Mr. Rowland P. Gill
OCMH
Voucher No.
DEC

the

SIXTH MARINE

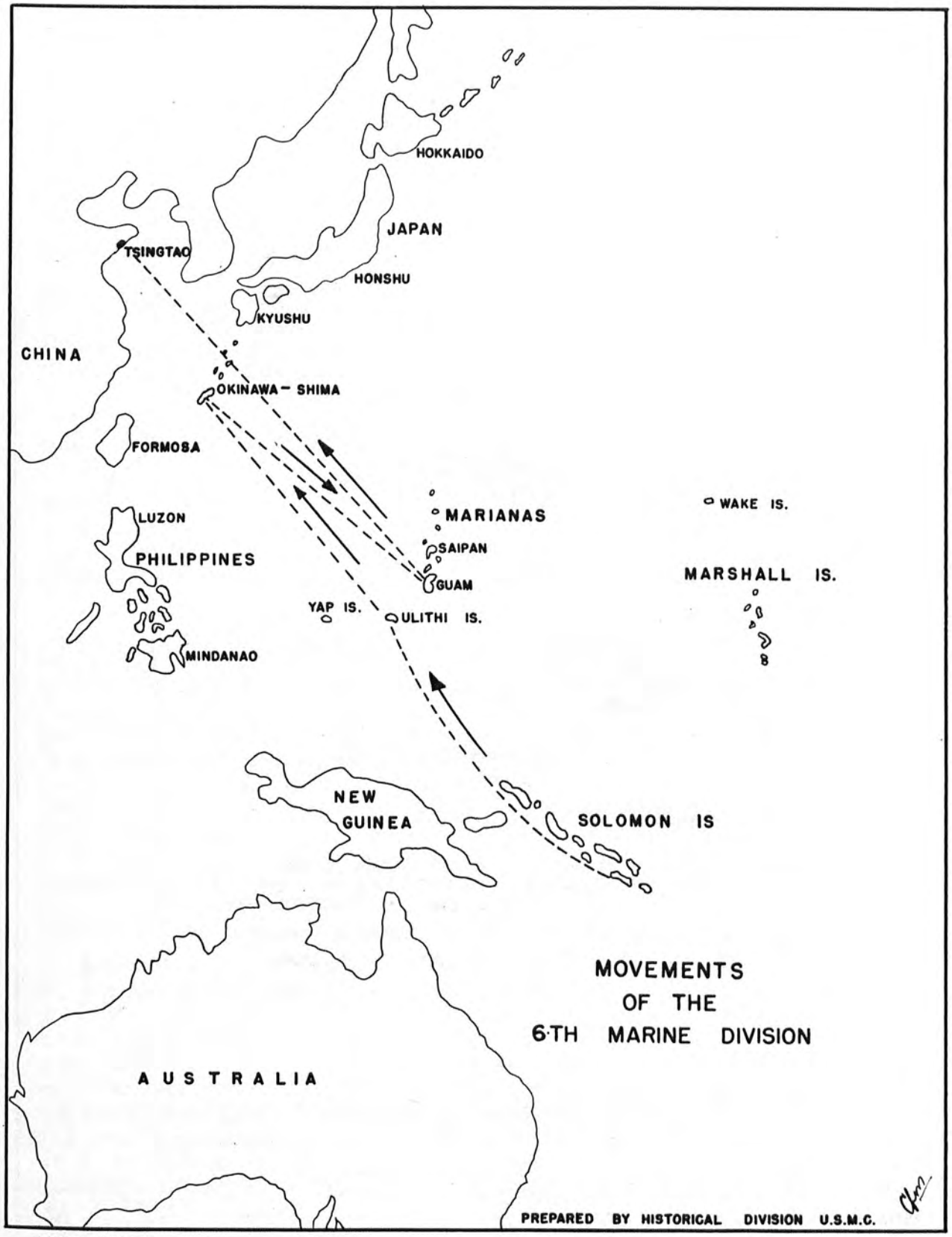
DIVISION

Historical Division
U.S. Marine Corps

THE
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION

Prepared By
James R. Stockman
Captain, U. S. Marine Corps

HISTORICAL DIVISION
HEADQUARTERS, U. S. MARINE CORPS


HOKKAIDO
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YAP IS.
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MINDANAO
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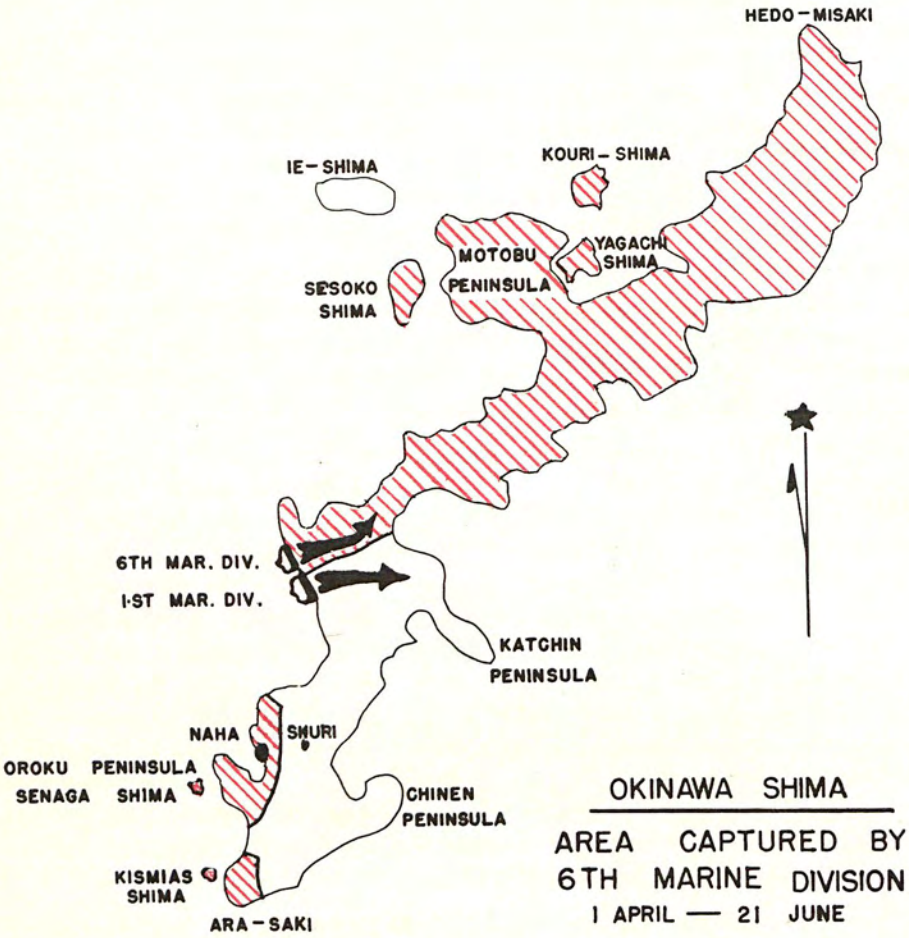
MOVEMENTS OF THE 6TH MARINE DIVISION
AUSTRALIA
PREPARED BY HISTORICAL DIVISION U.S.M.C.

MAP NO. I



OKINAWA SHIMA

AREA CAPTURED BY 6TH MARINE DIVISION

1 APRIL — 21 JUNE

PREPARED BY HISTORICAL DIVISION U.S.M.C.

MAP NO. 2

1. ORIGIN

Last of the famous Marine divisions of World War II, the Sixth was activated on 7 September 1944 on Guadalcanal, the same island that the First Marine Division had landed on exactly twenty five months before. Although the Sixth Marine Division was new in name, the elements that composed it were, for the most part, as old as the war itself. From the First Provisional Brigade that had fought so notably on Guam came two regiments: the Fourth Marines and the Twenty Second Marines. The other regiment of the new division came from Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, where it was organized, with the exception of its First Battalion, by Colonel Victor F. Bleasdale from handpicked officers and men.

In command of the new division was Major General Lemuel C. Shepherd, USMC, who had had a varied and colorful career in this war. He had trained the Ninth Marines, afterwards a part of the Third Marine Division, and was later Assistant Division Commander of the First Marine Division during the Gloucester operation in New Britain. When the landings on Guam were made in July of 1944, General Shepherd (then a Brigadier) was in command of the First Provisional Marine Brigade. His Brigade, consisting of the Fourth and Twenty Second Marines plus reinforcing elements, fought notably on Guam and received the Navy Unit Commendation for its excellent record.

The Assistant Division Commander was Brigadier General William T. Clement, USMC, another colorful figure. On the staff of Admiral Thomas Hart in the Philippines at the outbreak of the war, General Clement (then a Colonel) left Corregidor on a submarine. Later he served in London, and for a while was Commandant of the Marine Corps Schools at Quantico before returning to the Pacific.

Of the three regiments the Twenty Second Marines was the oldest. It was formed at San Diego in June, 1942, and the following month left for Samoa where it remained as a part of the defense force until the fall of 1943. After an extensive training period the regiment left Samoa and sailed to the island of Hawaii to prepare for the Marshalls Campaign. During the Kwajalein phase it acted as a reserve and after the rapid capture of Roi and Namur by the Fourth Marine Division, the Twenty Second Marines, in accordance with the resulting speed-up in the Central Pacific timetable, went on to assault Eniwetok in the Western Marshalls. After a brief but bloody fight for Eniwetok, the regiment seized and occupied numerous adjoining islands. From Eniwetok the Twenty Second Marines went to Guadalcanal and trained there for the Guam Campaign. On 21 July 1944, the regiment landed on Guam on W-Day as a part of the First Provisional Brigade. It drove inland against heavy resistance and then turned to seal off Orote Peninsula. In conjunction with the Fourth Marines, the Twenty Second drove the length of the peninsula and destroyed the enemy emplaced there.

Activated on 8 January 1944, the Fourth Marines was formed from veteran units—the four Marine Raider Battalions. It took its name from the famous Marine regiment that had been lost on Bataan. Its officers and men had seen action at Tulagi, Guadalcanal, Makin, New Georgia, Bougainville; later at Guam, and abreast of the Twenty Second Marines the new regiment received as such, its baptism of fire, when it landed on 21 July 1944. After fighting its way inland and seizing Mt. Alifan, the regiment joined the Twenty Second to reduce heavily defended Orote Peninsula. The Fourth Marines had been on one operation previous to Guam; it had seized the island of Emirau in the St. Matthias Group, and although the operation was bloodless, it was a triumph in planning and execution.

On 1 May 1944, the major part of the Twenty Ninth Marines was activated at Camp Lejeune, New River, North Carolina. Two battalions were formed from the pick of officers and men in the eastern part of the United States at that time. These battalions were composed of some veterans but the greater part had no previous combat experience. With reinforcing elements, the regiment (less its First Battalion) crossed the United States by rail and sailed to Guadalcanal in August. The First Battalion joined the regiment on Guadalcanal in early October. It had been activated from Second Marine Division troops on Hawaii in February, 1944. First called the Second Separate Infantry Battalion, it trained for a brief time on Hawaii and then went to Saipan for that operation, attached to the Second Division. Landing on D-Day the battalion, now called the First Battalion, Twenty Ninth Marines, was attached to the Eighth Marines and to it fell the task of capturing Mt. Tapotchau, the commanding terrain on Saipan. Its losses were heavy—over 60%—and the battalion therefore was not used in the Tinian operation, which followed.

From the reinforcing elements of the First Provisional Brigade were formed, in large part, the Sixth Tank Battalion, Sixth Pioneer Battalion, the Sixth Engineer Battalion, and the division's artillery regiment, the Fifteenth Marines.

2. TRAINING AND PREPARATIONS

When the Sixth Marine Division began its training program for its first—and only—operation, it had several initial advantages: Over two thirds of its officers and men were veterans, well schooled in the ways of the wily Japanese; it started off with the experience gained from nearly four years of war; the structure of the entire division was organized to benefit from this experience. Through October, 1944, and on into February, 1945, the division trained vigorously. Special emphasis was placed on individual marksmanship, combat firing exercises employing all weapons and arms, night problems, flamethrower-demolition teams, tank-infantry problems, and air-ground problems. Training was concluded with an eight day division problem illustrating tactical principles for large unit employment. All through the training period General Shepherd strove to indoctrinate his division with the spirit of attack; that it was cheaper to drive ahead in unrelenting assault than to hesitate trying to find easier ways of achieving the objective while troops remained in contact with the enemy. This indoctrination was to pay dividends on Okinawa when forward progress seemed impossible.

3. MOVEMENT TO TARGET

During the period 1-6 March 1945, the Sixth Marine Division was aboard ship engaged in amphibious landing rehearsals for the Okinawa operation. On the first day troops practiced debarkation and deployment of landing craft; on the next two days the two assault regiments, the Fourth and Twenty Second, landed on the beaches of Guadalcanal and practiced limited maneuvers ashore. Then followed a critique and on the next day there was a full-scale dress rehearsal. Although limited in their extent, the rehearsals were quite satisfactory.

After breaking camp ashore, the division re-embarked to sail for the staging area, Ulithi, on 15 March. At Ulithi, a little atoll in the Caroline Islands, the division joined the enormous task force assembling there for the invasion of Okinawa. Training was carried out aboard ship and final preparations made for the target. By now the troops were aware of their destination and the force designated to land there. They were told that the Sixth Marine Division would land simultaneously with, and on the left of, the

First Marine Division, as a part of the III Amphibious Corps. South of the Marines a corps of Army, the XXIV, would land. Both of the corps were components of a larger force—the new Tenth Army.

On the way to Ulithi, while there, and on the way to the target the men were given a thorough briefing. General Shepherd made it plain that every man should know not only his assigned task, but that of his own unit, and of adjacent units, as well as the general scheme of maneuver. In the briefing aboard ship the men learned that Okinawa had a population of some 450,000 civilians; that there were roughly 70,000 Japanese soldiers on the island. They also learned something about its geography, its towns, roads, rivers and terrain.

While at Ulithi the troops were taken ashore on the little island of Mog Mog for rest and rehabilitation. During the staging period assault troops were transferred to LST's for the last part of the journey. On 27 March the Sixth Marine Division left Ulithi, loaded in 13 APA's, 24 LST's and one LSD, and encountered heavy rains and cooler weather as the convoy moved north.

4. OKINAWA

Easter Sunday, 1 April 1945, was Love-Day for the Okinawa operation. With the bright clear dawn came enemy planes but the invading armada—over 1400 ships—drove off or destroyed the attacking planes. From the transports the troops could only see small portions of the island; the preliminary bombardment from the naval task force and the bombs from our planes, diving through the clouds, raised a haze of smoke and dust that covered most of the area behind the landing beaches.

Forming into long waves, the Fourth and Twenty Second Marines, loaded in amphibious tractors, churned toward the beaches, over the coral reef, and landed at 0837. Every man went in with the expectation that this beachhead, like Tarawa, Saipan, and Iwo, would be a bloody one; they were surprised but not entirely relieved to find virtually no enemy opposition to the landing. Rapidly, units organized and moved inland and up across the terraced fields that led to Yontan Airfield. By noon the Fourth Marines had seized Yontan and the Twenty Second Marines were advancing as rapidly on the left. By late afternoon the two regiments had reached a line tentatively set to be reached on the second day and as yet had not found the enemy. To the left of the Twenty Second Marines lay a little peninsula jutting out to the northwest, named Zampa Misaki. It seemed likely that an enemy force might be there; General Shepherd requested III Amphibious Corps to release from its reserve one battalion of the Twenty Ninth Marines. The First Battalion was released to division and placed to protect the division's left flank. Troops dug in for the night with mixed emotions. Everyone was extremely grateful that the landing had not been a bloody one; still there was a certain apprehension felt: Where was the enemy? When would he attack?

Love-Day had been successful beyond the wildest hopes; the division was ashore safely, in a good position, and had already secured its first objective. Yontan Airfield was firmly in our hands and had not been badly damaged. The enemy defensive positions constructed to guard the field were strangely empty. Casualties were negligible; the landing had been easy.

Now the Sixth Marine Division moved rapidly to cut the island in two. In conjunction with the First Marine Division which was making the main effort, the Fourth and Twenty Second Marines drove quickly to the east and, despite some opposition from small isolated enemy pockets, reached the east coast on 4 April. Turning to the

north, the division began to seize the Ishikawa Isthmus. Averaging nearly 7000 yards each day the troops pushed up the isthmus and by 7 April had reached Nago at the base of Motobu Peninsula.

