

# FORTITUDINE

BULLETIN OF THE MARINE CORPS HISTORICAL PROGRAM

HISTORICAL BULLETIN VOLUME XXII

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PASS THIS ISSUE ON  
TO ANOTHER MARINE



MARINE FORCE OPERATIONS IN SOMALIA TRACED BY OFFICIAL HISTORIAN AND COMBAT ARTIST . . . 'CATLIN OF THE 6TH,' EARLY PAGES FROM A NEW HISTORY OF WORLD WAR I . . . 25TH ANNIVERSARY LOOK-BACK AT THE ASTOUNDING BATTLE OF KHE SANH . . . PART II OF NIHART'S HISTORY OF THE MARINE CORPS MUSEUM



# FORTITUDINE

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

Historical Bulletin Volume XXII

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## THE COVER

Among a number of well-known artists, who also are Marine Reservists, heading for Somalia late in 1992 and early this year, was Capt Burton E. Moore, Jr., whose specialty for the Marine Corps Combat Art Program has got to be "Marines in action." In one of his graphite sketches from Mogadishu, Capt Moore caught members of the 5th Marines' Jump Team No. 1 under fire on the roof of the former U.S. Embassy. Here, he writes, "LCpl Thomas W. Wasson, USMC, shirtless, sees a 'porthole of opportunity,' and puts a few rounds over that way." More Moore sketches appear on pages 19 and 20. His colleague, Capt David A. Dawson, USMC, of the History and Museums Division staff, also appears in this issue, beginning on page 16, to describe his active work as both Task Force and Marine Force historian. Finally, Col Charles J. Quilter, USMCR, departing commander of MTU DC-7, who coordinated the assignments of Reserve historians and artists to Somalia and was himself the I MEF historian in Operation Desert Storm, reviews a tumultuous tour of duty, beginning on page 21.

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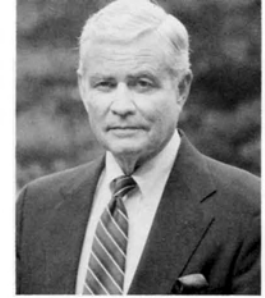
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Senior Editor/Editor, *Fortitudine*

## Catlin of the 6th Regiment



BGen Simmons

“AN OVERSEAS TRAINING camp was established at Quantico, Va., and I went down to take charge. There we received the graduates from the regular training stations as fast as they could be turned out, and through the summer and fall of 1917 we drilled 'em and we drilled 'em, until they were fit to go up against any foe on earth. We taught them to shoot straight and to use the bayonet, we had them mopping up trenches and cutting wire, we hardened them with hikes and we got them to handle machine guns like baby carriages. We filled them full to bursting with the spirit of the Corps and then we shipped them across to France to fight. And did they fight? You shall see.” So wrote Col Albertus W. Catlin in 1918 after being invalided home from France.

The 5th Regiment of Marines had gone to France in June 1917. In July 1918, Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels, pursuing the objective of a Marine brigade serving in France, offered Secretary of War Newton D. Baker another regiment of Marines. The offer was accepted and on 26 July the 6th Regiment of Marines was activated under command of Col Albertus W. Catlin, with LtCol Harry Lee as second-in-command.

At age 49, Catlin was a powerfully built man (admitting to 215 pounds), of medium height and with iron-gray hair. An admirer said that he had a “face as weak and effeminate as Plymouth Rock” and that it was largely jaw. Born in New York State in 1868, he had gone to the Naval Academy from Minnesota, had been halfback on the football team for three years, and cap-



*In France, Col Catlin, right, and Army MajGen Omar Bundy wear “tin hats” and gas masks, which in use Catlin likened to “fighting with a clothespin on your nose and a bag over your mouth . . . .”*

tained the team his last year. After graduating in 1890 and the customary two years at sea, he chose a commission in the Marine Corps. As a first lieutenant he was serving in the battleship *Maine* when she was sunk in Havana harbor in 1898. He had been in his stateroom writing a letter home when the explosion occurred. At Vera Cruz in 1914 he commanded the provisional regiment of Marines formed from the Fleet. As a colonel, he had graduated from the Army War College a month after the war began.

CATLIN WAS PROUD of his 6th Marines: “The officers, from captain up, and fifty or so of the non-commissioned officers were old-time Marines, but the junior officers and all of the privates were new men.” Sergeants, gunnery sergeants, first sergeants, quartermaster sergeants, and sergeants major were brought in from wherever they could be found. The privates, for the most part, came straight

from Parris or Mare Islands. Sixty percent of the regiment, according to Catlin, were college men.

“When you read of what these men did in Belleau Wood and Bouresches,” wrote Catlin, “remember who they were, and perhaps their exploits will seem less unbelievable.”

The 1st Battalion, 6th Regiment, under Maj John A. “Johnny the Hard” Hughes, left Quantico on Sunday morning, 16 September, and boarded the Navy transport *Henderson* at the Philadelphia Navy Yard that evening. After some delays, the *Henderson* arrived at St. Nazaire in the Bay of Biscay on 5 October. The battalion disembarked the following day and was assigned guard and police duties at St. Nazaire (in Col Catlin’s words, “. . . to help the engineers and stevedores bring order out of the chaos of the port.”) and at Brest and Le Havre.

Col Catlin with his regimental headquarters, his supply company, and his machine-gun company sailed for France on 16 October in the *De Kalb*, which had been the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* before her internment and confiscation, and arrived at St. Nazaire on 1 November.

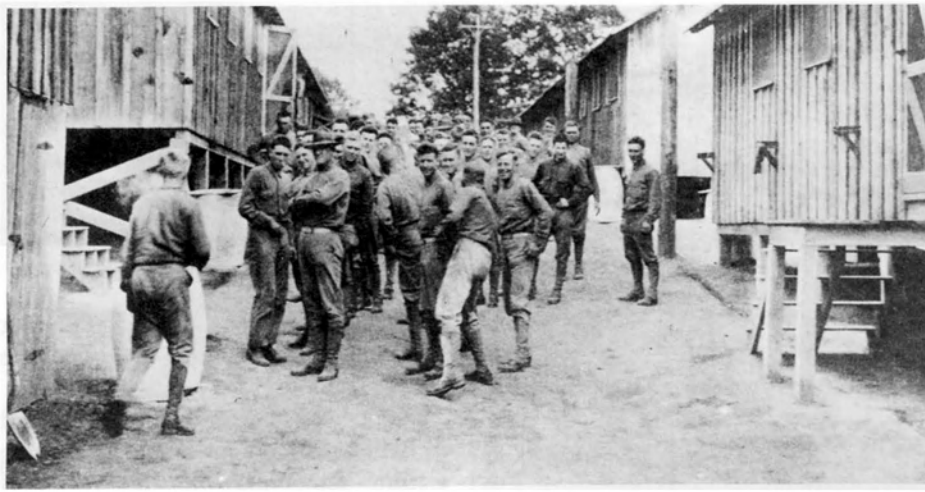
Maj Berton W. Sibley’s 3d Battalion, 6th Regiment, left Quantico next, sailing on 30 October in the *Von Steuben*, the erstwhile *Kronprinz Wilhelm*. Sibley arrived in France on 12 November and together, the 6th Regiment’s headquarters and the 3d Battalion, went to Bordeaux for irksome line-of-communication duties.

THE ODDS AGAINST the Allies on the Western Front were widening. The collapse of Russia made it possible for Von Hindenburg and Ludendorff to thin out the Eastern Front. From December 1917 to March 1918, 10 divisions a month, as many as the efficient German railroads could carry, arrived on the Western Front. As the 1918 campaign season opened, the French estimated that the Germans would have 200 divisions against the Allies’ 180. There were just four American divisions

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*BGen Simmons is writing “Through the Wheat: The U.S. Marines in the First World War,” a 75th anniversary of World War I commemoration. This piece is derived from that work in progress. A primary source was BGen Albertus W. Catlin’s memoir, With the Help of God and a Few Marines, written in collaboration with Walter A. Dyer (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1919).*





*Young men volunteering for the war in France, a large proportion of them college students, trained to become Marines at Quantico, Virginia. Here a training company fronted by a campaign-hatted drill instructor "falls in for chow" by newly built barracks.*

(1st, 2d, 26th and 42d) in France, not yet combat-ready but each counted as two divisions because of its size.

Catlin's 6th Regiment was relieved of its port duties early in January and went by rail to the 2d Division training area, moving into billets in the Bourmont area close to the 5th Marines. Together they formed the 4th Brigade of Marines. The division's other infantry brigade, the 3d, was made up of two regular Army regiments, the 9th and 23d.

The French military trains were something to remember.

"The signs on the freight cars read 'Hommes 40,' wrote one of Catlin's Marines, "but they always managed to squeeze in about sixty men. The scenery was fine, so they told me—all I saw was the four walls of the car."

The Marines had come to France in broad-brimmed felt field hats (commonly called "campaign hats") and trousers with canvas leggings. Now, for the most part they were in breeches with wrap puttees, had flat "overseas caps," and on arriving at Bourmont were issued their steel helmets (the British M1917 "tin hat") and gas masks.

**I**T WAS FARM COUNTRY where the Marines were billeted. The French, in their way, did not live in isolated farm houses but in little villages with their farms outside.

The brigade's food, which came from the U.S. Army, had to be cooked over wood-burning stoves and this fuel had to be cut. Col Catlin was impressed by the French forestry department. The woodlots

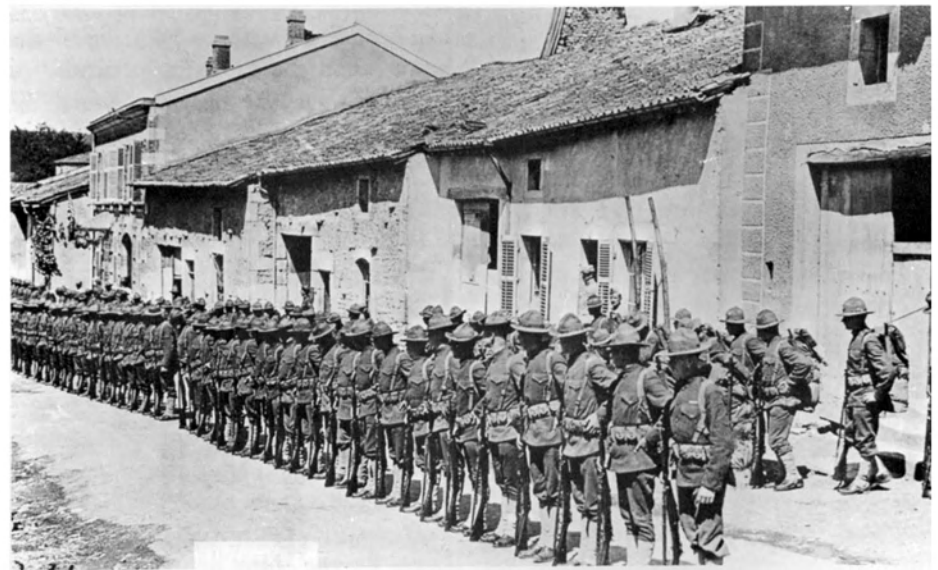
were carefully maintained, every tree that could be harvested was marked. Other similarly well-tended woods were in the 6th Marines' future.

The 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, under Maj Thomas Holcomb, did not arrive in France until 5 February. It went directly to the 2d Division training area.

For two months the brigade trained hard under the tutelage of a battalion of the French 77th Infantry. The 6th Marines drew, as its senior advisor, Capt Tribot Laspierre, a charming man who had campaigned in North Africa as well as on the Western Front.

"We engaged in the hardest kind of intensive training," wrote an enlisted Marine. ". . . It was winter, the weather was cold

*Still uniformed as Marines in green wool jackets and trousers with canvas leggings, and wearing campaign hats, men newly arrived in France dress their lines. The green uniforms soon would be exchanged for Army olive drab with wrap puttees and helmets.*



and often stormy, but this did not make any difference. We were subject to rush calls during the night, such as forced marches to the trenches, occupations and relief, patrol work, gas and raid signals sham raids, and other details of trench warfare, such as developed in this war. When we got through we were as hard as nails."

**O**N 5 MARCH the 2d Division received orders to move up into the line. It was time, as the next phase of training, to occupy a quiet sector of trenches south of Verdun. The 4th Brigade's aggregate strength was 280 officers and 9,164 enlisted men, by far the largest tactical unit of Marines as yet assembled. Col Catlin had no doubts about the readiness of his 6th Marines. By this time there was no newness about them: "They acted like veterans; they thought like veterans; and all because of that training and the material they were to start with."

When Gen Pershing came to inspect the brigade at Bourmont he is supposed to have said, "I only wish I had 500,000 of these Marines!"

The movement by rail from the Bourmont area began on 13 March. The standard French military train had 30 box cars, 17 flat cars, a coach for officers, and a caboose for the train crew. The 6th Regiment required five trains—one for each battalion; one for regimental headquarters, headquarters company, and machine-gun company; and one for the supply



company. The Germans picked up the rail movement and there was a light shelling as the Marines unloaded at the railhead.

THE REGION TO WHICH the division moved was in Lorraine, between St. Mihiel and Verdun, along the Meuse River, which here ran nearly north and south. The Germans held St. Mihiel. The French held Verdun. The distance between the two cities was about 20 miles. There had been heavy fighting here, but now the area was quiet, a place for exhausted divisions on both sides to live and let live.

The 2d Division found itself assigned to the French X Corps. The section of the X Corps front, which would be occupied by the Marines, ran along a ridge line east of the Meuse River. Known as the Toulon Sector, it had a frontage of about six miles and was held by the French 33d Division. As neatly drawn on situation maps well to the rear, a division in the line occupied a "sector." Brigades or regiments were given "sub-sectors." A "sub-sector" contained a "center of resistance," usually occupied by a battalion. Each "center of resistance" was made up of "strong points" occupied by companies. The front line itself was held by "combat groups," squad- or platoon-sized detachments under a lieutenant or NCO.

Field fortifications were an elaborate system of firing trenches and dugouts; communications trenches running from front to rear; and connecting trenches going out to the flanks. The front-line trench was not a straight line and it was not filled

*MajGen John A. Lejeune, left, welcomed AEF commander, Army Gen John J. Pershing, second from left, to a postwar review of the 2d Division. At the earlier March 1918 Bourmont inspection, Pershing supposedly said, "I only wish I had 500,000 of these Marines!"*



*"Forty men" to a boxcar, Marines rode toward the front in March 1918. Catlin's 6th Regiment required five trains to accommodate its battalions, regimental headquarters and staff, and machine gun and supply companies. They were shelled at destination.*

shoulder-to-shoulder with men, but was occupied by combat groups at from 50 to 150 yard intervals. Dugouts for men not on watch were dug into the rear wall. Dugouts came in various sizes, some large enough to accommodate 30 to 40 men, some barely big enough for three or four.

MACHINE GUNS were sited so as to fire "final protective lines" along the barbed wire entanglements in front of the trenches. Light artillery, the famous French 75s, was positioned within a mile or so of the front line. The heavy artillery, the 155mm howitzers and guns, was farther back. Carefully constructed fire plans called for the delivery of standing barrages

in front of any threatened point. Patrols going forward of the line could be covered by curtain or box barrages. It was all very logical and sometimes it worked quite well.

To the rear of the front lines was a support line held by a second battalion of the regiment holding the sub-sector and to the rear of that was a reserve camp for the remaining battalion. It was arranged that one battalion of each American infantry regiment would relieve a French battalion in some center of resistance and come under the command of the French regimental commander. Within the Toulon Sector, the 6th Marines was assigned to Sub-Sector Bonchamp, center of resistance (CR) Mont-sous-les-Cotes.

Reliefs were always at night. The 3d Battalion, 6th Regiment, relieved the French in CR Mont-sous-les-Cotes the night of 18-19 March. A French battalion was sandwiched between the front-line battalions of the 5th and 6th Marines. The plan was that the battalions would have 10 days in each of the three positions—front-line, support, and reserve—and then rotate.

C AUTIOUSLY VIEWED through periscopes and loopholes, "No Man's Land" was desolate and forlorn, the wreckage of little villages and farmhouses, and shell-churned earth. The Marines' front line was on the high ground and the ground in front of them sloped away until it rose to the corresponding German front line. "No Man's Land" was sometimes as narrow as a hundred yards or so,



*French poilus, experienced infantrymen, for two months trained the newly arrived Marines in the intricacies of European trench warfare. There were forced marches, patrol work, classes in gas and raid signals, and sham raids. Weather stayed cold and stormy.*

but for most of the length the lines were up to almost a mile apart.

Nothing very exciting, except for shelling, happened those first few nights in the trenches, then the Marines began sending out patrols of two kinds. One kind were the wire patrols that went out to repair the barbed wire; the other were reconnaissance patrols that went out to eavesdrop on the Germans. These were not raiding parties, not at first, although picking up a German prisoner was, in Col Catlin's words "always welcome."

There were no tactical radios. Telephone was the most dependable form of communication, but in a regimental sub-sector shellfire cut the wires as often as 15 or 20 times a day. When telephones were out, runners were the basic form of communication. Runners were schooled to carry messages scrawled on field message forms in the left breast pocket of their shirt or coat. If they became a casualty that's where others would look.

**I**N THEIR APPRENTICESHIP in the trenches, Marine patrols were schooled to go out on a definite route and with a definite time schedule. If detected by the Germans they could be boxed in with prepared friendly artillery fires. Clashes between Marine and German patrols were frequent. Of these nasty little fights Col Catlin said, ". . . we loved the Hun no more for that."

The trenches had not been well maintained except for the officers' dugouts, some of which were little miracles of homeyness. Mud was knee-deep, most dugouts were wet with standing water, and they were overrun with vermin in the form of "cooties" and rats. "Cooties," one of the

hallmarks of trench warfare, were small but persistent members of the louse family.

"The cootie is as troublesome as shrapnel and he loves Red Cross knitting," said Col Catlin.

Getting back into reserve meant baths and getting one's clothes steamed to give temporary relief from the louse. Rats were omnipresent and virtually indestructible. They would eat anything and would chew their way through canvas packs to get at rations. They also made a more grisly diet of bodies left out in "No Man's Land."

**G**ERMANY'S FIRST great offensive of 1918 began on the Somme on 21 March, driving toward Amiens, its axis of

*There was constant work for Marine line-men; in a regimental sub-sector, shellfire cut wires as often as 15 or 20 times a day.*



advance along the fault line marking the boundary between the French Army and the British Expeditionary Force. French troops were pulled away from the quiet sectors and sent to reinforce the threatened rupture of the lines.

The 6th Marines stayed in place with the 1st Battalion taking over CR Montgirmont and the intervening position vacated by a departing French battalion. Late in March, the 6th moved to the left, taking over from the intervening French. This gave the Marine brigade a solid front, four battalions on line, two in reserve.

Col Catlin's Post of Command (P.C.) was on a hill overlooking his regimental positions. Once the hill had been the site of a fortified Roman camp and the trace of the old earthworks—a grass covered mound 10 feet high—still ran across the hill. Catlin named his new command post "P.C. Rome." A few gas shells fell near P.C. Rome. Catlin clapped on his gas mask, but saw that a bird was still singing in a tree nearby. It struck him that if there were not enough gas in the air to kill the bird, it would not kill him. He took off the mask.

"A gas mask, by the way," wrote Catlin, "is a thing one is anxious to take off at the first opportunity. It is a hot and stifling thing and seems to impede the faculties. The wearer takes in the air through his mouth, after it has been sucked through the purifying chemicals. His nose is not trusted and is clamped shut. Imagine yourself fighting with a clothespin on your nose and a bag over your mouth and you may be able to get some notion of what a gas mask is like." During the month that followed there were no solid contacts with the Germans, but patrolling, shelling, and gas attacks continued.

"On the whole," wrote Catlin, "I am inclined to think that the gas was the worst evil we had to encounter, and we learned to dread the deadly smell of mustard."

