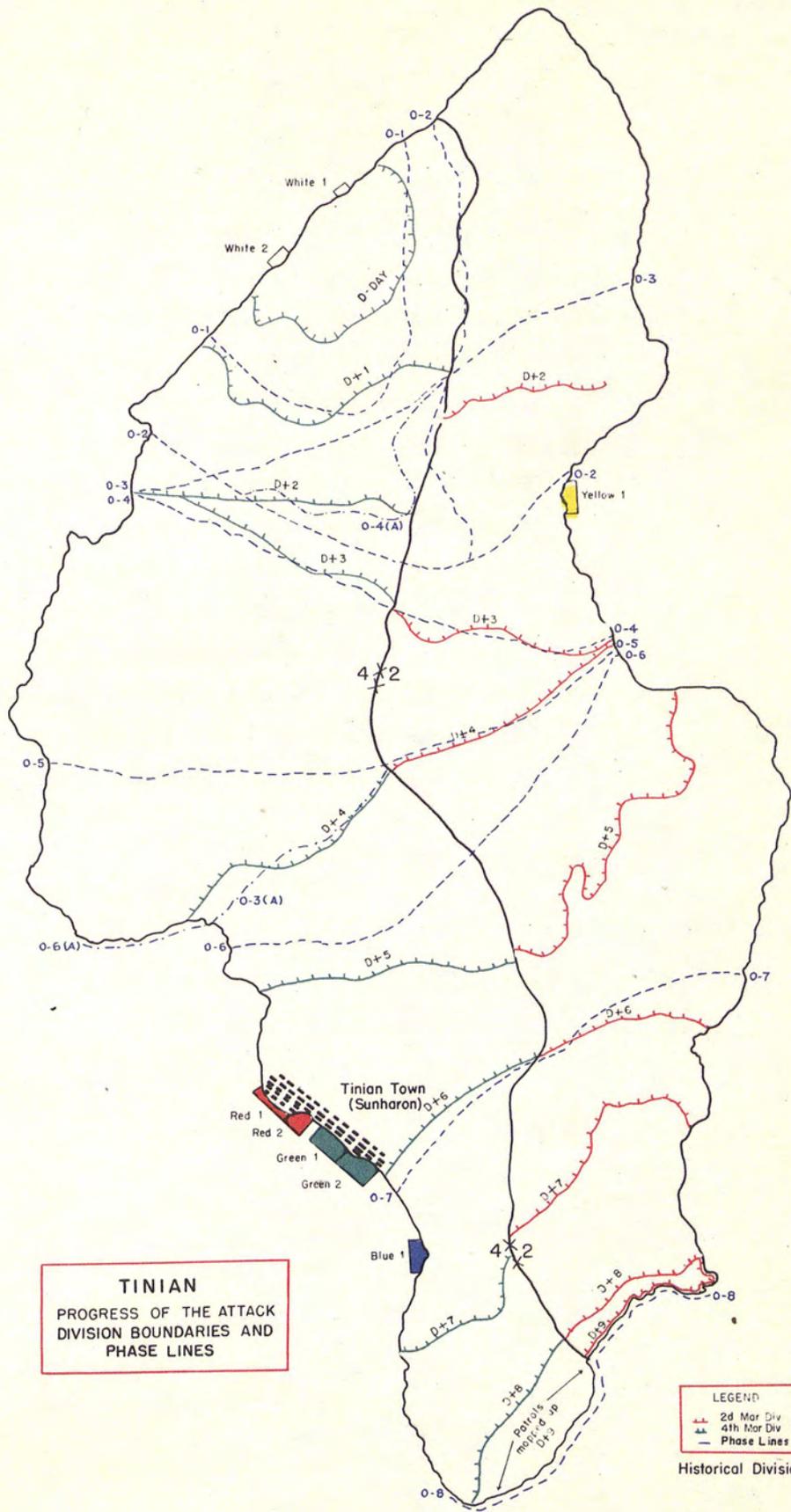
The 2d Marine Division was ordered to land on order in rear of the 4th Marine Division on Beaches White One and Two, Tinian, and move to assembly positions to be designated, and prepare for offensive operations on order.

The 27th Infantry Division, less the 105th Infantry Regiment and Division Artillery was ordered to be prepared to embark in landing craft on four hours notice and land on order on beaches to be designated on Tinian.

The XXIV Corps Artillery with all artillery, including divisional, larger than 75mm (13 battalions), was ordered to support the landing on Beaches White One and Two on Tinian and subsequent operations from initial positions in the southern portion of Saipan.

The Tinian Garrison Forces were ordered to initiate AA defenses, airfield repairs and execute its base development mission.

\*Northern Troops and Landing Force SAR Tinian.



**TINIAN**  
 PROGRESS OF THE ATTACK  
 DIVISION BOUNDARIES AND  
 PHASE LINES

**LEGEND**  
 ▲▲ 2d Mar Div  
 △△ 4th Mar Div  
 — Phase Lines

Historical Division

## **Part III**

### **TASK FORCE**

#### **Task Organization, Northern Attack Force**

Northern Attack Force, TF 52, Rear Admiral Hill, USN.

Northern Troops and Landing Force, TF 56.1, Major General Harry Schmidt, USMC.

Northern Support Aircraft, TG 52.1, Commander Osborne, USN.

Transport Group, TG 52.2, Captain Richardson, USN.

Transport Reserve, TG 52.3, Captain Carlson, USN.

Beach Demolition Group, TG 52.4, Commander Horner, USN.

Tractor Flotilla, TG 52.5, Captain Robertson, USN.

Service Group, TG 52.7, Commander Curtis, USN.

Demonstration Group, TG 52.8, Captain Mission, USN.

Screen, TG 52.12, Captain Libby, USN.

Minesweeping and Hydrographic Survey, TG 52.13, Commander Moore, USN.

Carrier Support Group, TG 52.14, Rear Admiral Scollada.

Fire Support Group, TG 52.17, Rear Admiral Oldendorf.

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## Part IV

### AVAILABLE SHIPPING

The following shipping and landing craft were available for the operation:

- 8 APAs
- 2 LSDs
- 37 LSTs
- 31 LCIs
- 20 LCTs
- 195 LCMs
- 9 Pontoon barges
- 527 LVTs—459 LVTs(cargo), 68 LVTs(armored)
- 130 DUKWs

The 2d Marine Division embarked two regiments in APAs and one regiment, later loaded on LSTs, remained on Saipan.

The 4th Marine Division was embarked in LSTs carrying LVTs. The LSTs were all top deck preloaded with supplies. No supplies were carried that could not roll across the beach in DUKWs or LVTs to inland dumps.

MEMORANDUM

TO: [Illegible]

FROM: [Illegible]

SUBJECT: [Illegible]

DATE: [Illegible]

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## Part V

### ACCOUNT OF THE OPERATION

#### Jig-Day—24 July 44

On the morning of 24 July, 1944, the 4th Marine Division prepared to land two combat teams simultaneously over the limited landing beaches on the northwestern coast of Tinian. Beach White 1, which was farthest north, had an overall width of sixty yards, of which only thirty yards were suitable for landing vehicles and supplies. CT 24, under Colonel Franklin A. Hart, landed on this beach in a column of battalions at approximately 0745 hours. About one thousand yards south of Beach White 1 was the other landing beach, Beach White 2, which was larger; about sixty yards could be utilized for unloading vehicles and supplies. By scaling rock formations at the water's edge, troops could land over a front of over four hundred and fifty yards. It was on this beach that CT 25 led by Colonel M. J. Batchelder landed with two battalions abreast. Prior to the landings, two battleships, one cruiser, four destroyers and thirty LCI(G)s participated in the Pre-How-Hour preparation. At the same time, thirteen battalions of artillery were supporting the landings from the southern shore of Saipan.

While the landings were being made, elements of the Naval Attack Force, with the 2d Marine Division embarked, were making a demonstration simulating a landing off Tinian Town (Sunharon). The Japanese expected this landing and were prepared to repel it. Upon learning that this was only a demonstration and that the real landings were being made on the northwestern coast, the enemy was unable to do much about it, except to contest it as fiercely as possible with the troops already disposed in the northern area. Because of the interdicting fire laid down by our naval gunfire and Saipan-based artillery and the vigilant watch kept by aircraft hovering overhead, the Japanese could not move additional troops into the area concerned. In this respect we achieved tactical surprise for the enemy had no sizable force defending the northwestern landing beaches.

On the smaller northern beach, Beach White 1, the only enemy opposition was from small arms and a few mines. Plenty of opposition was encountered on Beach White 2 however, where CT 25 had to cross a coral reef and then a four to eight foot coral ledge at water's edge under heavy small arms, automatic weapons, mortar and observed artillery fires. In addition, the extensive employment of mines by the enemy gave considerable trouble. This caused traffic in the form of pre-loaded vehicles to be routed over the other beach for a while on this first day.