5. BATTLE FOR MOTOBU

It was General Shepherd's plan to have the Twenty Second and Fourth continue the drive up the mainland of Okinawa until Hedo Misaki was seized. To destroy the enemy known to be on Motobu, the General committed the Twenty Ninth Marines, which had been in Corps reserve during the first four days of the operation. For the time being, the Fourth Marines was held as a reserve near the base of the peninsula. Patrolling continued.

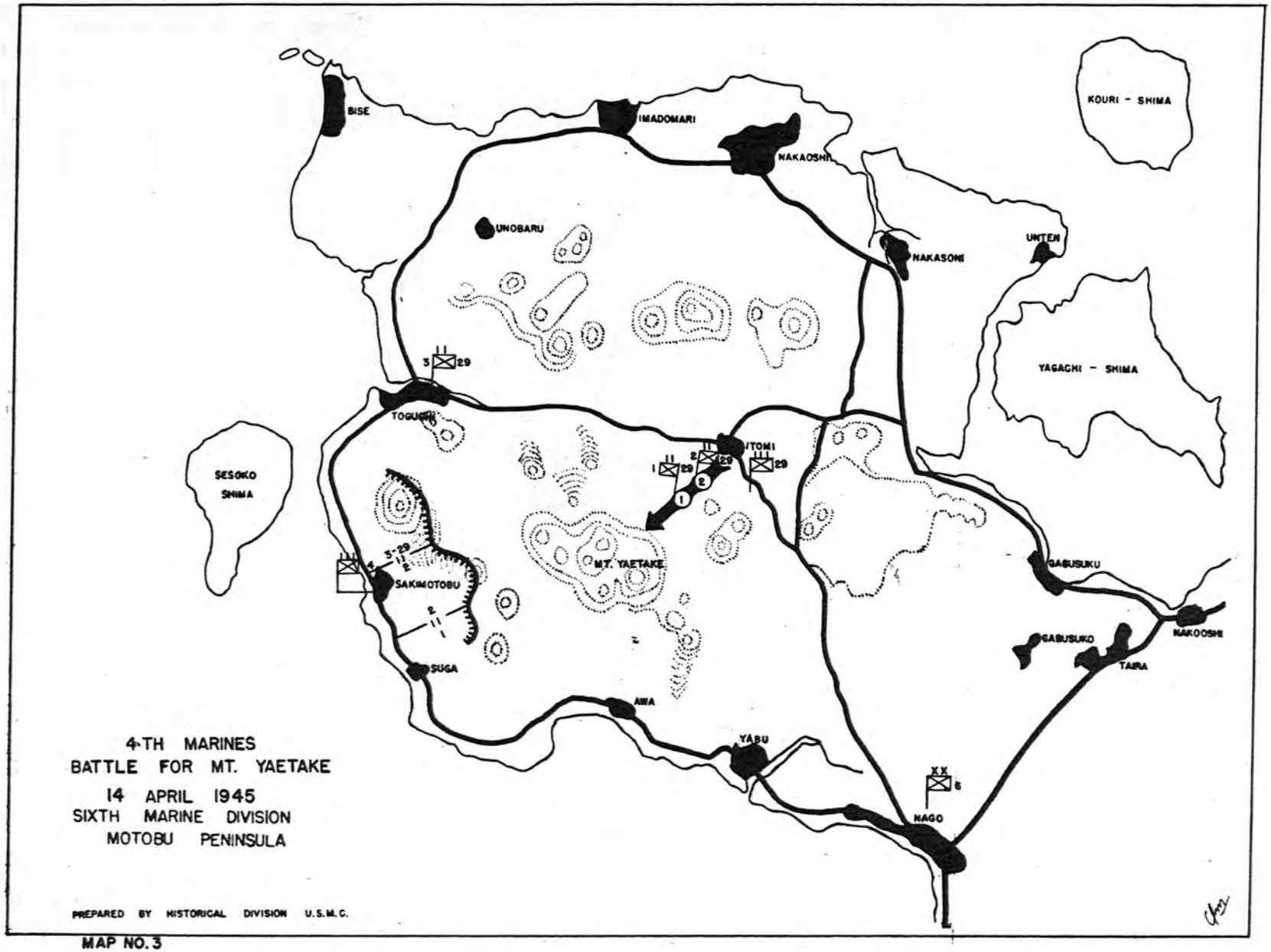
Many captured enemy soldiers and civilians had stated that the main Japanese defensive force was in southern Okinawa but that a force of about 3000 men, commanded by a Colonel Udo, was somewhere up north, probably on Motobu. Aerial observation and photo terrain studies confirmed indications that there was a sizeable enemy force on the peninsula. On 8 April the Twenty Ninth Marines moved out in three columns, one along the south coast, one along the north coast and one up the center toward the town of Itomi. At first progress was rapid and there were few contacts made; it was noted, however, that all inland trails were mined or blocked. The coast roads had numerous roadblocks and tank traps. By 10 April the Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth, was at Toguchi and had been hit by enemy artillery fire near Awa. Near Toguchi, on the Manna road, it had contacted Udo's force. West of Itomi the First Battalion was also in contact with what was apparently the same force. Meanwhile the Second Battalion had captured the enemy midget submarine base at Unten Ko but had encountered no appreciable resistance.

During the next three days the battalions were in almost constant contact with Udo's forces. Ambushes were frequent but the enemy could not be engaged in any decisive action. It was clear that he was engaged in guerrilla-type warfare and wanted to harass our troops but was trying to avoid a meeting engagement. By 13 April the enemy position was definitely fixed as being in the Mt. Yaetake area; it was known that he had considerable artillery, mortars, and a few naval guns emplaced in hidden positions in the wild and rugged mountain mass.

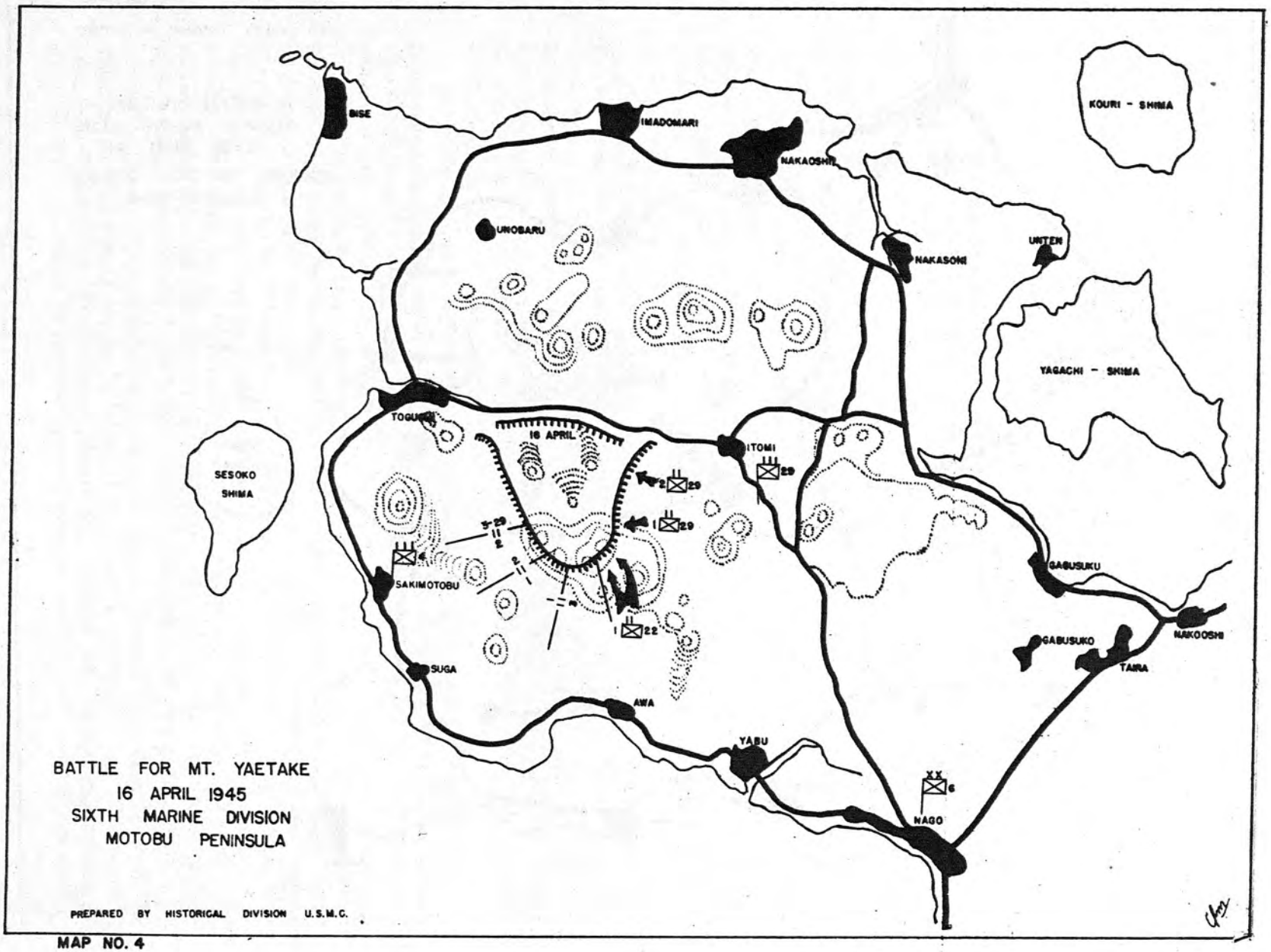
Mt. Yaetake provided Colonel Udo with ideal ground for defensive positions. Here he had unlimited observation in every direction; it was impossible to attack him without warning. The rugged character of the terrain prohibited the use of mechanized support in the reduction of his positions.

While the Twenty Ninth Marines were fixing the enemy position and determining its character and strength, General Shepherd saw that he would need additional troops to destroy Udo's force. His tactical decision was to move the Fourth Marines, less the Third Battalion, to Sakimotobu on the western side of the peninsula and attach to it the Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth Marines which was near by. Then he ordered a coordinated attack for 14 April with the Fourth Marines driving into Yaetake in an easterly direction while the Twenty Ninth Marines, with two battalions, near Itomi, attacked to the west and southwest. Udo would be hit from front and rear.

On 14 April the Fourth Marines, commanded by Colonel Alan Shapley with the Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth, attached, moved rapidly inland to seize the first high ground from which to launch the attack on Mt. Yaetake. The Twenty Ninth Marines found enemy dispositions to its front in such strength and on such unfavorable ground,


BISE
IMADOMARI
NAKAOSHI
KOURI - SHIMA
UNOBARU
NAKASONE
UNTEN
YAGACHI - SHIMA
TOGUCHI
SESOKO SHIMA
ITOMI
MT. YAETAKE
SAKIMOTOBU
SUGA
AWA
YABU
NAGO
GABUSUKU
GABUSUKO
TAIRA
NAKOOSHI
4-TH MARINES
BATTLE FOR MT. YAETAKE
14 APRIL 1945
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
MOTOBU PENINSULA
PREPARED BY HISTORICAL DIVISION U.S.M.C.

MAP NO. 3



BATTLE FOR MT. YAETAKE
16 APRIL 1945
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
MOTOBU PENINSULA

PREPARED BY HISTORICAL DIVISION U.S.M.C.

MAP NO. 4

that it was virtually impossible to attack in a southwesterly direction.

Resuming the attack on 15 April the Fourth Marines drove up the approaches to Mt. Yaetake; fighting was bitter with one battalion commander killed and several company commanders casualties. The First Battalion, Fourth Marines, seized a key hill mass southwest of the Yaetake peak against heavy resistance. Over rugged terrain the Twenty Ninth Marines continued to advance into the rear of Udo's position against intermittent resistance.

Next day, 16 April, the Sixth Marine Division prepared to attack the enemy from three sides. The First Battalion, Twenty Second Marines, which had been in immediate reserve near Awa, was ordered to advance to the north to close the gap between the two attacking regiments. After a day of extremely hard fighting the Fourth Marines seized Mt. Yaetake and held it despite an all-out Banzai charge. Meanwhile, the Twenty Ninth Marines, now under Colonel William J. Whaling, USMC, had swung its front to the west and north, destroying fixed emplacements and enemy groups as it moved.

With Udo's force caught in the jaws of a giant nutcracker, and driven from the commanding ground in its position, the Fourth Marines changed its tactics. Colonel Shapley ordered his two left battalions, facing east, to initiate a holding attack on 17 April, while the two right battalions drove down from Mt. Yaetake to the north with the mission of seizing the Manna Road. The situation on this day then, was for the two battalions to sweep down a corridor formed by the First and Second Battalions, Twenty Ninth, on the east and the Second Battalion, Fourth Marines, and Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth, on the west. Down from Yaetake and through the corridor swept the First and Third Battalions, Fourth Marines, mopping up enemy remnants as they went. Nightfall saw both regiments on the first hills south of the Toguchi-Itomi road, the road that ran through Manna.

On 19 April the Sixth Marine Division began a coordinated drive to secure the high ground remaining between the Toguchi-Itomi road and the north coast of the peninsula. On the left was the Fourth Marines; next to it, the First and Second Battalions, Twenty Ninth Marines. From Toguchi, the Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth moved by truck to Itomi and struck out through the hills toward the highest hill mass in the northern part of Motobu, which was seized next morning. On 20 April, the drive continued and both regiments reached the north coast without difficulty. Little opposition had been found in this last sweep, but it was known that several hundred enemy troops had escaped from Motobu and were somewhere in northern Okinawa.

The battle for Motobu had challenged the Sixth Division with mountain warfare of the most rugged sort. It was costly: the Sixth Marine Division lost 207 men killed, 757 wounded and 6 missing in action. In contrast, the enemy lost 2,014 men killed. Captured enemy material included 11 field pieces of 75 and 150-mm. calibre, two six-inch naval cannon and large numbers of mortars, machine guns and 20-mm. dual purpose guns.

While the other two regiments were fighting on Motobu, the Twenty Second Marines, commanded by Colonel Merlin F. Schneider, USMC, continued its march up the northern part of the mainland. On 13 April the Second Battalion moved by forced march to seize Hedo Misaki, the northern tip of the island. Scattered resistance was encountered during the march. Upon occupying Hedo Misaki, the regiment sent patrols down the east coast and on 19 April, patrols from the north and south met on the east coast at Aha. By 20 April all of Okinawa north of the original landing beaches had been secured by the Sixth Marine Division; it was known, however, that several small enemy groups still remained at large.

The first of these isolated enemy groups to be located was one consisting of about 200 men. It was contacted by the First Battalion, Twenty Second Marines, near Taniyotake, a hill mass southeast of Motobu Peninsula. After two days of heavy fighting most of the enemy band was destroyed although a few escaped to join another remnant of the Motobu action. By 27 April this group had been located and from Hentona two battalions of the Twenty Second Marines advanced toward the suspected area in a forced night march. Meanwhile from Kawada the Third Battalion, Fourth Marines hurried inland and made contact by noon. After considerable maneuvering, the battalion outflanked the enemy and forced him to fight on unfavorable ground. Most of the group was destroyed; a handful escaped.