**A**FTER COMING OUT of the line in the second week of April, the 74th Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Marines, was back in reserve at Fontaine-St. Robert, about a mile behind the front line and fairly comfortably billeted in prefabricated wooden Adrian huts. The Marines were sleeping, 60 to a hut, in double-decked bunks with chicken wire springs. During the early morning hours of 13 April the company was heavily bombarded with mustard gas shells mixed with high explosive, some



*Marine in gas mask guards a mist-shrouded supply dump. In the early hours of 13 April, the 74th Company was bombarded with mustard gas shells. Marines slow to get on masks contributed to the 297 casualties, including all of the officers. Forty died.*

2,000 of them. One shell exploded inside a hut where men were sleeping. Partly due to severity of shelling, partly due to the inexperience of Marines who were slow in getting on their gas masks, casualties were horrific: 297 casualties including all the 74th Company's officers. Forty Marines died.

On 7 May BGen Doyen was relieved as the 4th Brigade commander by Pershing's chief of staff, BGen James G. Harbord, USA. Harbord and Catlin had been members of the same class at the Army War College and Catlin found him to be a splendid soldier:

"Though not a Marine himself, Gen Harbord fully understood and appreciated the traditions of our Corps, and it was said of him that he became as pro-Marine as any Marine."

Orders came in the second week of May for the 2d Division to proceed to a rest area.

"We rejoiced," said Catlin, "for the order meant a rest from trench digging, relief from the nightly peril of No Man's Land, a fond farewell to the mud and rats and cooties . . ."

THE DIVISION moved to a training area near Bar-le-Duc. Here there was no trench work but constant drilling, route marching (a Marine's heavy marching order weighed about 60 pounds), and field problems in open warfare at the battalion, regimental, and brigade level.

Orders came for the 2d Division to occupy a reserve position between Paris and Beauvais. The division moved by train on the 18th and 19th of May to Pontoise and

then marched to the vicinity of Chaumont-en-Vixen. The 2d Division, as now assembled and trained, was an imposing sight. In the 6th Regiment, Col Catlin was allocated 332 mules to pull his baggage wagons, rations wagons, water carts, ammunition wagons, rolling kitchens, and so forth. There were also the Colonel's touring car, three motorcycles, and 59 riding horses (the British called them "chargers") for the commanders and staffs of the regiment and its battalions. The automobile would go to the front, but not the horses.

The Marines thought they would be relieving the U.S. 1st Division near Cantigny. A new German drive, this one hitting the Chemin des Dames northwest of

*Marines of the 6th Regiment rode through villages to the front in camions, heavy-duty motor trucks supplied by the French. The drivers seemed to be Chinese, but actually were from Indochina. On the road for 72 hours, they often fell asleep at the wheel.*



Rheims on 27 May changed their destination.

THE CHEMIN DES DAMES front was considered very strong, which is the reason it was used to rest exhausted French and British troops. On 30 May the Marne River was reached. The apex of the German drive was the ancient city of Chateau-Thierry, just 35 miles from Paris.

At 5 p.m. on that day a French staff officer arrived at the 2d Division headquarters, his dust-covered automobile evidence of hard driving. The division was to start for Meaux which was on the Marne about 25 miles west of Chateau-Thierry and 56 miles from Chaumont-en-Vixen.

Col Catlin was told that French motor-trucks called *camions* would arrive at 6 p.m. on the 30th to take his 6th Regiment forward. Six o'clock came, but no *camions*. The *camions* did not come until four o'clock the next morning. They were big French trucks with canvas covers like prairie schooners. The 31st of May was clear, bright, and swelteringly hot. The Marines fell in at dawn, ate breakfast from rolling kitchens, and climbed into the trucks, 30 or so Marines crowded into each truck. The drivers seemed to be Chinese; actually they were Annamites and Tonkinese from French Indo-China. They had been at their wheels for 72 hours and had the exciting habit of falling asleep.

Catlin waited until his last squad had moved out, then followed in his staff car. By then it was nearly 10 a.m. The Marines



in the trucks behaved as though they were going to a picnic. The French villagers dutifully cheered them and threw flowers as they passed.

"It was more like an enormous bridal procession than a column of fighters going to face a terrible death," said Col Catlin.

Catlin arrived in Meaux about 8:30 p.m. His regiment had already passed through the town. He reported to division headquarters and was told to proceed north from Meaux. About ten o'clock he was overtaken by a French staff officer who sent him off in the direction of Montreuil-aux-Lions.

"I was a lost Colonel, hunting around in the dark for his command, and hunting with an anxiety that, in this crisis, approached panic," remembered Catlin.

*Camions* were going forward and *camions* were coming back. Units were intermingled. (Catlin's regimental band, whose members would serve as stretcher bearers, would not get to the front for two days.) The traffic moving to the rear thickened with refugees and French soldiers.

"For the most part everything and everybody seemed to be hurrying away from the battle line except the Americans," said Catlin. He found his regiment, or a good part of it, at Montreuil, about four miles behind the lines.

THE MARINES bedded down on the ground with poncho and blanket and waited for the day. Guns could be heard somewhere to their front. The French had been sending fresh troops in as fast as they arrived, whereon "overwhelmed by numbers, they evaporated immediately like drops of rain on white-hot iron." Those were Petain's words reporting to Foch.

Orders came early on 1 June. The 9th Infantry was to form a line with its left flank at Le Thiolet on the Paris-Metz road, its right extending almost to the Marne. The 6th Marines was to follow behind the 9th Infantry and was to deploy to the left or north of the Paris-Metz road in the sector of the French 43d Division.

Catlin showed his battalion commanders his map, indicating the points to be defended, and told them the line was to be held at all costs. Actually there was no distinct line, except as the Marines might themselves establish it. At 2:30 p.m. the 6th Regiment began the march for-

ward along the Chateau-Thierry road. Having sent his infantry marching to the front, Catlin then commandeered 25 trucks, and, riding with them, took forward his regiment's baggage and ammunition.

THE 1ST BATTALION, now commanded by Maj Maurice E. Shearer, took a position northeast of Lucy-de-Bocage. Holcomb's 2d Battalion extended the line from Lucy to Triangle Farm on the right. Sibley's 3d Battalion went into brigade reserve about a mile and a half behind the line in the vicinity of La Voie du Chatel.

The Marines went into position under light artillery fire. They were told to dig in, so they dug rifle pits and shelter trenches of the kind that were beginning to be called "foxholes" The Marines made themselves as comfortable as they could and ate theirhardtack and raw bacon.

At 6:50 p.m. Catlin sent a message to Harbord by runner:

Regiment in position assigned.  
Liaison established. None of the battalions were issued rations. Request that rations be sent tonight by truck.—Catlin

Catlin went to Lucy and found a battalion of French soldiers and the colonel

in command of the sector. The colonel was not optimistic. Catlin had a two-mile gap on his left flank. Beyond that was a French regiment. Catlin felt better after the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, under LtCol Frederic M. Wise, went into the line on his left. On the right flank of Wise's battalion, Shearer's battalion picked up at Hill 142 and extended to the southeast to Lucy-de-Bocage. In front of Lucy was a woods marked on the map as "Bois de Belleau." From Lucy to the southeast ran Holcomb's battalion with its right flank on the Paris-Metz Road at the village of Le Thiolet.

BELLEAU WOOD was on rising ground that stood above the surrounding wheat fields. Roughly kidney-shaped, it was two miles from north to south and about a half-mile wide at its widest part. The French told the Americans that the wood was lightly held. They were wrong.

Catlin established his first Post of Command in a corner of the woods near Lucy-de-Bocage. The Germans found the range and began shelling his position. He decided the position was too exposed and on the morning of the 2d he moved to the little village of La Voie du Chatel, west of Lucy and south of Champillon, establish-

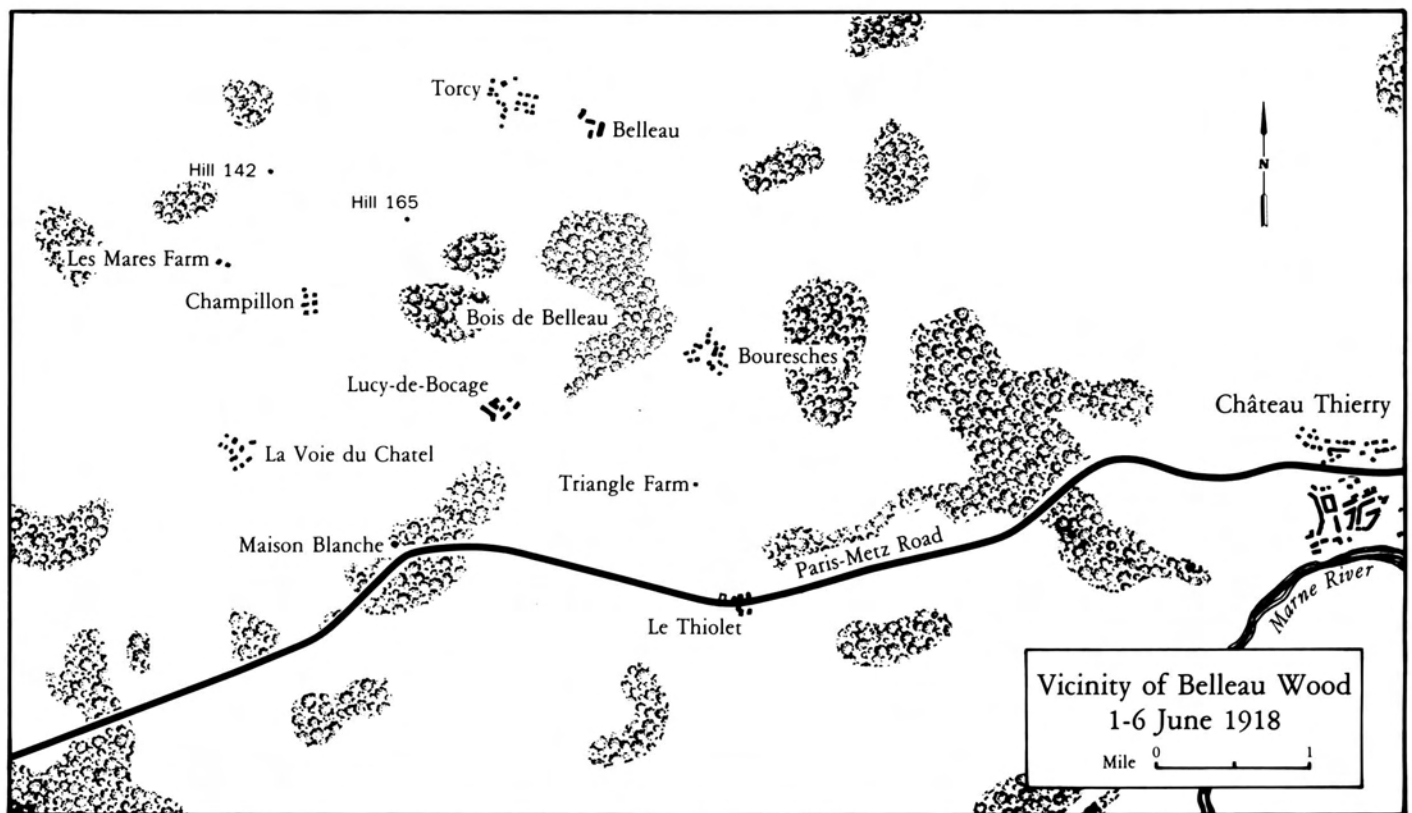
## Catlin Long Familiar Corps Name in Hawaii

by Robert V. Aquilina  
Assistant Head, Reference Section

AS A YOUNG CAPTAIN IN THE MARINE CORPS, Albertus W. Catlin served from February to July 1904 as the first commanding officer of the Marine Barracks at the U.S. Naval Station, Honolulu. Although his tenure at the Barracks was of short duration, his subsequent gallantry in World War I during the battle for Belleau Wood resulted in a singular posthumous honor for Catlin in Hawaii. On 15 April 1942, the Marine Cantonment, Salt Lake Area, Oahu, was designated Camp Catlin in honor of the heroic brigadier general who had died in May 1933.

On 12 July 1944, Headquarters, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, was established at Camp Catlin, with LtGen Holland M. Smith as commanding general. This action consolidated control of all Marine units in the Pacific under one command. Immediately after its establishment, Headquarters, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, initiated planning for the assault on Peleliu, along with concurrent planning for future operations at Iwo Jima and Okinawa. When the Pacific war ended, the headquarters at Camp Catlin was planning the final assault on the Japanese home islands by six Marine divisions.

After the war, personnel strengths in the Marine Corps were progressively lowered in ground and aviation elements. By June 1950 there were less than 12,000 officers and men in the entire Fleet Marine Force, Pacific. As a result, during the same month, the headquarters was relocated from Camp Catlin to the site of the former Aiea Naval Hospital at Halawa Heights, Oahu, Hawaii.



ing his headquarters in an old stone house. It gave him an excellent view of his regiment's position.

With the French falling back, the front line was constantly shifting and very irregular. All companies of Shearer's battalion were on line. Three companies of Holcomb's battalion were on line and one in reserve. Catlin's right flank unit was the 96th Company of Holcomb's battalion, its very right resting on the Paris-Metz road at Le Thiolet. Enemy artillery fire increased during the day and there were some losses.

Late in the afternoon on the 2d, word was received that a fresh German division was expected to attack with two regiments north of the Paris-Metz road and one to the south. The 97th Company, 3d Battalion, was put into the line to reinforce Holcomb's thinly-held position.

**B**Y THE NIGHT of 2-3 June the French retreat had become general and the Marine support line had become the front line. The French were to counterattack on 3 June but they were no longer combat effective. All that morning a French officer stood near Catlin's post of command trying to reorganize some part of the tattered torrent that was falling back. With a few stout souls he made an effort to counterattack that afternoon, but was driven back and his little party of Frenchmen melted away behind Catlin's lines.

Heavy German shelling on the 3d took its toll, particularly on the remainder of Sibley's battalion in its reserve position. The reserve, taught a lesson by the shelling, dug in more seriously. Catlin inspected them and found:

"Each man had dug a hole six feet long, two and a half feet wide, and three feet deep. Even the battalion commander had his hole . . . They were arranged in rows like graves in a Potter's Field or a soldiers cemetery . . . When I saw them each was filled with the motionless form of a sleeping man. It was a gruesome sight."

**A**BOUT NOON on the 3d, Sibley's 82d Company was sent in to reinforce the line northeast of Champillon. At dark, one more of his companies, the 83d, joined the 82d south of Torcy. Sibley went up to command his front-line companies. This left just the 84th Company, already pummeled by the shelling, in brigade reserve.

The attack on 3 June came first against the few French who were still in front of Catlin's left flank. Catlin could see it clearly from his observation post at La Voie du Chatel. The Germans came down an open slope, in "platoon waves," through a wide field of wheat in which poppies "gleamed like splashes of blood in the afternoon sun." The French fell back. The Germans

came in two columns, "steady as machines."

"To me as a military man it was a beautiful sight," wrote Catlin. "I could not but admire the precision and steadiness of those waves of grey with sun glinting on their helmets."

Wise's battalion opened up with rifle fire.

"The German lines did not break," said Catlin. "They were broken."

The Germans wavered, halted, and then came again, three times, but they could not break through. The fight, which centered around Les Mares Farm, lasted just an hour.

**O**N THE 4TH of June the Germans increased the intensity of their artillery fires. Gas shells were mixed in with the high explosive. Catlin said that the shells fell so thickly on Lucy "that you could scoop up handfuls of shrapnel bullets in the streets, round pellets about the size of marbles."

At 3 p.m. on 4 June, the French corps commander ordered a limited general advance to straighten the line. The 2d Division was to attack to reduce the salient at Lucy-de-Bocage, clear Belleau Wood, and take the high ground overlooking the villages of Torcy and Belleau. All of these objectives were in the zone of action of the 4th Brigade.



*The open wheat fields through which Marines attacked toward Belleau Wood on 6 June 1918, were photographed a few years after the war. The Marines offered excellent targets for machine guns and mortars placed in the wood, the Germans later reported.*

All through the 5th of June the Marines waited with nothing much happening except increasing artillery fire, both German and American. The attack the Marines thought sure to come did not materialize. Germans could be seen throughout the day and these sightings gave targets for the American artillery and Marine snipers who did good work. During the day, "Johnny the Hard" Hughes resumed command of the 1st Battalion, 6th Regiment, from Maj Shearer.

The night of 5-6 June was a time of movement for the battalions of the 6th Regiment. Sibley's scattered companies were ordered back to Ferme Blanche, where his battalion once again would go into reserve. Holcomb's battalion was relieved by a battalion of the 23d Infantry. Holcomb, in turn, moved to a position near Maison Blanche, south of Lucy, where he relieved Hughes' 1st Battalion which went into corps reserve.

**S**OMETHING WAS GOING on inside the Bois de Belleau and the intelligence report that came down from division said the Germans were consolidating their positions.

The French 167th Division relieved the Marines west of Champillon at 3 a.m. on 6 June. The shortened Marine line from left to right was Turrill's 1st Battalion, 5th Regiment; Berry's 3d Battalion, 5th Regiment; and Holcomb's 2d Battalion, 6th Regiment. Wise's 2d Battalion, 5th Regi-

ment, was in brigade reserve northeast of Lucy.

Turrill's battalion jumped off at 3:45 a.m. on 6 June. Berry advanced the left of his battalion to conform to Turrill's movement. By 7 a.m. Turrill had his objective, Hill 142.

Maj Julius S. Turrill's 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, was to move forward on the left. Turrill, who had only two companies under his immediate command, was to attack on a front of about 800 yards to a depth about one kilometer which would bring him to a crossroad. Next in line to the right, Maj Berry's 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, would pivot forward, keeping touch with Turrill's right flank. The attack would be preceded by a half-hour artillery preparation by all the artillery in the division.

**W**HEN MORNING CAME on 6 June, Turrill's two missing companies had not arrived and he necessarily jumped off with half a battalion. Turrill reached the road that was his objective by 6:30 a.m. and began to dig in. His missing companies now joined him. To Turrill's right, Berry's battalion had advanced only slightly, and Turrill was left with an exposed right flank.

To the north of the line and west of Belleau Wood the Germans were still troublesome, particularly the shellfire coming from the reverse slope of Hill 165. Berry dug in on the west edge of Belleau Wood, a north-south line that reached

from south of Torcy to Lucy. The Marines now faced Belleau Wood, Berry on the west and Holcomb to the south. On both the west and the south, wheat fields separated the Marines from the edges of the wood.

"We were nearer to the woods on the south than on the west, and on both sides open wheat fields lay between our lines and the forest. From without it appeared almost impenetrable, and there were those open spaces to cross. Behind us lay the smaller woods where our own reserve were waiting."

At 2:05 in the afternoon, Harbord issued his second field order: The attack was to be continued in two phases. Catlin was to command the first phase. In it Berry's 3d Battalion, 5th Regiment, on the left, and Sibley's 3d Battalion, 6th Regiment, on the right, were to take Belleau Wood. In the second phase, after Belleau Wood was taken, the attack would continue against Bouresches. The first phase was to jump off at 5 p.m.

Belleau Wood being longer than it was wide, it was concluded that it would be easier to take it from west to east rather than plunging straight ahead.

**B**ERRY WAS TO ADVANCE his battalion straight east on a front of about one mile. Sibley was to advance on Berry's right from just north of Lucy-le-Bocage and go through the southern end of the wood. Holcomb's battalion was to act as the hinge connecting the 4th Brigade to the 3d Brigade.

At 3:45, Harbord's aide, Lt Williams, came up by motorcycle and delivered a copy of the attack order to Catlin.

"Holcomb's battalion was ordered to hold the line, while Sibley's was to come up, pass through it, and make the attack on the southern section of the woods, starting in on the western side," remembered Catlin. "The objectives for the first attack mentioned in the orders were the eastern edge of the woods and Bouresches. Berry's battalion was to attack from the west of Sibley's left."

"It was a clear, bright day. At that season of the year it did not get dark till about 8:30, so we had three hours of daylight ahead of us."

As soon as Catlin received these orders he met with Holcomb and Sibley at Holcomb's headquarters, some 500 yards behind the line. Catlin issued his orders to



the battalion commanders and as he stood there, Sibley's battalion was filing past into a ravine, getting into their jumping-off position. Holcomb and Sibley passed oral orders to their company commanders.