Both CT 24 and CT 25 were able to advance without too much difficulty although progress forward was necessarily slow. With the beachhead expanding, and keeping in mind the fact that the combat teams were not up to full strength, General C. B. Cates ordered CT 23 ashore and into the line. By doing this, each CT could maintain a defensive position for the night that would have considerable depth. CT 23, under Colonel Louis R. Jones, relieved right flank units of CT 25, permitting that combat team, whose reinforced battalions had an average strength of 565 officers and men, to reorganize and consolidate its positions in a zone of action with a considerably reduced frontage. In effecting this relief and in an effort to establish its lines on better ground, CT 23 attacked immediately in its zone of action. The assembly areas of the assault companies and those of Charlie company's tanks from the 4th Tank Battalion, were hit heavily by enemy machine gun fire at almost point blank range. The intensity of this fire was such that

the landing team which had done the relieving, LT 2/23 (Lieutenant Colonel E. J. Dillon), was practically pinned down. To the front, the underbrush, woods, and sugar cane was so heavy that it was almost impossible to locate the hostile guns. During this time, for almost an hour, the tanks cruised through the entire area eventually flushing out some snipers and locating and destroying some of the machine guns. This caused enemy fire to lift sufficiently for the battalion to be able to dig in for the night.

By 1730 the CTs began digging in for the night in spite of the fact that the O-1 line had not been reached in all sectors. However, reasonably good ground had been attained and it was felt that preparation should be commenced at that time for the construction of defensive positions for the night in view of the anticipated counterattack. We knew that according to Japanese doctrine we could expect an attempt by the enemy sometime during the first night on the beach in an effort to push our forces back into the sea. During the day the enemy had been moving his troops preparatory to the launching of this counterattack.

The 4th Marine Division Artillery, consisting of four 75mm battalions pre-loaded in DUKWs, was ashore, in position and firing by 1635. Before nightfall a unit and a half of ammunition had been landed. All of the tanks of the 4th Tank Battalion were ashore by 1850 and working with the units to whom they had been assigned.

Northern Troops and Landing Force ordered one LT from the 2d Marine Division to be sent ashore and attached to the 4th Marine Division. Accordingly, LT 1/8 (Lieutenant Colonel L. C. Hays) was ashore by 1850 and went into division reserve in an assembly area in the rear of CT 24 which was on the division's left flank. LT 3/23 (Major Paul S. Treitel) was also in division reserve in the southern sector.

By nightfall a beachhead some fifteen hundred yards deep had been established, with the right flank of CT 23 resting on a cliff above the water at a point about three hundred yards south of White Beach 2. The left flank of CT 24 was based at the water's edge not quite two hundred yards north of White Beach 1. All units were well tied in for the night, lines were well consolidated, and the defense was in depth. All available barbed wire was utilized in preparation for the inevitable counterattack. In gaining an unusually large beachhead the 4th Marine Division had lost fifteen men killed in action and two hundred and twenty-five wounded in action.

During early evening and on until approximately midnight, the enemy action consisted principally of desultory mortar fire with sporadic artillery bursts. At about midnight, this fire began to intensify, with the volume of artillery fire increasing in the beachhead area. At about 0230 the enemy counterattack began. After noticing the increase in enemy artillery and mortar fire, our units called for more illumination from naval star shells and the 60mm mortars of the rifle companies commenced firing their illuminating shells.

The first intimation of the enemy's movement was noticed on the right front where our lines ran across the main north-south road from Tinian Town. In the sector of LT 2/23 the Japanese attacked in force, supported by tanks. Four of the five attacking tanks were destroyed by anti-tank weapons and the fifth, which was known to have been hit, was found out of action in front of the lines next morning. Over two hundred and fifty enemy dead were found in this area on the following morning.

On the left flank of CT 24 and in the zone of LT 1/24 (Lieutenant Colonel Otto Lessing), the Japanese struck at about 0300 with fierce fighting resulting. At the same time another group of enemy hit the right flank of the CT in the sector of LT 2/24 (Lieutenant Colonel Richard Rothwell), but this attack was more of a secondary nature, later shifting toward the left front. Batteries of 2/14 were firing in an attempt to limit

or break up this enemy attack. While the counterattack was in progress, a large group of the enemy, estimated to be about a hundred, infiltrated at a point where CT 24 and CT 25 were tied in, in an attempt to destroy these gun positions. By immobilizing one of its firing batteries, 2/14 was able to continue firing by employing this battery as infantry to protect the others. At about 0445, one company was sent up from LT 1/8 to augment the defense of 2/14 and the firing batteries were able to continue supporting our troops and helped to break up the counterattack. Most of the infiltrating group were annihilated. The counterattack continued on the left flank until about 0545 when it began to diminish in its vigor. Medium tanks were brought up at this point and their firepower, added to that of the artillery and infantry fire, broke up the attack although desultory enemy fire was received until about 0700. LVTAs were used along the beach to mop up enemy remnants.

Among the enemy units that largely destroyed themselves in this counterattack were the 1st Battalion of the 50th Infantry, the 2d Battalion of the 50th Infantry and a company of engineers armed and fighting as infantry. The front lines of CT 25 received the attack of the attached battalion of the enemy's 135th Infantry. This battalion constituted the Japanese's reserve and had been moved up from the Marpo area on the southeast side of the island by forced marches during the day and night. It is interesting to know that this battalion was able to move during daylight hours along tree fringed roads, utilizing the natural camouflage and concealment offered by the trees and vegetation found along the road, and was only detected once by an aerial observer. Fire was brought to bear on the column, causing them some casualties and forcing them to scatter and reform later to continue toward the north. This battalion too was destroyed. Almost a company of the enemy penetrated our perimeter at a point near the lines of CT 25 and CT 23. They were taken under direct fire by a battery of 75mm pack howitzers and annihilated.

Constant illumination enabled our troops to watch enemy movements and consequently the enemy had no opportunity to force his way through our lines in any strength. A few infiltrators did get through but these were easily mopped up on the following morning. This Japanese counterattack was supported by two battalions of 75mm guns which were soon taken under counterbattery fire by our own artillery and destroyed. Next morning 1,241 enemy dead were counted in front of the 4th Marine Division's perimeter. Subsequent information indicated that over 2,000 enemy troops perished in this attack.

#### **Jig plus One—25 July 44**

At 0630 the remainder of CT 8 (Colonel Clarence Wallace) commenced to land on Beach White 1 and passed to operational control of the 4th Marine Division. During the morning, CT 2 (Colonel Walter Stuart) was alerted and commenced debarkation at about 1200. Later in the afternoon the 2d Marine Division Command Post was opened ashore. Unlike the other two regiments, CT 6 (Colonel James P. Risely) had embarked in LSTs at Saipan and had moved to the transport area off White Beaches. This CT completed its landing by 0630 on the morning of 26 July.

The 4th Marine Division on Jig plus One delayed its attack from 0700 to 1000 in order to resupply and reorganize after the previous night's counterattack. In front of LT 2/23, as soon as it was light, two platoons of Charlie company, 4th Tank Battalion, began cruising to destroy any of the enemy remaining. The area was littered with enemy dead and there were a few live ones left. One tank ran over a dead Jap who apparently was carrying a bangalore torpedo when he was killed. As the tank ran over the Jap, the torpedo was detonated and blew six blocks off the left track. The crew remained in the

