GUAM



WORLD WAR II
50th Anniversary
Commemorative Edition

GUAM

Operations of the 77th Division

21 July – 10 August 1944



CENTER OF MILITARY HISTORY

UNITED STATES ARMY

WASHINGTON, D.C., 1990

First printed by the Historical Division, War Department,
for the American Forces in Action series, 1946

CMH Pub 100–5

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Washington, D.C. 20402

Foreword to CMH Edition

Guam: Operations of the 77th Division (21 July–10 August 1944) is one of a series of fourteen studies of World War II operations originally published by the War Department's Historical Division and now returned to print as part of the Army's commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of that momentous clash of arms. These volumes, prepared by professional historians shortly after the events described, provide a concise summary of some of the major campaigns and battles fought by American soldiers. The skillful combination of combat interviews with primary sources, many of which are now lost, gives these unassuming narratives a special importance to military historians. The careful analysis of key operations provides numerous lessons for today's military students.

I am pleased that this entire group of studies will once again be available. I urge all military students and teachers to use them to enhance our collective awareness of the skill, leadership, daring, and professionalism exhibited by our military forebears.

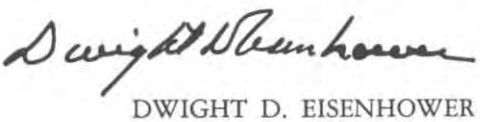
Washington, D.C.
15 September 1989

HAROLD W. NELSON
Colonel, FA
Chief of Military History

Foreword

In a nation at war, teamwork by the whole people is necessary for victory. But the issue is decided on the battlefield, toward which all national effort leads. The country's fate lies in the hands of its soldier citizens; in the clash of battle is found the final test of plans, training, equipment, and—above all—the fighting spirit of units and individuals.

AMERICAN FORCES IN ACTION SERIES presents detailed accounts of particular combat operations of United States forces. To the American public, this record of high achievement by men who served their nation well is presented as a preface to the full military history of World War II. To the soldiers who took part in the operations concerned, these narratives will give the opportunity to see more clearly the results of orders which they obeyed and of sacrifices which they and their comrades made, in performance of missions that find their meaning in the outcome of a larger plan of battle.



DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER
Chief of Staff

WAR DEPARTMENT
Historical Division
Washington 25, D. C.
1 February 1946

The seizure of Guam in July–August 1944 added another base to our growing chain of possessions encircling the Japanese homeland. Marine troops made the initial landings on Guam and were aided in capturing the island by army units, comprised chiefly of the 77th Infantry Division. *Guam* tells the Army's part of the campaign.

This study is based upon a first narrative prepared in the field from military records and from notes and interviews recorded during the operation by S/Sgt. James M. Burns. The manuscript of this historical officer has been edited and partially rewritten with the help of additional documentation by Mrs. Marjorie Cline of the editorial staff of the Historical Division. Although in published form the book contains no documentation, the original manuscript, fully documented, is on file in the War Department. Two photographs (pp. 43 and 120) are International News Photos; four (pp. 59, 105, 115) are from the Bishop Museum on Oahu; seven (pp. 15, 21, 32, 33, 54, 69, 78) were taken by the U. S. Navy; one (p. 34) is from the U. S. Coast Guard; one (p. 44) was taken by the U. S. Marine Corps; two (pp. 15, 26) were supplied by the Air Transport Command, Overseas Technical Unit. The rest, unless otherwise stated in the captions, were taken by the U. S. Army Signal Corps. Photographs from International News Photos may not be reproduced without the approval of the War Department. Readers are urged to send directly to the Historical Division, War Department, Washington 25, D. C., comments, criticism, and additional information which may be of value in the preparation of a complete and definitive history of the Guam operation.