Berry and his battalion were in a wood, a mile away, out of reach. Catlin went back to Lucy, one, because he thought he could best see the action from there, and, two, because he was anxious about Berry and he thought it necessary that he get as close to Berry's battalion as possible. Catlin tried to phone Berry's P.C. from Lucy, but it had been impossible because of the heavy shelling to run a telephone line to him. Catlin sent runners, but wasn't sure that Berry could be reached before the attack had to be made. As it happened, Berry had received orders from the 5th Marines HQ and knew the role his battalion was to play.

"No one knows how many Germans were in those woods," wrote Catlin. "I have seen the estimate placed at 1,000, but there were certainly more than that. It had been impossible to get patrols into the woods, but we knew they were full of machine guns and that the enemy had trench mortars there . . . Sibley and Berry had a thousand men each, but only half of these could be used for the first rush, and, as Berry's position was problematical, it was Sibley's stupendous task to lead his 500 through the southern end of the wood, clear to the eastern border if the attack was not to be a total failure. Even to a Marine it seemed hardly men enough."

AS HE WENT THROUGH Lucy, Catlin went around the left of Sibley's battalion, waiting in shallow trenches, ready to go "over the top." They had picked up that phrase from the British; later it would get shortened to "going over," or, more frequently, changed to the terse "going in."

"When Marines go into line they travel in heavy marching order, but when they go in to fight it is light marching order, with no extra clothing or any blankets. They carry twenty-odd pounds then. They all had their rifles and ammunition, and some of the men were equipped with hand or rifle grenades. The machine guns were in position, both those of the machine gun company of the Sixth and those of two companies of the machine gun battalion attached to the brigade. They were just back of the front line. Each company had eight automatic rifles and



*Three Marines shelter within the devastated fringes of Belleau Wood. Wounded in the chest at his position about 300 yards from the wood, Catlin would be evacuated and not see the fighting continue. But he had observed the assault approvingly.*

eight in reserve; all were used."

To Catlin, "The men seemed cool, in good spirits, and ready for the word to start."

Catlin spoke to a number of them as he passed.

"I am no speech maker," he later said. "If the truth must be told, I think what I said was, 'Give 'em Hell, boys!'"

Catlin reached the right flank of Berry's battalion. They too seemed to be ready. The American artillery shelled the woods for about half an hour, but in Catlin's mind it was not a proper preparation:

"They had no definite locations and were obliged to shell at random in a sort of hit-or-miss fire. It must have been largely miss."

"Watches had been synchronized and no further orders were given. As the hands touched zero hour there was a single shout, and at exactly 5 o'clock the whole line leaped up simultaneously and started forward, Berry's 500 and Sibley's 500, with the others in support," wrote Catlin.

The Germans later reported that they offered excellent targets.

Because of poor communications the attacks of the two battalions were virtually independent.

In front of Berry was the open wheat field, a quarter-mile wide. It was winter wheat, still green, but tall and headed out. Catlin knew only in a general way what was happening to Berry's battalion. What was left of it got to within a hundred yards of the edge of the woods but could go no further. They threw themselves flat on the ground and waited for darkness so they could pull back. At some point in the attack, Berry himself was badly wounded.

Sibley's battalion had better luck. On Sibley's left there was open grass land, perhaps 200 yards wide; his right was close to the woods. Catlin watched them go in and said that it was one of the most beautiful sights he ever saw.

"The battalion pivoted on its right, the left sweeping across the open ground in four waves, as steadily and correctly as though on parade. There were two companies of them, deployed in four skirmish lines, the men placed five yards apart and the waves fifteen to twenty yards behind each other.

"They walked at the regulation pace, because a man is of little use in a hand-to-hand bayonet struggle after a hundred yards dash . . . Oh, it took courage and

steady nerves to do that in the face of the enemy's machine gun fire . . . . In this frame of mind the soldier can perhaps walk with even more coolness and determination than he can run. In any case it was an admirable exhibition of military precision and it gladdened their Colonel's heart."

CATLIN HAD TAKEN position on a little rise in the ground, about 300 yards from the woods, screened a bit by some bushes. It was near a road where Holcomb's left flank had touched Berry's right. He had no field telephone. He watched through his field glasses as the first wave reached the edge of the woods and then plunged in.

Just about the time Sibley's Marines

### Readers Always Write

## Wake Island Veteran Finds Flaws in Official History

### *PAMPHLET READ CAREFULLY*

It seems as though I must accept that Wilson follows Woodrow and that my middle initial cannot be M, but W, as shown on page 4 of *A Magnificent Fight* (Robert J. Cressman, *Marines in World War II Commemorative Series, A Magnificent Fight: Marines in the Battle for Wake Island* [Washington, D.C.: History and Museums Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1992]). On page 37 I got the M back. Also, I noted that I was a first lieutenant until page 32, when I was demoted to second lieutenant.

On 23 December 1941, I was amazed to see a line of Japanese heavy cruisers quietly moving along the north coast of Peale Island at a range of over 16,000 yards (beyond our effective range) without their firing a shot at us as we duelled with a division of DDs to the southwest. It seemed a miracle that they allowed such insolence. But on page 31, I read that the cruisers were only at 10 kilometers (10,936 yards) and firing. I just didn't notice the explosions of 8" shells, which can be quite noisy. The ships did not fire.

On page 11, it is stated that the Wildcats took off as enemy ships approached on 11 December and before our 5" guns were fired. This is the opposite of actuality. Devereux asked Putnam to hold his planes on the ground so as not to alert the

reached the woods, a sniper's bullet hit Catlin in the chest. The bullet spun him around and knocked him to the ground. Catlin said that it felt like he had been hit by a sledge hammer, he felt little pain, but his right side was paralyzed. The bullet had drilled a hole straight through him, going through his right lung. His French liaison officer, Capt Tribot Laspierre, a little man, dragged Catlin, no small burden at 215 pounds, head first back to a shelter trench some 20 feet to the rear.

Capt Laspierre laid him down in the bottom of the shallow trench and did what he could do. Catlin had him send a runner back to Lucy where his rear regimental headquarters could be telephoned and his executive officer, LtCol Harry Lee, summoned to the front.

CATLIN DID NOT lose consciousness. Lee got there by a combination of automobile and foot. Catlin turned over command of the regiment. The regimental surgeon, LCdr Wrey G. Farwell, came up from Lucy. There were gas shells mixed in with the high explosive and Dr. Farwell fitted a gas mask to Catlin's face which was not pleasant for a man with a lung full of blood. After the artillery fire let up, Catlin was carried back to Lucy and here an ambulance took him first to Meaux and finally, after eight hours in the ambulance, to a hospital in Paris. He remained in the hospital until 22 July when he was discharged and sent home on leave.

Catlin was out of the war but the battle for Belleau Wood had just begun.

□1775□

enemy that he had been observed and we were ready for him. Putnam did so.

On page 11 it is stated that "Kajioka's flagship managed to land only one shell in Battery B's vicinity." No shell landed at Battery B.

Just a few lines down on page 11, it is stated that Battery L first opened fire on enemy transports. McAlister told me, and all reports I've read have stated, that L Battery first fired on the destroyers and only later tried ranging shots at a transport much farther out. I've noted that the description of this action on page 118 of [USMC official history] *Pearl Harbor to Guadalcanal* requires close reading to understand that the DDs received fire first, and then (page 119) the transports were fired on, and then the cruisers. Heintz's monograph is more clear on this action.

Then, just a few lines farther down on page 11, it is stated that Battery B engaged three destroyers plus two cruisers. No cruisers were visible to me and we did not fire on any. The map on page 12 shows the cruisers engaged by Battery L, not B. Further, it is stated that enemy "counterfire" disabled one gun. The gun was disabled because the recoil cylinder plug blew out, not from enemy fire.

On page 17, the barracks area on the northern part of the island is given as Camp 1. The Marine tent area on the

southern part was Camp 1.

On page 25, it is stated I saw Japanese flags "whipping" in the breeze. Actually they were flat on the ground as markers of Japanese positions for their own aircraft. I neither reported nor saw a "particularly large one flying where Battery F had been." When the flags were removed I reported that also.

On page 31, the procedure of firing at PB32 is in part described as "gunners lowered their sights." The calculations for this very touchy procedure were done at the rangekeeper and data transmitted to sight setters at the guns who controlled the yokes or brackets above the tubes, not by gunners lowering their sights. It is best described in Heintz's monograph.

On page 32, it is stated that in bombing Battery B, the Japanese were inaccurate and thus inflicted no casualties. Actually, they were quite accurate, placing a 500-pound bomb about 15 feet from my personal position. The concussion was terrific. The lack of casualties came from the type of nose fuses (armor piercing) they were using, which caused the bombs to penetrate the coral ten or more feet before detonating. The planes probably were carrying the bombs prepared for and left over from the attack on Pearl Harbor ships.

On page 10, in the caption, it is stated that the 5" 51-cal. guns had a range of

17,100 yards. As with all guns the effective range is much less than the maximum. At ranges beyond about 12,000 yards the fall of shot was so erratic that any attempt to accurately control fire would have been a failure. All the shots would have been "wild." I note the same thing with respect to the 3" AA guns, as described on page 4, where it is stated that they had an effective ceiling of nearly 30,000 feet. That may be if the gun is nearly vertical, but the fire would have been ineffective because the bomb release line is much farther out so that the aircraft would drop their loads and circle away.

On page 1, it is stated that we didn't have radar because it was new. We had received training in radar both afloat and ashore. It sat on the dock while the Navy debated whether to send it to us.

On page 1, Hamas was stated to be issuing weapons to civilian volunteers. There could not have been many, for I was told there were none when I requested rifles for the volunteers at my position. I armed them with hand grenades after giving them instruction. Other accounts re civilians, such as around Hanna's position, seem to indicate that few weapons were provided other than hand grenades; not until there were Marine casualties that made rifles available.

On page 4, it is stated that thirty 5" rounds were put into "ready-use" boxes at the guns. Before the war I had requested lumber for building such boxes and magazines. My request was denied by orders of the Navy in Hawaii, stating that barracks construction had priority on lumber. Our ammunition at Battery B was scattered in small piles and covered with tar paper.

On page 7, the sentence beginning "Then Lewis ordered his men . . ." does not make sense. Perhaps what is intended here is description of the line from Battery E to Battery D to provide Battery E with readings from the Battery D height-finder.

On page 8, it is stated that Kliewer and Hamilton attacked the "stragglers" bombers. In his after-the-war report, Putnam was quite expressive about the strict discipline of the Japanese formations to the extent that they were so regular that they exhibited little initiative or variety of operation. It is likely that any stragglers resulted from disabling hits by AA guns.

On page 8, it is stated that Hamas recommended Shank for a Medal of

Honor. If so, it didn't go very far. It would be very unusual for a civilian to receive this rare military medal. Dr. Kahn was involved in the same incident; it would be interesting to learn what recognition he received.

On page 24, it is stated that the searchlight was shut off. Actually, it failed, presumably because of bomb damage.

This more recent work does have the advantage over Heintz's monograph, having had access to Japanese reports that were unavailable to Heintz. However, it does seem as though preference is given to the accuracy of Japanese reports over those of the Americans. The Japanese reports were notoriously slanted to minimize their losses and to make claims of victorious actions that were false. It is true that they were not alone in the activity, but they were much more inclined to it as a matter of saving face. For example, they reported the seizure of Wake on 11 December and never did rectify the report. Against Godbold's vision, on page 21, the Japanese report is indicated as more reliable. Again, on page 17, both Godbold's and McKinstry's veracity is questioned vis a vis Japanese reports. On page 36, Japanese casualties are given much lower than the observations of Wake Marines who as POWs were used to collect the dead and observed a very large cremation operation. No mention is made here of the Japanese submarine sunk by Kliewer, as recounted on pages 14-15.

There is a tendency to ascribe to Cunningham a knowledge of land warfare tactics and, in particular, the capabilities of the defense battalion that he did not have. He was a fine and intelligent gentleman, but his prior service did not relate to the Wake situation and he had arrived too late on Wake to gain experience. On the only occasion I saw him during the siege, he drove in his vehicle to my 5" seacoast battery and congratulated me on the fine shooting we had done that day against Japanese aircraft. Of course, Devereux deferred to him as senior officer by keeping him informed of the actions, but most of the initiatives came from Devereux, Putnam, and the defense units.

On page 1, it is stated that Cunningham ordered the defense battalion to battle stations. If so, we had already been so ordered by Devereux, who was unable to contact Cunningham with the news of the Pearl Harbor attack for some time.

On page 10, Cunningham is credited

with the "Bunker Hill" tactic of holding fire until the enemy ships had closed. Yet, this was Devereux's initiative reported to Cunningham after the batteries had been so ordered, based on Devereux's knowledge of the destruction of fire direction equipment by previous bombing of Batteries A and L. He was also aware that Japanese cruisers could well outrange our 5" 51-cal. guns. It was necessary to allow the enemy to approach to point-blank range to be assured of any success. On page 10-11, Cunningham is said to have ordered the alert. Maybe so, but we had already been at the alert for over an hour.

On page 31, the description of Fletcher angrily throwing his hat to the deck is the first such account I have seen of this. I had read of Fitch doing this but not Fletcher. Later, in support of the Marines on Guadalcanal, Fletcher, in the face of a Japanese threat, withdrew his shipping, leaving the Marines stranded with limited ammunition, food, and other supplies. See *First Offensive: The Marine Campaign for Guadalcanal* by Henry I. Shaw, Jr., page 13.

I am sorry to be so adversely critical. But since this is a history which historians of the future may use as an official reference, I feel the record should be as correct as possible. I know that I can err, but in the matters cited I have considerable confidence in my statements.

BGen Woodrow M. Kessler, USMC (Ret)  
Paoli, Pennsylvania

*EDITOR'S NOTE: BGen Kessler, a battery commander veteran of the battle to save Wake Island from Japanese occupation, also is the author of To Wake Island and Beyond: Reminiscences, published by the History and Museums Division in 1988. Robert J. Cressman, the author of A Magnificent Fight, the new World War II commemorative pamphlet dealing with the Wake Island fighting, was invited to respond directly to Gen Kessler's comments on the pamphlet:*

First of all, let me say that I appreciate the general's taking the time to set down his thoughts on what he sees as wrong in *A Magnificent Fight*. I have learned a lot, and am grateful for his setting me straight on some of the items he addresses.

As I see it, *A Magnificent Fight* is a case of "too many cooks spoiling the broth." The original manuscript was well over



twice the size of the finished product . . . the editorial team, however, decreed that the manuscript was too big and had to be cut by 50 percent. Some further "tightening" in the process led directly to some of the misconceptions the general points out.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to respond to BGen Kessler's comments:

1. Since I have a copy of the general's biography and his *Lucky Bag* entry, I know that his middle name is Milton and thus the initial should be M. Somehow in the process between draft and final product it became a W. Careful editing should have caught that, as well as the mix-up in rank.

2. The source I used, "Records of the Sixth Cruiser Division (1 Dec 1941-31 Oct 1942)," appears to have been mistranslated. Individual records of the four CAs involved confirm Gen Kessler's recollection.

3. The takeoff of VMF-211 on 11 Dec 41 is a sticky point. I derived the time of takeoff of the Wildcats from then-2dLt John F. Kinney's diary (reconstructed in Feb 42, making it the source closest to the action—except the 20 Dec 41 reports of Cunningham and Putnam, neither of which makes mention of the tactic), which lists the take-off of the first three F4Fs at 0515—before the Japanese opened fire, fire answered in turn by the seacoast guns. A fourth took off shortly thereafter. Even though Gen Kinney admitted to me in a recent letter that the times may not be accurate (given the December-February time lag), it is significant that the sequence of events he describes opens with VMF-211 taking off. In addition, both then-Capt Frank Tharin and Maj Paul Putnam recalled (in 1945) taking off "before dawn"—a significant point. Since the "high ground" shielded the airfield from the sea, the Japanese could not see the take-offs of the F4Fs. For Cdr Cunningham (who was a pilot) or Maj Devereux (who was not) to have exposed the Wildcats to gunfire from the Japanese ships—or, worse yet, for Maj Putnam to have assented to a plan that might have resulted in the destruction of his remaining planes (and he did not seem to hesitate to speak his mind when the occasion demanded it)—would have been foolhardy, given the fact that those planes constituted the only aerial defense of the atoll. Furthermore I have serious reservations about Devereux's

version because there is evidence that his *The Story of Wake Island* is a "romance" (when the label is defined as ". . . a long fictitious tale of heroes and mysterious or extraordinary events"), not a "history." Evidence exists that Gen Devereux changed his story during 1946-1947, so until I am convinced otherwise . . . I stand by the original statement, which was based on the pilots' stories.

4. The "shell in Battery B's vicinity" should be in Battery A's, another editorial mistake.

5. Engagement with the DDs/CLs is from Dull, *A Battle History of the Imperial Japanese Records*, which was done from Japanese sources.

6. Should be Camp 2, not Camp 1, again an editorial mistake.

7. With regard to the Japanese flags, that's the impression one gets by reading the narratives of the people involved on Wilkes.

8. On the mechanics of firing a 5"/51, the general has broadened my knowledge, for which I am grateful!

9. Thanks for the information on the accuracy of the bombing. The general's 1945 statement mentions no casualties and no damage.

10. Caption for the 5"/51—the general offers useful information.

11. The statement that the radar was "new" was not mine . . . I protested the oversimplification that was done in this and other instances in the interest of "tightening up" the narrative but was overruled . . .

12. Hamas distributing weapons comes from his 1945 narrative.

13. With regard to "ready boxes" at the guns, the general's own 1945 statement specifically mentions ready boxes at the guns.

14. "Lewis ordered his men" is another instance of an editor "tightening up" the original prose, and thus altering the meaning. I am well aware of where Lewis was leading his lines; the original manuscript describes it correctly.

15. "Stragglers" were indeed those that had suffered AA damage (and there were many).

16. Hamas did recommend Shank for the Medal of Honor; I have seen the write-up that he submitted. Kahn received no decoration for his work at Wake.

17. In the original draft, I so stated that the searchlight went off as the result of

damage, not that it was shut off. Again, an editorial change.

18. Regarding my "preference" for Japanese reports over our own, as much as it is frustrating to admit, their losses at Wake in terms of ships, planes, and men, were not nearly as bad as we would like to believe . . . . When did the Japanese report the seizure of Wake as occurring on 11 December? The general cites the recollections of then-Capt Godbold and Gunner McKinstry, who doubtless . . . "called 'em as they saw 'em," but when the Japanese sources show plane and personnel losses (the latter by name), as well as the times the planes crashed, one has to go with the available information. It should be remembered that at that point in the war, despite the setback on 11 December 1941, the Japanese could be considered as winning, or at least doing better at achieving their objectives than our side was in preventing them from doing so.

19. Casualty figures for the Japanese are incomplete, as I so state.

20. The reason the sinking of the submarine is not mentioned is because there is no hard evidence to support it. However, I have a theory on this which makes sense and will be explored in a future book.

21. It was not my intent to attribute to Cunningham any extraordinary perception in land warfare tactics, and I do not believe that I did.

22. Cunningham's ordering of the battalion to battle stations comes from what he himself related.

23. I made no attempt to attribute the "Bunker Hill" tactics to Cunningham. I merely recounted what Hamas related of the incident.

24. Cunningham's ordering of the alert, again, what he himself wrote about it.

25. The incident of Fletcher throwing his hat is good copy, but it may not have happened. All the returns aren't in on that one. For an explanation (and an exoneration) of Frank Jack Fletcher's later activities in 1942, see John B. Lundstrom's "Frank Jack Fletcher Got a Bum Rap" in *Naval History*. It is a more accurate version of the story of what happened off Guadalcanal.

Robert J. Cressman  
Rockville, Maryland

### UNFORGETTABLE 'BIGFOOT'

You certainly captured the spirit of the General [MajGen Wilbur S. "Bigfoot"

Brown, USMC, in "Director's Page: Fond Memories of 'Bigfoot' Brown," *Fortitudine*, Winter 1991-1992], who was one of the most unforgettable people I have ever met . . . I was pleased to find myself pictured. Even if not mentioned by name, I count it a true distinction to have found my way into such a fine publication . . .