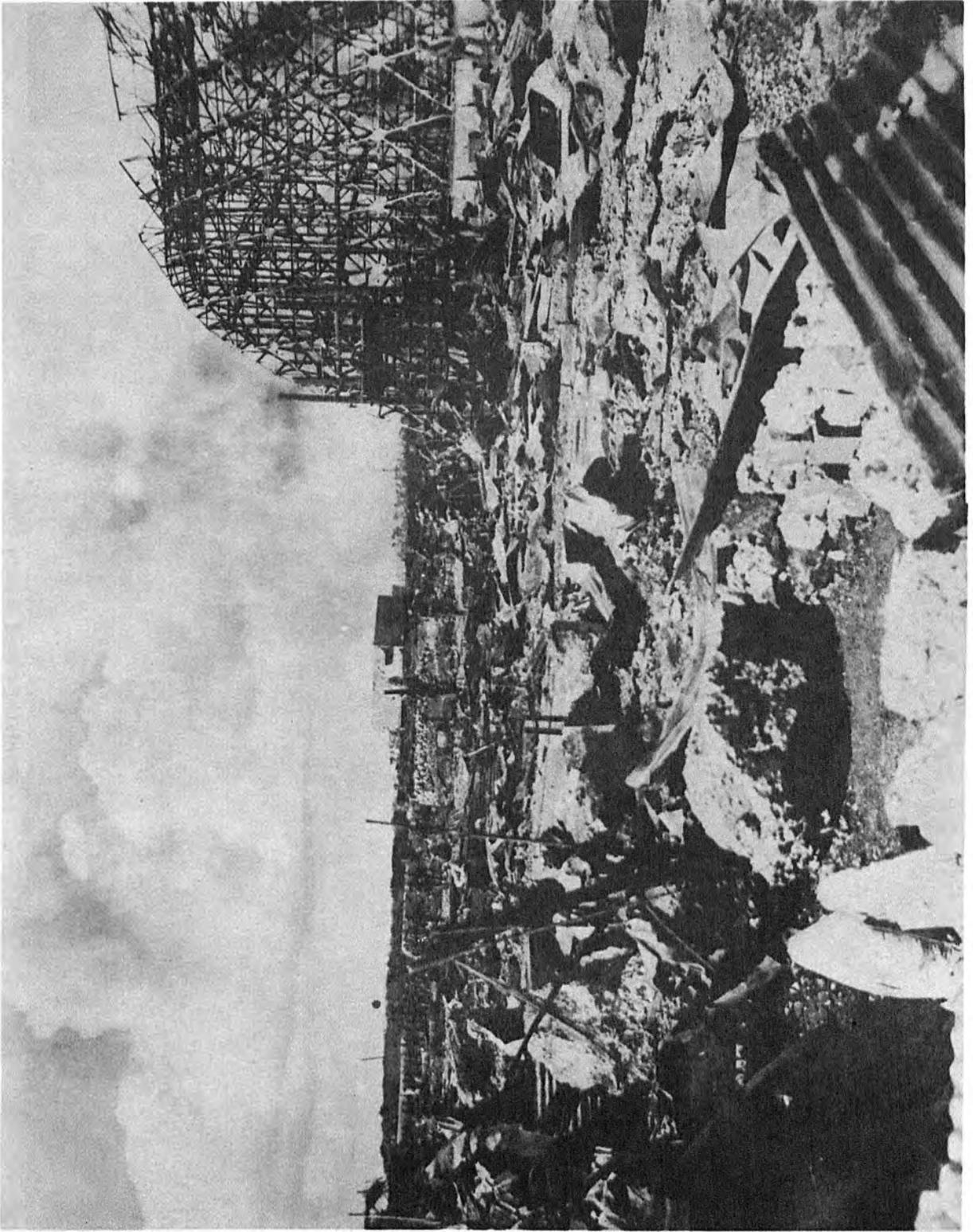
tank firing at targets of opportunity. After this phase of the day's operation was completed, a tank retriever from Able company helped the crew of the damaged tank to repair it on the spot. During the same action, a Jap who had been lying amongst a group of enemy dead, suddenly got up as the tanks passed him, and succeeded before he was shot down in placing a magnetic mine against the side of the tank. A curious fact is that this tank was the only tank present whose sides were not covered with lumber as an anti-tank measure. The detonation of the magnetic mine caused a leak in one of the fuel tanks of the tank against which it was placed and the concussion of the explosion blew all the fuel out of the tank of the auxiliary generator without springing a leak or doing the generator any other damage!\*

Fifteen minutes prior to 1000, artillery, naval gunfire, and air preparatory fires were laid down. The objective of this day's attack was to complete the seizure of the line 0-1. Included in this objective was a sheer cliff of rather formidable proportions which was about in the center of the 4th Marine Division's zone. The formation for the day's attack was from left to right, CTs 8, 24, 25, and 23 abreast. In its initial stages the attack progressed rapidly, but in the center where CT 25 encountered the above mentioned cliff, the nature of the terrain and the resistance from the Japanese slowed down the forward movement. In capturing this ground CT 25 employed a double envelopment. Using one LT as a holding force to contain the cliff, the other two LTs reached the heights by attacking around either flank, thus making a pincer movement. After a brief fight the pincer closed on the plateau above the cliff. By 1500 the line 0-2 was secured on the left. Later in the afternoon center units dug in well in advance of 0-1. Right flank units secured positions in advance of 0-1 along the west (right) coastline. Some small counterattacks were repused during the day's fighting. Advances made for the day consisted of from 200-800 yards on a 4000 yard front for CT 24, nearly 1000 yards for CT 25 and about 800 yards for CT 23. In its sector CT 8 had added LT 2/8 (Lieutenant Colonel Lane C. Kendall) in its line to LT 1/8 already committed. At 1610 this CT received orders from the 4th Marine Division, to which it was attached, to extend to its right and relieve elements of CT 24. This was accomplished and the lines consolidated before nightfall.

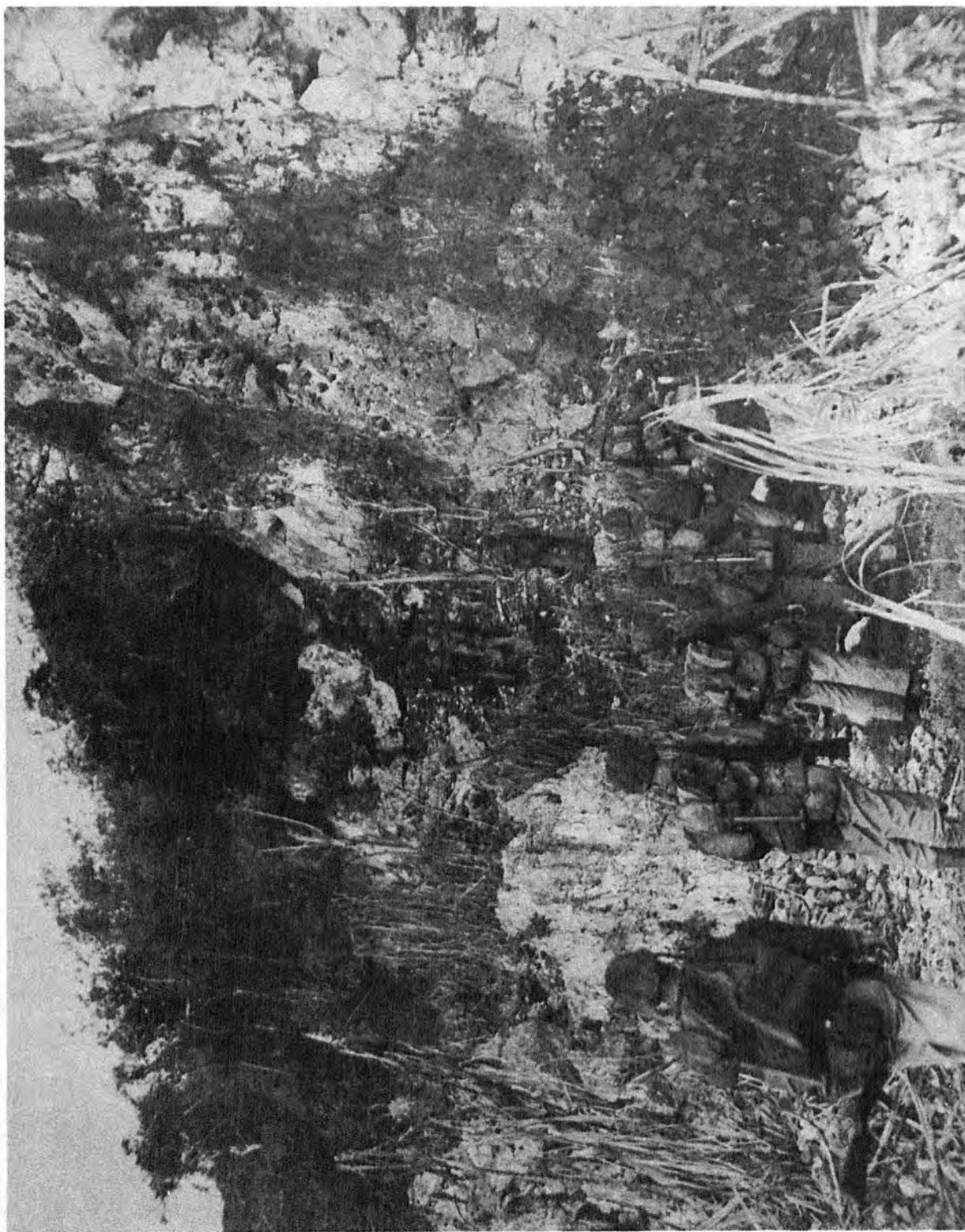
#### **Jig plus Two—26 July 44**

Early on the 26th of July CT 8 reverted to control of the 2d Marine Division. During the morning of this day CT 2 relieved LTs 1/24 and 3/24 (Lieutenant Colonel A. A. Vandergrift, Jr.) and the 2d Division continued the attack abreast of the 4th Marine Division. In expanding the beachhead, CT 8 on the left and CT 2 on the right of the division, attacked almost directly to the east and by noon had secured the eastern beach. By 1240 both regiments had secured the 0-3 line and the 2d Marine Division was now prepared to re-orient itself in order to attack to the south abreast of the 4th Marine Division. To turn the attack south, General Watson moved in CT 6 on the right flank of CT 2 and between CT 2 and the 4th Marine Division. This movement put CT 2 on the left of the division front with its left flank anchored on the eastern beach and both regiments were now prepared for the drive to the south. Since CT 8 had been squeezed out, it was placed in division reserve. CT 6 committed LT 1/6 (Lieutenant Colonel W. K. Jones) and LT 3/6 (Lieutenant Colonel John W. Easley). CT 6 attacked to the south at 1300 with the objective being the taking of the 0-4 line. Practically no opposition was met but the terrain to the front proved to be quite an obstacle. When the high ground in this sector was reached the advance was held up to consolidate positions for the night. As defensive positions were being constructed and wired in, active patrolling to

\*From SAR Tinian, Company C, 4th Tank Battalion.