Contents

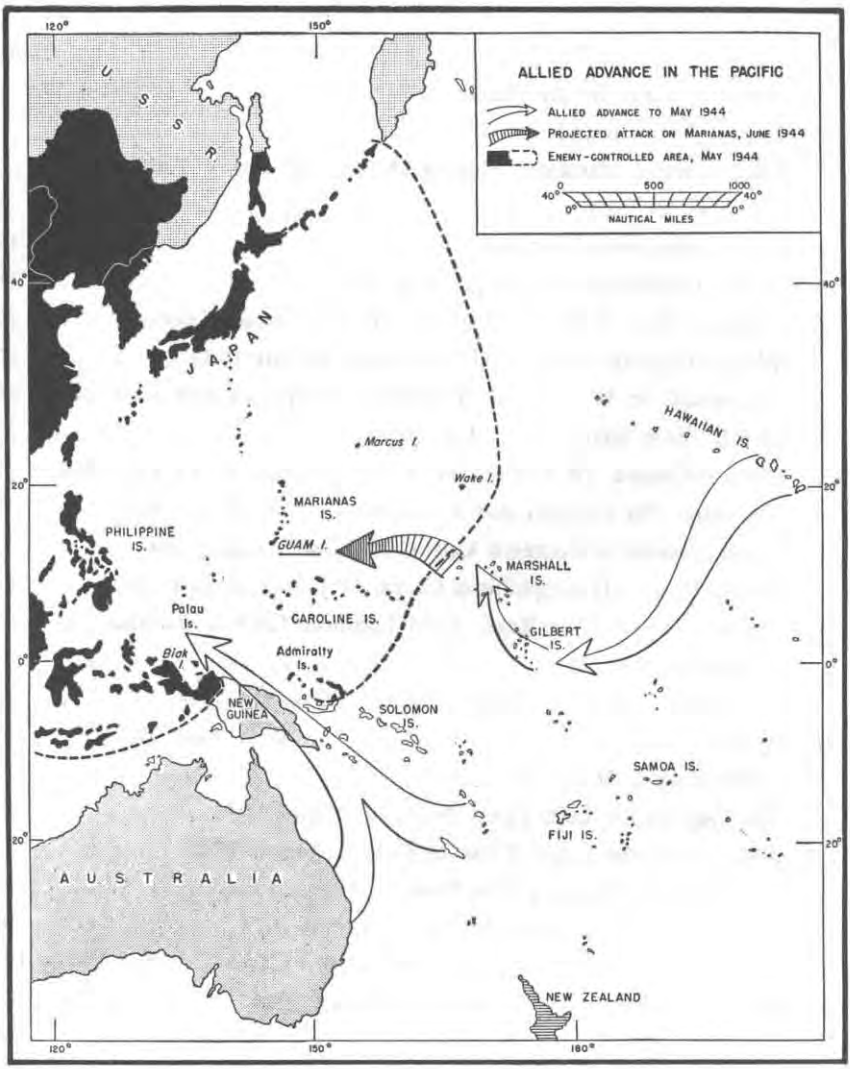
	Page
OBJECTIVE: GUAM	1
Offensive in the Central Pacific	2
Marianas Islands	5
The Island of Guam	13
Enemy Forces on Guam	19
Plan of Attack	23
ASSAULT PHASE	29
Preparations for W Day	29
The Landings	31
Expanding the Beachheads	37
Attack on Orote Peninsula	41
Establishment of Final Beachline	47
Battle of Supply	53
PURSUIT PHASE	57
Reconnaissance of Southern Guam	57
Pursuit to the North	63
77th Division's Supply Route	73
BARRIGADA	75
The Pursuit Continues	75
Feeling Out Enemy Positions	80
The Gap on the Left	84
Tanks Support the 305th	90
Attempt to Close the Gap	93
North to O–3 Line	101
FINAL PURSUIT PHASE	107
The 306th Takes Over the Left (5–6 August)	107
Two Japanese Tanks	111
Plans for the Attack on Mt. Santa Rosa	117
Attack on Yigo	119
Tank Attack Against the 306th (7/8 August)	126
Push Beyond Mt. Santa Rosa (8 August)	127
Mopping Up	129
CONCLUSION	133
ANNEX NO. 1: *Abbreviations*	135

Illustrations

	Page
Maj. Gen. Andrew D. Bruce	4
Troops of 77th Division	10
Bluffs Rising 600 Feet	15
The Enemy Task Force	17
General Takashina and Colonel Suenaga	20
Japanese 200-mm Coastal Defense Gun	21
Landing Beaches	24
Hills in Western Coastal Range	26
The First Wave of Landing Craft	32
Small Boats Leave Asan Beaches	33
Waiting for Orders	34
306th RCT Comes Ashore	40
Close-in Fighting	43
Orote Air Strip	44
An Antitank Crew	48
The 2d Battalion, 305th RCT	49
Men of Company B	51
Cranes at Reef's Edge	52
Bulldozers Cleared Roads	54
Supplying the 77th Division	55
Area Patrolled	59
Pursuit Phase Begins	61
Machine-Gun Nests	64
Company G, 305th RCT	66
Native Camp	69
An Artillery Column	70
Locale of Barrigada Action	78
The Green House	86
The Wooded Plateau	105
Disabled Japanese Light Tank	113
Mt. Santa Rosa's Bare Slopes	115
The March to Yigo	120