6. BATTLE FOR NAHA

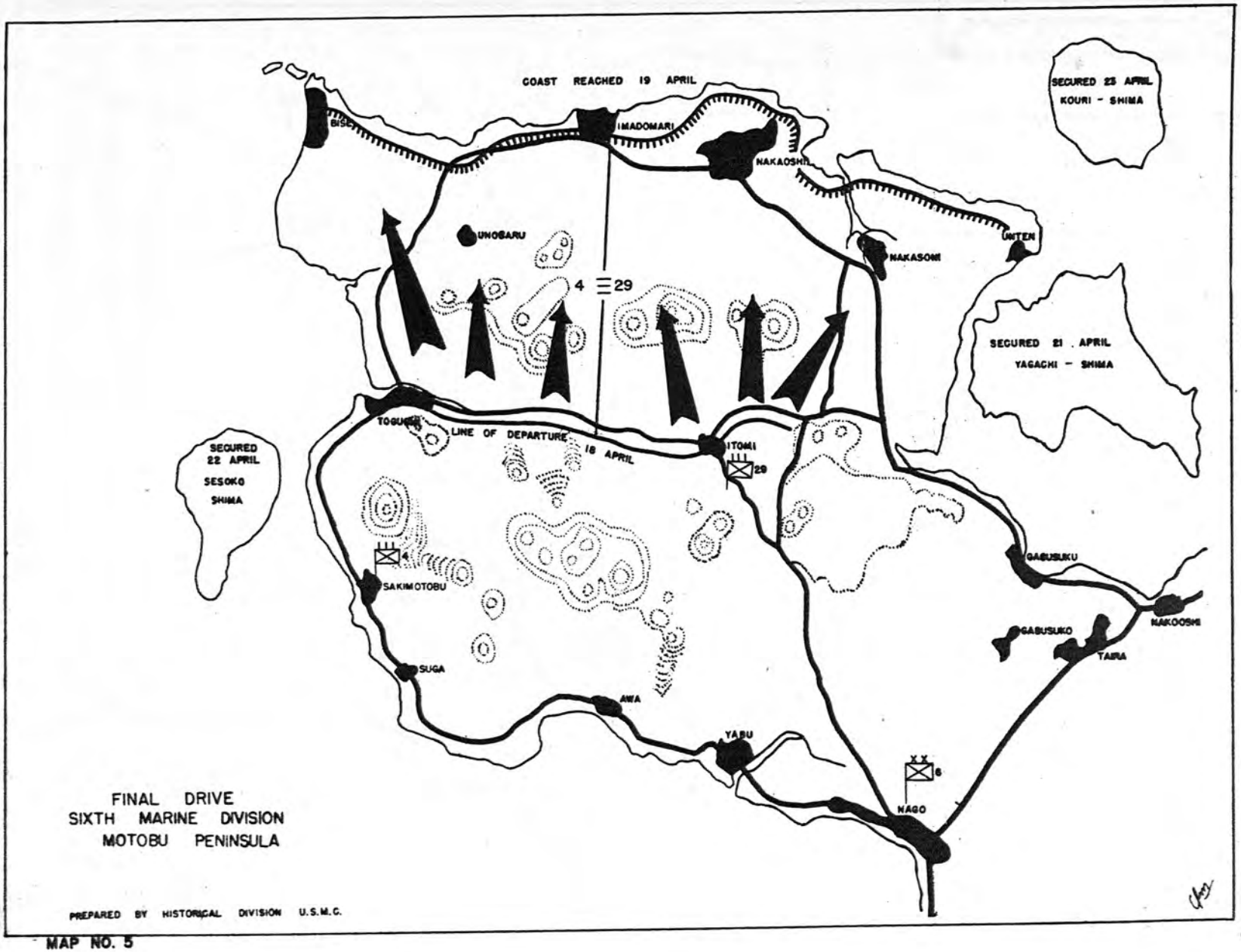
During the latter part of April the Tenth Army had found its XXIV Corps heavily engaged in southern Okinawa. It was decided that the III Amphibious Corps would be assigned the western half of the southern line on about 7 May. It was further decided that on 1 May the First Marine Division would be attached to the XXIV Corps and committed in the vicinity of Machinato Airfield. Its mission was clear out the Jichaku plateau area and then strike toward Shuri, the core of the Japanese defensive position. The Sixth Marine Division would then be committed on the right of the First Division.

All through the last week in April, the Sixth Division patrolled and garrisoned northern Okinawa. Preparations were made for the move to the south. The regiments rested, re-equipped themselves and received replacements. During the month of April the division had traveled over 84 miles, seized 436 square miles of enemy territory, captured 46 prisoners and killed nearly 2,500 of the enemy. In the same period the division had lost 236 men killed and 1,061 wounded in action.

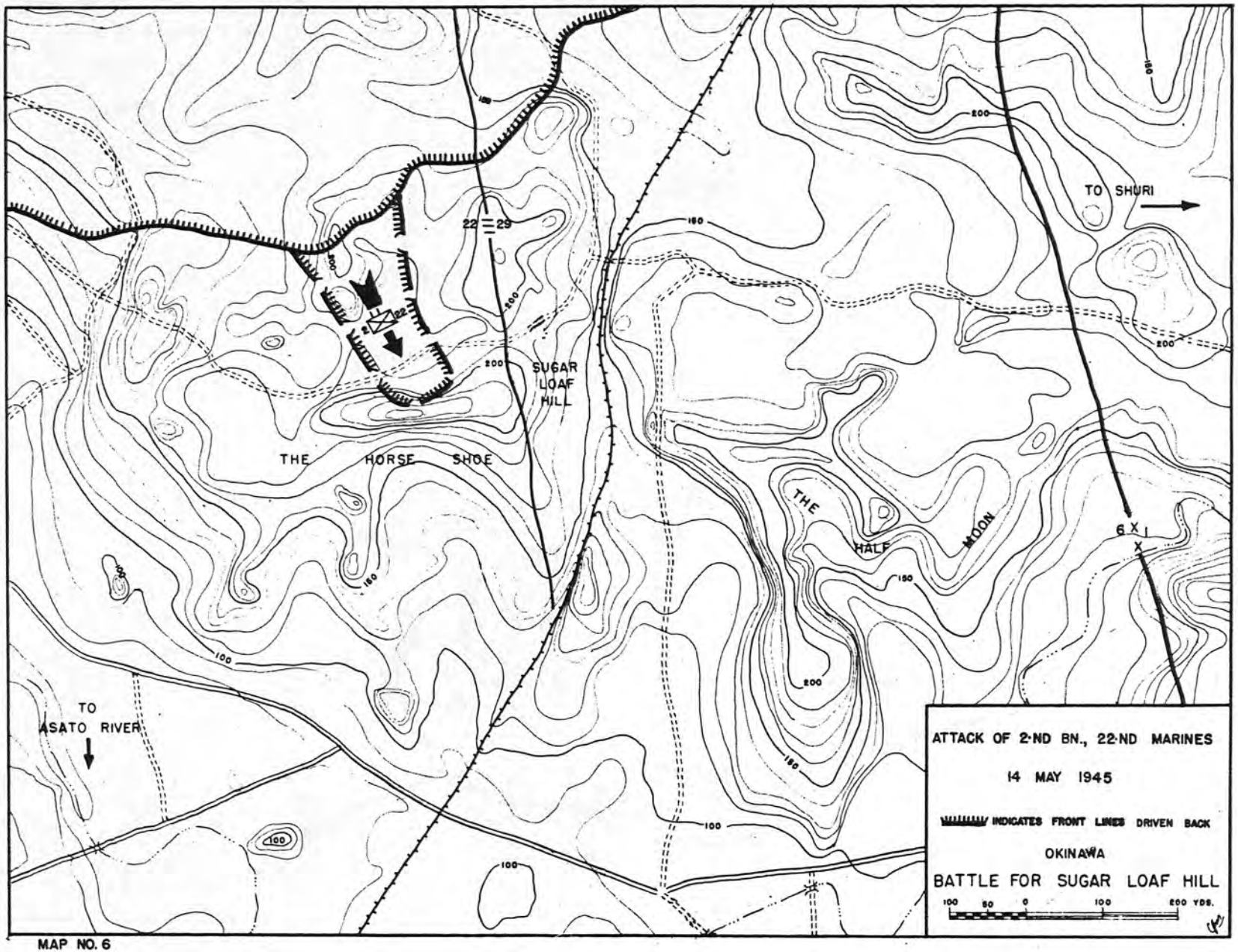
On 2 May the division began to move southward to assembly areas near Chibana, east of the original landing beaches. The responsibility for the defense of northern Okinawa passed from the Sixth Marine Division to the Twenty Seventh Infantry Division on 4 May.

According to Tenth Army order, the III Amphibious Corps was to assume responsibility for the western portion of the southern front on 7 May. The First Marine Division was already committed and was fighting to secure the high ground north and northeast of the Asa River. The Sixth Marine Division was ordered to commit one regimental combat team on the right of the First Division on 8 May. General Shepherd chose the Twenty Second Marines to be committed first. Its mission was to cross the Asa and seize the first high ground to the south. From here, the division could attack to carry out its mission, which was: To seize Naha and the line of the Kokuba River in its zone of action, to assist the First Marine Division by fire and maneuver, and to protect the Corps' right (west) flank.

All during the fighting on Motobu, the men of the Sixth Marine Division had heard stories of the fighting down south. They knew that the Tenth Army had uncovered the main Japanese defensive positions; that the enemy had chosen rough hilly ground across a narrow part of the island. The enemy was well dug in on a high and broken hill mass which took its name from its geographical center—Shuri. The line, or series of lines really, ran from north of Naha through Shuri to Yonabaru on the east coast. They had heard that the XXIV Corps had run into a virtual stalemate; that some sixty thousand of the enemy were offering fierce resistance from concealed positions; that the enemy was using mortars and artillery on an unprecedented scale; and that the enemy troops in southern Okinawa were excellent soldiers, well disciplined, and well prepared to fight


COAST REACHED 19 APRIL
SECURED 23 APRIL
KOURI - SHIMA
BISE
IMADOMARI
NAKAOSHI
UNOGARU
NAKASONE
UNTEN
4
29
SECURED 21 APRIL
YAGACHI - SHIMA
TOGUCHI
LINE OF DEPARTURE
18 APRIL
ITOMI
29
SECURED
22 APRIL
SESOKO
SHIMA
4
SAKIMOTOBU
GABUSUKU
NAKOOSHI
GABUSUKO
TAIRA
SUGA
AWA
YABU
XX
6
NAGO
FINAL DRIVE
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
MOTOBU PENINSULA
PREPARED BY HISTORICAL DIVISION U.S.M.C.

MAP NO. 5


ATTACK OF 2-ND BN., 22-ND MARINES
14 MAY 1945
INDICATES FRONT LINES DRIVEN BACK
OKINAWA
BATTLE FOR SUGAR LOAF HILL
100 50 0 100 200 YDS.
TO SHURI
TO ASATO RIVER
SUGAR LOAF HILL
THE HORSE SHOE
THE HALF MOON
22 = 29
6 X
100
150
200

MAP NO. 6

a long and costly campaign. Before the second week in May had passed the men were certain that none of the stories were exaggerated.

In the new zone of action, the Sixth Marine Division launched its first attack when it sent the Twenty Second Marines across the Asa River in the early morning hours of 10 May. Patrols had crossed the river on the previous day and reconnoitered the ground to its immediate south. The only bridge across the river in this sector had been totally destroyed. Through the night of 9-10 May, the Sixth Engineer Battalion worked to construct a footbridge. Although the little bridge was finally completed in time for the pre-dawn attack, a group of the enemy carrying demolitions packs succeeded in destroying themselves and a section of the bridge before many of the Marines got across.

At 0330, 10 May, the First and Third Battalions of the Twenty Second Marines crossed the Asa; the First waded across upstream on the regiment's left, while the Third started to use the footbridge. When it was destroyed, the battalion was forced to go upstream and wade across. At first enemy resistance was light, but as the Japanese became aware of this threat to their left flank, opposition became fierce. Despite heavy artillery, mortar, and small arms fire, the troops moved on up the first ridges. By nightfall, and after a day of heavy casualties, a bridgehead 1400 yards wide and about 400 yards deep had been established.

Next morning the reserve battalion of the Twenty Second Marines, the Second, was committed to cover the left flank of the First which was fighting to reduce an enemy stronghold on a formidable coral hill southeast of Asa village. When flanking action failed to secure the hill, the troops withdrew so that naval gunfire from the USS Indianapolis could be utilized. In the meantime the engineers labored under sporadic enemy fire to construct a Bailey Bridge across the Asa, where the footbridge had been. About noon the structure was completed and tanks roared across to support the troops. With the added fire power of the tanks, the First Battalion attacked the hill again, this time successfully. Over on the right, the Third Battalion fought for three hours before capturing the precipitous cliff area in its zone of action.

On 12 May the Twenty Second Marines, with all three battalions in the line, continued to advance despite increasing enemy resistance. Not only was the regiment receiving fire from its front, but also from the left flank, where the enemy in his positions on Wana Ridge and the Shuri heights could observe troop movements and bring fire to bear at an instant's notice. As it became apparent that the division's left was becoming open, General Shepherd ordered the Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth Marines into the line to protect the east flank. It was quite plain that another regiment would have to be committed if the momentum of advance were to be maintained.

Next day, the Sixth Marine Division continued the attack with the Second Battalion, Twenty Second Marines and the Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth, in assault. About three hundred yards was all that could be gained due to heavy enemy resistance. In the late afternoon the other two battalions of the Twenty Ninth Marines moved up behind the Third, and prepared to go into the assault on 14 May.

By this time General Shepherd had discovered the following: (1) In attempting to outflank the Shuri line, the Sixth Marine Division had uncovered the western anchor of the enemy's main defensive position; (2) Three terrain features, heavily fortified and manned, and mutually supporting formed this anchor; (3) Unprotected but heavily guarded corridors led into each of these terrain features. (4) There was no ground offering covered routes of approach, from which these terrain features could be assaulted; (5) the three terrain features (later called Horseshoe Ridge, Sugar Loaf Hill, and Half Moon Hill)

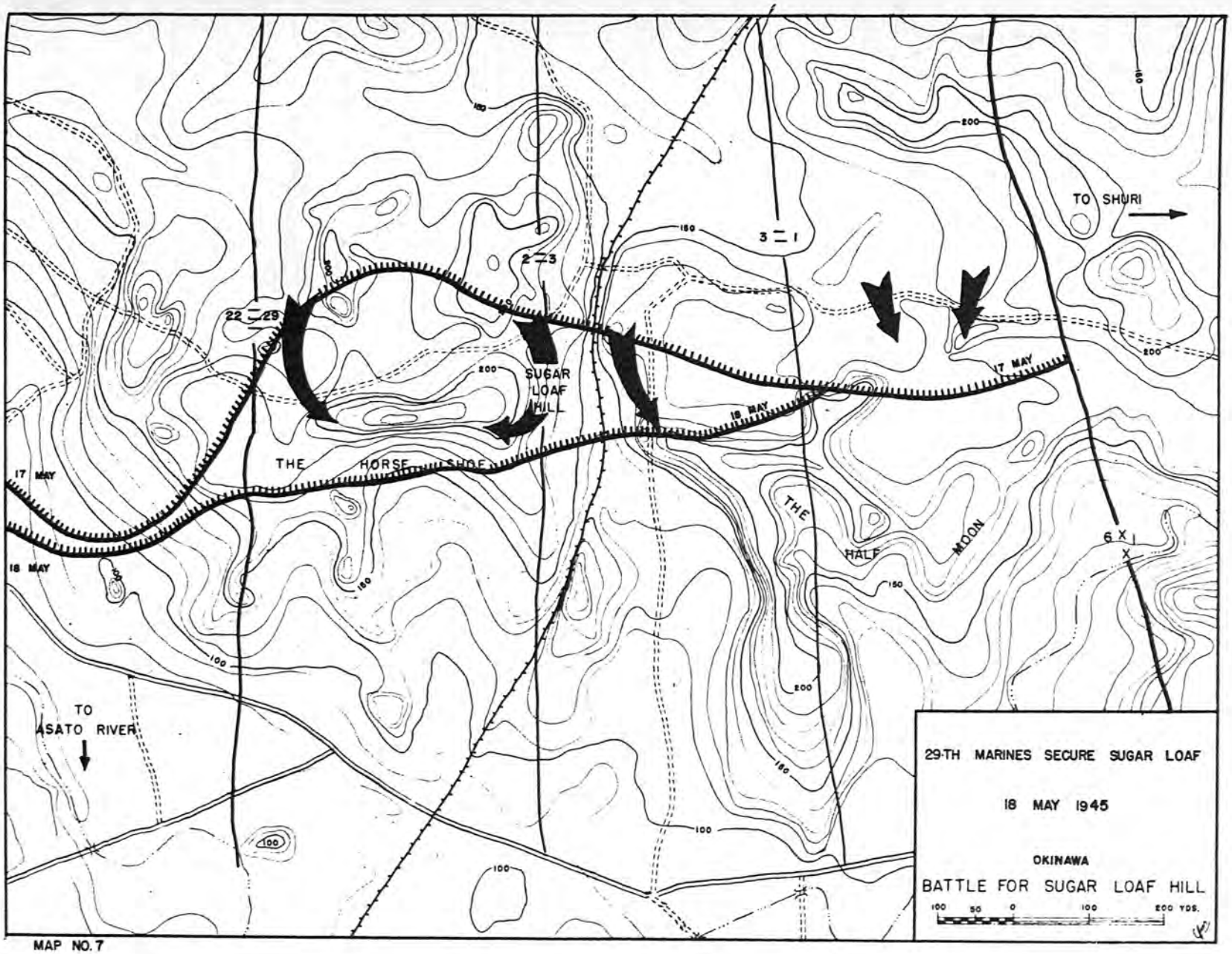
would be held by the enemy at all costs; if they were lost, the enemy's main position at Shuri would be outflanked; (6) The battle efficiency of the Twenty Second Marines was seriously impaired; It had lost over 800 men killed or wounded since crossing the Asa; (7) Naha, the capital city of Okinawa, lay open in front of the Twenty Second Marines, but it could not be seized until the Sugar Loaf defensive position, Horseshoe Ridge, and the Half Moon were reduced and cleared of enemy.