Ushi Airfield, Tinian



**Tinian Offered Rough Terrain**

the front was maintained. At 1450 a patrol from LT 1/6 contacted and knocked out the point and connecting file of a large column of Japs moving toward our positions. Immediately an air spot was called in and upon verification of the patrol's report, locating the enemy in front of LT 1/6, artillery and mortar fire was then directed into the position of the Japanese column and it was dispersed and partially destroyed.

By dark the 2d Marine Division was dug in between 0-3 and 0-4 with the right flank tied in firmly with the 4th Marine Division on the plain below and to the east of Mt. Lasso. During the day the two pack howitzer battalions of the 2d Marine Division, which had landed with the 4th Marine Division, reverted to control of the 2d Marine Division and supported the advance of CT 2 and CT 6. CT 2 had experienced little difficulty in moving abreast of CT 6 during the afternoon's attack. Casualties for the day were extremely light—two killed and fourteen wounded. During the night the Japanese attempted to infiltrate the 2d Division's lines but were beaten off, and at dawn 137 of the enemy were found dead in front of, and within our front lines.

In the 4th Marine Division's sector, CT 25 with CT 23 on its right, continued the attack. By 1100 the line 0-3 was reached on the division's left flank and on division order an intermediate objective was set at 0-4A. At 1300 the attack was continued to seize Mt. Lasso, the highest terrain on Tinian, and the objective in particular was to seize the high ground forward of Mt. Lasso in order to have favorable defensive positions for the night. This ground was seized at 1630. On the right for the division's zone, CT 23 had initiated a local operation early in the morning to move its positions prior to King-Hour and in the general advance the line 0-3 was secured. At 1300, in a coordinated attack which progressed through heavy cane fields, the regiment reached good ground in the vicinity of 0-4. By this time it was getting late in the afternoon and the regiment was instructed to hold its present positions and prepare to attack again the next morning. Casualties for the division were very light.

#### **Jig plus Three—27 July 44**

Resuming the attack at 0730 the 2d Marine Division reached the 0-4 line in its zone of action at 1344. The advance was halted and the front line LTs commenced organizing and consolidating their positions for the night. During the night there was only some light sniper activity by the enemy. Meanwhile the 4th Marine Division commenced its attack at 1000 with very little opposition and no change in formation. The objective, 0-4, was reached by 1200. Patrols were sent forward but made no contact with the enemy. Casualties were negligible.

#### **Jig plus Four—28 July 44**

This day was to see gains made by both divisions with no change in formation by redesignation of objectives. The 4th Marine Division on the right with a 5000-yard front, advanced roughly three and a quarter miles. The 2d Marine Division jumped off at 1024 and by 1130 had reached its assigned objective, having covered over 2000 yards on a 300-yard front, and prepared to dig in for the night. The 2d Marine Division was just forward of the 0-4 line and tied in with the 4th Marine Division. The 4th Marine Division reached 0-5 at noon "standing up" and in anticipation of a future tactical advantage, the division requested and received permission to continue the attack to an objective conceived by it (06-A), in order to take advantage of the shortening of the line created by the indentation of the bay. This advance was led by organic tanks. The rapidity of the advance forced the 14th Marines to displace in order to keep pace with the fast moving situation. During the afternoon the 2d Marine Division patrolled vigorously to its front but was unable to contact the enemy. After darkness, however, two enemy patrols were encountered to our front.

#### **Jig plus Five—29 July 44**

The 2d Marine Division advanced against moderate resistance, finding some opposition in the center of its zone toward the east coast, and had no difficulty reaching the 0-5 line with its left flank units, while CT 6 on the right advanced considerably farther than the 0-5 line. 3d platoon tanks from Baker company, 2d Tank Battalion, advancing with LT 3/6, moved about 400 yards beyond 0-6 line and encountered artillery and mortar fire. On the road running north and south through the area, obstacles of gasoline drums and TNT charges covered with tree branches were found. Booby traps hanging from trees along the road were noticed. As the tanks crossed the road between the obstacles, they came under the observation of the enemy who immediately placed intense artillery fire on them. To avoid drawing fire on the infantry in dugouts along the road, the tanks pulled back into defilade with one tank damaged. The 4th Marine Division moved with little difficulty to favorable defensive positions, roughly about 300 yards forward of the 0-6 line in its zone of action, which put the division upon high ground overlooking Tinian Town. The 14th Marines fired no preparations for the attack this day but delivered call fires during the day. Tanks were used to good advantage during the attack.

In both divisions' zone of action our casualties consisted mainly of heat prostration cases, since the fighting at this time was being conducted through dense cane fields. We were having more difficulty with the terrain than we were with the enemy. The 10th Marines supported the advance of the 2d Marine Division with call fires during the day.

#### **Jig plus Six—30 July 44**

During the night 29-30 July, minor infiltrations by the Japanese were attempted with no success. The 2d platoon of Charlie company, 2d Tank Battalion, moved out at 0700 to rescue a patrol from LT 1/2 pinned down about 500 yards in front of our lines. Receiving intense small arms fire, this platoon engaged the enemy with machine gun fire and recovered the patrol. At 0745 the 2d Marine Division resumed the advance, encountering practically no resistance. At 1245 CT 6 arrived on the 0-7 line. CT 2, which was on the left, got stiff resistance from a small strong point on the northern nose of the hill located just inland from the coast where the eastern side of the island makes a bulge about midway of the length of Tinian. Using artillery fire, CT 2 reduced the opposition on this hill and advanced swiftly southward through the remainder of the high ground in this eastern bulge. Upon seizure of 0-7 in its zone of action, CT 2 established defenses, with installations well dug in, and Dannert wire placed in front of the lines. At about 1700 LT 3/2 began receiving enemy machine gun and mortar fire from caves in the cliffs to its rear. Using flame-thrower tanks from the 2d Tank Battalion and demolitions, these enemy positions were almost entirely reduced prior to darkness. From the 0-7 line, our troops were facing the enemy's final defensive position on the southern end of Tinian which was located on a high plateau. Routes of access to this plateau involved negotiating cliffs and heavy shrub and jungle growth. On the seaward side the cliffs rose abruptly. It was decided that in order to attack this high ground, it would be necessary to approach it from the division's right front, and in order to do this, it was believed necessary that CT 2 should maintain a holding position at the foot of the cliffs in the eastern part of the division zone, while CT 8 be employed abreast of CT 6, and on the right of CT 6, in an attempt to maneuver into the high ground of the plateau. Therefore, CT 8 was ordered into the line on the right of CT 6, and occupied a zone a part of which had formerly been held by CT 6 and the remainder by CT 23. The 4th Marine Division on this day continued the attack at 0745 with its objective being the 0-7 line. There was no change in formation. CT 24 and CT 25 were abreast with CT 24 on the right along the west coast. Ten minutes before King-Hour the 14th Marines fired an

initial preparation which was followed by two successive five-minute concentrations at five-minute intervals with the range increased 400 yards in each case. To the north of Tinian Town and along the west coast in a valley lay an inland coastal plain cliff line which caused CT 24 some difficulty. This cliff-face was pockmarked with caves in which the Japanese were making last stands. This regimental combat team liquidated the opposition in these caves with infantry-tank teams and by using demolitions and flame-throwers. By 1420 troops were in the town itself which was found to be in ruins as a result of our artillery fires, naval gunfire, and aerial bombings. The beach at Tinian Town was found to be heavily mined. Both CTs of the 4th Marine Division were on the 0-7 line by midafternoon and spent the remainder of the afternoon patrolling and reorganizing for the next day's attack. During the morning and again in the afternoon, intense naval gunfire concentrations were fired on selected targets on the southern edge of the island.