Robert E. Johnson  
Chairman, Department of History  
University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa

I think your piece on "Bigfoot" did the proper homage to that remarkable man.

BGen F. F. Henderson, USMC (Ret)  
Moorestown, New Jersey

### HAD THEIR FILL OF ICELAND

Jim Donovan's *Outpost in the North Atlantic* (Col James A. Donovan, USMC [Ret], *Marines in World War II Commemorative Series, Outpost in the North Atlantic: Marines in the Defense of Iceland* [Washington, D.C.: History and Museums Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, 1992]) is a splendid essay. Congratulations to him on a contribution to Marine Corps history.

Here is a tiny footnote to Donovan's story:

In June 1941, three Marine officers, LtCol R. O. Bare, Capt Dean C. Roberts, and I were sent by Gen H. M. Smith, on brief notice, to Floyd Bennett Field in New York.

We were to fly from there to Reykjavik, Iceland, to make preliminary arrangements for the arrival of a brigade of Marines. Particularly, we were to ascertain the condition and adequacy of billeting, the availability of food, fuel, and other supplies the British could turn over to us, the enemy situation, the nature and extent of defensive dispositions, the capacity of the port and anchorages, plus many other specific questions.

It turned out that our transportation was to be a PBY 5-A, amphibian, unheated, cruising speed 115 knots. We flew to Argentina, Newfoundland (12 hours)—a cold, noisy, interminable ride. We stopped there for fuel, a meal, and to draw cold weather flight gear for the last half of the trip (12 hours more).

We landed in the fjord just south of Reykjavik, where we were distressed to see the noses of three British Short-Sunderland flying boats pecking out of the water. They had been sunk, just the

day before, by German aircraft. That raised the question of whether we might expect a return visit by the Germans to do the same thing to our PBY.

We were met by a boat from an American AVD, a converted World War I destroyer, serving as U.S. aid station ship and as a fuel source for U.S. patrol planes. The AVD people gave us a bunk in the small crew's compartment, where we changed clothes and went ashore to call on the British and set about our work.

What we saw was bleak in the extreme. The British brigadier was hospitable, indeed more than glad to see us. He gave us lunch in his mess—canned Argentine beef, gray bread, canned butter, coffee. I knew right then that they had little food our Marines would care for.

We inspected their billeting areas—Nissan huts with oil or charcoal stoves, no cots for the men—some had electricity, some did not. Their gasoline was 56 octane. We couldn't use that. They had no building materials. Their roads were poor, largely narrow, gravel tracks. The British defensive positions were rudimentary and the port of Reykjavik built for fishing boats, not military transports.

All told, it was an unattractive picture, except for one thing, the British were cheerful, willing to give us anything we could use, but, above all, anxious to know when the U.S. forces were coming. They had had their fill of Iceland.

After a week of reconnaissance, we had seen enough. We got back aboard our PBY and spent the frigid 24-hour flight home composing the disappointing report we would be making to Gen Smith. He took the bad news in stride, said it was about what he expected.

LtGen Victor H. Krulak, USMC (Ret)  
San Diego, California

### MISIDENTIFIED BATTLESHIP

Your latest article, "Guadalcanal 50 Years Later" (*Fortitudine*, Fall 1992), was particularly interesting for me. Although I wasn't on Guadalcanal, I was a member of the Marine Detachment aboard the battleship U.S.S. *South Dakota* (BB-57) during the night action on November 14-15, 1942. In your article, on page 10, the *South Dakota* was given the number BB-55 . . . As I recall, BB-55 was the *North Carolina*.

LtCol Edwin A. Deptula, USMC (Ret)  
Oceanside, California

*EDITOR'S NOTE: LtCol Deptula, whose letter also relates his entry into the Corps in March 1941, is correct. The South Dakota (BB-57), launched on 7 June 1941 and commissioned on 20 March 1942, was wrongly identified.*



### STORY BEHIND THE PICTURE

The photograph appearing on page 22 of the Summer 1992 issue of *Fortitudine* has appeared from time to time in books, magazines, and even on a cover of a war game. It is always associated with the Guadalcanal campaign, but there has not to my knowledge ever been an identification of the date or place this action took place or the names of the persons in the picture.

Before all the players have disappeared, I thought I should write you to set the record straight . . . The action occurred on January 28, 1943, in a coconut grove near Tassafonga Point. Company A, 1st Battalion, 6th Marines was acting as the point in an advance up the coast when it encountered a Japanese ambush. This was part of a delaying action to facilitate the withdrawal of Japanese forces from the island.

All of the persons in the photograph were from that company. That day I was acting as company commander in the absence of Capt Charles R. Durfee, who was ill. I was hit by a heavy machine gun bullet in the right thigh. Several others were also wounded. I am the person on the stretcher. The stretcher bearers were as follows: left front, Cpl Berndt (KIA Tarawa); left rear, PltSgt Joseph A. Cado; right rear, Pvt Barkowski; and right front, Cpl Herman Burks.

This may well have been the last land engagement by Marines in the Guadalcanal campaign.

Baine P. Kerr  
Houston, Texas

# Marine Historian Reflects on His Mission to Somalia

by Capt David A. Dawson, USMC  
Historical Writer

**D**URING THE FIRST days of December 1992, Marine units around the world began preparing to support the imminent deployment to Somalia in eastern Africa. The Marine Corps Historical Center was no exception. On the morning of 3 December, LtCol Thomas A. Richards, the head of the Historical Branch, informed me that if the call for a historian came, I would go. The next morning, a Friday, the call came. I spent Saturday packing my seabag, and on Sunday, 6 December, I left to join I MEF, still at Camp Pendleton.

I joined I MEF at a busy time. The staff was making plans for Operation Restore Hope while simultaneously trying to integrate hundreds of augmentees from all Services as I MEF transformed itself into Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) Somalia.\* My few days at Camp Pendleton were extremely hectic as I tried to learn as much as possible about the operation while rushing to get my personal gear ready for a lengthy deployment. I was a little overwhelmed by my sudden elevation to the job of "Joint Task Force Historian." Luckily, I was able to pay a number of visits to Col Charles J. Quilter II, USMCR, the commanding officer of MTU DC-7 and the I MEF historian for Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Col Quilter gave me a condensed course in the duties of a field historian. From him I gleaned the cardinal rule—"go out and see for yourself."

After a couple of false starts I left Camp Pendleton on 11 December, bound for Somalia. I flew on board a chartered 747, and enjoyed all the normal luxuries of commercial air travel—meals, soft drinks, and in-flight movies. Landing in the capital city, Mogadishu, around noon on 13 December, I was struck by the sudden change in my life. Just one week before I had said goodbye to my wife and family in the chill of a Northern Virginia winter; now I was sweltering under the equatorial sun in a country with no government, no electricity, no safe drinking water, and no order of any kind.

\*CJTF Somalia was later designated Unified Task Force Somalia (UNITAF).



Watercolor by WO Charles G. Grow, USMC

*This sign, just outside Mogadishu airport, greeted everyone who arrived in Somalia. The artist, WO Grow, was operations officer for the MARFOR Combat Camera Team.*

**A**LTHOUGH I ARRIVED just four days after D-Day, I had already missed a great deal of the action. The 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) [MEU(SOC)] had landed at Mogadishu on 9 December. In a couple of short engagements they had already convinced the local gunmen that it was unwise to challenge the Marines. The day I arrived elements of the 15th MEU(SOC) secured Bale Dogle airfield, about 50 miles north of Mogadishu. I barely had time to find a place for my cot before I

was off to catch up with the Marines at the tip of the spear.

I spent my first few weeks in Somalia as a very busy gypsy. Through a little planning, a lot of luck, and the kind assistance of many Marines, I was able to get around the country. I would attend the CJTF operations meetings to get the big picture, and to find out what was coming next. Then I would hitch a ride out to the unit scheduled to secure the next Humanitarian Relief Site (HRS), usually appearing at the command post unannounced only hours

*LtCol Marc Jacqmin, commander of the Belgian 1st Parachute Battalion, seated far left, meets in Kismayo with Col Omar Jess, a local warlord, in desert hat at right.*





before the unit was scheduled to depart. Although I could be viewed as a “useless body who does nothing more than consume food and water,” these units hospitably always made room for me. After entering the new HRS, and spending a day or two, I would catch a passing helicopter or C-130 back to Mogadishu, spend a day at headquarters learning the new plans, and then launch out to the next unit to do it all again.

ON 15 DECEMBER I showed up on the doorstep of the 15th MEU(SOC). Elements of the MEU and the amphibious company of the *2eme Regiment Etranger Parachutiste* (2d French Foreign Legion Parachute Regiment) had formed Task Force Hope to secure Baidoa, some 150 miles northwest of Mogadishu. Although I was too late to join the lead elements of Task Force Hope, I was able to fly to Baidoa with the MEU’s Bravo command group on the morning of 16 December, a few hours after the airfield had been secured.

The next evening, after accompanying the first two relief convoys escorted by Task Force Hope, I was headed back to Mogadishu. After a quick visit around the headquarters the next morning, I found myself wandering the beach at Mogadishu International Airport looking for a ride out to one of the ships to tag along with Company G, Battalion Landing Team (BLT) 2/9 for its trip to Kismayo. Luckily I bumped into 1stLt William S. Lucas, the company executive officer, with the company and the BLT’s amphibious tractor platoon waiting to reembark on the USS *Juneau* (LPD-10). Lt Lucas graciously offered me a lift, and two days later I found myself in an amphibious tractor with LtCol Marc Jacqmin, Commanding Officer, 1st Parachute Battalion (Belgium), acting as Commander, Landing Force, and Capt Brian D. Beaudreault, Commanding Officer, Company G, as we landed at Kismayo.

We immediately drove to the headquarters of Col Omar Jess, the leader of one of the local factions. Unfortunately, we got separated from the security platoon as we navigated Kismayo’s narrow streets. Undeterred, LtCol Jacqmin strode straight into Col Jess’s compound, and Capt Beaudreault, myself, and the rest of the command group plunged in after him. As



*Col Werner Hellmer, MARFOR Civil-Military Operations Team head, facing camera; Col Emil R. “Buck” Bedard, 7th Marines commander, to right of him; and Donald G. Teitelbaum, U.S. State Department, back to camera, in Bardera, Christmas morning, 1992.*

LtCol Jacqmin settled down to chat as if he were at a staff meeting in Brussels, I inspected the armed men and “technicals” in the compound. I then realized that my 9mm pistol, along with the forward air controller and a couple of radio operators, constituted our sole local security. My apprehension proved unfounded, and we

quickly departed to secure the airfield. By noon I was on another C-130 back to Mogadishu.

I came back to find LtCol Dennis P. Mroczkowski waiting for me. He relieved me as the CJTF historian, and I assumed duties as the Marine Forces (MARFOR) historian. I arrived at MARFOR head-



*Taking the Marine Corps Historical Program to the field are, from left, Col Peter M. “Mike” Gish, USMCR (Ret); LtCol Dennis P. Mroczkowski, USMCR; Capt David A. “Scotty” Dawson, USMC; and Capt Burton E. Moore, Jr., USMCR, four of the six historians and artists who served in Somalia. Below, a hard-to-recognize Capt Dawson takes a turn on the gun during the 7th Marines’ move to Bardera on Christmas Eve, 1992.*



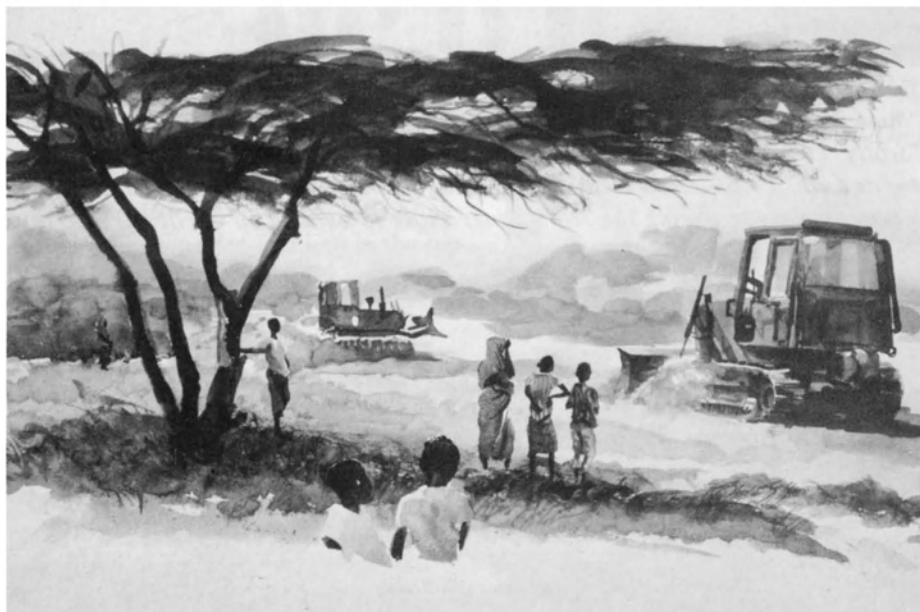


*LtCol Charles H. Cureton, USMCR, with camera, and Maj Robert Furu, USAR, back to camera, of the Joint Historical Team, survey the damage along Mogadishu's "Green Line," near Checkpoint 77. In the background, at right, is the once-popular Lido Hotel.*



*The arrival of Coalition Forces broke the back of the famine, but starving Somalis continued to trickle into the "Italian Village" into late February. Below, WO Grow captured Marines of the 7th Engineer Support Battalion clearing a soccer field for children at the LaFole Refugee Center just north of Mogadishu. The Marines of the 1st FSSG "adopted" the LaFole Center, building a schoolroom, a playground, and a hospital ward.*

Watercolor by WO Charles G. Grow, USMC



quarters just in time to travel with the 7th Marines to Bardera.

I joined the headquarters of the 7th Marines on the night of 21 December. At dawn the next day we left for Baidoa, the first stop on our trip. The regiment paused for a day at Baidoa, while the composite engineer company began to clear and repair the road to Bardera. The regiment began leaving at dawn the next day. I made the long, dusty trip with Sgt Paul A. Reifke's heavy machine gun team from Weapons Company, 1st Battalion. Sgt Reifke and his Marines kindly let me take my turn manning the M-60 machine gun on the vehicle's roof. We arrived at Bardera airfield just before dusk on Christmas Eve. The 7th Marines had covered more than 300 miles in less than 60 hours, less than a week after the bulk of the regiment had arrived in country.

ON CHRISTMAS MORNING, Col Emil R. "Buck" Bedard, Commanding Officer, 7th Marines, entered Bardera for his first meeting with local Somali leaders. At this meeting Col Bedard announced that our arrival was our "Christmas present to Bardera." That afternoon the Marines delivered a tangible Christmas present, 10 tons of grain that they had brought with them from Baidoa. In the evening, the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines chaplain, Lt (j.g.) Alfonso J. Murray, CHC, USNR, conducted a brief Christmas service by the runway. Two days later I managed to get back to Mogadishu by catching a ride with a UN flight.

By the first of January, the Unified Task Force (UNITAF) had secured all of the HRSS, and Mogadishu became the focus of MARFOR's main effort. MajGen Charles E. Wilhelm, Commanding General, Marine Forces Somalia, placed Col Jack W. Klimp in command of a composite unit task-organized for this job, dubbed Task Force Mogadishu. I continued to travel, this time within the city, accompanying various units on sweeps and searches.

Both Baidoa and Bardera remained peaceful after the first arrival of Marine Forces. In the middle of January the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, turned Baidoa over to the 1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, and on 19 January the first planeload of Marines and sailors departed Mogadishu for Camp Pendleton. By the end of January Task Force Mogadishu had

eliminated the anarchy that had reigned in the city.

AS MARFOR SETTLED into the routine of keeping the peace that had been established, I tried to visit every major Marine unit in Somalia, spending the night if possible. I found that "sleeping over" gave me enough time to get to know the Marines of a unit. I also made a point of visiting each of the numerous coalition forces assigned to MARFOR.

This period also gave me a chance to visit hospitals, orphanages, and refugee camps. For the first time I saw incredibly emaciated people and absolutely shocking suffering. It was hard to remember that by this point the suffering from starvation

was less than a tenth of what it had been. When I visited the "Italian Village" camp of about 20,000 refugees outside of Bardera, I saw perhaps a hundred "hard cases" and four or five people were dying every day. Before the 7th Marines had arrived on Christmas Day, in this camp more than 300 people had been dying a day.

During February and March the number of Marines in Somalia slowly but steadily declined as the Army and coalition forces gradually began to take over the logistical support and peacekeeping tasks. By the beginning of March it was clear that the real story in Somalia was over, and that it was time to begin wrapping up my collection efforts. On 23 March I departed

Mogadishu on another 747 with MajGen Wilhelm and the bulk of the MARFOR staff, three and a half months after I had left Washington. During that time, more than 10,000 Marines had served in Somalia. These men and women, along with the other members of CJTF Somalia, ended the famine and saved tens of thousands of lives. Once the famine was broken, these Marines began to help the Somalis to rebuild their country. Marines "adopted" schools, hospitals, and orphanages; joined SeaBees to clear the streets; and helped reconstitute local police forces. When I arrived in Somalia, I found chaos and destruction. When I left there was food, security, and hope for the future. □1775□

## Combat Artist Sought Out Marines Responding to Danger in Somalia

by Capt Burton E. Moore, Jr., USMCR

SINCE ARRIVING IN Mogadishu on 5 February I made a personal commitment to staying with the U.S. Marine elements of Joint Task Force (JTF) Somalia. Although there was much else of interest—MedCaps, "food frenzies," other-nationality participants in the U.N. coalition forces—I chose to remain with the men of the Corps and their activities.

Day in and day out I "farmed" myself out to the various Marine units, staying with them on their missions, keen to the possibility of getting action under fire in photographs and sketches. The Marines, for their part, adopted me as something of a curiosity: a one-time active Marine, an artist, and the oldest captain in the entire Marine Force (MARFOR) and the JTF. I accompanied them on night recons, night and day raids for weapons confiscation, crowd control assignments, LAAV sweeps of known hostile areas, and many other foot and motorized patrols in nasty real estate. These men often were the objects of inflammatory verbal abuse and rock-throwing.

Though Mogadishu was the place which presented the most activity because of its size and hostile elements, I also went to Kismayo, Baledogle, Bardera, and Baidoa. While "up north," I spent one day with the French Foreign Legion at Oddur. This was the same parachute battalion I had jumped with in 1972, while in the Mediterranean. So, we did it again (Well, we all know what an invitation is. Blue sky. Grand international relations!).

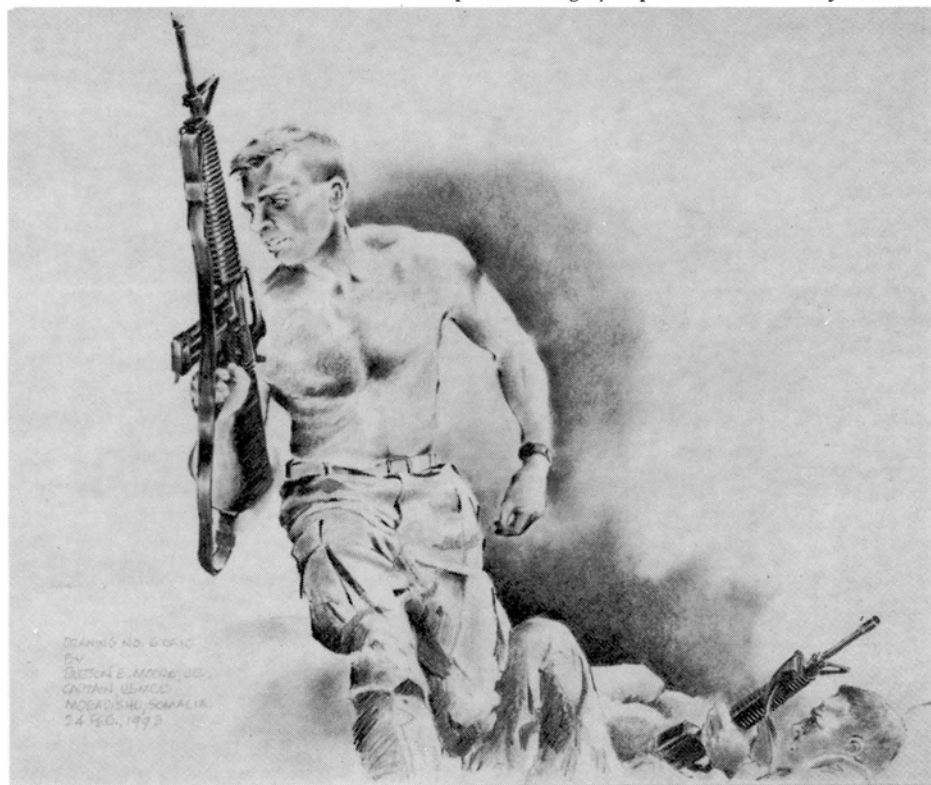
EVERY DAY I reviewed the situation reports at MARFOR headquarters. In 1900, Winston Churchill is quoted as saying, "Somalia. A land of rocks and thorn trees, people by rifled fanatics." Every day, somewhere, someway, somehow, there was shooting happening in Mogadishu. It may not have involved the Marines; more than

likely it did not. But eventually it might.