Commanding the surrounding countryside, Sugar Loaf Hill was the apex of a triangle. All three elements of the triangle were mutually supporting: Horseshoe Ridge and the Half Moon covered Sugar Loaf; from Sugar Loaf the enemy could cover the other two with fire; all three terrain features were, in turn, under observation and fire from Shuri. Troops attacking any one of the three hills would be subjected immediately to fire from the other two. There was no room for extended maneuver; on the right of the division was the sea; on the left the zone of the First Marine Division, which offered no protection or cover.

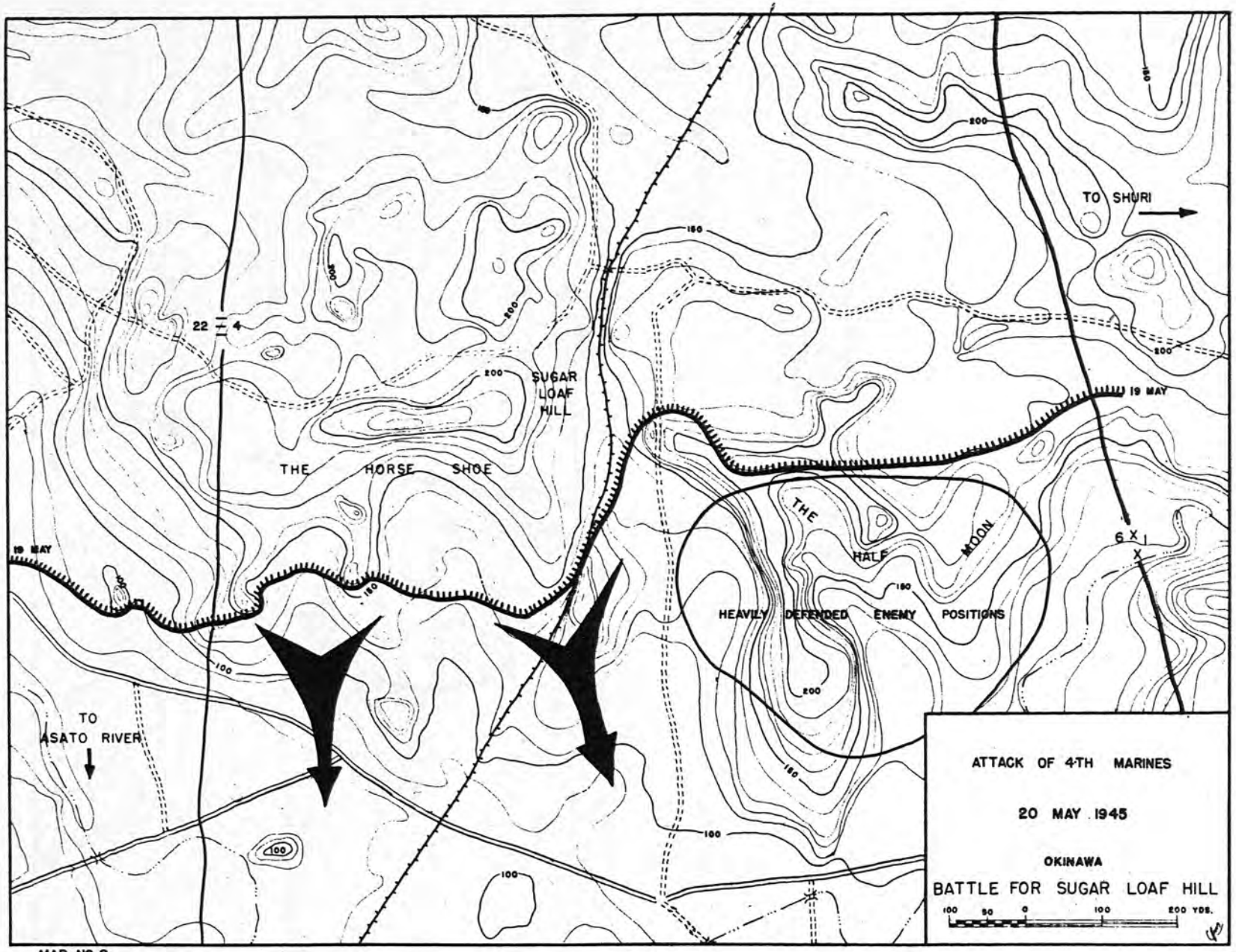
Late in the afternoon of 14 May the Second Battalion, Twenty Second, attempted a tank-infantry assault, and despite heavy 47-mm. fire that drove the tanks back, succeeded in getting a few men from "G" Company up on the top of Sugar Loaf. The attack caught the Japanese by surprise, but only momentarily; during the night, they reorganized to launch an attack next morning that drove tht Second Battalion back from the ground immediately to the north of Sugar Loaf, and finally spread over into the zone of the Twenty Ninth Marines. This counterattack, in approximately battalion strength, started a day of the bitterest fighting yet seen by the Twenty Second Marines. The desperate character that the fight now assumed was indicative of the enemy's resolve to hold the Sugar Loaf system regardless of the cost. Two battalions of the Twenty Ninth, the First and Third, encountered the same bitter fighting that was experienced by the First and Second Battalions, Twenty Second. In the corridor leading to the Half Moon, the Third Battalion, Twenty Ninth, finally reduced an enemy pocket that had been bypassed but had become so troublesome as to prevent further advance. To the left, the First Battalion was fighting in the low ground north of the Half Moon. During the afternoon of this day, 15 May, the Third Battalion, Twenty Second Marines, moved up to relieve the Second Battalion which had lost over 400 men in the last three days. Over on the division's right, the First Battalion of the Twenty Second drove down the long ridge overlooking the Asato, but could advance no further due to heavy fire from the Horseshoe and Sugar Loaf.

All during the night of 15-16 May the enemy used his mortars and artillery to interdict the front lines, causing light casualties. Early next morning the Sixth Marine Division, with the Twenty Second and Twenty Ninth regiments in assault, again attacked to seize the Sugar Loaf—Half Moon positions. Heavy enemy fire greeted the attack; from near the town of Takamotoji the enemy commenced to fire, although that area had been quiet previously. It was apparent that the enemy was moving in replacements and additional troops to bolster the Sugar Loaf system. Working its way into position on the left of the regimental front, the Third Battalion, Twenty Second Marines prepared to assault Sugar Loaf Hill. Behind tanks, and after an intense artillery barrage, the battalion advanced rapidly up the pitted north slope of the hill in the face of extremely heavy fire from enemy mortars, grenades, and automatic weapons. Several times the battalion reached the top of the hill and closed with the enemy in hand-to-hand fighting only to be driven back. Finally, with losses steadily mounting, the battalion was forced to withdraw.

Hope was held for a while on this day that the Twenty Ninth Marines might seize


29-TH MARINES SECURE SUGAR LOAF
18 MAY 1945
OKINAWA
BATTLE FOR SUGAR LOAF HILL
100 50 0 100 200 YDS.
TO SHURI
TO ASATO RIVER
SUGAR LOAF HILL
THE HORSE SHOE
THE HALF MOON
17 MAY
18 MAY
19 MAY
22 29
2 3
3 1
6 X 1
100
150
200

MAP NO. 7


ATTACK OF 4TH MARINES
20 MAY 1945
OKINAWA
BATTLE FOR SUGAR LOAF HILL
100 50 0 100 200 YDS.
TO SHURI
TO ASATO RIVER
SUGAR LOAF HILL
THE HORSE SHOE
THE HALF MOON
HEAVILY DEFENDED ENEMY POSITIONS
19 MAY
19 MAY
22 4
6 X
X
200
150
100

MAP NO. 8

Half Moon Hill. Closely supported by tanks, troops moved forward slowly and reached the edge of the ridge by late afternoon. Before they could organize defensive positions, or dig in, the enemy poured so much fire in from Shuri, Sugar Loaf, and the reverse slopes of the Half Moon, that the troops had to withdraw under the cover of smoke. Casualties were extremely heavy.

This day, 16 May, was perhaps the bitterest day of the entire Okinawa Campaign for the Sixth Marine Division. With all the strength at their command, two regiments had attacked without apparent success. A week of steady fighting had reduced the offensive capabilities of the Twenty Second Marines so General Shepherd now shifted the burden of attack to the Twenty Ninth, leaving the Twenty Second to hold where it was.

Before the Twenty Ninth Marines began the attack of 17 May, the enemy in the Sugar Loaf area was subjected to a terrific bombardment which included 16-inch shells from the main batteries of battleships, 8-inch howitzer shells, and 1000-pound aerial bombs. With tanks in close support and immediately behind a heavy and continuing artillery barrage, the First and Third Battalions, Twenty Ninth Marines edged their way to the northern edge of Half Moon Hill. Finally the Third Battalion seized a slim foothold on the northwestern edge of the hill but intense enemy fire made the position untenable and the troops were forced to withdraw. Meanwhile "E" Company of the Second Battalion was attempting a flanking attack around the east side of Sugar Loaf Hill. Despite heavy enemy mortar barrages and grenade fire, the company drove to the top of the hill three times; each time the enemy counterattacked and drove the men off. Finally at 1830 in the last vestige of light, the company mustered strength enough to assault the hill again. This time when it reached the top it beat off an enemy counterattack, but had so few men left, and so many wounded to be evacuated, that it had to pull back to better ground for the night.

At dusk, but while there was still enough light to be seen, the enemy attempted to reinforce Sugar Loaf and began to move his troops in the open. Almost immediately twelve battalions of our artillery took the enemy troops under time-on-target fire and inflicted such heavy losses that the reinforcement threat was broken up. While the Half Moon and Sugar Loaf still remained in enemy hands, the division had made gains that were not yet perceptible. There was no way of knowing as yet the extent of the enemy's losses. So far, he had been able to move in enough reinforcements to counter our attacks, but his losses had reached the point where he could no longer readily replace them. Meanwhile, the Twenty Ninth Marines had got into position for the final attack, which was to be launched next day.

At 0830, 18 May, the First and Third Battalions, Twenty Ninth again assaulted the enemy on the Half Moon. After a foothold was established the fighting resolved itself into a slugging match, and this enabled the Second Battalion to make its move. It first attempted to encircle Sugar Loaf with tanks but enemy mines, 47-mm. fire, and artillery fire disabled six tanks and drove the rest back.

Next, the Second Battalion launched a combined tank-infantry assault on Sugar Loaf, working the tanks, closely supported by troops, around each flank of the hill simutaneously. One tank accompanied by troops, edged its way around the west side of the hill and commenced firing into the enemy's reverse slope defenses. Then, as the enemy moved to repel this threat, another tank worked its way around the east side of the hill and emptied its machine guns into the backs of the defenders of Sugar Loaf. In the ensuing pandemonium troops swarmed all over the hill and, after an hour of heavy fighting, the hill was firmly held by Marines. "F" Company was sent to seize the Horseshoe and reduce the mortar positions there that were firing on Sugar Loaf. The company moved

rapidly across the intervening ground, climbed up on the Horseshoe, and engaged the enemy in a hand grenade battle. During the night the enemy counterattacked and drove "F" Company back to Sugar Loaf but could not regain the lost hill. Over on the left of the zone of action of the Twenty Ninth Marines, the First and Third Battalions held their positions at the base of the Half Moon, despite heavy enemy fire. For the action during the period 14-19 May, the Twenty Ninth Marines, and attached units, were awarded the Presidential Unit Citation.

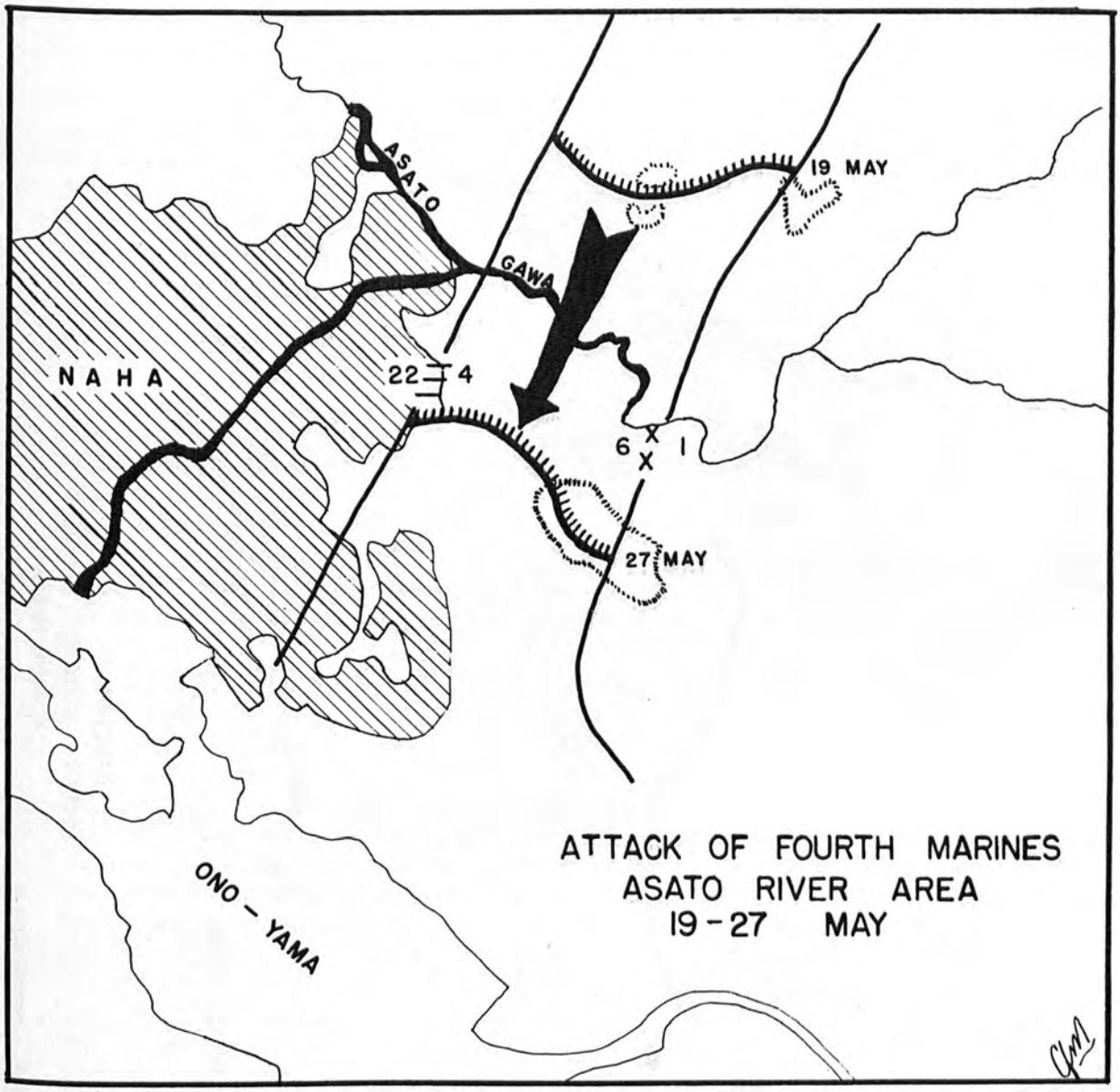
In order to exploit the recently won gains General Shepherd ordered the Fourth Marines fresh after a two weeks' rest, to relieve the Twenty Ninth on 19 May. On the right of the division's front, the Twenty Second Marines remained in position, but were in no condition to continue the attack. After relieving the Twenty Ninth Marines, the Fourth prepared to attack next day to seize the upper reaches of the Asato River. The night of 19 May saw the enemy making full use of his mortars and artillery but casualties were light. Next morning the Fourth Marines attacked Horseshoe Ridge and managed to seize a part of it. While the fighting raged, the enemy on the Shuri Hill mass turned his weapons and hit the flank of the Fourth with heavy fire. At 2130, following a terrific 90-mm. mortar barrage, the enemy commenced to counterattack with Sugar Loaf as the objective. Centering on the Third Battalion, Fourth Marines, the counterattack continued until midnight. During this time naval star shells kept the critical area illuminated and six battalions of artillery fired to break up the counterattack. Before the enemy was driven back, it was necessary to commit part of the regimental reserve. In this unsuccessful counterattack, the enemy lost nearly 300 killed while the Fourth Marines only lost 1 man killed and 19 wounded.

On 21 May the Fourth Marines made slight gains in the interior of Horseshoe Ridge but the foothold on the Half Moon could not be expanded. Until Shuri fell it would be virtually impossible to take the Half Moon in its entirety. It was futile to attack on the left. Now the emphasis was shifted to the regiment's right and on the morning of 22 May the front lines advanced slowly to the Asato.