#### **Jig plus Seven—31 July 44**

During the night the enemy shelled our front line positions with mortars, causing very few casualties and little damage. From its positions in the valley facing the plateau to the front, the 4th Marine Division prepared to resume the attack at 0830. Preceded by a coordinated and intense air, artillery and naval gunfire preparation, our troops moved forward in attack against a high cliff-faced plateau. Resistance increased during the morning, slowing our advance as the enemy became more stubborn. Using his antitank guns and mines, bringing fire to bear from caves in the cliff, and having the advantage of this high cliff itself, the enemy was making his last determined stand. During the day, because of the nature of the terrain, contact was lost with the 2d Marine Division but this occasioned no alarm since it was realized that the attacking LTs would have to make their advances conform with the nature of the terrain itself. By late afternoon our troops were on the heights above the cliff, having found the way up a narrow hairpin road that led up the escarpment. Progress was difficult because of mine fields sowed in this road which were protected by machine guns. Troops who had gained the high ground dug in for the night defenses with their backs to the cliffs. While our line was not strong or well tied in for the night, we were able to utilize the terrain sufficiently to protect our own defensive positions and at the same time prevent any attempt on the part of the enemy to break through in force. CT 24 advancing on the right of the division zone and maintaining contact with elements of CT 23 on the left, moved around the coastal plain to the west of the plateau escarpment. This plain was covered by thick undergrowth which made tank operations increasingly difficult. Near the beach a small local counterattack by a surviving pocket of Japanese was repulsed at about 1000. Fire support was provided mainly by LVTAs along the shore-line. Flame-thrower tanks were used in some cases to burn away the dense undergrowth and to roast the enemy in the caves in the face of the cliff. Positions for the night of this CT were not too good but were chosen from the best available conditions present. Soon after commencing the attack, the left flank of LT 1/23 was pinned down by enemy machine gun and mortar fire from the cliff-line on the left flank. LT 2/23 ran into heavy gunfire from a large calibre weapon, believed to be a 5" naval gun, which knocked out one medium tank.

By 1745 LT 1/23 had advanced to high ground and held a favorable position. LT 2/23 on the right was held up by a strong pocket of resistance which consisted of a mine field on a road covered by hostile machine gun and rifle fire. LT 2/23 contained this pocket for the night using two companies while sending the third up on the high ground of the plateau to help LT 1/23.

During the day one section of 37mm guns and a one-ton truck were knocked out by intense enemy fire. One of these 37s was later retrieved by a half-track which went in under heavy enemy fire to get it. The other gun was dismantled and abandoned. LT 3/25, which had been in division reserve, was assigned to CT 23 and used to protect tank attachments in view of the gap that existed between the 4th and 2d Marine Divisions. The enemy attempted unsuccessful small scale infiltrations during the night. In its zone of action, the 2d Marine Division attacked simultaneously and abreast of the 4th Marine Division at King-Hour, 0830. CT 2, following intense artillery fire, attacked and reached the base of the steep cliffs to its front at noon and proceeded to hold up in order to contain the enemy while CT 6 and CT 8 continued the attack on higher ground inland in order to get up on the table-lands above the cliffs. By 1330 CT 6 had moved up to the foot of the plateau. In its sector CT 8 was receiving heavy enemy mortar, machine gun and rifle fire. The best approach to the high table-land was in the zone of action of CT 8. Apparently the enemy realized this and concentrated his defensive fires along our route into his positions. LT 3/8 commenced the advance to the high ground at about 1400, utilizing the narrow road which led up to the plateau. This road was found to be ditched and mined. By late afternoon it did not seem probable that troops would reach the top of the plateau. LT 1/8s lines disappeared from view in the heavy foliage and growth that covered the approaches. Contact between platoon leaders and company commanders was difficult. At 1650 one platoon of Able company reached the top of the plateau. Five minutes later Charlie company had a platoon on top. This break-through had been made in the center of CT 8s zone of action. Every effort was made now to rush LT 2/8 up to assist LT 1/8 in holding the ground gained. In ascending the steep wooded cliff, contact with the 4th Marine Division was lost and, despite efforts made by both divisions in sending out patrols as late as 2200, contact was not regained until next day.

Easy company of LT 2/8 reached the top of the plateau at 1800. LT 2/8 was to tie in with LT 1/8 using the northeastern gun of an enemy 4-gun dual purpose 120mm battery as the boundary between LTs. At 1830 the enemy centered a counterattack at this boundary and it was impossible to move troops into position until after dusk, which was done as quickly as possible under the covering fire of Able company. A strong point was established at the northeastern enemy gun position by one platoon of Easy company with two machine guns and extended west to the woods at the edge of the plateau cliff. At this point two 37mm guns were emplaced after dark. Another platoon of Easy Company held a line extending westward down the slope, where it was tied in with George Company; the latter was disposed down the slope to the cane fields in an east-west line. So far, LT 2/8 had succeeded in bolstering the beachhead on the plateau, but the situation was not entirely satisfactory. LT 1/8's right flank was refused as far as it went, but was nonetheless exposed. There was a distinct possibility that the enemy might encircle this flank. Between George Company and LT 3/8 there existed a gap of three hundred yards—all flat open ground. Some of the personnel from the headquarters of LT 2/8 were attached to George and bent back to refuse the company's flank. The gap was covered by fire.

Although the assigned mission of LT 2/8 was to fill the gap between LTs 1/8 and 3/8, the Battalion Commander believed that his primary mission was to assist in the defense of the shallow beachhead on the plateau. LT 1/8's right flank was open, our troops had but a small foothold in the plateau and the situation demanded a strong

reserve, ready to be committed in any sector at a moment's notice. The C. O. LT 2/8 decided to retain as his reserve, one platoon from Easy, one from George and all of Fox Company; the gap between George and LT 3/8 was left open and, as has been said, was covered by fire by a section of machine guns.

After dusk Easy Company moved its right flank platoon into position and placed machine guns in the AA emplacements where they covered the platoon's front. At the same time, a section of 37mm guns was rolled into position in the lines of Easy Company in the heavy growth at the plateau's edge. Here, the guns could pour cannister across the dangerous open ground to the front. Machine guns were placed on the right and left of the 37's to give protection. Patrols were sent out along the edge of the cliff to divert the enemy while Dannert wire was laid, but the patrols ran into and killed enemy groups within twenty yards of the front line. The wire was finally laid by passing it from foxhole to foxhole and then rolling it forward about ten yards.

At about 2300 the enemy launched a counterattack against the right platoon of Easy and the left flank of LT 1/8, but met such disastrous fire that this portion of the line was never again threatened.

Until 0100 the road had been used by jeep ambulance and cargo jeeps to evacuate wounded and bring up barbed wire, ammunition, and other supplies. At 0100, however, an enemy force of 100-200 cut this supply route and captured and burned two jeep ambulances. There was no way of knowing whether this was a by-passed group or a force that had infiltrated around LT 1/8's flank. The latter case was assumed and seemed further substantiated when an enemy platoon, operating in the vicinity of the road, captured half the vehicles parked on the road and attacked a platoon of Fox Company in reserve.

Promptly, the Battalion Commander ordered his reserve platoon and Fox Company to attack through the endangered area. This was done with considerable close-in fighting and a road-block was established first and then a line thrown up to protect a corridor up the cliff so that additional troops might ascend if necessary. Our counterattack destroyed most of the infiltrating enemy and isolated one small group of about twenty, who committed suicide.

At 0515, the enemy launched a strong counterattack along the entire front of the plateau beachhead, concentrating his main strength in the area of the 37mm guns. Naval gunfire illumination was increased immediately and artillery concentrations were delivered at two-minute intervals. In addition, the 81 and 60mm mortars brought their fires in as close to the lines as possible. The attack failed to penetrate our lines, although many of the enemy were killed within five yards of our front lines. The attack was halted by machine gun fire, rifle fire and cannister from the 37mm guns. The shield of the left gun was penetrated five times. All but two men of the original squads for these two guns were casualties. It is estimated that approximately five hundred enemy troops participated in the attack. The enemy withdrawal was orderly and employed a rear guard which was annihilated by our tanks when they attacked at daylight. Over two hundred enemy dead were counted. We had seventy four casualties.\*

\*All of the above account was taken from SAR, Tinian, CT 8, as amplified by C. O. LT 2/8.

#### Jig plus Eight—1 Aug 44

Commencing at about 0355 on the morning of 1 August, the enemy struck at our troops in a determined counterattack, but failed to dislodge CT 8. Again just before daylight a large counterattack developed which proved to be the final one. A few of the enemy succeeded in infiltrating our lines and were hunted down and killed. Most of the five or six hundred Japanese who had made the final counterattack were killed. The remainder who escaped withdrew across the plateau into the woods and cliffs of the south-east coast. During the morning, landing teams of CT 6 climbed upwards around the shoulders of the steep cliffs and joined CT 8. LT 3/6 and LT 3/8 moved forward at 0815 to establish a perimeter on the 0-8A line. At 1130 CT 6 (consisting now of LTs 3/8, 2/6, and 3/6) and CT 8 (made up of LTs 1/8 and 2/8) jumped off for the 0-8 line and moved forward against this last organized resistance. By mid-afternoon our troops occupied the last high ground in their zone of action overlooking the southern end of Tinian and the rocky cliffs that characterized this part of the island. Enemy soldiers were killing themselves in caves. With them were hundreds of civilians. Some were preparing for a last stand in the caves, while others were blowing themselves apart with grenades or jumping off the cliffs on the rocks below; others chose to wade out into the surf and drown themselves.