I designated the morning of 24 February to be "wash day," to be spent with the communal "tent bucket" and "water buffalo." At 0730 it happened. With the exception of isolated incidents, during which time rounds would be fired in our vicinity, nothing much had occurred

*Among 10 sequential sketches made by Capt Moore of Jump Team No. 1, Reconnaissance Company, 5th Marines, is this one in which LCpl Thomas W. Wasson, USMC, nimbly steps over other snipers to get ammo magazines from a hut on the embassy roof.*

Graphite drawing by Capt Burton E. Moore, Jr., USMCR







Graphite drawing by Capt Burton E. Moore, Jr., USMCR

*Above, LCpl Wasson passes out ammo magazines to fellow snipers on the embassy rooftop. The magazines have short pieces of parachute cord attached to them for quick handling. While this is going on, two rounds slam into the sandbags. Several more snap overhead. Below, top, LCpl Wasson, center, and a buddy return fire, while LCpl Thomas I. Bales, USMC, left, with lowered head searches the Mogadishu cityscape. Bottom, with the sun now well up, Wasson and Bales report that the shooting is over.*

Graphite drawings by Capt Burton E. Moore, Jr., USMCR



which would afford the opportunity of sketching Marines reacting to real danger, until, with all of my clothing wet and sudsy, relatively heavy automatic weapons fire erupted from outside the MARFOR compound. Tracer rounds criss-crossed over and between tents. Some Marines were in their sandbagged holes. I put on my soaking, soapy sand-suit, grabbed gear, and hustled 800 meters to the CP of Capt Dennis Guzik, a battery commander with 3d Battalion, 11th Marines. He gave me permission to accompany his reaction force, which had compound security. I arrived at the walls and gates surrounding the compound, the old U.S. Embassy. An agitated mob had gathered outside—several hundred Somalis yelling obscenities, throwing rocks, burning tires in the street, and jumping up and down. Rounds were popping in the distance, some close by. I got quick, but good, film exposures of Marines preparing to expel attackers and a few Marines returning fire to distant snipers.

Now a heated exchange of weapons fire came from another direction, then died down, then returned. Canadian and Australian “office pogies” were hunkered down behind trees and TV satellite disks. I ran into the embassy building and up onto the roof, where Marine snipers were posted on a permanent basis. These were the first Marines I sought out when I arrived there. I have a vested interest in them; I was one. I did 10 graphite renderings of them (Jump Team No. 1, Reconnaissance Company, 5th Marines) and the quick incident which happened when I arrived at their post. They were the objects of hostile fire. It was real. A brief moment.

**L**ATER IN THE morning fighting, rifle fire, and RPG shooting spread through Mogadishu. I observed it moving through the city from my position with the Marines on top of the embassy building. The Marines of 3d Battalion, 11th Marines, were ordered into the Nigerian sector as a react force in amtracs. I went with them. There was a considerable amount of shooting, although to be candid, most of it was a preventive display on the part of the Nigerians, putting “holes in the air.” Nevertheless some Marines were wounded by the fire, including one with a head wound and one with a serious wound to his kneecap. I was with them. The scrap at “K-4” may have been the most violent of the entire commitment of Marines to Somalia. □1775□

# Departing MTU Leader Reviews Action-Packed Tenure

by Col Charles J. Quilter II, USMCR

ON 15 APRIL I handed over command of Mobilization Training Unit (History) DC-7 to LtCol Dennis P. Mroczkowski, USMCR. This is a brief report of the unit's activities over the past three and a half years that I had the pleasure—and challenge—of commanding it.

For those not familiar with MTU (Hist) DC-7, the unit provides nearly all of the Marine Corps' uniformed historians and combat artists. We support the History and Museums Division of Headquarters Marine Corps both in the field and at the Marine Corps Historical Center in the Washington Navy Yard. Our dozen officer members are part of the drilling branch of the Individual Ready Reserve and receive no pay except when on active duty. I note with some pride that current unit members participated in virtually every contingency operation involving Marines from the liberation of Kuwait to the humanitarian relief expedition in Somalia.

Most of our historians come from backgrounds in combat arms and who have subsequently gained doctorates or masters degrees in history. Some are also experienced museum specialists. Our combat artists are professional artists in civilian life and are well known in the art world. Their work as Marines becomes part of the Marine Corps Combat Art Collection and can be seen in the Center and elsewhere.

PERHAPS THE GREATEST test of the unit's capabilities to date occurred during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990-91. Two of us, LtCol Charles H. Cureton and myself, were ordered to active duty on 15 October 1990. After begging and borrowing an assortment of government and private cameras, computers, and video gear, we joined I Marine Expeditionary Force, then at Jubayl, Saudi Arabia, to conduct the Marines' historical collection effort. Upon my arrival, the force commander, LtGen Walter E. Boomer, designated me the command historian. I bring up the equipment issue here to point out that we attempt to be as self-supporting as possible, whenever we deploy. Later on, LtCols Mroczkowski, Ronald G. Brown, and Frank

V. Sturgeon arrived as Desert Storm got underway. Back at the Center, LtCol Donna J. Neary and Capt Meredith P. Hartley both were on extended active duty. LtCol Ronald H. Spector took acting charge of the unit while I was away.

Our historical collection efforts revolved around a number of tasks: collecting and preserving documents and artifacts, conducting oral history interviews, directing the Combat Camera program and ensuring the quality of units' command chronologies. We also kept notes and journals and took photographs and video footage. The command chronologies were particularly important because these form the primary reference framework for operational and unit histories later on. Units sometimes unnecessarily view them as bothersome during high-tempo operations, but once we explained to them that writing skills were secondary compared to the preservation of supporting documents, such as logs and orders, we got excellent cooperation. Our somewhat higher-than-average rank level also helped us gain access to commanders and staff and definitely made oral interviews easier.

IN DECEMBER I placed LtCol Cureton with the 1st Marine Division. As soon as he arrived in mid-January, I sent LtCol Mroczkowski over to the 2d Marine Division, just as it moved north. Although historians in the field are cautioned "not to become a part of history", all the historians had their share of excitement.

LtCol Mroczkowski got additional duties as second-in-command of his division's breach control party and led a small group that captured 286 Iraqi troops during the ground assault on 24 February. LtCol Cureton was in an armored assault vehicle unit during the assault on Kuwait International Airport on the evening of the 26th, when they encountered a column of Iraqis retreating northwest along the Seventh Ring Road. In the lively firefight that followed, Cureton—a former arm-tracker himself—spotted an adjacent vehicle's .50-caliber machine gun that had become unmanned. He leapt up to it and proceeded to deliver rounds on the enemy. The next night, I had the dubious

honor of being the object of the last hostile rounds of the ground campaign. (I am pleased to report that they missed.)

After the cessation of hostilities, LtCol Brown led the tedious and sometimes dangerous job of gathering and shipping artifacts ranging in size from D20 152mm howitzers to small items of uniform, as well as about a ton of classified documents. In May he accompanied the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit to northern Iraq in Operation Provide Comfort in its humanitarian relief mission there.

AS SOON AS WE returned to the United States, the historians involved began writing a series of six monographs concerning Marine operations in the Gulf War, the first of which was published this April. Meantime, Maj Susan M. Exner, then on Okinawa, began the collection process on Marines in Operation Fiery Vigil, the disaster relief that followed the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines.

Other deployments followed. Capt Burton E. Moore, Jr., a combat artist who, as many of us, had previously served in Vietnam, flew to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to cover the Haitian humanitarian relief operation there. In December 1992, I Marine Expeditionary Force again deployed, this time to Somalia in Operation Provide Hope. During Desert Shield we learned the importance of having historians and artists accompany the deployment of forces as early as possible; LtCol Mroczkowski and Capt David A. Dawson, a regular officer from the Center, landed at Mogadishu within a few days of the first elements. Both of our artists followed soon afterwards: our Thomason Award winner, LtCol Neary, and Capt Moore. All of them journeyed throughout the country in bone-jarring relief vehicle convoys and on security patrols. Our artists' work is tentatively scheduled to be displayed in the U.S. Senate office building in Washington, D.C., this summer.

As were many of the recent expeditions involving Marines, Provide Hope was at first a joint, and then later, a combined operation. Upon arrival in Somalia, LtCol

Mroczkowski was designated the Joint Task Force command historian covering activities of all American forces there. He was succeeded in February by LtCol Cureton, who led an all-service Joint Historical Team to Somalia on behalf of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

AS A RESULT of the Somalia experience, the Joint Staff ordered the formation of Reserve joint history elements. The Marines' share in this levy is five historians, all of whom will probably come from our unit. As if we weren't busy enough, one of our newest members,

LtCol Nicholas E. Reynolds, an infantry officer with a Ph.D. from Oxford, was ordered to active duty this winter to Europe to begin the collection effort of American military involvement in the Balkans.

All in all, the past three years have been an extraordinarily busy time for MTU (Hist) DC-7. Despite extended deployments and interruptions to personal lives, each of our members rose to the occasion and I am honored to have commanded them.

The unit's new commander, LtCol Mroczkowski, needs no introduction in

military history circles. He is the director of the U.S. Army's Casemate Museum at Fort Monroe, Virginia, and holds a masters' degree in history. His monograph concerning the 2d Marine Division in the Gulf War is the second in our series and will be published this summer. As a Marine, in addition to the work noted above, he served as an artillery officer in Vietnam and in a number of assignments in the Selected Marine Corps Reserve, most recently with the 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade and with the staff of Fleet Marine Forces, Europe. I'm pleased to leave the unit in such capable hands. □1775□

## War College World War II Commemoration Has Marine Speakers, Displays

by Benis M. Frank  
Chief Historian

THE NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE'S observance of the 50th anniversary of World War II began last fall with an evening devoted to presentations concerning Operation Torch. Continuing with its commemoration of the anniversary, on 1 April, the National War College and National War College Alumni Association sponsored a seminar, attended by students, faculty, and NWC alumni, and devoted to a study of the Solomon Islands campaigns.

Marine Corps Historical Foundation President LtGen Philip D. Shutler, USMC (Ret), spoke on "Air-Land-Sea Campaign Integration" in the opening session. In the panel on "Protecting and Interdicting Lines of Communication," Gen Shutler presented a paper entitled, "Role of Land Air Bases," an outgrowth of his continuing study of Guadalcanal as a land air base in the Solomons operations.

In a second panel, this one devoted to "Joint Air Battles and Air Superiority," veteran Marine aviator MajGen John P. Condon, USMC (Ret), former chairman of the Foundation Board, spoke on a "Veteran's Perspective: Marines and Joint Considerations."

IN A THIRD PANEL, "Jungle Fighting," Chief Historian Benis M. Frank spoke on "Guadalcanal and the U.S. Marine Corps," devoting his paper to a discussion of the development of amphibious warfare doctrine and its successful employment in the first U.S. offensive of World War II.

Also on this panel was BGen Gordon D. Gayle, USMC (Ret), a Guadalcanal veteran and former head of the Historical Division. He gave "A Veteran's Perspective," and was the guest speaker at the luncheon at the Fort McNair Officer's Club, where he spoke on "Guadalcanal: The Human Dimension." He was introduced by another Guadalcanal veteran, Capt Herbert C. Merillat, who was the 1st Marine Division public affairs officer and historian, and the author of two books on the operation, *The Island*, published shortly after the campaign, and *Guadalcanal Remembered*, published in 1982.

Enhancing NWC's commemoration of the Solomons Campaign are a series of exhibits of photographs, maps, and artifacts relating to the fighting on, over, and around Guadalcanal. National Defense University Special Collections Archivist Susan Lemke borrowed liberally from the

holdings of the Museums Branch to give the exhibits she arranged a feeling of Guadalcanal and the Solomons.

ON DISPLAY IN ONE of the cases is the Australian-made Eisenhower-type jacket Center volunteer George C. MacGillivray and the rest of the 1st Marine Division were issued when they went to Melbourne. On the left shoulder of this jacket is one of the original 1st MarDiv patches designed by then-LtCol Merrill B. Twining, Division operations officer, who arranged to have them knitted in Australia.

The National War College will continue this series of commemorative seminars by dealing with the war in the Atlantic and Europe, as well as other Pacific campaigns, in the coming months and years until the 50th anniversaries of V-E Day and V-J Day are celebrated. □1775□

*Veterans of World War II taking part in National War College observances of the anniversary are, from left, MajGen John P. Condon, USMC (Ret); Herbert C. Merillat; and George C. MacGillivray, whose Australian-made jacket is featured in the display.*





# A Large Battle in a Small Place: Khe Sanh in Vietnam

by Rev. Ray W. Stubbe

HILL 881 SOUTH, the most remote American outpost in Vietnam, was shrouded in dense fog the morning of the Marine Corps Birthday, 1967. Called “cra-chin,” French for spit, these fogs only accentuated the feeling of isolation of the garrison. Men hadn’t showered in months, and suffered from infected cuts and sores caused by the razor-sharp high elephant grass. Clothes literally rotted. The blackness was all-pervasive at night in the dank and dark bunkers, except for the small light emitted by the Coleman lantern in the company CP and the few candles.

Despite the sometimes surrealistic

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*The author, a former Navy chaplain, is a veteran of the Khe Sanh fighting and the writer of detailed histories of the battle. More than 1,800 other veterans of Khe Sanh have formed their own organization, which meets annually and publishes a newsletter. For information contact Rev. Ray W. Stubbe, President Emeritus, Khe Sanh Veterans, Inc., 8766 Park View Court, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin 53226.*

*Under a pall of smoke and dust raised by the constant shelling from both sides, American killed are removed from the Khe Sanh battle zone by helicopter. This print by famed photographer*

beauty of the surrounding landscape that everyone who was at Khe Sanh will never forget, there were constant reminders of the war. Occasional human skulls unearthed or a pocket of nauseating stench that suddenly belched forth and enveloped the Marines as they dug new trenches were unpleasant souvenirs of the heavy fighting of the previous spring.

LtGen Alfred D. Starbird, USA, had just visited this hill yesterday, and had pointed towards the DMZ. The “snuffy” knew it wasn’t everyday that an unknown three-star general visited a company-sized outpost! Unknown to the uninitiated, Starbird was the head of DCPG (Defense Communications Planning Group), developing electronic sensors to “illuminate” the battlefield. Inside of a mysterious, small, tent-like shack just to the west of the bald top LZ of the hill, a Marine with a loop radio direction finder told a visiting chaplain, “They say the NVA are creeping closer and closer and will attack us . . . [but] You’re really not supposed to be looking in here, Sir!”

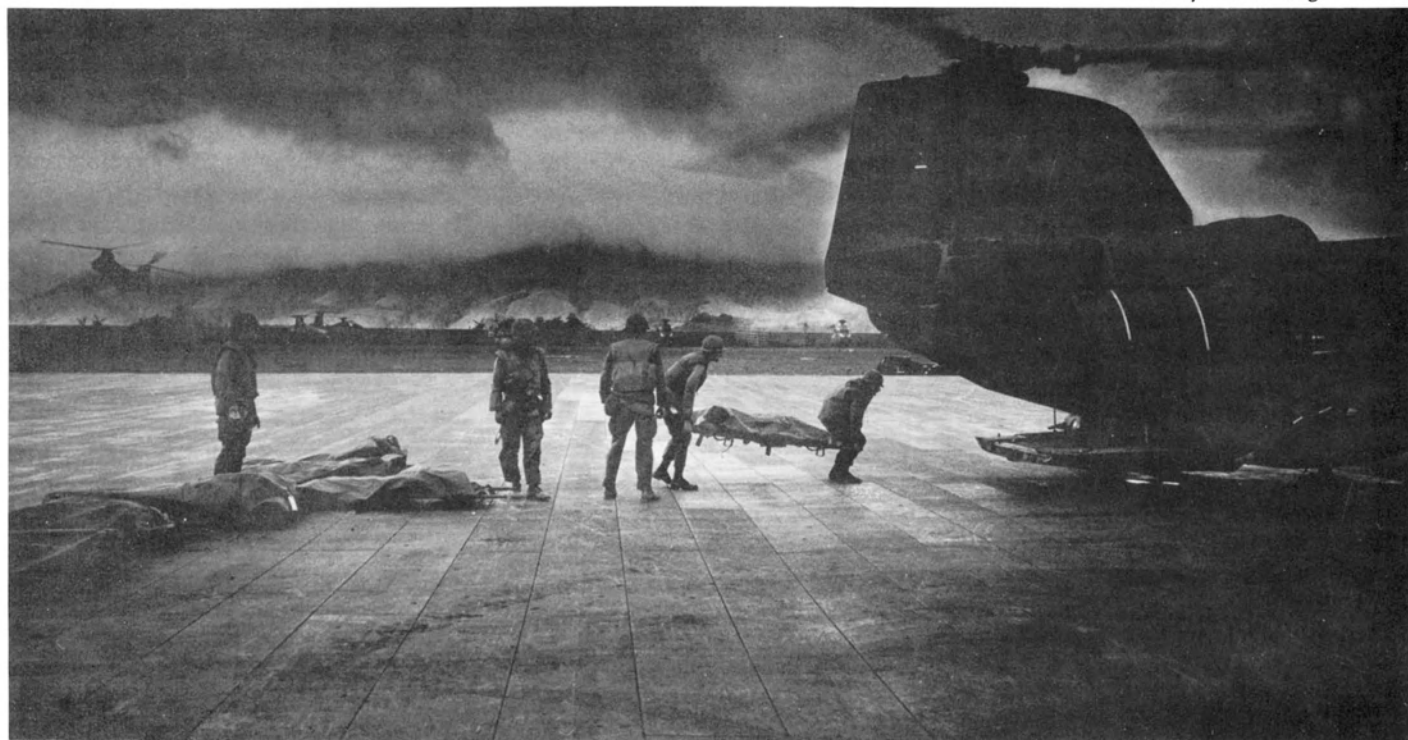
SUDDENLY—AND EVERYTHING at Khe Sanh happened suddenly—the chopper landed, and Col David E. Lownds, CO of 26th Marines, appeared. The Marines of Company B, 26th Marines gathered around and Col Lownds spoke of the Marine Corps Birthday. But one statement he made sent shivers through his listeners: “You will all soon be in the history book.”

By November, the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) was establishing a new Front Headquarters, designated “B5-T8,” from out of their former DMZ Front Headquarters, to coordinate their Khe Sanh operations. Allied intelligence also obtained a copy of the North Vietnamese “Resolution 13,” detailing a Tet offensive and directing the capture of a major U.S. base “in the western portion of South Vietnam.” A copy was immediately sent to President Lyndon B. Johnson.