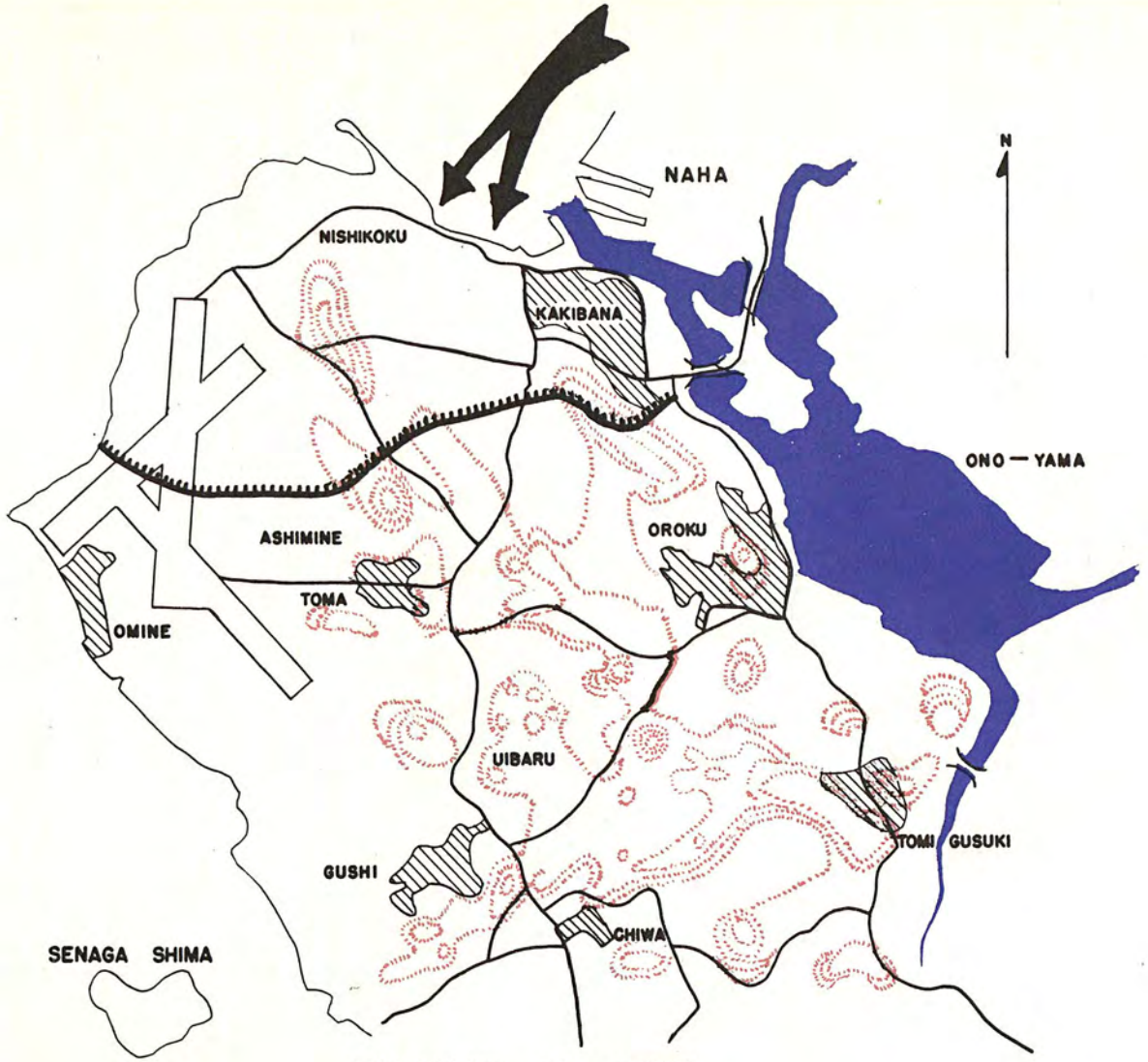
Employing a holding attack on the extreme left of the division front, General Shepherd was ready to exploit his gains. After a thorough reconnaissance of the ground just across the Asato, the Fourth Marines moved two battalions across the river during the afternoon of 23 May and ran into determined enemy resistance. The position of the Fourth Marines, while not precarious, was extremely difficult. Two attempts to bridge the Asato had failed; all food, water and ammunition had to be carried across by hand. The past three days had brought unusually heavy rains and the entire division zone of action was a sea of mud. Wading through mud ankle deep, stretcher bearers had a hard time getting the wounded back to evacuation points north of the rear. Few vehicles could negotiate the morass of mud that characterized the area. These rains were to continue until the last of May.

On 25 May the Fourth Marines resumed the attack and seized most of the north-south ridge line west of Machishi. About a company of the enemy counterattacked during the night and spent its force in the sector of the Third Battalion. While the Fourth Marines were moving into the eastern outskirts of Naha, the Division Reconnaissance Company crossed the Asato near its mouth and penetrated the urban portion of Naha west of the north-south canal. Enemy resistance was very light; only a few snipers harassed the company. Next day, with the heavy rain still falling, the Fourth Marines confined its efforts to vigorous patrolling. The reconnaissance company moved 300 yards further into Naha.

Unmistakable signs on 26 May pointed toward a Japanese withdrawal from the Shuri


ASATO
GAWA
19 MAY
NAHA
22
4
6
1
27 MAY
ONO - YAMA
ATTACK OF FOURTH MARINES
ASATO RIVER AREA
19 - 27 MAY

MAP NO. 9



BEACHHEAD ON OROKU
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
4 JUNE 1945

PREPARED BY HISTORICAL DIVISION U.S.M.C.

MAP NO. 10

position. In order to determine the extent of the withdrawal to the front of the Sixth Marine Division, all units commenced patrolling. Part of the Second Battalion, Twenty Second Marines, crossed the Asato and passed through the Reconnaissance Company while pushing farther into Naha. The city was almost a total wreck. Only a few buildings around the outskirts remained standing and these were badly damaged. During the day the Fourth Marines sent patrols over 300 yards forward of the lines and found only light opposition.

Again General Shepherd reoriented his attack; he ordered the Twenty Second Marines to complete the capture of Naha and be prepared to advance through the hills that overlook the Kokuba River from the north. At the same time, he ordered the Twenty Ninth Marines to relieve the Fourth, and to be prepared to continue the attack to the southeast toward the Shichina hills. On 28 May the Twenty Ninth Marines commenced to relieve the Fourth Marines; at the same time, the Twenty Second Marines completed the capture of urban Naha, the part that lies to the west of the north-south canal.

Initially, the Twenty Ninth Marines were to carry out a holding attack while supporting the Twenty Second Marines by fire. On 29 May, with the Twenty Ninth Marines holding on its left, the Twenty Second Marines crossed the north-south canal and commenced to fight through the low hills that lead to Shichina, and parallel the Kokuba River. The attack moved rapidly at first on the right but the enemy rear guard, stationed in the hills to the front of the two regiments, began to resist more fiercely, and it wasn't until 1 June that the two regiments were able to clean out the enemy in the Shichina area; now the division could look down from its position above the Kokuba and see the Naha-Yonabaru cross-island highway. Across the river, troops could see destroyed materiel abandoned by the enemy in his hasty withdrawal to the south.

The Twenty Second Marines rested now for the first time since crossing the Asa River on 10 May. For this period the regiment, and its attached units, was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation. In the drive from the Asa to the Kokuba casualties had been heavy.

7. BATTLE FOR OROKU

After the seizure of Naha and the area to its east the Sixth Marine Division prepared to continue its drive to the south by making an amphibious landing on Oroku. General Shepherd ordered his Division Reconnaissance Company, a flexible group that worked under G-2 or G-3 as the situation demanded, to cross the estuary during the night of 1-2 June and reconnoiter possible landing beaches as well as explore the area inland where the beachhead would be established. Using plastic boats, the company made its reconnaissance and returned to Naha at 0300, 2 June, to report that the northern part of Oroku Peninsula was occupied by the enemy but not in great strength.

The plan for the reduction of enemy forces on Oroku was simple and complete; it left the Japanese no alternatives except to surrender or die. The Fourth Marines were to make a dawn landing on 4 June and as the beachhead expanded, the Twenty Ninth Marines were to go in on the left of the Fourth. With two regiments attacking abreast, the plan called for the other regiment, the Twenty Second Marines, to throw a cordon-like line across the base of the peninsula in conjunction with the First Marine Division as it crossed both forks of the Kokuba river and drove south. Then with the Twenty Second facing northwest and preventing the enemy from escaping, the two assault regiments would drive east and southeast to exterminate the enemy defenders of Oroku.

After the rainy weather of the last week in May and the first few days in June, the Sixth Marine Division faced a tremendous logistical problem. Initially the assault regi-

ments would have to be supplied by amphibious craft over the same route used for the landing. As the attack moved to the southeast, there was a chance that the Naha Estuary could be bridged by using little Ona Yama island, which lay in the center of the estuary, almost equidistant from Naha and Oroku. There were a few of the enemy on Ono Yama; these would have to be killed before the engineers could commence their bridging efforts. Simultaneously then, with the landing of the Fourth Marines on Oroku, the Sixth Reconnaissance Company was ordered to land on, and secure, Ono Yama. All through 2-3 June amphibious trucks (DUKWS) and tractors carried supplies and equipment over impassable roads to the beach at Naha where the landing was to be launched.

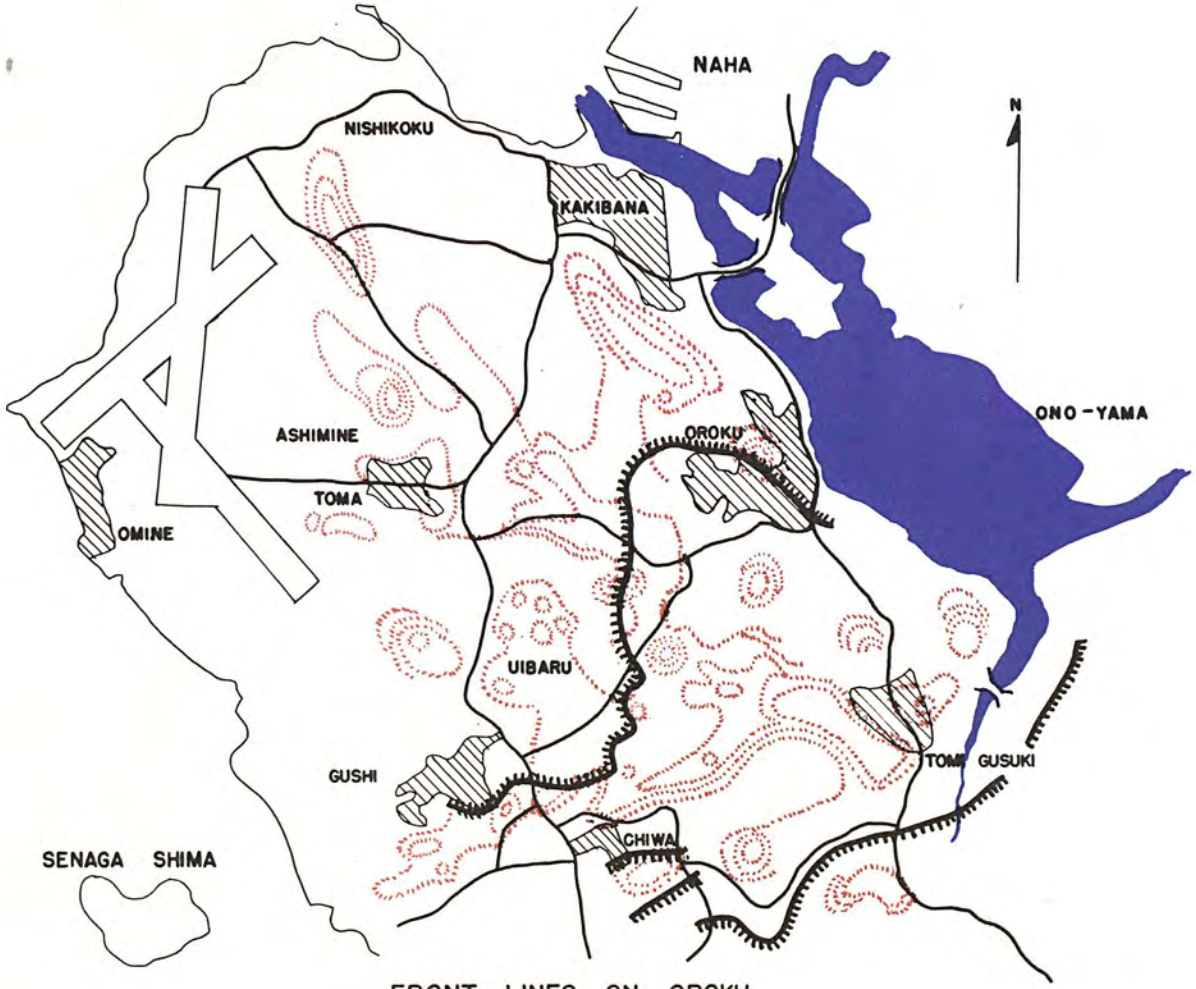
Before dawn, 4 June, the preliminary bombardment commenced on Oroku and Ono Yama. At 0551, the Fourth Marines landed two battalions without any great difficulty. Early enemy resistance was light and the troops moved rapidly inland. At 1000 the Twenty Ninth Marines commenced to load a battalion to send across to join the Fourth. In the meantime, the Division Reconnaissance Company had landed on Ono Yama and killed a handful of Japanese.

Defending Oroku were mixed troops. There were some regular units, some Okinawa Home Guardsmen, and some were naval and air personnel from units stationed at Naha Port, and Naha Airfield. The rough character of the terrain on Oroku, with the exception of the flat ground around the airfield, lent itself to the defenders. From carefully prepared cave positions they could use the machine guns, 40 and 20-mm. antiaircraft guns that had been stripped from the defenses of the airfield. This enemy group on Oroku, some 5000 strong, had resigned themselves to making a last ditch stand on the peninsula. Initially, however, the amphibious landing of the Fourth Marines caught them by surprise. With the advance of the First Division across the Kokuba toward Itoman, the enemy apparently decided that Oroku would be attacked from its base, not its northwest tip, and was originally deployed to fight off any thrust from the base.

It was indeed unfortunate then, that because of two factors beyond its control, the Sixth Marine Division was not afforded the opportunity of really capitalizing on its tactical surprise to the enemy. The rainy weather through the latter part of May and early June had made Oroku extremely muddy. What few roads there were that led inland from the landing beaches were either mined or had sections blown out so that our tanks could not use them. The rice paddies, fields and hills, ankle to knee deep with mud, were heavily mined, precluding the possibility of tank movement and causing the infantry to move with utmost caution. At a time when speed could have meant rapid gains, the division found itself forced to let the rifle companies fight as best they could and without many of their supporting arms. The brief respite gained by the enemy allowed him to redeploy his forces to resist the attack of the Fourth and Twenty Ninth Marines.

It wasn't until 13 June that the enemy forces on Oroku were destroyed. The Fourth Marines, after landing on 4 June, had seized the first hills inland and then as the Twenty Ninth came in on the left, the Fourth secured Naha Airfield and drove to the southeast in an encircling maneuver. Facing the enemy from the east, the Twenty Second Marines kept him bottled up and harassed his rear. On the left, driving down the long ridge that parallels the estuary, the Twenty Ninth moved slowly. In the extreme broken terrain that characterized Oroku, the enemy resisted fiercely using all the weapons at his command to prevent the advancing Marines from crossing the numerous compartments, and denying them the use of the corridors.