With the remainder of the island in its zone of action as its objective, the 4th Marine Division, with CT 24 on the right and CT 23 on the left and abreast, commenced the attack at 0800. Prior to the attack, the 15th Marines fired a five-minute preparation 600 yards in advance of the Line of Departure, which was our front line positions, and followed this with two successive three-minute concentrations, one at 0805 and the other at 0813, 900 yards and 1,200 yards respectively, in advance of the Line of Departure. Isolated enemy groups offered moderate resistance consisting principally of machine gun and mortar fire. Mines, road-blocks, cliffs, dense brush, and rock ground, provided most of the opposition during the day's advance. LT 2/23 had cleared the minefield in its sector by 1045 and had reduced the pocket of resistance to its front. Attack continued during the day against sporadic opposition. The chief difficulty was found in trying to move down from one level of ground to another. The cliff-faces were honey-combed with caves and these were alive with snipers. The one-ton truck and 37mm gun mentioned before were recovered and found to be heavily booby-trapped. CT 24 moved down over three distinct cliff levels which formed steps from the plateau south to the sea. Its advance was slow but steady. By late afternoon the 4th Marine Division, like the 2d, occupied the last high ground overlooking the sea and all that remained to be done was the mopping up of the caves which honeycombed the southern cliffs. All organized resistance had ceased and the commanding officer of Northern Troops and Landing Forces announced that the island of Tinian was officially secured at 1855.

## Part VI

### SUMMARY

The Tinian operation will long stand out in the history of amphibious warfare as being unique because of a number of factors: (1) It was the first shore-to-shore movement in the Central Pacific. (2) The landings were made over the narrowest beaches ever used in an amphibious operation. (3) The enemy knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that we would land on Tinian; he was prepared for our landing—yet tactical surprise was achieved. (4) This landing was made by troops fifteen days after they had finished fighting for over a three-week period in one of the most costly operations of the Pacific. (5) The beachhead was established in record time. (6) Original supporting artillery fires were given from an adjacent island. (7) Although a four-day storm made beaches unusable for anything but special landing craft and LVTs, supplies were brought in and casualties evacuated by air from Ushi field (Tinian) to Isely field (Saipan).

In addition, the landings on Tinian combined the features of shore-to-shore movements with those of ship-to-shore. Normal ship-to-shore procedures were followed as to (a) Formation of waves. (b) Underwater demolition operations. (c) Air support. (d) Preliminary demonstrations. (e) Landing of reserves.

Variances from ship-to-shore procedures were: (a) Limited shore party operations at the beach initially, since all supplies were landed in vehicles and moved directly to inland dumps. (b) Except for initial emergency supplies on LSTs, all supplies were handled in a shore-to-shore movement from Saipan to Tinian. (c) Other than the two regiments of the 2d Marine Division embarked in transports, all other units landed were embarked at Saipan and moved to Tinian in LSTs or smaller craft. (d) There were thirteen battalions of field artillery emplaced on southern Saipan to support the landing.

The techniques involved were merely ingenious adaptations to the sound doctrine already established. The results speak for themselves as a two-division corps was landed against opposition on about 180 yards of usable beaches with a minimum of casualties and with sufficient supplies to continue the attack without delay.

Altogether a total of over 1,600 patients were evacuated by air from Ushi field to Saipan when the surf became so rough on JIG plus 3 and during the rest of the operation that surface craft, except for DUKWs, could not negotiate the approach to the beach. This tends to substantiate the wisdom in selecting the northern beaches as places from which to launch the attack of Tinian. All units were loud in their praise of the valuable work done by the amphibious trucks (DUKWs). Had it not been for the rapidity with which our dumps of ammunition, food, water, fuel, and other supplies were built up in the early stages of this operation plus the work of the DUKWs during the rough weather on JIG plus 3 and the following days, the eventual success of the Tinian operation might well have been delayed for a number of days with attendant discomfort and increased casualties.

As it turned out, the Tinian operation cost us fewer casualties than had been anticipated, yet was pursued with as much vigor as any other operation. In giving good accounts of themselves the 2d and 4th Marine Divisions with their attached units demonstrated what well trained troops under capable leadership and following wise and imaginative planning can do.

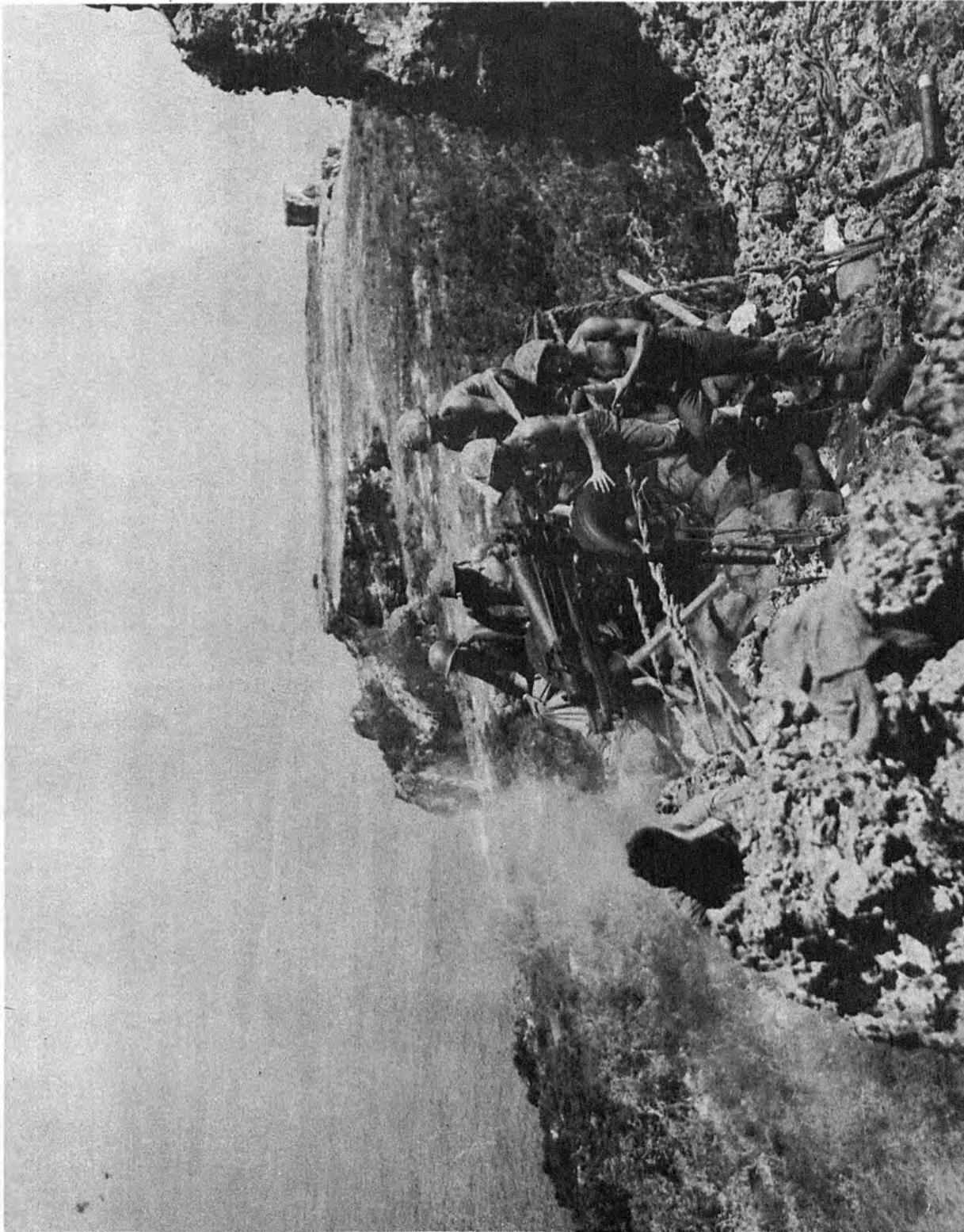
### CASUALTIES FOR TINIAN

Killed in Action		Wounded in Action		Missing in Action		Total	
Officers	Enlisted	Officers	Enlisted	Officers	Enlisted	Officers	Enlisted
22	268	79	1435	0	24	101	1729
<u>          </u>		<u>          </u>		<u>          </u>		<u>          </u>	
(290)	Totals	(1514)		(24)		(1828)	