Maps

No.		*Page*
1.	Allied Advance in the Pacific	x
2.	Central Pacific Islands	2
3.	The Southern Marianas: Plan of Attack, III and V Amphibious Corps	8
4.	Guam (physiographic map)	12
5.	Enemy Dispositions on Guam, July 1944	18
6.	Preferred Plan of Attack on Guam, III Amphibious Corps	22
7.	W-Day Landing, III Amphibious Corps, 21 July 1944	30
8.	Beachheads on W + 1, III Amphibious Corps, 22 July 1944	36
9.	77th Division Sector, 24–27 July 1944	38
10.	Orote Peninsula, 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, 25–29 July 1944	42
11.	The Gap, 77th Division and 3d Marine Division, 25–27 July 1944	46
12.	Reconnaissance of Southern Guam, 28 July–2 August 1944	58
13.	Pursuit Phase, III Amphibious Corps, 31 July–1 August 1944	62
14.	Construction of New Road, 302d Engineer Combat Battalion, to 31 July 1944	72
15.	Approach to Barrigada, 77th Division, 2–4 August 1944	76
16.	Reconnaissance of Barrigada, Company D, 706th Tank Battalion, Company I, 305th RCT	80
17.	The Gap on the Left, About Noon, 2 August 1944	82
18.	Situation on the Right, Close of Day, 2 August 1944	91
19.	Company G's Attack, 1500—Dark, 2 August 1944	95
20.	Barrigada Positions, Close of Day, 2 August 1944	98
21.	Advance to the O–3 Line, 305th and 307th RCT, 3–4 August 1944	100
22.	Plan for Advance, 77th Division, 5 August 1944	108
23.	Advance to O–4 Line, 77th Division, 5–6 August 1944	109
24.	Plans for Final Phase, III Amphibious Corps	116
25.	Action at Yigo, 7 August 1944	118
26.	Night Positions, 7/8 August 1944	124
27.	Guam (in color)	Inside back cover


ALLIED ADVANCE IN THE PACIFIC
ALLIED ADVANCE TO MAY 1944
PROJECTED ATTACK ON MARIANAS, JUNE 1944
ENEMY-CONTROLLED AREA, MAY 1944
0 500 1000
NAUTICAL MILES
120°
150°
180°
40°
20°
0°
U S S R
JAPAN
Marcus I.
Wake I.
HAWAIIAN IS.
MARIANAS IS.
GUAM I.
PHILIPPINE IS.
MARSHALL IS.
Palau Is.
CAROLINE IS.
GILBERT IS.
Biak I.
Admiralty Is.
NEW GUINEA
SOLOMON IS.
SAMOA IS.
FIJI IS.
AUSTRALIA
NEW ZEALAND

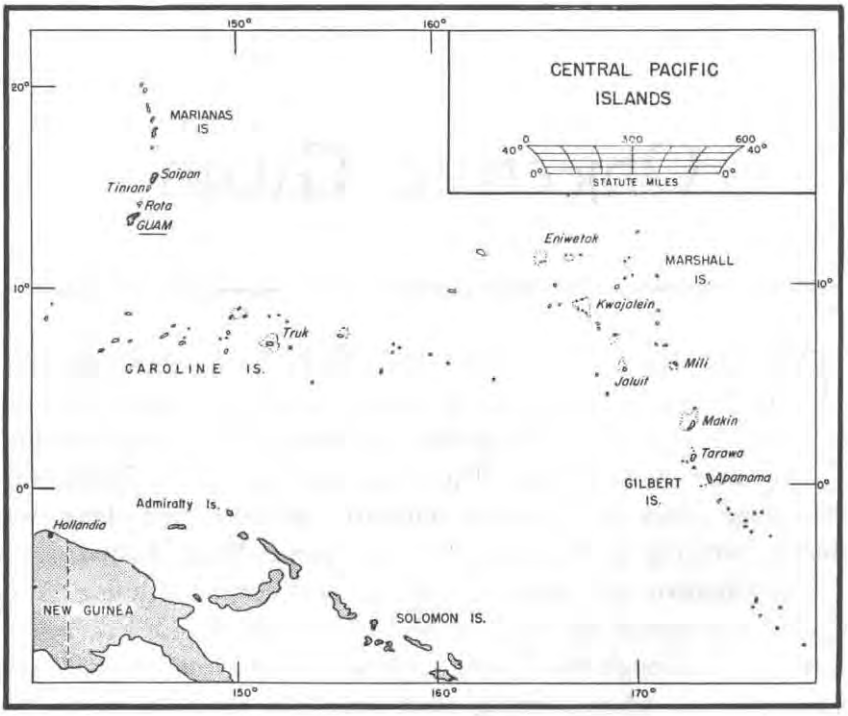
MAP NO. 1

Objective: Guam

THE INVASION OF THE SOUTHERN MARIANAS in June and July of 1944 was part of a coordinated effort by U. S. forces to obtain bases within striking distance by air of the Philippines and the Japanese home islands. The enemy position in the Pacific was weakening under strong Allied offensives, which moved along two lines converging on the Japanese inner zone. From Australia the Allied offensive had developed on an axis northwest along New Guinea and beyond the Bismarck Sea, and from Hawaii it had moved to the west through the Marshall Islands (Maps Nos. 1 and 2, pp. x and 2). The advance along both lines had depended upon the conquest of enemy islands selected to form a system of supporting garrisons from which air and sea power could neutralize the remaining enemy bases in the area.