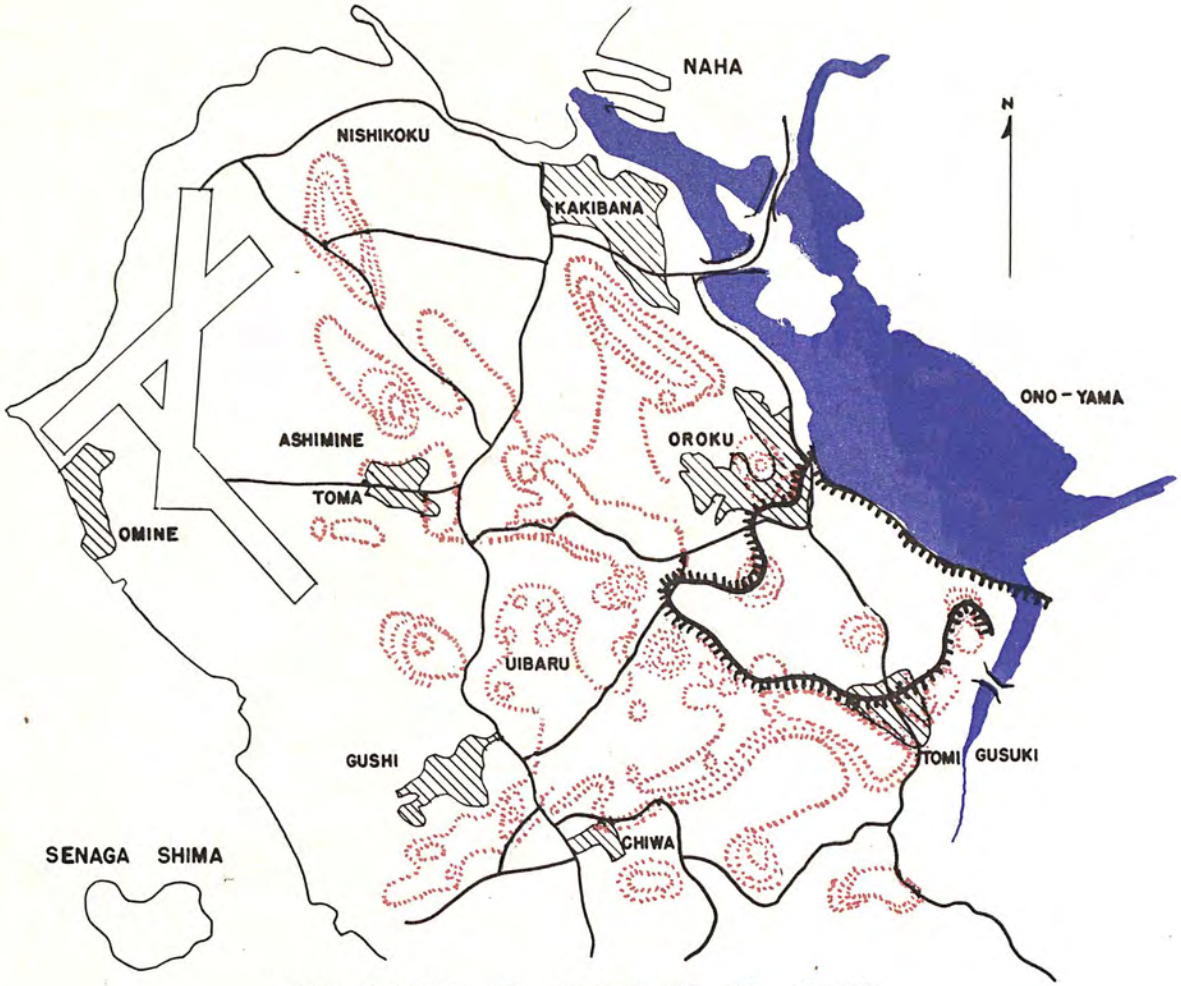
The advance was slow and the action costly. In addition to his automatic weapons, small arms, grenade discharges and mortars, the enemy had 320-mm. spigot mortars and



FRONT LINES ON OROKU
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
9 JUNE 1945

PREPARED BY HISTORICAL DIVISION U.S.M.C.

MAP NO. 11



LAST POCKET OF RESISTANCE ON OROKU
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
12-14 JUNE 1945

PREPARED BY HISTORICAL DIVISION U.S.M.C.

MAP NO. 12

artillery. Cut off, surrounded, and assaulted from all sides, the enemy was exacting a final price for the peninsula. It was not until 12 June that the first real break in his carefully coordinated defense became apparent. On this day, converging forces of the Fourth Marines and the Twenty Ninth had the enemy completely encircled. From his positions, the enemy could look to the northwest and see the Twenty Ninth; turning to the south, he could see the Fourth Marines driving in on his flank; behind him was the Twenty Second Marines, moving in slowly to complete his doom.

During the afternoon of 12 June, some enemy groups came out waving white surrender flags. Others refused to surrender and pressed grenades to their stomachs. Still others allowed themselves to be killed while offering only feeble resistance. In most, the will to live was gone; they were resigned to their fate. Next day, 861 Japanese were killed and 73 taken prisoner.

Before the capture of Oroku could be called complete, there remained to be taken the small island of Senaga Shima. After a heavy preliminary bombardment, the Sixth Division's Reconnaissance Company, with a company from the Twenty Ninth Marines attached, landed on the island and quickly seized it. Only two of the enemy were found and killed but many fine coastal guns were captured. Now the battle for Oroku was over. The enemy had resisted bitterly, 1,608 Marines were killed or wounded in the capture of the peninsula, and thirty of our tanks were lost. During the ten days of fighting the Sixth Marine Division had killed almost 5,000 Japanese and had captured nearly 200. For its excellent work in landing on the peninsula, seizing the airdrome and then driving around the enemy's position to overwhelm him from the flank, the Fourth Marines was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation.

8. END OF CAMPAIGN

On 15 June the III Amphibious Corps instructed the Sixth Marine Division to be prepared to pass through the right of the First Marine Division on Mezado Ridge on 17 June. The mission assigned the Sixth Marine Division was to seize Kuwanga Ridge, part of Ibaru Ridge, and the Kiyamu Gusuku hill mass. Although their plight was hopeless, the enemy still held out in the southernmost part of Okinawa, evidently intent upon exacting as stiff a price, in terms of lives, as possible before being destroyed. Like a trapped animal, the Japanese were resisting bitterly and from their positions on the hills and ridges, were delaying the attackers as long as possible.

With its zone of action limited in width, the Sixth Division committed the Twenty Second Marines at 0300, 17 June. To reach Mezado Ridge, the regiment had to advance past Kunishi through open ground swept by enemy fire. During the hours of daylight, the First Division, fighting on Kunishi and Mezado Ridge, was forced to use tanks to supply the front lines and evacuate the wounded. By moving before daylight the Twenty Second Marines had little difficulty in reaching positions from which to launch an attack to secure Mezado Ridge. After an intense preliminary artillery, naval gunfire, and aerial bombardment on Mezado Ridge, Hill 69 and Kuwanga Ridge, the First and Third Battalions attacked at 0730. The advance was slow and difficult due to increasing enemy resistance. With every weapon at his command the enemy brought fire to bear on the assault battalions. By late afternoon the attack had moved up on the western part of Mezado Ridge; the Third Battalion had captured the key high ground around Hill 69, and could see Kuwanga Ridge to the south.

Next morning, 18 June, the Twenty Second Marines continued the attack, passing the Second Battalion through the Third, which was left to mop up in its immediate area.

Against heavy resistance the Second Battalion advanced to Kuwanga Ridge and by late afternoon had a firm hold on the ridge. While moving through the Mezado Area to inspect his regiment's attack, Colonel H. C. Roberts, USMC, the Commanding Officer of the Twenty Second Marines, was shot through the heart by a sniper.

Although the Second Battalion had a foothold on Kuwanga Ridge, it could not hold the entire length of the ridge, some 1800 yards, and General Shepherd decided to move up a battalion of the Fourth Marines on the left in order to hold the ridge through the night. On the next day he could continue the attack to the south with a fresh regiment.

Early in the morning of 19 June, the Fourth Marines with the First and Third Battalions abreast, assaulted Ibaru Ridge and, after a brisk fight, had seized the ridge by noon. After a hasty reorganization on the ridge, the regiment attacked again, this time to capture the Kiyamu-Gusuku hill mass. Immediately upon leaving Ibaru the Fourth Marines ran into heavy enemy fire from mortars emplaced behind the hill mass and machine guns firing from concealed positions on it. Just before dark the regiment succeeded in gaining a small foot hold on the high plateau of the hill mass. During the afternoon the little island just offshore from Nagasuku was seized by a quickly assembled task force consisting of three amphibious tractors, two 37-mm. platoons and a War Dog platoon. In the brief action 20 Japanese soldiers were killed and 8 taken prisoner.

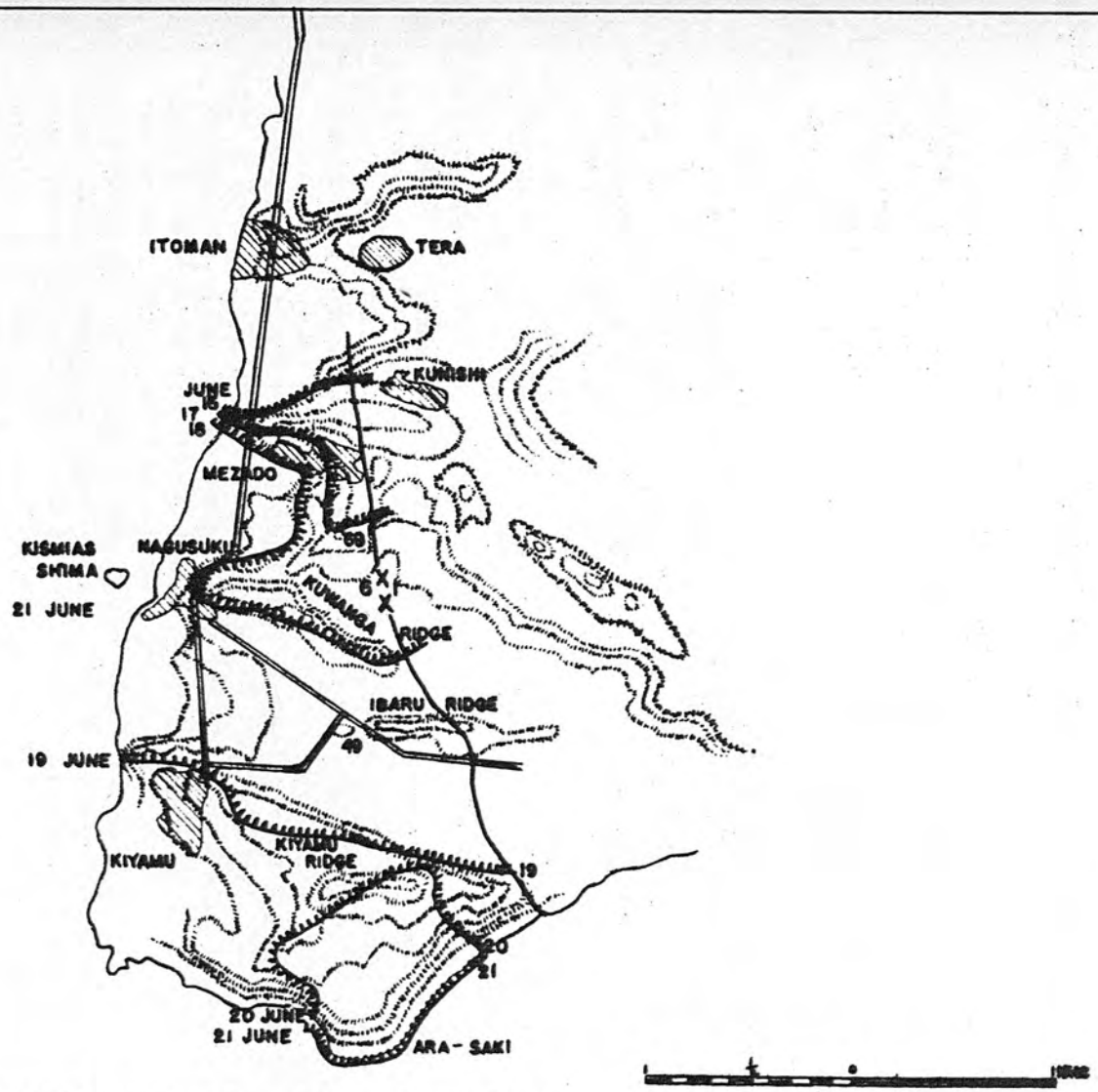
On 19 June the Sixth Marine Division committed two battalions of the Twenty Ninth Marines on the right of the Fourth Marines in preparation for a final assault to seize the 5000 square yards of ground remaining. Next day at 0700 both regiments attacked, the Twenty Ninth to drive to the coast, and the Fourth to complete the seizure of the Kiyamu-Gusuku Ridge. Against light opposition, the Twenty Ninth Marines advanced rapidly and reached the southern coast. Harassing long range fire from the regiment's left caused few casualties. The enemy in this sector began to surrender. An LCI, equipped with a loudspeaker, moved along the coast calling to the remaining Japanese to give themselves up. Over 700 Japanese officers and men surrendered during the day.

Meanwhile over on the division's left, the Fourth Marines were engaged in a bloody fight to secure Kiyamu-Gusuku Ridge. From their positions in the hill mass the Japanese resisted desperately with intense mortar and small arms fire. After a day of bitter fighting the Second Battalion captured Hill 80, the peak of the hill mass, but the remainder of the ground was still held by the enemy.

Resuming its attack on 21 June the Fourth Marines turned from frontal assaults and flanking attacks to a double envelopment from the rear. Early in the morning the two flank battalions sent companies around either extremity of the ridge and at 0800 struck the enemy's rear in a coordinated attack. For two hours the enemy fought back bitterly but could not halt the assaulting Marines. With the fall of the Kiyamu-Gusuku Ridge all organized resistance in the Sixth Marine Division's zone of action ceased.

During all but thirteen of the eighty two days that the Okinawa Campaign lasted, the Sixth Marine Division was committed and actively engaged. Credited to the division were 23,000 Japanese killed and over 3,500 captured. The division had captured over two thirds of Okinawa and had repeatedly fought the enemy on his own terms, and his own ground. During this operation the Sixth Marine Division had taken heavy losses; 400 officers and 7,822 enlisted men were either killed or wounded. In the drive from the Asa River to the Kokuba, the division had lost the equivalent of a regiment of men. Not included in the above figures are men lost due to non-battle casualties, sickness, or combat fatigue.

After reaching the southern coast the Sixth Division turned to retrace its steps back to the Kokuba, mopping up enemy remnants at it went.



BATTLE FOR ARA-SAKI PENINSULA
16-21 JUNE 1945
OKINAWA

PREPARED BY HISTORICAL DIVISION U.S.M.C.

MAP NO. 13

The first week in July found the Sixth Marine Division busy with preparations for the trip to the new base camp on Guam. On 4 July there was an impressive ceremony held to dedicate the division cemetery. Although the division was preparing to leave Okinawa, it paused briefly to pay its respects to those of its members who would have to remain forever behind. In the last paragraph of the special order of dedication, General Shepherd admonished his men as follows:

"As this cemetery is dedicated to the dead and to the past that they made glorious by their heroic sacrifices, let there be in the minds of the members of this division the resolve to dedicate their future efforts to speeding the impending final defeat of the enemy to the end that there will no longer be occasion for the sacrifice that the honored dead of our division were called upon to make on this island."

9. GUAM

On 16 July General Shepherd and his staff arrived at Guam and set up his new command post. By direction of Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, a base camp had been built for the Sixth Marine Division on Guam. As soon as the units had moved into their new areas, construction was begun on chapels and recreation facilities. A division training order was issued on 23 July outlining a program to last from 6 August to 15 December 1945.

On 26 July General Shepherd published a letter of gratitude from the people of Guam to the officers and men of the Sixth Marine Division. Written on the occasion of "Guam Liberation Day", 21 July, one year after the Fourth and Twenty Second Marines had landed on the bloody beaches near Agat, the letter, signed by several leading Guamanians said in part:

"On behalf of the people of Guam we take this opportunity, as a token of everlasting gratitude, to extend our greetings and felicitations to you, the officers and men of the First Provisional Brigade which formed the nucleus of the Sixth Marine Division, with its supporting arms and services, on the first anniversary of D-Day.

"Through popular request, the twenty first of July has been designated as 'Guam Liberation Day'. It is fitting and proper that we renew and reaffirm our loyalty and devotion to our mother country and the cause for which she stands."

With general preparations for future combat operations against the enemy underway, the Sixth Marine Division launched an intensive training program in August. The main effort of the division was diverted, however, from 11-15 August to preparing and mounting out Task Group Able for the forthcoming occupation of Yokosuka Naval Base. This task group was a headquarters command headed by Brigadier General William T. Clement which was superimposed over the Fourth Marines (Reinforced), under the command of Lt. Col. Fred D. Beans. On 16 August, Task Group Able departed from Guam and three days later joined the Third Fleet.

As a part of the Fleet Landing Force, Task Group Able landed at Yokosuka Naval Base and Airfield on 30 August. There was no opposition to the landing. Here it remained as a part of the Sixth Marine Division until late in November when it passed from the administrative control of the division to that of Fleet Marine Force, Pacific. Its general duties consisted of demilitarizing the Naval area of responsibility, and in providing security for the Naval Base and Airfield. On 20 September, all reinforcing elements of the Fourth Marines and its superior command, Task Force Able Headquarters, returned to Guam, leaving the regiment under the operational control of the Eighth Army. By January the force had been reduced to the Third Battalion; the other two battalions, Weapons Company, and Headquarters and Service Company departed for the U. S. to be disbanded. Later a reduced regimental headquarters group left for Tsingtao to rejoin the division.