Simultaneously, signal intercepts by Marines of Maj Alfred M. Gray’s Radio Battalion verified that two major NVA Divisions—the 304th, which had fought at Dien Bien Phu, and the 325C, were ap-

*David Douglas Duncan is one of a collection selected from many he took at the combat base. On 23 February 1968 alone more than 1,300 shells struck the one-and-a-half-square-mile base.*

Photo by David Douglas Duncan

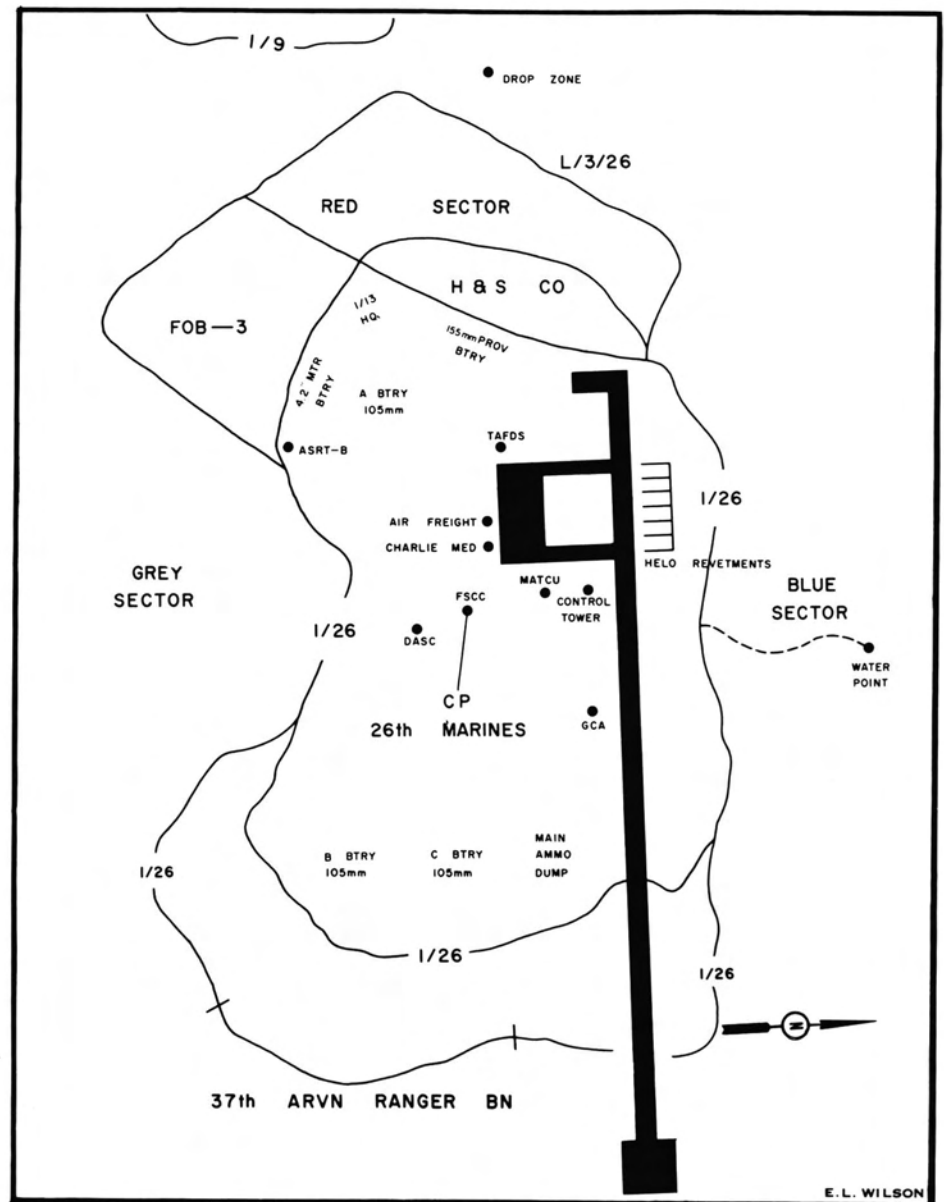


proaching the Khe Sanh area to take up positions. Based on this intelligence, Col Kenneth Houghton (G-2, III Marine Amphibious Force [MAF]) and LtGen Philip B. Davidson (J-2, Military Assistance Command Vietnam [MACV]) argued that Khe Sanh was the target for the impending major NVA attack, at a meeting attended by LtGen Robert E. Cushman (CG, III MAF), MajGen Rathvon McClure Tompkins (CG, 3d MarDiv), and BGen Louis Metzger (ADC, 3d MarDiv), among others. Despite doubts among many of the senior III MAF and 3d Marine Division staff, the decision was made to reinforce Khe Sanh. On 13 December, on very short notice, 3d Battalion, 26th Marines departed for the Marine base.

**T**WO DAYS LATER, Dr. Walt W. Rostow forwarded a completed intelligence analysis of a probable attack on Khe Sanh to President Johnson. Concerned about the unfolding drama, President Johnson had a three-dimensional sandbox of the Khe Sanh battlefield made so that he could conceptualize the daily MACV Khe Sanh Reports. Later, he made the Joint Chiefs of Staff sign a statement that Khe Sanh could be held. On 10 January 1968, the CIA concluded that Khe Sanh was the target for a major NVA attack.

Gen William C. Westmoreland, the MACV commander, had, since the summer of 1966, strongly advocated and insisted upon the presence of Marine infantry forces at Khe Sanh. The Khe Sanh battlefield included the main east-west route in northern Quang Tri Province, QL-9. While detractors might criticize him, noting that North Vietnamese troops could easily bypass Route 9, Gen Westmoreland's grasp of its historic significance—going back to the thirteenth century—as an invasion avenue into the eastern populated areas was well-founded. Later, in March 1972 and October 1973, North Vietnamese units moved tanks, self-propelled artillery, trucks, and masses of troops along QL-9 finally to capture areas to the east.

Westmoreland clearly saw that if there was no defense of Khe Sanh, the same sequence could well occur in 1968, and to extricate major NVA units together with supporting armor and artillery once they had become enmeshed within the populous areas could involve great loss of civilian and friendly life.



## KHE SANH COMBAT BASE

**A**DDITIONALLY, KHE SANH served as the launch site of the U.S. Air Force's Project Tigerhound since 3 January 1966. These were small prop aircraft that flew aerial reconnaissance up to 10 miles into Laos from the Laos/South Vietnam border. Khe Sanh was also a launch site for special operations teams dispatched to monitor the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Indeed, Khe Sanh was host to a multitude of intelligence nets and agencies, each reporting to different higher headquarters and guarding their information from each other and from those who defended Khe Sanh.

The influx of North Vietnamese troops—more than 40,000—to the Khe Sanh battlefield, moved by the necessity to win the “Decisive Battle” (Gen Giap's words), and perhaps to entice American

troops away from populated areas, has since evolved into the conundrum of who caused whom to move? Were the North Vietnamese draining Americans away from the real targets—the population centers—or were the Americans drawing the North Vietnamese to a place as to fly-paper, making a lucrative target for them and, in turn, making them a lucrative target for massive U.S. airpower, which should annihilate them? American forces sometimes used outposts as bait to attract NVA forces which could then be fixed and destroyed by supporting arms. The common NVA tactic, on the other hand, was to wound a man and then ambush and kill all who came to his rescue.

The unfolding battle at Khe Sanh denies any one-sided analysis. Neither side caused the other to move; both were

moved by forces beyond their awareness. That the scales tip in favor of Gen Westmoreland controlling the situation, however, is reflected in his directive to plan Operation Niagara as early as 5 January—Niagara being the massive air bombardment to destroy encircling NVA troop concentrations. His strategy apparently was to draw-in NVA forces by making those already there lucrative targets. Thus, fewer than 6,000 tied down more than 40,000—perhaps 60,000; it is ludicrous to assert that 40,000 tied down 6,000, as one historian perceptively notes. There were four Marine infantry battalions at Khe Sanh, plus a reduced South Vietnamese Army Ranger Battalion, out of a total of 93 infantry battalions in I Corps and a total of 292 in South Vietnam—hardly a significant “drain” of forces to Khe Sanh!

**W**HILE THE SPECTOR of Khe Sanh had become a preoccupation for President Johnson and Gen Westmoreland and their staffs, the reality of the battle, that which determined what happened, remained mostly with those on the ground, on the battlefield itself.

The red clay soil of the region also had forced above-ground bunkers and hootches; everything below ground collapsed during the monsoons which were just ending as the siege commenced.

The QL-9 highway was especially significant given the configuration of the battlefield terrain. The area was wrinkled with precipitous mountains, sharp “razorback” cliffs, immense boulders, and numerous natural caves. Dense vegetation blanketed the area. From the air, everything appeared as so many gentle, rolling green hills; on the ground, the cliffs, bamboo thickets, thick grass, and raging rivers made movement slow. The Marines at Khe Sanh were well aware that “the map is not the terrain.”

**T**HE BATTLEFIELD AS THE siege opened included the main Khe Sanh Combat Base, a Special Forces camp, at Lang Vei along QL-9; a radio relay site atop Hill 950 (actually 963 meters high) just to the north of the KSCB, manned by a platoon; Hill 861 to the northwest of KSCB, manned by a company; Hill 881-South further to the west of 861, manned by two companies; Hill 558 position manned by a battalion (minus) to block any large assault approaching KSCB from the “Santa

Fe Trail” leg of the Ho Chi Minh Trail; and finally a battalion at the “Rock Quarry” almost connecting KSCB’s southwest sector.

North Vietnamese positions were spread throughout the area. Indeed, the Pakistani-born regimental target intelligence officer, Maj Mirza Baig, wrote that he had more than 3,000 targets within a 15-kilometer radius of KSCB. Artillery positions in the cliff face of Co Roc, facing KSCB, were out of range of U.S. artillery tubes, but could themselves easily reach the base. NVA positions were located on Hills 881-North, 861, 552, 1015, and the rest of that ridgeline to the east.

One of the very early NVA positions was Hill 471, a strategic hill at the junction of QL-9 and the base access road, from which one could easily and clearly see the entire KSCB, Hills 950 and 861, Khe Sanh village, most of the Bru Montagnard villages, and even Lang Vei. Col Lownds had originally planned to emplace 1/9 here, but following a contact by a recon team the night the battle erupted, opted to place them instead at the Rock Quarry, narrowly averting disaster as a regiment of NVA quickly occupied 471.

**T**HE NVA LOCATIONS were characterized by numerous prepared positions which would be manned occasionally. Not only troops, but also all headquarters were in constant movement.

Undoubtedly the rapid and last-minute reinforcement of the Khe Sanh battlefield by American battalions (3/26, 2/26 arrived 17 January; 1/9 arrived 22 January; 37th ARVN arrived 27 January) frustrated the North Vietnamese in the execution of their plans. On 1 January, a Marine patrol detected a last-minute recon by senior NVA officers and killed the entire party.

That Khe Sanh was to be for the NVA their “Decisive Victory” is reflected in their degree of investment: according to a still classified NVA history of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, the amount of supplies delivered to B5-T8 was double the amount delivered to Tri-Thien Front (the rest of Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces, including Hue), and 24.5 times the amount delivered to Nam Bo (i.e., the area south of Darlac Province).

During the evening of 20-21 January, recon team Nurse was surrounded and boxed-in by artillery. A few hours later, Hill 861 was attacked and the defensive

## Statistics Show Enormity of Khe Sanh Battle

The siege officially ended with the beginning of Operation Pegasus on 1 April. In 70 days of operation, 102,660 rounds of artillery had been fired and 96,000 tons of bombs had been dropped, nearly twice as much as was delivered by the Army Air Corps in the Pacific during 1942 and 1943. Total tactical air sorties were 21,236 (USAF, 9,684; USN, 5,167; USMC, 6,385). B-52 sorties totalled 2,567. Total air sorties for the siege: 23,803. This does not include 1,598 FAC sorties and 1,398 reconnaissance sorties. USMC made 1,169 close air support strikes, delivering 36,161 tons ordnance, and 4,989 TPQ strikes, delivering 32,500 tons. FMFPac records indicate USMC flew 85 percent of its flights against enemy targets located within nine miles of friendly troops. The average of tactical air strikes at Khe Sanh was 300. B-52 strikes averaged 33 a day for January and February and 41 a day during March. Bomb damage from Arc Lights included: 4,705 secondary explosions, 1,932 secondary fires, 1,061 structures destroyed. Marine helicopters flew 9,109 sorties, lifting 14,562 passengers and 4,661 tons of cargo. Hits were reported on 123 Marine helicopters and 23 fixed wing aircraft. Aerial resupply by USAF was delivered by the 834th Air Division and totalled 12,430 tons of cargo in 1,124 sorties. During this effort, the 834th also landed 2,676 passengers at Khe Sanh and lifted out 1,574 including 306 medevacs. Fifty-three USAF aircraft were hit by ground fire; 18 were extensively damaged and 3 C-123s were destroyed. MAG-36 (USMC) pilots flew 7,174 sorties, transporting 10,890 passengers and 3,597 tons of cargo at Khe Sanh, while also supporting Task Force X-Ray in the Battle of Hue City.

During Operation Scotland, the KSCB and outposts reported receiving 898 60mm mortars, 2,895 82mm mortars, 326 120mm mortars, 185 recoilless rifle rounds, 1,743 mixed artillery rounds, 1,249 mixed rocket rounds, and 3,612 unknown type rounds, for a total of 10,908 rounds.



perimeter penetrated. In a desperate battle, the company commander, executive officer, first sergeant, and gunny were all casualties—the first sergeant saved his own life by pressing a finger into a spurting neck wound to stop the flow of blood, telling the corpsman to attend the young Marines who bravely checked the advance of the enemy forces. The NVA force was repulsed.

**T**HE DISTRICT headquarters in Khe Sanh village was surrounded by the 6th NVA Regiment, which attacked in battalion strength, while the larger portion of the regiment waited in ambush to engage any reinforcements that might come to the rescue of the defenders.

KSCB was struck and the old ammunition supply point (containing some 11,000 rounds) blew, spewing numerous unexploded ordnance, CS powder, and havoc throughout the base. The TACAN air navigation system was down, five helicopters were either destroyed or extensively damaged, all-weather equipment was destroyed, the majority of all wire communication lines were down, the messhalls were destroyed, and the dangers of delayed-fuze unexploded mortar shells made everyone nervous. One Marine had taken into his intestines a live 60mm mortar round which was bravely removed by one of the doctors and a Marine explosive ordnance disposal specialist. Casualties, amazingly, were light.

What happened this first day of the siege was to characterize the entire subsequent battle. The significant hill outposts—and the KSCB itself—held fast and did not fall; massive air support kept the base alive; unrelenting shelling did not intimidate.

**W**HEN WATER AND FOOD became scarce—as it frequently did—the Marines in the hills or Combat Base were down to half a canteen cup a day or one C-ration a day (sometimes less!). Men shared the little they had.

The hill outposts were constantly subjected to mortars, even the large 120mm variety, while those on the KSCB received the shrieking 122mm and 140mm rockets—sounding like fingers being scraped on the blackboard amplified a thousand times—and 130mm and 152mm field gun artillery. The small, 1.5 x .5 mile KSCB usually received several hundred

rounds per day, but on 23 February more than 1,300 rounds were delivered and other days were close to that record amount. Bunkers took direct hits. More than 80 percent of recon became casualties, and Company I was to walk off 881-S after the siege with only 12 of its original 250 Marines.

Tactically, electronic sensors were seeded, making their first appearance in a major battle and changing forever the nature of future battlefields. Initially there was some misinterpretation of their activations, since those “reading” their signals did not consider aerial observer-directed airstrikes and reported rounds from these strikes as enemy truck movements! One of the 3d MarDiv aerial observers happened to be at the Division briefing and noted the coordinates of reported enemy activity—familiar coordinates—looked at his knee-pad, and realized these “enemy movements” were actually his airstrikes. Each intelligence source by itself had its limitations: low-flying “people sniffers” detecting ammonia—sweat and urine—might be detecting a pack of monkeys; a radio signal intercept might be a lone transmitter broadcasting taped traffic and not a headquarters at all; POWs might be confused or untrustworthy. Put together, however, if all gave indications, there was probably a target. And there were many. H&I fires ceased as targets now were “real,” and results were frequently spectacular. One Marine bombardment of a suspected major NVA supply depot resulted in more than 1,000 secondary explosions and fires.

**K**HE SANH ALSO SAW innovations in air support. The hill outposts could be supplied only by helicopters, which themselves were hampered by enemy anti-aircraft fire. On 24 February, “Super Gaggle” operations successfully began supplying the hill outposts, employing a meticulously coordinated fixed-wing air strikes, dropping of CBU time-released explosions, smoke-laying aircraft, and a series of externally loaded CH-46s rapidly releasing load after load.

As the NVA forces surrounding KSCB drew closer—to avoid the B-52 strikes which up to this point had a safety limit of three kilometers from friendly forces—and built their trench network from which they could mount a massive human wave assault, the USAF B-52s dropped their 106 bombs (82 Mark 82 500-pound bombs

and 24 M-117 750-pound bombs, for a total of 60,000 pounds) within one kilometer of friendly forces. Simultaneously, 26th Marines artillery officers developed the “Mini Arc Light” and “Micro Arc Light” involving firing artillery while radar-controlled TPQ-10 missions were being run or during A-6 bomb runs (dropping 28 500-pound bombs), for a TOT (time on target).

Coordination of air and artillery was an early problem, later solved by positioning a direct air support center at Khe Sanh. In the meantime, however, Lang Vei Special Forces camp fell from an onslaught of PT-76 Russian tanks of the *198th Battalion, 203d Regiment*, on 7 February, in large measure because they requested “air.” Due to “Sav-a-plane” doctrine, as soon as aircraft were launched, for a period long before the planes’ arrival on station no artillery could be fired even though it was ready. The aircraft, meanwhile, were questioning what kind of armored vehicle was attacking, so they would know what kind of ordnance to load.

It was during the Lang Vei battle that the NVA first used tanks, and it was also during this battle that American forces first used a new type of munitions called “Improved Conventional Munitions” or “Fire-Cracker,” code-named COFRAM. These were rounds that exploded by dispersing small ping-pong sized mini-grenades specially tooled to explode in tens of thousands of fragments.

It was electronic sensors which detected a regimental-sized force closing in on the eastern end of KSCB the night of 29 February/1 March; COFRAM artillery missions stopped the attack before it closed on the Rangers manning those lines.

**N**UMEROUS HISTORIC events will always be remembered when one thinks of Khe Sanh: the attack on Hill 861-A on 5 February during which Marine defenders repulsed intruders in vicious hand-to-hand combat; the attack on 8 February on an outpost of Company A, 1/9, where a few defenders held the overrun position against vastly numerically superior forces; the ambush of the patrol from B/1/26 on 25 February; the assault by B/1/26 on 30 March to recover MIA from the 25 February action; the link-up with the 1st Marine Regiment and 1st Air Cavalry Division forces on 8 April; and the reopening of Route 9 on 12 April. □/1775□

## Major Magruder Sought First Full-Scale Marine Museum

*by Col Brooke Nihart, USMC (Ret)*

*Part I of this essay, in the Spring 1992 issue, ended with a proto-museum being established on the second deck of Little Hall in Quantico.*

THE MUSEUM AT Quantico's Little Hall continued through the 1940s into the 1950s with little change and a minimum of supervision or care. In 1952, General Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., the Commandant, in visiting the Smithsonian Institution, noted that there was no Marine Corps exhibit, although the Army and Navy were represented. Seeking to correct this disturbing oversight, he directed LtCol Harry Edwards, head of G-3's Historical Branch, to begin thinking about museum matters. Reserve Maj John H. Magruder III, an acquaintance of Edwards', had shown him some watercolors he had done illustrating Marine Corps historical uniforms in accurate detail. With Magruder's concurrence, Edwards had him ordered to six months active duty for the purpose of correcting the discrepancy at the Smithsonian.

### Seven Lean Years

Maj Magruder came from an old Navy family with wide service connections, had had training as an artist, and at that time was involved in commercial art. He had been in the G-2 section of the 2d Marine Division at Tarawa and been transferred to the European Theater, where he served as liaison between the 21st Army Group and the Free Dutch Forces. He was quite familiar with The Netherlands as his father had been Naval Attache there in the 1930s.