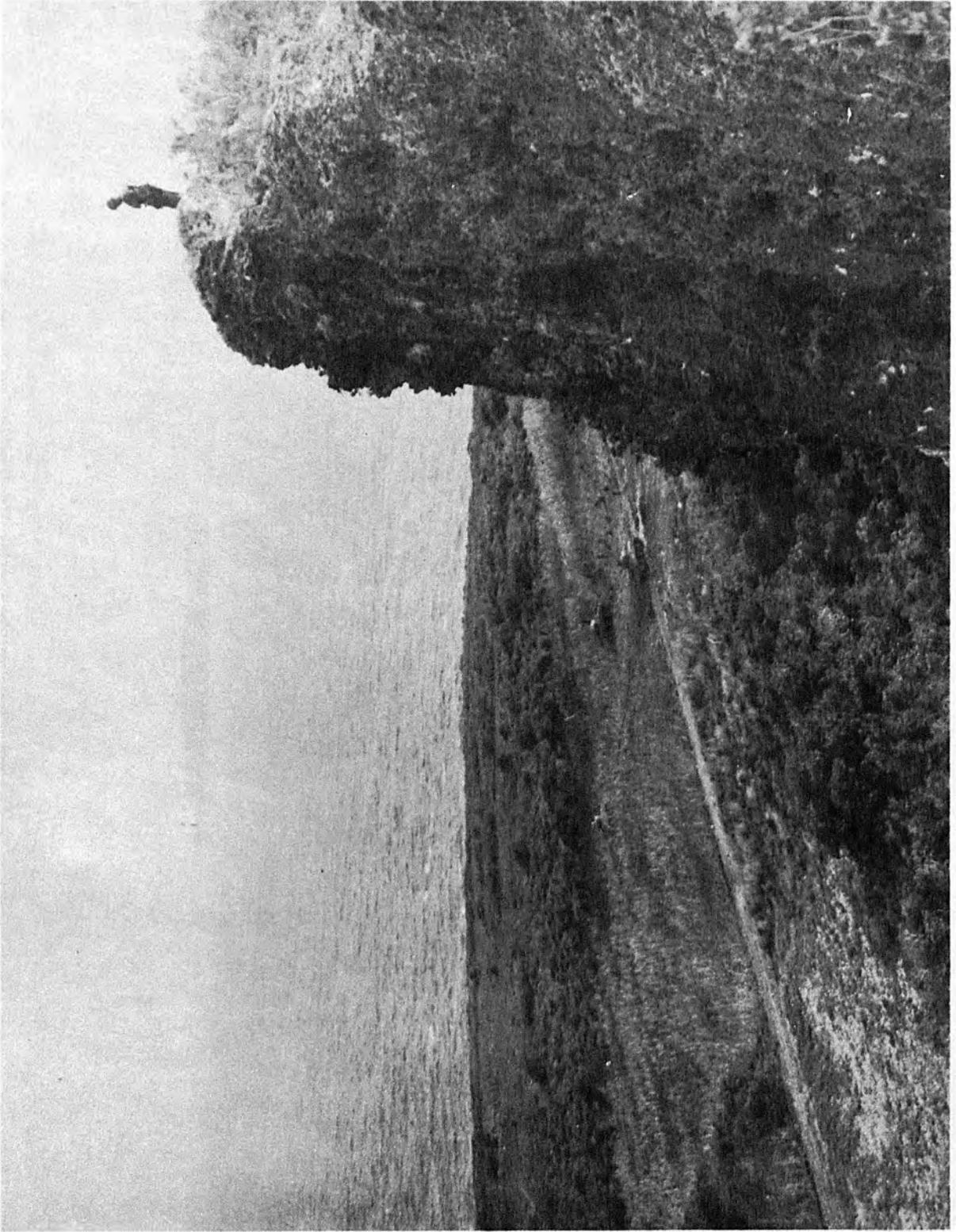
Prisoners of war captured: 152 Japanese  
                                   103 Koreans

—  
 255 Total

Enemy dead buried by our troops: 5000



**Pack Howitzer in Action on Tinian**



**Last Phase Mopping Up, Tinian**

**Commanding Officers and Staffs  
for  
24 July, 1944**

**V Amphibious Corps**

Corps Commander  
Chief of Staff  
C-1  
C-2  
C-3  
C-4

Major General Harry Schmidt  
Brigadier General Graves B. Erskine  
Lieutenant Colonel Albert F. Metze  
Colonel St. Julien R. Marshall  
Colonel John C. McQueen  
Colonel Raymond E. Knapp

**2d Marine Division**

Division Commander  
Asst. Division Commander  
Chief of Staff  
D-1  
D-2  
D-3  
D-4

Major General Thomas E. Watson  
Brigadier General Merritt A. Edson  
Colonel David M. Shoup  
Lieutenant Colonel James T. Wilber  
Lieutenant Colonel Thomas J. Colley  
Lieutenant Colonel Wallace M. Greene  
Colonel Robert J. Straub

**2d Marines**

Commanding Officer  
Executive Officer  
R-1  
R-2  
R-3  
R-4

Colonel Walter J. Stuart  
Lieutenant Colonel John H. Griebel  
Captain Leonard G. Hicks  
Captain John L. Schwabe  
Major Samuel D. Mandeville, Jr.  
Major Harold K. Throneson

**1st Bn, 2d Marines**

Battalion Commander  
Executive Officer  
Bn-1  
Bn-2  
Bn-3  
Bn-4

Lieutenant Colonel Wood B. Kyle  
Major Wendell W. Andrews  
Captain Robert J. Munley  
1st Lieutenant Charles Schultz, Jr.  
Major Charles P. Lewis, Jr.  
2d Lieutenant Albert B. Cochrell

**2d Bn, 2d Marines**

Battalion Commander  
Executive Officer  
Bn-1  
Bn-2  
Bn-3  
Bn-4

Lieutenant Colonel Richard C. Nutting  
Major Michael P. Ryan  
2d Lieutenant Albert S. Borek  
1st Lieutenant Monroe Morgan  
1st Lieutenant William B. Somerville  
1st Lieutenant James L. Dent

**3d Bn, 2d Marines**

Battalion Commander  
Executive Officer  
Bn-1  
Bn-2  
Bn-3  
Bn-4

Lieutenant Colonel Walter F. Layer  
Major Frederic R. Smith  
Warrant Officer (Com) Elbert E. Cameron  
1st Lieutenant Leonard M. Wood  
Captain Richard Phillippi  
1st Lieutenant Adrian Mallia

### 6th Marines

Commanding Officer

Colonel James P. Riseley

Executive Officer

Lieutenant Colonel Russell Lloyd

R-1

Captain Philip J. Costello

R-2

Captain Donald V. Nahrgang

R-3

Major Loren E. Haffner

R-4

Major Cyril C. Sheehan

### 1st Bn, 6th Marines

Battalion Commander

Lieutenant Colonel William K. Jones

Executive Officer

Major James A. Donovan, Jr.

Bn-1

2d Lieutenant Robert J. Vroegindewey

Bn-2

Captain George Azud

Bn-3

Captain Paul S. Hospodar

Bn-4

Captain Donald K. Calkins

### 2d Bn, 6th Marines

Battalion Commander

Lieutenant Colonel Edmund B. Games

Executive Officer

Major LeRoy P. Hunt

Bn-1

1st Lieutenant Francis T. Sweeney

Bn-2

1st Lieutenant Paul A. Diehl

Bn-3

Major Hulon H. Riche

Bn-4

Captain Wilson L. Brown, Jr.

### 3d Bn, 6th Marines

Battalion Commander

Lieutenant Colonel John W. Easley

Executive Officer

Major John E. Rentsch

Bn-1

1st Lieutenant Eugene R. Johnston

Bn-2

Warrant Officer (Gen) Claude R. Short

Bn-3

Captain Royal E. North

Bn-4

1st Lieutenant Berthold O. Fay

### 8th Marines

Commanding Officer

Colonel Clarence R. Wallace

Executive Officer

Lieutenant Colonel Jack P. Juhan

R-1

Captain Lloyd E. Iverson

R-2

(Not listed on muster roll)

R-3

Major William H. Souder, Jr.

R-4

Major Alfred E. Holland

### 1st Bn, 8th Marines

Battalion Commander

Lieutenant Colonel Lawrence C. Hays, Jr.

Executive Officer

Major Robert J. Oddy

Bn-1

Captain Warren H. Keck

Bn-2

1st Lt. Warren H. Simpson

Bn-3

Major Daniel V. McWethy

Bn-4

1st Lieutenant Richard J. Davis, Jr.