10. TSINGTAO

During the month of September the Sixth Marine Division prepared for an operation, the forthcoming occupation of Tsingtao, China. From 2 October until 11 October the division was aboard ship en route to China and commenced unloading at Tsingtao on the latter date.

While aboard the division command ship en route to Tsingtao, General Shepherd stated the general mission of his command:

"Our mission is to land and occupy Tsingtao and the adjacent Tsangkou Airfield; to assist local authorities in maintaining order and in preventing disease and starvation; to release, care for, and evacuate Recovered Allied Military personnel and Allied internees; to cooperate with Chinese Central Government forces; to accept, when necessary, local surrender of Japanese forces, as authorized by higher authority, and to assist the Chinese in effecting the disarming and confining of these forces."

The city of Tsingtao, with 1,300,000 inhabitants is situated on a promontory on the southern coast of Shantung Peninsula. It is regarded as one of the finest ports in China, and is second only to Shanghai as a textile manufacturing center. When the division landed, it found the citizens of Tsingtao to be a polyglot group: Communist agents, former Nazis, White Russians, Koreans, Japanese civilians, Japanese military personnel, Europeans, Eurasians, and Chinese.

Politically, Tsingtao, as the most coveted city on Shantung Peninsula, was a hotbed of intrigue and strife. The Communists, with a stronghold at Chefoo, hoped to gain control of the peninsula, and the city. Resisting them were Japanese troops, protecting rail lines leading into the city. Here too, were independent factions ostensibly aligned with the Chungking government. Still in evidence, but ineffective, were puppet groups. At large, but not easily identified with either Chungking or Yennan, were small groups of brigands which terrorized Tsingtao despite the Mayor and his poorly trained and discipined troops.

Most of the interior of the Shantung Peninsula was controlled by Communists; their only access to the sea was at the port of Chefoo. Early in the month of October an emissary from the Commander-in-Chief of the Liberation Army of the Communists entered the harbor and sought an audience with General Shepherd. Permission was granted and a letter was presented which proposed, in essence, passive collaboration between the Marines and the Communists. Offering to enter the city to "restore order" by killing puppet troops, that is those troops who professed allegiance to Chiang Kai-Shek's Chinese Central Government, the Communists promised not to disturb the Marines of the Sixth Division. To this General Shepherd replied firmly that he would have no part in a fratricidal war between factions in China, and that his combat veterans could prevent any disorders in the city.

Obviously, the Communist forces had hoped to gain complete control of the Shantung Peninsula at the cessation of hostilities through the surrender of Japanese troops to them.

One of the earliest problems to confront the men of the Sixth Marine Division in Tsingtao was a financial one, the fluctuating rate of exchange. With inflation rampant, attempts to stabilize the exchange at one American dollar to 2,000 Chinese Federal Reserve Bank dollars failed. Black markets flourished for a while and speculation in local currency helped to make that currency unstable. Food was plentiful but there was a shortage of coal.

Law and order was more a matter of theory than practice. Throughout October uniformed Chinese perpetrated many small crimes against both the Japanese and German

residents. These usually consisted of breaking into houses, threatening the occupants with rifles or pistols, and stealing jewelry, silver, or small valuables. Marine roving patrols remedied this situation. It wasn't long before the Sixth Marine Division found itself regarded as the guardian of minority groups within the city.

The mornng of 25 October found the Twenty Second Marines, the Twenty Ninth Marines, the Sixth Tank Battalion, the Sixth Engineers, the Sixth Marine Division Headquarters Battalion, and other troops, marching out to the race track at the edge of Tsingtao to witness the surrender ceremony of the Japanese to representatives of the United States and Chinese Central Governments.

At 1100 the ceremony began. For the Japanese, Maj. General Eiji Nagano, commanding officer of the Japanese 5th Independent Mixed Brigade, stepped up on the platform and affixed his signature to copies of the surrender document. After laying his sword on the table Nagano withdrew to rejoin his staff, who immediately followed his example. On the platform representing the United States was General Shepherd who signed his name next. Lt. Gen. Yen Nien Li, deputy commander of the 11th War Area and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek's personal representative, signed for the Chinese Central Government.

The surrender document stated that all Japanese forces in the Tsingtao area were to surrender unconditionally to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek and that all equipment and records were to be turned over to the Allies in good condition. Civilian internees and prisoners of war were to be released immediately. General Shepherd, as Commanding General of the Sixth Marine Division, was named as Chiang's authorized representative.

By the end of October, the division had settled to its routine duties. Guards had been established over American properties and Japanese warehouses; patrols were maintained throughout the non-Chinese sections of the city. A new training program was started. Special Services distributed athletic gear and arranged athletic events; in addition, an education program had been started. The division began to make plans for withdrawal as soon as the 8th Chinese National Army arrived. By 23 November, before a lapse occurred, 6,701 Japanese military personnel and 877 Japanese civilians had been evacuated to Japan. Along with the repatriation of the Japanese, many members of the division were "repatriated" to the United States through rotation as point scores dropped.

During the month of December the Sixth Marine Division continued its duties in Tsingtao; 7,827 military and 18,390 civilian Japanese were repatriated. Near the end of the month Major General A. F. Howard, USMC, arrived to relieve Major General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., USMC, as Commanding General of the Sixth Marine Division.

Gradually many of the functions of the division were absorbed by the 8th Chinese National Army and the division turned to schools and training prior to deactivation on 1 April, when from its units the Third Marine Brigade was formed.

The career of the Sixth Marine Division had been relatively brief, a few days less than nineteen months, but in that short time the division had won a respected position among the fighting divisions of this war. For its excellent work on Okinawa the division was warmly commended by both Lt. General Roy S. Geiger, Commanding General, III Amphibious Corps, and the late Lt. General Simon B. Buckner, Commanding General, Tenth Army. To each of the three infantry regiments of the Sixth Marine Division, the Twenty Second Marines, the Tewnty-Ninth Marines and the Fourth Marines, went the highly coveted Presidential Unit Citation. While it lived, the division not only upheld all the proud traditions of the Marine Corps, but added to the impressive record of brave deeds long associated with the Corps.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX "A"

Copy Copy

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
Office of the Commanding General
Second Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California

26 September 194-

From: The Commanding General.
To: The Commanding General, 6th Marine Division.
Subject: Services rendered by personnel of 1st Battalion, 29th Marines.

1. I wish to express my appreciation of the heroic part played by the officers and men of the 1st Battalion, 29th Marines (Reinf), while attached to the 2d Marine Division, in the defeat of the Japanese forces on Saipan.

2. This battalion landed on the Japanese base of Saipan, Marianas Islands, on D-day, 15 June 1944, and immediately upon landing was attached to CT-8 and subsequently committed to front-line action on the original beachhead. For a period of twenty days until the zone of action of this division was completely secured, it occupied front-line positions, participating in attacks against most determined resistance over the most difficult terrain the island offered. During this entire period, due to tactical considerations and the nature of enemy resistance, it was at no time relieved from its front-line positions. In its advance over very difficult terrain, including the main ridge of Mount Tapotchau, the commanding terrain feature of the island, it successfully repulsed numerous counter-attacks and overcame many pockets of inordinately tenacious enemy resistance, including heavy machine gun and mortar fire.

3. In its advance it suffered very heavy casualties. Despite these losses, this battalion continued its attacks and advances with unabating vigor and persistence.

4. It has been a pleasure to have under my command these officers and men who were of inestimable value to the success of the operation as a part of the 2d Marine Division, Reinforced. The parent organization of the 1st Battalion, 29th Marines can well be proud of the accomplishments of this battalion during the Saipan operation.

/s/ T. E. Watson
T. E. WATSON

First Endorsement 8 October 1944

HEADQUARTERS, SIXTH MARINE DIVISION, IN THE FIELD

From: The Commanding General.

To: The Commanding Officer, Twenty-ninth Marines, Reinforced.

Copy Copy

Subject: Services rendered by personnel of 1st Battalion, Twenty-ninth Marines, Reinforced.

1. Forwarded.

2. This is a fine tribute to the 1st Battalion, Twenty-ninth Marines, Reinforced, and will be an inspiration to the remainder of your excellent regiment.

LEMUEL C. SHEPHERD, JR.

2d Endorsement 11 October 1944

HEADQUARTERS, 29th MARINES, REINF., SIXTH MARINE DIVISION, IN THE FIELD

From: The Commanding Officer.

To: The Commanding Officer, First Battalion, 29th Marines, Reinf.

Subject: Services rendered by personnel of the First Battalion, 29th Marines, Reinf.

1. Forwarded with congratulations.

2. The Commanding Officer takes pleasure in forwarding this letter from the Commanding General, Second Marine Division, In the Field, commending you and your men for heroic and valiant services at Saipan.

3. It is a source of gratification for me to receive this report, and to welcome your splendid unit to this regiment.

VICTOR F. BLEASDALE

Copy Copy

HEADQUARTERS, TWENTY-NINTH MARINES REINFORCED,
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION, IN THE FIELD.

16 November 1944

REGIMENTAL MEMORANDUM)
: Combat Record of the First Battalion, 29th Marines.

NUMBER 129 1944)

1. The article, "BATTALION ON SAIPAN" by War Correspondent Robert Sherrod, appearing in the October 1944 issue of the MARINE CORPS GAZETTE describes the splendid part played in the conquest of Saipan during June and July 1944, by the battalions of the Sixth Marine Regiment. However, in addition to his description of the fighting done by the battalions of the Sixth Marine Regiment, Mr. Sherrod includes the following reference to the magnificent achievements of the First Battalion, Twenty-ninth Marines:

"And none of them (battalions of the Sixth Marine Regiment) approached the rather appalling losses incurred by an extra battalion formed of detachments from each of the nine regular battalions of the Second Division. This heroic battalion, the First Battalion, Twenty-ninth Marine Regiment, commanded first by Lieutenant Colonel Guy E. Tannyhill and later by Lieutenant Colonel Rathvon McC. Tompkins (until he was also wounded near the end of the battle), faced the fearsome task of taking the 1,554-foot peak of Mount Tapotchau, the highest point on Saipan. Like good Marines, Colonel Tompkins' men never faltered in their assignment, but there were only about 200 left in the battalion when the battle ended. The United States can thank its lucky stars for such picked men who are not afraid to die; without them it is difficult to see how the Pacific war would even now be advanced as far as Tarawa, which is 2,000 miles to the rear."

2. The officers and men of the 29th Marines are very proud of the splendid reputation already established by our First Battalion.

VICTOR F. BLEASDALE,
Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps
Commanding

APPENDIX "A" (Cont.)

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in commending the

FIRST PROVISIONAL MARINE BRIGADE

for service as follows:

"For outstanding heroism in action against enemy Japanese forces, during the invasion of Guam, Marianas Islands, from July 21 to August 10, 1944. Functioning as a combat unit for the first time, the First Provisional Marine Brigade forced a landing against strong hostile defenses and well camouflaged positions, steadily advancing inland under the relentless fury of the enemy's heavy artillery, mortar and small arms fire to secure a firm beachhead by nightfall. Executing a difficult turning movement to the north, this daring and courageous unit fought its way ahead yard by yard through mangrove swamps, dense jungles and over cliffs and, although terrifically reduced in strength under the enemy's fanatical counterattacks, hunted the Japanese in caves, pillboxes and foxholes and exterminated them. By their individual acts of gallantry and their indomitable fighting teamwork throughout this bitter and costly struggle, the men of the First Provisional Marine Brigade aided immeasurably in the restoration of Guam to our sovereignty."

/S/ JAMES FORRESTAL
Secretary of the Navy.

All personnel serving in the First Provisional Marine Brigade, comprised of: Headquarters Company; Brigade Signal Company; Brigade Military Police Company; 4th Marines, Reinforced; 22nd Marines, Reinforced; Naval Construction Battalion Maintenance Unit 515, and 4th Platoon, 2nd Marine Ammunition Company, during the above mentioned period are hereby authorized to wear the NAVY UNIT COMMENDATION Ribbon.

COPY

1990-10-10
018/159

HEADQUARTERS
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
IN THE FIELD

22 April 1945.

S.O. - 78-45:

1. The Commanding General takes pleasure in announcing that all organized enemy resistance in the central and northern part of OKINAWA was overcome on April 20, 1945.

2. Within a period of twenty days, the Sixth Marine Division effected a landing on a hostile shore, captured an important airdrome, and fought its way over rugged terrain against enemy resistance a distance of 84 miles securing an area of 436 square miles of Japanese territory. Over 2200 enemy dead have been counted in addition to the capture of large numbers of assorted weapons and quantities of military stores.

3. The Sixth Marine Division may well be proud of its achievements. Its units have operated in combat with distinction. The attack and seizure of precipitous Mt. YAETAKE on MOTOBU Peninsula will stand out in our history as an example of courage and determination of the individual Marine to surmount impassable terrain defended by a well organized and fanatical foe. Your accomplishments have demonstrated a standard of proficiency in battle equal to any unit in the Fleet Marine Force.

4. In addition to the fighting ability of the assault troops, the Commanding General commends the supporting units for their untiring and efficient operation which enabled the attack to maintain its momentum throughout the operation. Artillery, Tanks, Engineers, Shore Party, Medical and Service elements of the division all contributed their share to bring the campaign to a successful and rapid conclusion.

5. The Sixth Marine Division has lived up to the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and can proudly take its place among the other famous Marine organizations which have brought glory and honor to our illustrious Corps.

6. In rejoicing over our recently achieved victory, we should not forget to honor our fallen comrades and those who have suffered wounds in battle. The loss of those who made the supreme sacrifice is deeply mourned by all who survived. The memory of their sacrifice will remain with us always.

/S/ LEMUEL C. SHEPHERD, JR.
Major General, U. S. Marine Corps,
Commanding, Sixth Marine Division.

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APPENDIX "A" (Cont.)

C O P Y

1990-10-10
018/125

17 May 1945.

HEADQUARTERS
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
IN THE FIELD

SO: 120-45

1. The Commanding General wishes to commend the Twenty-second Marines for their outstanding performance of duty during the period from 8 May 1945 to the present date.

2. On 8 May 1945, the Twenty-second Marines was assigned the extreme right flank of the Third Amphibious Corps zone of action. At that time the forward line in this sector ran from the west coast inland just south of Machinato airfield. The enemy positions facing them were recognized to be of an extremely formidable nature and had withstood attack for many days.

Undeterred by the grim prospects confronting them the Twenty-second Marines upon receiving the order to attack, immediately began a determined skillful advance to the south.

The regiment rapidly forced its way to the Asa-Kwan estuary and upon reaching that formidable natural barrier, unhesitatingly forded the fire swept water course and established a firm bridgehead on the southern side.

The following day, the attack was resumed, this time against the enemy main line of resistance lodged on commanding ground honeycombed with tunnels, caves, and pillboxes. In the face of devastating artillery, mortar and machine gun fire, the regiment unhesitatingly hammered its way up the fanatically defended slopes and by its persistent, dogged determination breached the enemy defenses and seized the tactically important high ground overlooking Naha.

Since the seizure of this important area, the regiment has demonstrated its tenacity in holding ground gained against repeated enemy counter-attacks and counter-landings.

3. The Sixth Marine Division looks with pride on the accomplishments of the Twenty-second Marines. The esprit de corps, courageous determination, and outstanding fighting ability of this regiment is worthy of the greatest praise.

4. Let us not forget that these achievements have not been without cost. The glory gained belongs equally to those who so unsparingly gave their lives in the performance of their duty. The battle is not yet won, and hard fighting lies ahead, but it behooves those who remain to resolve to maintain the inspired standards established by the recent accomplishments of this regiment.

/S/ LEMUEL C. SHEPHERD, JR.
Major General, U. S. Marine Corps,
Commanding, Sixth Marine Division.

C O P Y

COPY

1990-10-10
018/125

HEADQUARTERS
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
IN THE FIELD

19 May 1945

SO: 125-45
Reference: (a) ComTransronTwelve ltr to CG, 6th Mar Div. serial #318, dated 15 April 1945.

1. Reference (a) is quoted below for the information of all members of this command:

"1. During the period from 1 to 10 April 1945 inclusive the Shore Party of the SIXTH Marine Division worked in closest cooperation and harmony with Transport Squadron TWELVE (Transport Group ABLE), ships under its operational control, and with all elements of the Navy beach and control parties of the squadron. During this period some 51,920 tons of cargo were landed on and handled over the reef and sent to dumps and dispersal areas in the rear. At no time were the beaches allowed to become congested with cargo to the detriment of progress in general cargo unloading. At the end of the unloading period all cargo was clear of the beach areas, beaches were clean and free of wreckage, cargo nets and life preservers had been salvaged and returned to ships, and Garrison Shore and Beach Parties were completely stationed, well instructed in their duties and fully functioning.