Maj Magruder immediately set about using the resources of the Little Hall museum to create an exhibit at the Smithsonian's Hall of Military and Naval History in the old, red sandstone "Castle." These treasures he augmented by a vigorous collection campaign among his family's service connections and from identified descendants of early-day Marines. This uncovered a quantity of swords, both presentation and service, uniforms and uniform adornments, portraits, and personal papers. Most of these items remain on exhibit to this day, either in the Museum in the Washington Navy Yard or in rede-

signed exhibits in the Smithsonian's new Museum of American History. The Smithsonian exhibit was so well received that Maj Magruder was kept on active duty to organize a full-scale Marine Corps Museum. He was to remain for more than 15 years.

In those days, interspersed among the second rank of brick barracks along Quantico's Barnett Avenue, were a number of



*Maj John H. Magruder III, USMCR, came for six months to build an exhibit, but stayed 15 years to establish the museum.*

one-story, woodframe buildings used during World War II as classrooms. Maj Magruder was assigned one of these in which to store his growing collection and to design and construct exhibits while seeking a more suitable building in which to establish a museum. His principal, and for many years only, assistant was MSgt George E. McGarry. "Top" McGarry was an aviation ordnanceman and had worked with Reserve Col George M. Chinn at the Naval Bureau of Ordnance in designing the Mk-11 20mm aircraft machine gun. Col Chinn had assembled a world-class research collection of hand-cranked and automatic machine guns to aid him in developing the Mk-11. When the project ended, and with Col Chinn's blessing, MSgt McGarry brought the collection with him to the museum. It, and additional guns acquired over the years either as war trophies or for test, now form one of the

country's foremost automatic weapons collections. Many are on exhibit, while the remainder are available for study and research.

Representatives of the General Electric Company, developing its Vulcan and other Gatling-type multibarrel guns from 5.56mm to 35mm in caliber, came to the museum to study the collection of Gatling guns under the tutelage of McGarry. In later years, Col Chinn, then consulting for the Naval Ordnance Station at Louisville, Kentucky, returned to his collection for ideas in developing the Mk-19 40mm automatic grenade launcher. As a result, the museum possesses a number of experimental and test weapons from this project. Upon retirement from the Corps, MSgt McGarry went to work for GE on further development and production of its Gatling guns and saw to it that the museum was supplied with a number of models.

Three years into his program by 1955, with the Smithsonian exhibit in hand, and collection development and plans for a future museum progressing, Maj Magruder was called upon to present his views and programs to the annual meeting of the Secretary of the Navy's Advisory Committee on Naval History. The Navy had no museum at that time. Perhaps Adm Arleigh Burke, Chief of Naval Operations at the time and generally acknowledged to be the moving spirit behind the present Navy Museum, borrowed Magruder to explain museums to the committee. In any event, the Navy's large museum in Washington Navy Yard did not open for another eight years.

Magruder began the briefing with his philosophy on the purpose of a Marine Corps Museum, outlined his programs, apprised the committee of his organization and the support needed, and took a brief look into the future. Magruder pointed to the hallmark of the Corps from its beginning, that of establishing tradition and esprit de corps and relying on those essentials to the success of a small organization. He went on to describe the Corps as no longer a small, tightly knit body of 17,000 professionals, but a near-



*From the entrance to the museum, newly housed in Building 1019 at Quantico, visitors looked past the drums and colors cases towards the renowned Gun Room, with its collection of automatic weapons donated by weapons designer Col George M. Chinn.*

Army of almost 200,000. Something more than the small “family” aspects of the Corps is needed to keep the traditions and esprit de corps alive in such a large organization, he argued. He prescribed a “living museum,” a museum that is more than just a collection of relics, that would dramatize those values through an inspirational story told through historic artifacts and art.

Magruder told of the Marine Corps Museum to be formed at Quantico in another two years (actually it was to take five), its role as an integral educational part of the Marine Corps Schools at Quantico, and his hope for it to be on a par with the museums at Annapolis and West Point. He spoke of the Marine Corps Memorial and Museum to be installed in Philadelphia made possible through the interest and generosity of a prominent charitable foundation and a group of local Marine Reserves. The third element of his program was the exhibit already installed in the Smithsonian. The fourth was outreach with special exhibits in other museums such as the Virginia War Memorial Museum at Newport News, the National Rifle Association Museum, the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, and others, plus support for historical ceremonies, pageants, and celebrations. All of these foresighted plans had been achieved at the time or were to be accomplished

during Magruder’s tenure. John Magruder, who was a colonel by the time he left the museum, put his stamp on the program which endures to this day; from excellence in exhibits to spreading the story of the Marine Corps to Marines and to the world outside.

The writer, who was acquainted with Magruder through the Company of Military Historians, a society of scholars and enthusiasts in material military history, recalls Magruder’s storage and workshop building. It was the summer of 1956 and the writer commanded a Platoon Leaders Class battalion at Brown Field. In spare moments he visited Magruder, who was experimenting with basic exhibit design. Using a free-standing case about three feet on a side he would mount a mannequin in a period uniform with the correct weapon and accouterments for the time. On the back panel of the case he would affix the appropriate campaign streamer and any illustration showing Marines of the period, plus a text recounting Marine activities of the era. Each week the writer would borrow one of these cases and transport it to his battalion mess hall for the Marine Corps history education of his officer candidates. Magruder later expanded on this concept to design exhibits for the Marine Corps Museum.

In 1959 another prime asset was added to the slowly growing museum staff. MSgt

Walter F. “Fritz” Gemeinhardt had been a member of the Marine Corps’ 1st Parachute Regiment, a parachute rigger and an aircraft-fabric-covering specialist. In addition, he was a master craftsman and model builder and a bit of an artist as well. He stayed on the staff until retirement in 1962 and restored the basket-case World War I DeHaviland DH-4 bomber, with particular attention to the fabric work. He also made a series of dioramas on the history of Marine Corps aviation from its beginning through World War II, with finely crafted models and artistically painted backgrounds. These dioramas may be seen today in the Air-Ground Museum at Quantico. Gemeinhardt returned to active duty from his retirement in Oregon in 1976 to assist in the development of the Aviation Museum at Quantico and stayed an additional three years making more models, doing fabric work on aircraft, and producing aircraft illustrations for their interpretative signs.

Another museum service, which continues to this day, began in 1959 when kits of reproduction uniforms from the Revolution to World War II and original weapons, at that time relatively inexpensive, were prepared for purchase by major units and loan issue from the museum to small units for use in Marine Corps birthdays and other ceremonies. The writer recalls how, in 1962 while commanding the 7th Marines, he used the uniform kits available at Camp Pendleton in a ceremony commemorating the 45th birthday of the regiment. Measures were taken that year, to ensure that the museum acquire examples of new weapons, uniforms, and equipment from the testing or supply agencies, and commanders were urged to submit discontinued and obsoleted material to the museum. These procedures are still in force.

### **The Museum Opens**

On 13 September 1960 the museum opened in Building 1019 at Quantico. The stucco building adjacent to Little Hall was one of the first permanent structures at Quantico built to replace the wooden World War I temporaries. It served as post headquarters from the 1920s through the 1950s and was occupied by such Corps luminaries as Smedley D. Butler, Lemuel C. Shepherd, and Clifton B. Cates when they commanded at Quantico. By 1960 it had become rickety and too small to house the essential functions of the Marine Corps



Schools staff. MajGen Edward W. Snedeker and his staff moved to nearby "A" Barracks, leaving their old headquarters to Magruder to refurbish and occupy.

Aside from its age and condition, 1019 was ideal for a small museum. A circular plot in front of the building defined a circular drive to the entrance and was occupied by a heroic-scale bronze statue of a World War I Marine often known erroneously as "Iron Mike" (the real "Iron Mike" is at Parris Island), but formally titled, "Crusading for Right." In a large case just inside the front door, Magruder installed a trophy of stacked drums with a Marine Corps color and staff draped over them. To the left was the Gun Room which showed off the best of the small arms, machine gun, and landing gun collections. To the right was the chronological history of the Marine Corps portrayed in cases and on panels not unlike the "Time Tunnel" of the current museum in the Washington Navy Yard. A colorful feature was six specially commissioned large dioramas showing Marine actions from the Battle of Bladensburg in 1814 to Tarawa in 1943. These also continue to be exhibited at the museum in Washington.

Soon a portion of the second deck was allotted to Marine Corps aviation, featuring artifacts as propellers, uniforms, and Gemeinhardt's dioramas. In 1963 the story of LtCol John Glenn's orbital space flight was added. The rest of the second deck was given over to offices, library, and the Personal Papers Collection, which was formed from material transferred from the Historical Branch's archives and Headquarters' Central Files.

In 1959 former Marine MSgt Garvice A. "Steve" Costner became the museum's curator of ordnance, uniforms, colors, and decorations and medals. Richard A. "Dick" Long, of the Historical Branch's Records and Research Section, who was appointed Curator of Fine Arts and Special Projects (including curatorship of the Commandant's House) in 1961, converted the remainder of the second deck to offices and library, and began to solicit personal papers from retired Marines. Charles A. "Tim" Wood was hired in 1965, and when the Historical Branch's Personal Papers Collection and Headquarters' Central Files historical material were transferred to Quantico, became their curator in 1967. The late John DeGrasse joined



*In August 1965, LtCol Magruder and two enlisted women examine a telescope used by a Marine who served from 1809-1836.*

the staff as exhibits specialist one month after Wood.

A significant lack was any additional space for special or changing exhibits. Exhibit construction was done in a workshop in the old AES-12 hangar, later known as Larson Gym, at Brown Field. Storage of most artifacts was in one of the corrugated-iron buildings in the post warehouse area. Ideally, a museum should encompass all these functions under one roof.

#### **The Marine Corps Memorial and Museum**

Meanwhile, Magruder, now a lieutenant colonel, was busy realizing another one of his goals set forth to the Secretary's committee in 1955. New Hall in Philadelphia was built by the Carpenters' Company when the Continental Congress took over Carpenters' Hall for its meetings. During the early Federal Period, before the government moved to Washington, New Hall was Secretary of War Knox's office. By the 1950s, while on National Park Service (NPS) land, the Hall was in ruins. In concert with the NPS, Magruder got the Mary Louise Curtis Bok Foundation to fund restoration of the Hall in order to install the Marine Corps memorial and museum. Headed by BGen Gooderham L. McCormick, USMCR, a committee of Philadelphia Reserves raised \$75,000 for exhibits. The museum was intended to present the Corps, which was centered on Philadelphia from 1775 to 1783, and again from 1797 to 1805, and its activities in the Revolutionary War, Naval War with France, and the War with the Tripolitan Pirates. The memorial portion was dedi-

cated to all Marines, but more especially to those of World War II.

The museum and memorial opened in 1962 with an impressive ceremony. Exhibits featured artifacts and art of the period collected by Magruder, and four specially commissioned dioramas. These showed a Continental Marine recruiting party outside Tun Tavern, spiking the guns of a French fort on Hispaniola, cutting out a pirate gunboat in Tripoli, and raising the American flag over the fort at Derna. These dioramas also may be seen in the Washington museum forming, with those from Quantico, a separate gallery titled "Marines in Miniature."

The memorial occupied one dimly lit room and featured a heroic-scale bronze sculpture of stacked, bayoneted Revolutionary War muskets with cartridge boxes hanging from them and with a drum beneath. The sculpture proved too tall for the room and a hole had to be cut in the ceiling and a dome installed to accommodate the bayonets. A heavy bronze sarcophagus in the memorial room contained a layer of volcanic sand from Iwo Jima and a Role of Honor inscribed with the names of casualties of the critical battle. Both bronze sculptures were created by Dr. Felix DeWeldon, creator of the Marine Corps War Memorial (Iwo Jima flag raising statue) in Arlington. The second deck of New Hall contained other exhibits, mainly on prominent Marines from Philadelphia of later years.

#### **Magruder's Program Continues**

Meanwhile, the museum at Quantico fared well. While the post newspaper, *The Quantico Sentry*, and *Leatherneck Magazine* took frequent note of the museum in their pages, they reached only a Marine audience. A breakthrough came in 1961 when John Marvin, a writer for the syndicate North American Newspaper Alliance, visited the museum and wrote a glowing article. Marvin's piece appeared nationwide and alert Marines from across the country clipped the article and sent it to Magruder, often including some piece of Marine memorabilia from their own seabag or foot locker. Outreach activities beyond the Corps burgeoned. The largest event was participation in the 1963 centennial of the Spotsylvania-Chancellorsville battle with the staff and friends of the museum demonstrating Civil War weapons and showing art and artifacts of the period.



*On hand to dedicate the Quantico museum on 13 September 1960 were, from left in front, LtGen Wallace M. Greene, Jr., Chief of Staff, Headquarters Marine Corps; Gen Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., 20th Commandant of the Marine Corps; and LtCol Magruder.*

The Commanding General, Marine Corps Schools, then-MajGen Snedeker, was a staunch supporter of the museum. From his headquarters in closeby "A" Barracks he would escort every important visitor across the street to show off "his" museum. One such visitor was the vice chief of staff of the U.S. Army. The soldier was so impressed with the then "state-of-the-art" exhibits that he instructed his aide to, "Tell the director of the West Point Museum to get down here and see how a museum should be." The West Point Museum director, who happened to be a friend of Magruder's and a distinguished historian and museologist in his own right, dutifully visited his friend and took copious notes.

Barely six years old in the old post headquarters, the museum was bursting the building's seams. By now a colonel, Magruder memoed the Commandant on 29 September 1966 proposing a new Ma-

rine Corps Museum building. He cited the old building's deficiencies: poor electric wiring posing a fire hazard; limited floor loading; inability to handle crowds; no room for future and changing exhibits; no storage or workshop space, etc. Appropriately, the proposed museum would be at the same site as the Marine Corps Memorial on the hillside facing the Iwo Jima flag raising statue. Dr. DeWeldon, the sculptor of the Iwo statue, had prepared a detailed rendering of a neo-classical style building which would include all the functional spaces both essential and desirable in a first-class museum. Unfortunately, this grand design never materialized and the museum at Quantico, jewel that it was, remained static for the duration of the 1960s. One exception was the beginning of an aircraft collection.

Magruder had acquired Hangars 1 and 2 at Brown Field. They were two corrugated-iron hangars joined end-to-end

and dating from just after World War I and had been in Haiti, disassembled, and returned to Quantico. They served as hangars until Brown Field was deactivated in 1935 and flight activity moved to the new Turner Field, MCAF Quantico. They continued as a warehouse until released to Magruder, who began to fill them with antique aircraft and aviation material. Former Marines with aviation experience Clyde Gillespie and Leo Champion were added to the staff to locate and repair aircraft with a Marine history. These included the previously mentioned World War I DH-4, a Grumman F4F-4 Wildcat, and a Goodyear FG-1D Corsair. The hangars were soon filled with junk aircraft and other material leaving no space for exhibit aircraft should they be restored. Initial efforts were concentrated on the DH-4 but a Marine Corps Aviation Museum had to wait for an additional hangar and a qualified restoration staff.

Col Magruder was seconded to the Smithsonian Institution as staff head of the National Armed Forces Museum Advisory Board. The board was to plan for an Armed Forces Museum in the Washington area, but after several years the idea was abandoned due to budgetary restrictions and anti-military sentiment growing out of the Vietnam War. The dilution of Magruder's efforts resulted in the museum at Quantico marching in place—no additional space, no new exhibits—the museum stayed in a maintenance mode.

At the end of 1971 BGen Edwin H. Simmons retired from active duty and the following day returned to active duty in retired status as head of a new headquarters staff division, History and Museums. One of his early acts was to direct that the Marine Corps Museum at Quantico clean out a second deck space in Building 1019 and create a Vietnam War exhibit. Suitable historical material had been flowing in from Vietnam leaving the only problem the compressing of second deck functions to free space for design and construction of the exhibit. With the expressed command interest the problem was quickly solved and an excellent exhibit resulted.

□1775□

*Part III of this essay in a future issue of Fortitudine will tell the story of the move of the Museum to the Washington Navy Yard, the expanded Museums Branch, the Aviation and Air-Ground Museums, and command museums.*

# Museum Given Guadalcanal Anniversary Postal Covers

by Richard A. Long  
Head, Oral History Unit

**S**TANLEY C. JERSEY, a prominent U.S. philatelist, of Carlsbad, California, recently made another of his numerous donations to the collections of the History and Museums Division.

The fiftieth anniversary ceremonies surrounding the dedication of the Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands War Memorial and other events on Guadalcanal were held on 7 August 1992 (See *Fortitudine*, Fall 1992). Mr. Jersey requested the U.S. Postal Service and the Military Postal Service Agency to transfer one of the two postal canceler stamps used there to the Marine Corps Museum.

Mr. Jersey is no stranger to the historical activities of the Marine Corps. This writer first met him on reporting for duty to the Marine Corps Museum in Quantico in 1961. One of my first assignments was to consult with Mr. Jersey on the planning of a Marine Corps postal history display. In the 1980s we were to collaborate again, in selecting specimen postal items from his collection and from other Marine collections throughout the country for a possible exhibition.

**A** SUCCESSFUL FOODS importer in Chicago, Mr. Jersey traveled throughout the world on business, taking that opportunity to research, collect, exhibit, and judge postal history memorabilia. He specialized in the collection of philatelic matter pertaining to Marines. He has written and published widely on the American and Japanese postal history of the British Solomon Islands. Several increments of his valuable collection have been donated to the Marine Corps.

As a member of the Board of Advisors of the Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands War Memorial Foundation, he was the one American member instrumental in planning the dedication's postal observance. He designed the several cancellation devices and coordinated their use with the Chief of Naval Operations and with the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Posts and Communications of the Solomon Islands Government. He also purchased the devices at his own expense and instructed

U.S. Navy and Islander postal clerks in their application.

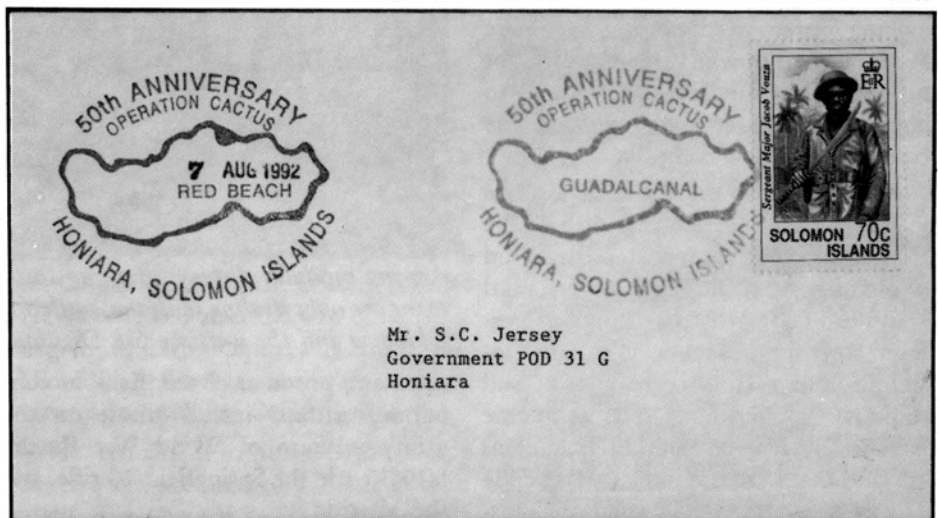
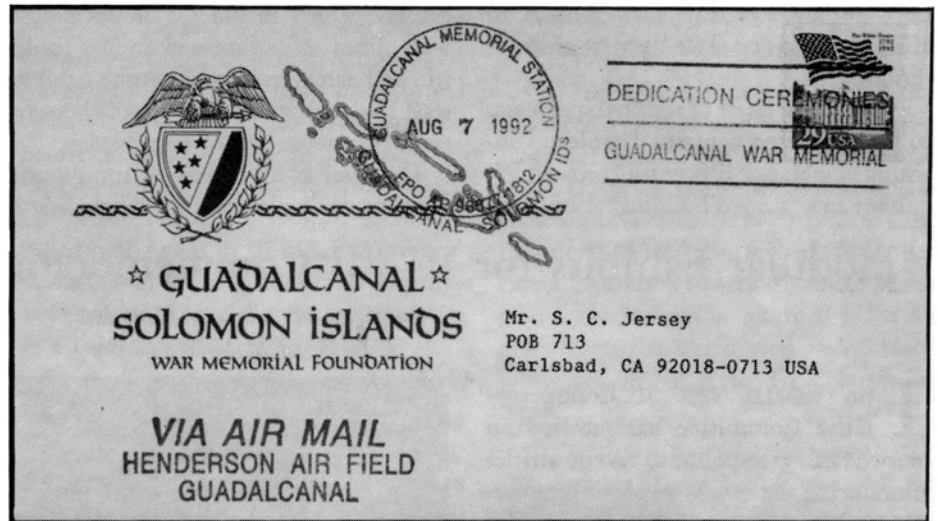
**M**R. JERSEY'S participation in these activities was preceded by his persistence in persuading the Solomon Islands Government to plan its first World War II commemorative stamp issue. On 3 May 1992 Guadalcanal issued five values of stamps, a souvenir sheet, and a booklet to honor Sir Jacob Charles Vouza, its retired Constabulary Sergeant Major, who distinguished himself as a scout for the 1st Marine Division on Guadalcanal. The stamps were designed by Ms. Teri Rider, also of Carlsbad, and the 25-cent value stamp featured her oil portrait of Vouza. Mr. Jersey donated the original portrait to the Ma-

rine Corps Museum's art collection.