Battalion Commander  
Executive Officer  
Bn-1  
Bn-2  
Bn-3  
Bn-4

Battalion Commander  
Executive Officer  
Bn-1  
Bn-2  
Bn-3  
Bn-4

Commanding Officer  
Executive Officer  
R-1  
R-2  
R-3  
R-4

Battalion Commander  
Executive Officer  
Bn-1  
Bn-2  
Bn-3  
Bn-4

**2d Bn, 8th Marines**

Lieutenant Colonel Lane C. Kendall  
Major William C. Chamberlin  
Captain John P. Sheehan, Jr.  
2d Lieutenant John R. Day  
Major Harry H. Phillips  
2d Lieutenant Francis L. Day

**3d Bn, 8th Marines**

Lieutenant Colonel Gavin C. Humphrey  
Major Stanley E. Larsen  
Captain George S. Skinner  
2d Lieutenant Laurence R. Dale  
Captain William H. Pickett  
1st Lieutenant Karl T. Homer

**10th Marines**

Colonel Raphael Griffin  
Colonel Presley M. Rixey  
1st Lieutenant Russell C. White  
1st Lieutenant Norman W. Milner  
Major Wade H. Hitt  
Captain Cecil H. Yount

**1st Bn, 10th Marines**

Lieutenant Colonel Donovan D. Sult  
Major Wendell H. Best  
Captain Joseph R. Chalfin  
Captain Robert M. Calland  
Captain Stephen J. Burich  
Captain John W. Hull

**2d Bn, 10th Marines**

Major David L. Henderson  
Major Kenneth C. Houston  
Captain John H. Brown  
Captain Ralph L. Wyer  
Captain Richard B. Cavanaugh  
Captain Carl A. Neilsen

**3d Bn, 10th Marines**

Lieutenant Colonel William C. Capehart  
Major James O. Appleyard  
1st Lieutenant Alfred Skowronek  
Captain Gavin H. Young  
Captain Alan H. Tully  
Captain John J. Schwab

**4th Bn, 10th Marines**

Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth A. Jorgensen  
Captain William P. Oliver, Jr.  
Captain George C. Armes  
1st Lieutenant Harry Fifer, Jr.  
1st Lieutenant Edwin D. Smith  
Captain Frederick W. Riggs, Jr.

### 18th Marines

Commanding Officer	Colonel Cyril W. Martyr
Executive Officer	Lieutenant Colonel Ewart S. Laue
R-1	Captain Winfield S. Halton Jr.
R-2	Captain Murdoch J. McLeod
R-3	Captain Murdoch J. McLeod
R-4	Captain Walter J. Hulsey

### 1st Bn, 18th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel August L. Vogt
Executive Officer	Captain Joseph G. Polifka
Bn-1	Captain Robert S. Rix
Bn-2	1st Lieutenant Kenneth J. McGowan
Bn-3	Captain Joseph G. Polifka
Bn-4	Captain William V. Schwebke

### 2d Bn, 18th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Chester J. Salazar
Executive Officer	Captain Jerome R. Walters
Bn-1	Captain Edward L. Kropp Jr.
Bn-2	Captain Jerome R. Walters
Bn-3	Captain Jerome R. Walters
Bn-4	Captain Albert T. Watson

### 4th Marine Division

Division Commander	Major General Clifton B. Cates
Asst. Division Commander	Brigadier General Samuel C. Cummings
Chief of Staff	Colonel William W. Rogers
D-1	Colonel Walter I. Jordan
D-2	Lieutenant Colonel Gooderham L. McCormick
D-3	Colonel Walter W. Wensinger
D-4	Colonel William F. Brown

### 23d Marines

Commanding Officer	Colonel Louis R. Jones
Executive Officer	Lieutenant Colonel John R. Lanigan
R-1	Captain Charlie J. Talbert
R-2	Captain Richard W. Mirick
R-3	Captain William E. Buron
R-4	Captain Henry S. Campbell

### 1st Bn, 23d Marines

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Haas
Executive Officer	Major James S. Scales
Bn-1	1st Lieutenant Maurice Gross
Bn-2	1st Lieutenant Claud B. Duval
Bn-3	Captain James R. Miller
Bn-4	Captain Kenion E. Edwards Jr.

**2d Bn, 23d Marines**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Edward J. Dillon
Executive Officer	Major Robert H. Davidson
Bn-1	*
Bn-2	*
Bn-3	Captain James W. Sperry
Bn-4	Captain Donald P. Libera

**3d Bn, 23d Marines**

Battalion Commander	Major Paul S. Treitel
Executive Officer	Captain Philip J. Maloney
Bn-1	1st Lieutenant Robert B. Steele
Bn-2	1st Lieutenant Clarence J. Stines
Bn-3	Captain Donald S. Callahan
Bn-4	Captain Joseph G. Lombardi

**24th Marines**

Commanding Officer	Colonel Franklin A. Hart
Executive Officer	Lieutenant Colonel Austin R. Brunelli
R-1	Captain Kenneth N. Hilton
R-2	Captain Arthur B. Hanson
R-3	Lieutenant Colonel Charles D. Roberts
R-4	Major Clyde T. Smith

**1st Bn, 24th Marines**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Otto Lessing
Executive Officer	Major Robert N. Fricke
Bn-1	1st Lieutenant Herbert I. Hines
Bn-2	Captain George D. Webster
Bn-3	Captain Gene G. Mundy
Bn-4	*

**2d Bn, 24th Marines**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Richard Rothwell
Executive Officer	Major Frank E. Garretson
Bn-1	*
Bn-2	*
Bn-3	Captain Charles C. Berkeley
Bn-4	1st Lieutenant Kingsley C. Torgesen

**3d Bn, 24th Marines**

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Alexander A. Vandegrift Jr.
Executive Officer	Captain Doyle A. Stout
Bn-1	1st Lieutenant George M. Gallion
Bn-2	1st Lieutenant Karl G. Schaick
Bn-3	Captain Webb D. Sawyer
Bn-4	1st Lieutenant Oscar Harte Jr.

\* Not listed on muster rolls.

### 25th Marines

Commanding Officer	Colonel Merton J. Batchelder
Executive Officer	Lieutenant Colonel Clarence J. O'Donnell
R-1	Captain George K. Dunn
R-2	Captain Charles D. Gray
R-3	Lieutenant Colonel William F. Thyson Jr.
R-4	Major Arthur E. Buck Jr.

### 1st Bn, 25th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Hollis U. Mustain
Executive Officer	Major Henry D. Strunk
Bn-1	1st Lieutenant Monroe R. Davis
Bn-2	Captain William C. Eisenhardt
Bn-3	Captain Fenton J. Mee
Bn-4	1st Lieutenant John E. Ericson

### 2d Bn, 25th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Lewis C. Hudson
Executive Officer	Major William P. Kaempfer
Bn-1	1st Lieutenant Johnston Robinson Jr.
Bn-2	Captain John C. Witherspoon
Bn-3	Captain Victor J. Barringer
Bn-4	1st Lieutenant William M. Masterson

### 3d Bn, 25th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Justice M. Chambers
Executive Officer	Major James Taul
Bn-1	1st Lieutenant Norman C. Smyle
Bn-2	1st Lieutenant Samuel R. Petetti
Bn-3	*
Bn-4	1st Lieutenant John M. Fogarty

### 14th Marines

Commanding Officer	Colonel Louis G. DeHaven
Executive Officer	Lieutenant Colonel Randall M. Victory
R-1	Captain Cecil D. Snyder
R-2	Captain Harrison L. Rogers
R-3	Major Frederick J. Karch
R-4	Major Richard J. Winsborough

### 1st Bn, 14th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Harry J. Zimmer
Executive Officer	Major Clifford B. Drake
Bn-1	W O William H. Woerner, Jr. (Arty)
Bn-2	Captain Raymond (N) Jenkins
Bn-3	Major Thomas Mc E. Fry
Bn-4	1st Lieutenant Peter F. Rothermel IV

\* Not listed on muster rolls

### 2d Bn, 14th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel George B. Wilson, Jr.
Executive Officer	Major William McReynolds
Bn-1	W O Carl P. Haynes*
Bn-2	1st Lieutenant Robert C. White
Bn-3	Captain Jack H. Riddle
Bn-4	1st Lieutenant Thomas S. Burrowes

### 3d Bn, 14th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Robert E. MacFarlane
Executive Officer	Major Harvey A. Feehan
Bn-1	Captain David F. Lawless, Jr.
Bn-2	Captain Thomas V. LeFevre
Bn-3	Captain Benton H. Elliott
Bn-4	1st Lieutenant Cecil E. Hinkel

### 4th Bn, 14th Marines

Battalion Commander	Lieutenant Colonel Carl A. Youngdale
Executive Officer	Major John B. Edgar, Jr.
Bn-1	W O Lawrence C. Handzlik
Bn-2	1st Lieutenant John C. Finegan
Bn-3	1st Lieutenant Russell F. Schoenbeck
Bn-4	*

### 20th Marines

Commanding Officer	Lieutenant Colonel Nelson K. Brown
Executive Officer	*
R-1	Captain Martin M. Calcaterra
R-2	Captain Carl A. Sachs
R-3	Major Melvin D. Henderson
R-4	Captain Samuel G. Thompson

### 1st Bn, 10th Marines

Battalion Commander	Major Richard G. Ruby
Executive Officer	Major George F. Williamson
Bn-1	*
Bn-2	*
Bn-3	Captain Martin H. Glover
Bn-4	Captain Donald C. Warner

### 2d Bn, 20th Marines

Battalion Commander	Major John H. Partridge
Executive Officer	Captain Howard M. Dowling
Bn-1	1st Lieutenant Theophilus A. Pierce Jr.
Bn-2	1st Lieutenant Carlos G. Nadal
Bn-3	Captain George A. Smith
Bn-4	Captain Thomas D. Irvine

\* Not listed on muster rolls