2. At no time, night or day, did unloading operations completely cease on RED and GREEN Beaches. Upon 'all clear' after RED alert, work was resumed promptly. At all times men were made available over and beyond the normal demands whenever an emergency of one type or another arose. At no time was there any complaint that the men were too tired to work:- that they were tired goes without question, but that they carried on is a tribute to their physical stamina, the morale of the individual marine, and to the quality of their leadership.

3. Commander Transport Squadron TWELVE (Commander Transport Group ABLE) strongly urges that the Commanding General, SIXTH Marine Division publish this appreciation of the superb work done by his Shore Party to all hands in his division so that all may know that their Shore Party contributed very materially to their recent success. It can be said in all truth that the SIXTH Marine Division Shore Party is the best in every respect so far seen in this war, and its organization, equipment and functioning deserve close study as a model for future operations.

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4. - - - - - - -
5. - - - - - - -
6. In conclusion may we in Transport Squadron TWELVE express the hope that at some future date we may be so fortunate as to serve with the SIXTH Marine Division again. Everywhere we found splendid cooperation, a thorough knowledge of what you wanted to do and a keen appreciation of our own problems which enabled us to solve often vexing details in a highly satisfactory manner. We know that we have seen the best examples of the ship-to-shore movement to date, and we leave you with highest regards and best wishes for your continued success.

H. B. KNOWLES"

COPY

OFFICERS AND MEN
OF THE SIXTH MARINE DIVISION

(Message read to all troops the day before landing on Okinawa)

"Within the next few hours our division will land on Japanese soil – the doorway to the enemy's country. It is an honor to be among the first to bring the war to the Japanese homeland.

"The Sixth Marine Division is ready for the task to which it is assigned. During the past months of training, we have perfected our technique and forged our battle-seasoned regiments and battalions into a hard-hitting offensive team, inbued with the will to win.

"When the day of battle comes, I have every confidence that you will strike with the force of a crusader, symbolized by the sword emblazoned on our shield, and bring victory and glory to our Corps and Country.

"I extend to each of you my sincere good wishes. May God in His infinite mercy bless our cause and protect us all."

(Signed) LEMUEL C. SHEPHERD, JR.
Major General, U. S. Marine Corps
Commanding Sixth Marine Division

APPENDIX "A" (Cont.)

C O P Y

1990-10-10
015/210

HEADQUARTERS
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
IN THE FIELD

13 June 1945.

SO: 146-45

1. The Commanding General takes pleasure in transmitting to all units of the Sixth Marine Division the following dispatch from the Commanding General, III Amphibious Corps:

"THE CORPS COMMANDER COMMENDS THE 6TH MARDIV ON THE CAPTURE OF OROKU PENINSULA X CONTINUING OPERATIONS AFTER THE HARD FOUGHT BATTLES IN
WHICH THE DIVISION PENETRATED THE WESTERN DEFENSES OF SHURI AND CAPTURED THE CITY OF NAHA IT QUICKLY EXECUTED AN AMPHIBIOUS OPERATION ORGANIZED AND MOUNTED UNDER THE HANDICAP OF ADVERSE WEATHER AND DIFFICULT LOGISTIC CONDITIONS X FIGHTING ITS WAY INLAND OVER VERY UNFAVORABLE
AND RUGGED TERRAIN IT WRESTED STRONGLY FORTIFIED HILL AND CAVE POSITIONS FROM AN ENEMY DETERMINED TO FIGHT TO THE BITTER END AND WELL EQUIPPED
WITH AUTOMATIC AND SUPPORTING WEAPONS X THE INDOMITABLE SPIRIT AND PROFESSIONAL SKILL DISPLAYED BY THE 6TH MARDIV WILL BE A SOURCE OF
PRIDE AND GRATIFICATION TO ALL MARINES"

2. Every officer and man in the Sixth Marine Division may be justly proud of the accomplishments attained during the past ten days fighting on the OROKU PENINSULA. Through your indomitable courage and determination to overcome all obstacles, you have again demonstrated the superior fighting qualities for which this division has become famous.

/S/ LEMUEL C. SHEPHERD, JR.
Major General, U. S. Marine Corps,
Commanding, Sixth Marine Division.

APPENDIX "A" (Cont.)

C O P Y

1990-10-15
015/210

HEADQUARTERS
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
IN THE FIELD

14 June 1945.

MEMO: 126-45

1. The Commanding General takes pleasure in transmitting to all units of the Sixth Marine Division the following dispatch from Lieutenant General Simon Bolivar Buckner, Jr., U. S. Army, Commanding General, 10th Army:

"MY COMPLIMENTS TO YOU AND ALL MEMBERS OF YOUR COMMAND FOR A WELL CONDUCTED AND SUCCESSFUL OPERATION IN SECURING THE OROKU PENINSULA AND DESTROYING A LARGE ENEMY GARRISON THEN IN STRONG AND WELL FORTIFIED POSITIONS, THUS CONTRIBUTING MATERIALLY TO THE SUCCESS OF THE OKINAWA CAMPAIGN"

2. The above message is truly indicative of the wide recognition and admiration gained by every officer and man of the Sixth Marine Division. The esprit de corps, persistent, dogged determination, and outstanding fighting ability demonstrated during the seizure of Oroku Peninsula are worthy of the greatest praise. The Commanding General congratulates each individual for his accomplishments.

/S/ LEMUEL C. SHEPHERD, JR.,
Major General, U. S. Marine Corps,
Commanding, Sixth Marine Division.

C O P Y

COPY

1990-10-10
046/171

HEADQUARTERS
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
IN THE FIELD

21 June 1945.

SO: 155-45

1. Organized resistance within the Sixth Marine Division zone of action ended today. In the 82 days which have passed since the division landed on the YONTAN beaches much ground has been gained, many Japs killed and numerous localities of great importance to our nation have been captured. These continuing successes have only been realized through the superb performance of duty on the part of every unit throughout the division. The aggressive conduct of units in contact with the enemy coupled with the tireless support rendered by units behind the lines, both tactical and logistical, are in keeping with the indomitable fighting spirit of which this division is so justly proud. Every officer and man may look upon the activities of the past three months as a hard job superbly accomplished.

/S/ LEMUEL C. SHEPHERD, JR.,
Major General, U. S. Marine Corps,
Commanding, Sixth Marine Division.

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1355
015-214

HEADQUARTERS
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
IN THE FIELD

23 June 1945.

SO: 158-45.

1. The Commanding General takes pleasure in quoting to all officers and men of the Sixth Marine Division the following message from the Commanding General, III Amphibious Corps:

"UPON THE COMPLETION OF ORGANIZED RESISTANCE IN OKINAWA I COMMEND ALL UNITS OF THE III PHIB CORPS FOR THEIR INDOMITABLE SPIRIT IN OVERCOMING ENEMY RESISTANCE AND FURNISHING SERVICES AND SUPPORT TO THE FIGHTING MEN X AS A TEAM YOU ALL WERE SUPERB AND DISPLAYED THE SPIRIT AND PROFESSIONAL SKILL WHICH WILL CARRY US TO TOKYO X"

2. The outstanding fighting ability demonstrated by combat troops of this division, together with the excellent performance of duty by supporting units during the past three months, will stand out as an example of courage and determination of the individual Marine to surmount all obstacles and defeat a well-organized and fanatical foe. The Sixth Marine Division has lived up to the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and may well be proud of its outstanding achievements.

/S/ LEMUEL C. SHEPHERD, JR.,
Major General, U. S. Marine Corps,
Commanding, Sixth Marine Division.

COPY

1990-10-50
048-214

HEADQUARTERS
SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
IN THE FIELD

27 June 1945.

SO: 164-45.

1. The Commanding General proudly quotes to all units of the Sixth Marine Division the following message from the Commanding General, Tenth Army:

"THE COMMANDING GENERAL, 10TH ARMY, TAKES GREAT PLEASURE IN FORWARDING THE FOLLOWING DISPATCH DTG 221645 JUNE 45 QUOTE FROM: COMMANDANT MARINE CORPS TO: COMGENTEN X OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE MARINE CORPS PROUDLY SEND CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU AND THE FORCES UNDER YOUR COMMAND FOR YOUR SPLENDID VICTORY AT OKINAWA X THE 10TH ARMY IN COMPLETING THE INITIAL CHAPTER OF ITS HISTORY CARRIED THE WAR TO THE THRESHOLD OF THE EMPIRE X WE EXTEND OUR BEST WISHES FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUCCESS AND THE GALLANT TROOPS AT OKINAWA WE SAY WELL DONE"

2. In addition to the above official dispatch, the Commanding General takes pleasure in quoting the following excerpt from a personal letter recently received from the Commandant of the Marine Corps:

"I wish to write you personally to say what marvelous work your division has done. - - - - - - - - - - - - -

I want you, your officers and men, to know how deeply grateful we at home here are that we belong to the same outfit that has been doing the fighting out there.

A. A. VANDEGRIFT"

3. Every officer and man of the Sixth Marine Division may justly be proud of these words of praise from our Commandant. To have been a member of the Sixth Marine Division on Okinawa is an honor which cannot be excelled. You have all lived up to the highest traditions of the Marine Corps.

/S/ LEMUEL C. SHEPHERD, JR.,
Major General, U. S. Marine Corps,
Commanding, Sixth Marine Division.

COPY

APPENDIX "B"

SIXTH MARINE DIVISION
COMMAND LIST

From 7Sep44 to 31Mar46

Division Commander:	Brig. Gen. Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., USMC 7-11Sept44. Maj. Gen. Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr. USMC 12Sept44 to 23Dec45. Maj. Gen. Archie F. Howard, USMC 24Dec45 to 31Mar46.
Assistant Division Commander:	Brig. Gen. William T. Clement, USMC 11Nov44 to 31Mar46.
Chief of Staff:	Col. John T. Walker, USMC 7Sept to 16Nov44. Col. John C. McQueen, USMC 17Nov44 to 16Feb46 Col. Harry E. Dunkelberger, USMC 17Feb to 31Mar46.
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1:	Major Addison B. Overstreet, USMCR 7Sept44 to 22Jul45. Col. Karl K. Louther, USMC 23Jul to 17Nov45. Lt. Col. Frederick Belton, USMC 18Nov45 to 31Mar46.
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2:	Lt. Col. August Larson, USMC 7Sept to 30 Sept44. Major William R. Watson, Jr., USMCR 1Oct to 9Nov44. Lt. Col. Thomas E. Williams, USMCR 10Nov44 to 16Feb46. Lt. Col. Carl V. Larsen, USMC 17Feb to 31Mar46.
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3:	Lt. Col. Thomas A. Culhane, Jr., USMC 7Sept to 10 Nov44. Lt. Col. Victor H. Krulak, USMC 11Nov44 to 26Oct45. Lt. Col. Wayne H. Adams, USMC 27Oct to 31Dec45. Lt. Col. George W. Killen, USMC 1Jan to 31Mar46.
Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4:	Lt. Col. August Larson, USMC 1Oct44 to 17May45. Lt. Col. Wayne H. Adams, USMC 18May45 to 31Dec45. Lt. Col. Samuel R. Shaw, USMC 1Jan to 31Mar46.

CO Hq Bn: (Activated 25Sept44)	Lt. Col. Floyd A. Stephenson, USMC 25Sept44 to 31Mar46.
CO Service Troops: (Activated 24Oct44)	Lt. Col. Floyd A. Stephenson, USMC 24Oct to 11Nov44. Col. William W. Orr, USMC 12Nov44 to 3Dec45.
CO 6th Motor Transport Bn: (Activated 23Sept44)	Major Ernest H. Gould, USMCR 23Sept44 to 30Mar45. Lt. Col. Ernest H. Gould, USMCR 30Mar to 24Jul45. Lt. Col. Robert E. McCook, USMC 25Jul45 to 31Mar46.
CO 6th Service Bn: (Activated 24Oct44)	Lt. Col. Floyd A. Stephenson, USMC 24Oct to 12Nov44. Major Charles N. Hulvey, Jr., USMCR 13Nov to 17Dec44. Lt. Col. Erma A. Wright, USMC 18Dec44 to 26Jan45. Lt. Col. George B. Bell, USMC 27Jan to 26Mar45. Lt. Col. Alexander N. Entringer, USMC 27Mar45 to 19Mar46. Lt. Col. Robert E. McCook, USMC 20-31Mar46.
CO 6th Medical Bn: (Activated 24Nov44)	Lt. Comdr. John S. Cowan, USN(MC) 24Nov44 to 18Jun45. Commander John S. Cowan, USN(MC) 19Jun45 to 27Jan46. Lt. Comdr. Rich H. Pembroke, USNR(MC) 28Jan to 26Mar46.
CO 6th Engineer Bn: (Activated 1Nov44)	Capt. Wm. C. McLaughlin, USMC 1-13Nov44. Major Elliot B. Robertson, USMC 14Nov to 28Dec44. Major Paul F. Sackett, USMCR 29Dec44 to 23Jul45. Major Robert S. Mayo, USMC 24-31Jul45. Major Paul F. Sackett, USMCR 1Aug to 22Sept45. Lt. Col. Orin C. Bjornsrud, USMC 23Sept45 to 25Mar46.
CO 6th Pioneer Bn: (Activated 10Nov44)	Lt. Col. Samuel R. Shaw, USMC 10Nov44 to 10May45. Major John G. Dibble, USMC 11May to 22Jun45. Lt. Col. Samuel R. Shaw, USMC 23Jun to 21Oct45. Lt. Col. Harry A. Schmitz, USMC 22Oct45 to 31Mar46.

APPENDIX "B" (Cont.)

CO 6th Tank Bn:	Major Harry T. Milne, USMC 29Sept to 16Oct44. Lt. Col. Robert L. Denig, Jr., USMC 17Oct44 to 26Mar46.
CO 15th Marines: (Activated 23Oct44)	Col. Wilburt S. Brown, USMC 23Oct to 17Nov44. Lt. Col. Robert B. Luckey, USMC 18Nov to 23Dec44. Col. Robert B. Luckey, USMC 24Dec44 to 15Mar46.
CO 4th Marines:	Col. Alan Shapley, USMC 7Sept44 to 3Jul45. Lt. Col. Fred D. Beans, USMC 4Jul45 to 28Jan46.
CO 22d Marines: (Activated Jun42)	Col. Merlin F. Schneider, USMC 7Sept44 to 16May45. Col. Harold C. Roberts, USMC 17May to 18Jun45. Lt. Col. August Larson, USMC 19-24Jun45. Col. John D. Blanchard, USMC 25Jun45 to 31Mar46.
CO 29th Marines: (Activated 1May44)	Col. Victor F. Bleasdale, USMC 7Sept44 to 14Apr45. Col. William J. Whaling, USMC 15Apr45 to 31Mar46.

APPENDIX "C"

Sixth Marine Division Insignia

The basic design for the shoulder patch of the Sixth Marine Division was submitted by Colonel Victor Bleasdale of the Twenty Ninth Marines. The design as finally adopted, incorporated ideas of Corporal Michael W. Pawl and Major General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr. The artist who actually drew and colored the design was Lieutenant George Thompson.

The outside diameter of the patch is three inches and the diameter of the inner circle is two and one fourth inches. Embroidered on the red outer border are the words Melanesia—Micronesia—Orient. Superimposed upon a crusader sword in the center of the patch is a one and a quarter inch block numeral "6", two inches long. The shading of the "6" is in the same color as the outer border. The "6" and the lettering of the words on the border is golden yellow. Cobalt blue is the color of the center background and the crusader sword is silver white.

To commemorate the fighting in the Solomons of the Raider Battalions, from which the Fourth Regiment was formed, the word Melanesia was chosen. Similarly, the word Micronesia commemorates the fighting of the Twenty Second Marines at Eniwetok, the First Provisional Brigade on Guam, and the First Battalion, Twenty Ninth Marines, at Saipan.

The board of officers, representing all units of the division, which adopted the patch selected the word Orient for two reasons: First, because China was the home of the old Fourth Marine Regiment, lost in the early days of the war on Bataan. The Raider Battalions were the units used to reactivate the Fourth Marines. The second reason advanced by the board was, that it was their belief that in its final stages, the war against Japan would have to be fought in the Orient. It is significant that the division took part in the last campaign, which was fought on Okinawa, and, as predicted, in the Orient.

The crusader's sword was chosen as a symbol of the Sixth Marine Division's crusade against the tyrannical principles of the axis powers.

In a special order, dated 17 October 1944, General Shepherd brought the insignia into official existence.

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