Mr. Jersey went to Guadalcanal in July 1992 to coordinate the stamp cancellation process. A postal station was opened on the USS *Racine* (LST-1191) for official naval visitors. However, the majority of cancellations was made at a special postal station in the lobby of the Japanese-owned Mandana Hotel in the capital city of Honiara as an accommodation to the greater influx of celebrants.

We have more recently learned from Mr. Jersey that the second Solomon Islands postal stamp issue, to be released in 1993, will include a likeness of MajGen Alexander A. Vandegrift, Commanding General of the 1st Marine Division on Guadalcanal. □1775□

*Top, postal cover cacheted with arms of the Guadalcanal Campaign Veterans and bearing postmark of canceler used at postal stations on the Racine and in Honiara and donated to the Division. Bottom, two other canceler devices which could have been used.*





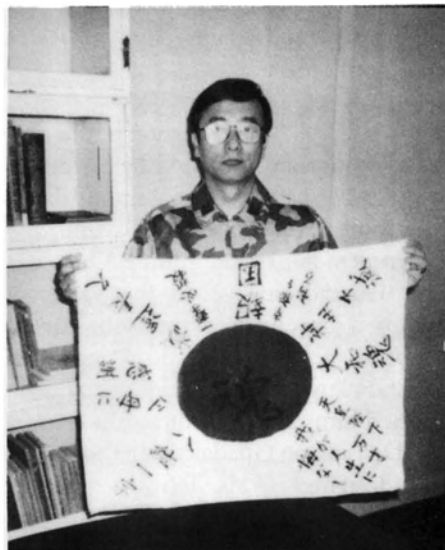
# Korean War Exhibits Enhanced for New Museum Season

by Kenneth L. Smith-Christmas  
Curator of Material History

THE MARINE CORPS Air-Ground Museum at Quantico's old Brown Field has reopened for the 1993 season. As has always been the case, previous years' visitors to the museum will find a number of exciting changes in the exhibits.

The most apparent changes are found in the hangar housing the Korean War exhibits. A Soviet SU-76M self-propelled gun of the type used by the North Korean Peoples Army is now at the center of the museum deck. The gun was derelict when it was acquired in the 1970s from the short-lived National Armed Forces Museum, an abandoned joint project of the Department of Defense and the Smithsonian Institution. Reduced to near-relic condition over the years it had spent in the open, thanks to volunteers at the Quantico museum over the past three years, it now has been fully restored. As have many of the vehicles on exhibit, the gun has been displayed with its hatches open, to afford the visitor a close-up view of its interior.

Nearby, the latest of the "habitat" cases to be completed contains a tableau consisting of a Marine officer using a field telephone in a "ruined building" during the



*LtCol Takashi Kozaki, JDF, holds the flag with aviator's Kanji inscriptions he added.*

battle for Seoul. Visitors are making favorable comments on the realism of the display, which includes a wooden door with lines of splintered bullet holes stitched across it. The museum's exhibits staff took the door to a private shooting range to prepare it for this display.

The aircraft and some of the ground equipment displayed in the World War II

hangar have new text boards which give the visitor more information than was made available before. Marine Reservists, temporarily assigned lieutenants, volunteers, and permanent staff members all contributed to this project, doing the research and scripting draft labels.

The impetus for change in the museum is most often driven by the staff, but occasionally a visitor makes suggestions which the staff agrees would improve an exhibit. The Japanese representative to the Command and Staff College, LtCol Takashi Kozaki, contacted the museum staff with questions about our Japanese kamikaze pilot display. LtCol Kozaki suggested that the exhibit could be improved by changing the action from the act of eating a last meal to that of writing on a flag, before a suicide mission. Since all of the flags with *kanji* inscriptions in our collection were captured from ground units, we could not provide a suitable flag for the exhibit. LtCol Kozaki volunteered to "create" one for us and executed a series of appropriate inscriptions on a flag purchased from a local militaria dealer with funds from the Marine Corps Historical Foundation. □1775□

## Modular Exhibits for WWII Commemorations Gain in Popularity

by Kenneth L. Smith-Christmas  
Curator of Material History

THE WORLD WAR II Commemorative Committee has received an overwhelming response to recent articles announcing the new World War II modular exhibits program. The Committee is looking forward to supporting even more Marine activities which plan to hold or support ceremonies and special events to honor the veterans or to commemorate the events of World War II.

Among the now more than 50 exhibits in the program are cases on each of the six divisions which fought in the war, and on 18 different campaigns, from Pearl Harbor to Okinawa. In addition, the exhibits cover the different combat arms, including tankers, artillerymen, aviators, and riflemen. Special units, such as Marine Defense, Raider, and Parachute Battalions are addressed, as are the Navajo Code Talkers, Women Reservists, Navy Corps-



*Among modular displays awaiting shipment are ones dealing with the battle for Okinawa and the wartime 6th Division.*

men, and prisoners of war. Exhibits containing artifacts include those on the utility uniform of World War II, the M1941 pack, the Springfield '03 rifle, and the M1 rifle.

Since the exhibits are in such demand, it is prudent to consider alternatives which can still address the topic even if the desired exhibits are unavailable. Modular exhibits on World War II can be requested by Marine commands from:

Capt John G. Worman, USMC  
USMC World War II Commemorative Committee  
The Pentagon, Room 2D332  
Washington, D.C. 20350-1200  
(Autovon) 227-7371/2 or (Commercial) (703) 697-7371/2 or FAX (703) 695-3478

Requests must detail the expected use of the exhibits, since available funding permits their use only in programs which are directly related to World War II commemoration. If there are any doubts about the eligibility of the request, please contact Capt Worman first. □1775□

## 1st MarDiv Vietnam CG, Past El Toro Commander Die

by *Benis M. Frank*  
*Chief Historian*

### *MajGen Carl A. Youngdale*

MajGen Carl A. Youngdale, USMC (Ret), an artillery officer in World War II and Korea, died at the age of 80 in Virginia Beach on 8 March. He also served two tours in Vietnam. The first was as J-2 of U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, and the second as commander of the 1st Marine Division.

A native Iowan, Gen Youngdale was commissioned in 1936 after graduating from Iowa State University. He initially served with the 5th Marines after finishing Basic School, and then was assigned to the 10th Marines. In July 1943, he joined the 4th Marine Division as commander of the 4th Battalion, 14th Marines, with which he fought in the battles on Roi-Namur, Saipan, Tinian, and Iwo Jima. He was decorated with the Legion of Merit with Combat "V" for Saipan-Tinian, and the Silver Star Medal for conspicuous gallantry on Iwo Jima.

Gen Youngdale was the inspector-instructor of the 2d 105mm Howitzer Battalion, USMCR, in Los Angeles when the Korean War began. He was executive officer of the 11th Marines in the Inchon

*MajGen Youngdale in October 1965*



landing and the taking of Seoul, and took command of the regiment at Hagaru-ri in the Chosin Reservoir action just prior to the advance to Hungnam. Following Korea, he served in the Secretariat of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and following graduation from the National War College in 1956, was assigned as Operations Officer, J-3 Division of United States European Command in Paris. Before his first Vietnam assignment, Gen Youngdale held various staff and command appointments.

His first tour in Vietnam was from 1964 to 1965; his second tour was June to December 1968, when he commanded the 1st Marine Division, and then was assigned as Deputy CG, III Marine Amphibious Force, a billet he held until he returned to the United States in July 1969. In 1969, before returning home, he headed a III MAF "Board to Consider the Utilization, Command, and Control of Marine Corps Helicopter Assets in III MAF," an important study of the air-ground relationships with respect to employment of helicopters in a combat situation.

He retired in 1972, after more than 36 years of active service, as Commanding General, Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune. Gen Youngdale was buried in Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors on 12 March.

### *BGen William J. Fox*

BGen William J. Fox, USMC (Ret), 95, died at his home in Los Angeles on 11 April. Born in Trenton, New Jersey, Gen Fox enlisted in the Army in 1918, and transferred to the Marine Corps, which commissioned him in the aviation branch. He was released after the war, obtained a degree in civil engineering from the University of Southern California, and became a Los Angeles County engineer.

He remained in the Marine Corps Reserve and was ordered to active duty in 1940, when he was assigned to the staff

of MajGen Ross E. Rowell, the senior Marine aviator on the West Coast at North Island, Coronado. He doubled as a stunt pilot for Erroll Flynn in the 1941 film "Dive Bomber." Because of his reputation and civilian calling as an airport designer, he selected the sites and designs for the five Marine Corps air stations which were built on the Pacific coast. In October 1942, then-Col Fox was transferred to Guadalcanal to become commanding officer of Henderson Field. He was later wounded in a bombing raid on the field and evacuated. After recovery, he took command of MCAS, El Toro. He returned to the Pacific as chief of staff of the 4th Marine Base Defense Aircraft Wing in 1945.

Col Fox retired from the Marine Corps in December 1946 and was promoted to brigadier general on the retired list in 1948. Upon his return to civilian life, he resumed his duties in Los Angeles as Chief Engineer. When he retired from that career, he moved to Mexico, where he had a horse ranch. Later he returned to Los Angeles. Gen Fox was buried at St. Mary's Cemetery in Trenton, New Jersey, 16 April. □1775□

*BGen Fox in May 1987*



## January—March 1944

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

*Fortitudine's* World War II Chronology continues with Marine Corps operations in the Central Pacific, including the assault on the Marshall Islands, a part of the Japanese trust territories since the end of World War I.

**2 Jan**—BGen Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., Assistant Division Commander, 1st Marine Division, launched an attack by the 2d and 3d Battalions, 7th Marines, and the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, toward Borgen Bay, New Britain.

**5 Jan**—MajGen Holland M. Smith released V Amphibious Corps Operation Plan 1-44, which superseded Operation Plan 3-43. The new plan established the landing forces for the Marshalls Operation, which included the Northern Landing Force, the Southern Landing Force, and the Majuro Landing Force, and designated landing beaches on Roi Namur and Kwajalein Islands.

**16 Jan**—The withdrawal of the 3d Marine Division from Bougainville was completed.

**31 Jan**—Northern Landing Force Troops from the 25th Marines landed on Mellu and Ennuebing Islands and captured Ennubirr, Ovella, Ennumennet, and Ennugarrett Islands, Kwajalein Atoll. U.S. Army troops of the Southern Landing Force seized the islets guarding the Ninni Pass, Kwajalein Atoll.

**31 Jan**—In the Marshalls, the V Amphibious Corps Reconnaissance Company secured Calalin and Eroj, the islands commanding the entrance channel to Majuro Atoll, and crossed to Uliga and Darrit Islands; the 4th Platoon seized Majuro Island.

**1 Feb**—Combat Team 23 (23d Marines, reinforced) landed within the lagoon across the south beaches of Roi Island in the Kwajalein Atoll of the Marshall Islands, and after seizing NAT Circle, the final Japanese stronghold, declared the island secured.

**2 Feb**—MajGen Harry Schmidt, commanding the Northern

*On board ship, MajGen Holland M. Smith, USMC, second from left, points out U.S. bombers attacking enemy positions on Kwajalein Atoll, for helmetless BGen Graves B. Erskine, USMC.*



*After hitting the beach on Roi Island in the Kwajalein Atoll on 1 February 1944, men of Combat Team 23 exchange suggestions for pressing their attack inland against Japanese fortifications.*

Landing Force, ordered the 4th Marine Division reserve commander to proceed with the seizure of islands in the northern portion of Kwajalein Atoll, to be executed by Combat Team 25 and Company A, 10th Amphibian Tractor Battalion. Landing Team 2 made the initial movement, securing eight islands on the first day without opposition.

**2 Feb**—Combat Team 24 launched a coordinated attack toward Natalie Point on Namur Island; Namur was declared secured when two advancing forces joined on the point. The capture of Namur marked the completion of the major task facing the 4th Marine Division in Kwajalein Atoll.

**4 Feb**—VAdm Raymond A. Spruance, USN, announced that the capture and occupation phases of Majuro Atoll had been completed. The island commander, Capt Edgar A. Cruise, assumed responsibility for the area.

**8 Feb**—Kwajalein Atoll was declared secured. The bulk of the Northern Landing Force—the 14th Marines, the 23d Marines, and the 2d Battalion, 24th Marines—departed the Kwajalein area. Combat Team 25 was selected to garrison Kwajalein and together with Company A, 10th Amphibian Tractor Battalion, was temporarily detached from the 4th Marine Division to report to the atoll's commander.

**17 Feb**—Task Group 51.11 shelled Engebi, Parry, Japtan, and Eniwetok Islands in Eniwetok Atoll, Marshall Islands, while planes from Task Group 58.4 bombed and strafed the islands. Marines of Tactical Group 1, landing from Task Group 51.11 secured Camelia and Rujiyoru Islands, Eniwetok Atoll.

**17-18 Feb**—Central Pacific task forces under VAdm Spruance struck airfield installations and shipping in the anchorage at Truk Atoll, revealing the weakness of that base. This raid was the deciding factor in Japan's decision to withdraw all combat aircraft from Rabaul, and the Allied decision to bypass the atoll.

**18 Feb**—The 22d Marines assaulted Beaches White 1 and Blue





*Remains of a still-smoldering three-story concrete blockhouse form a backdrop for the raising of the U.S. flag over Roi, as Marines conclude their takeover of the island on 2 February 1944.*

3, Engebi Island, Eniwetok Atoll. The tactical group commander declared the island secured except for an isolated pocket of Japanese.

**22 Feb**—Landing Teams 1 and 2, 22d Marines, assaulted the northern portion of Parry Island and secured the island against stiff resistance. Its possession marked the successful completion of the Eniwetok operation.

**1 Mar**—The Marshall Islands commander, RAdm Alva D. Bernhard, received orders to neutralize and control the Lesser Marshalls, those atolls and islands thought to be undefended or lightly held.

**4 Mar**—The 4th Marine Base Defense Aircraft Wing's campaign against Wotje, Jaluit, Mille, and Maloelap Atolls in the East Marshalls opened when Marine Scout Bombing Squadron 331 bombed Jaluit; the attacks continued until Japan's surrender.

**6 Mar**—On New Britain, Combat Team A (5th Marines), 1st Marine Division, landed at Volupai Plantation on the Willaumez Peninsula in preparation for the Talasea operation.

**8 Mar**—On Bougainville, the Japanese opened their attack against the 37th Infantry Division's sector.

**9 Mar**—Elements of the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, captured Mount Scheleuther and the Waru Villages on the Willaumez Peninsula, and found the Japanese had withdrawn south. Talasea was declared secured.

**10 Mar-25 Apr**—The three infantry battalions of the 5th Marines patrolled north, south, and southeast Bitakara on Willaumez Peninsula, to mop up Japanese stragglers from western New Britain.

**14 Mar**—A Marine reconnaissance force comprising two reinforced companies from the 1st Battalion, 22d Marines, returned to Kwajalein Atoll, having completed its task of securing islands and atolls in the Western Group.

**20 Mar**—In the Bismarck Archipelago, the 4th Marines landed on two beaches near the eastern end of undefended Emirau Island, St. Matthias Islands, to establish a light naval and air base.

**22 Mar**—The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was activated at Pearl Harbor, Hawaiian Islands. Major subordinate units of the brigade, which would assemble on Guadalcanal in April under the command of BGen Shepherd, were the reactivated 4th Marines and the 22d Marines, respectively veterans of Emirau and Eniwetok fighting.

**24 Mar**—On Bougainville, the Japanese launched their final attack against the XXIV Corps perimeter; it was their last attempt to retake the Cape Torokina area.

**27 Mar**—On Bougainville, the Japanese began to withdraw from the Empress Augusta Bay area.

**28 Mar**—The 2d Landing Team from the 3d Battalion, 22d Marines, returned to Kwajalein Atoll, after securing islands and atolls in the Southern Group.

**30-31 Mar**—In the Palau, Task Force 58 struck the islands in support of the Hollandia operation in New Guinea, permanently crippling the Palau as a naval base of real importance. The first systematic aerial photographs were collected. □1775□



### *Useful for Collectors*

*The Marine Corps Museum Gift Shop is supporting the Marine Corps' official commemoration of the 50th anniversary of World War II by making available for sale slipcases for the series of commemorative pamphlets being published by the History and Museums Division. The sturdy cases are forest green with gold imprinting, featuring the Corps' commemorative logo. Two slipcases will hold the entire series of pamphlets. The cost is \$12 for one case and \$22 for two. To order by phone with credit card information, call 1-800-336-0291, ext. 59. To order by mail with check or credit card information, write Museum Gift Shop, P.O. Box 420, Quantico, Virginia 22134-0420.*

OFFICIAL BUSINESS



## World War II, Persian Gulf War Marines Spotlited

by Benis M. Frank  
Chief Historian

**A** NEW WORLD WAR II 50th Anniversary commemorative pamphlet and the second in the "U.S. Marines in the Persian Gulf, 1990-1991" series were recently published by History and Museums Division. *A Magnificent Fight: Marines in the Battle for Wake Island*, by Robert J. Cressman, coauthor of an earlier pamphlet in this series—*Infamous Day: Marines at Pearl Harbor, 7 December 1941*—tells of the inexorable events which led to Japanese capture of Wake and the imprisonment of surviving members of the 1st Defense Battalion detachment and Marine Fighter Squadron 211, as well as naval and Army Air Corps personnel, and the civilian workers.

In his exhaustive and complete research, Cressman lays to rest the myth that when the Wake garrison was supposedly asked by Pearl Harbor what it needed and wanted, Wake answered, "Send us more Japs!" Of this statement, retired BGen/Congressman James P. S. Devereux said in his Marine Corps oral history interview that that was the last thing the Wake defenders wanted. As Cressman points out in this history, Gen Devereux also said of the cancelled Navy rescue/reinforcement attempt, that it would have been of no use and could not have accomplished what it set out to do. By means of maps, illustrations, and first-hand accounts, the author provides an almost minute-to-minute narrative of what happened on Wake Island from just before the first bombs were dropped to the point when the entire garrison surrendered. In between is a moving description of the heroic attempts of both the reduced force of Marine aviators and ground crewmen and all others on the island to force the enemy to make an extraordinary effort to take Wake.

**T**HE OTHER PUBLICATION recently released is the second in the series relating to Marine Corps operations in Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Col Charles J. Quilter II, USMCR, then-commanding officer of Mobilization Training Unit (History) DC-7, was one of the first members of the unit to join Marine forces in the Gulf War. From his experiences in the field and his assignment by LtGen Walter

E. Boomer, commander of I Marine Expeditionary Force, as the staff historian, he was in an excellent position to write *U.S. Marines in the Persian Gulf, 1990-1991: With the I Marine Expeditionary Force in Desert Shield and Desert Storm*. Future monographs are expected from MTU historians attached to the 1st and 2d Marine Divisions in the Gulf, as well as the historian who covered both Marine Corps afloat operations in Desert Storm and Marine Corps humanitarian operations in northern Iraq. Both new publications may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office. The Wake history is \$2.75 and the Persian Gulf history is \$15.00. □1775□