By late spring Allied forces in the Southwest Pacific, pushing their advance along the northern coast of New Guinea, had reached Biak Island. Their network of forward bases in the Admiralty Islands and on New Guinea threatened Japanese holdings in the Netherlands Indies, the Caroline Islands, and even the Philippines. Eastward of Hollandia more than 100,000 enemy troops, cut from their sources of supply, were ineffective for future operations. To the north and east of the New Guinea thrust, Central Pacific forces had established a line of approach toward the Philippines, severing the enemy's communications east of Eniwetok atoll. The advance through the Central Pacific, begun a year later than that in the South and Southwest Pacific, protected the Allied positions in the Admiralties and on the New Guinea coast by weakening Truk, principal Japanese fleet base and aircraft staging center in the vicinity.

The next move, to the Marianas, was daring; it extended the Central Pacific spearhead more than a thousand miles to the west of the Marshalls, between the enemy-held Carolines on the south



MAP NO. 2

and Wake and Marcus on the north. The potential value of the southern Marianas was worth the risk. In addition to threatening the Philippines and the enemy supply line to the south, the conquest of these islands would furnish Central Pacific forces with their first bases for large-scale air attacks on Japan.

Offensive in the Central Pacific

Advance through the Central Pacific to the Marianas by U. S. forces meant penetrating deep into the Mandates, made up of the Marianas, Palau, Caroline, and Marshall Island groups, which the Japanese had controlled since World War I. Except for Guam, a possession of the United States since the Spanish-American War, these islands had been secretly fortified by the enemy prior to 7 December 1941. By overwhelming Guam four days after their attack on Pearl Harbor, and occupying the Gilbert Islands during September and October 1942, the Japanese controlled all the great island chains in the Central Pacific. For more than two years they had been

perfecting interdependent land, air, and sea bases on these chains to form a defensive system in depth, guarding their inner empire from attack on the east and south.

The offensive on the east, penetrating the chain barrier, had begun on 21 November 1943 under the command of Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas. The first blow struck by Admiral Nimitz involved the seizure of selected atolls in the Gilberts. His offensive required a powerful naval force, with carrier-based planes superior in fire power and maneuverability to the Japanese land-based aircraft, to make the initial attacks on the enemy defenses. Before the amphibious assault, carrier bombers, assisted by medium bombers flying from South Pacific fields, "softened" the enemy's position in the Gilberts. A naval convoy transported marine and army ground troops to the beaches, some 2,000 miles southwest of Pearl Harbor, and covered the invasion offshore. The Japanese garrisons fought tenaciously, but were destroyed in three days of fighting. Control of Makin, Tarawa, and Apamama neutralized or isolated all other atolls in the Gilbert group, making a systematic annihilation of each of the enemy's fortified bases unnecessary. On these three atolls engineers developed airfields for advancing the Central Pacific forces toward the Marshalls.

Continuing his tactics, Admiral Nimitz pushed the offensive ahead. Carrier groups ranged forward early in December to strike at enemy installations in the Marshall Islands. At the end of the month fighters and medium bombers, taking off from the new Gilbert strips, attacked Jaluit and Mili. A series of air raids reached all important Japanese bases, and some were made unserviceable. On 31 January marines and army troops invaded Kwajalein, an atoll in the center of the group. One of the largest fleet concentrations in naval history supported the landing. Again the Japanese fought hard, but by 5 February they had lost the atoll. The capture of Eniwetok, 350 miles to the northwest, a month later completed the bypassing of the remaining enemy bases in the Marshalls.

The two great Caroline and Marianas archipelagoes lay to the west, guarding the Philippines and the enemy supply lines from Japan to New Guinea and the Netherlands Indies. The Central Pacific forces immediately launched air and naval attacks on both groups. Large carrier-plane formations hit Truk in the Carolines late in February, sinking 19 ships and seriously damaging shore installations.



MAJ. GEN. ANDREW D. BRUCE, *Commanding General, 77th Division and Col. Douglas C. McNair, Chief of Staff, on Agat beach.*

A strong task force, including hundreds of carrier-based aircraft, attacked Saipan and nearby Tinian on 23 February; a small raid by 12 fighters was made on Guam. These were the preliminary actions toward neutralizing the Carolines and preparing for an invasion of the Marianas.

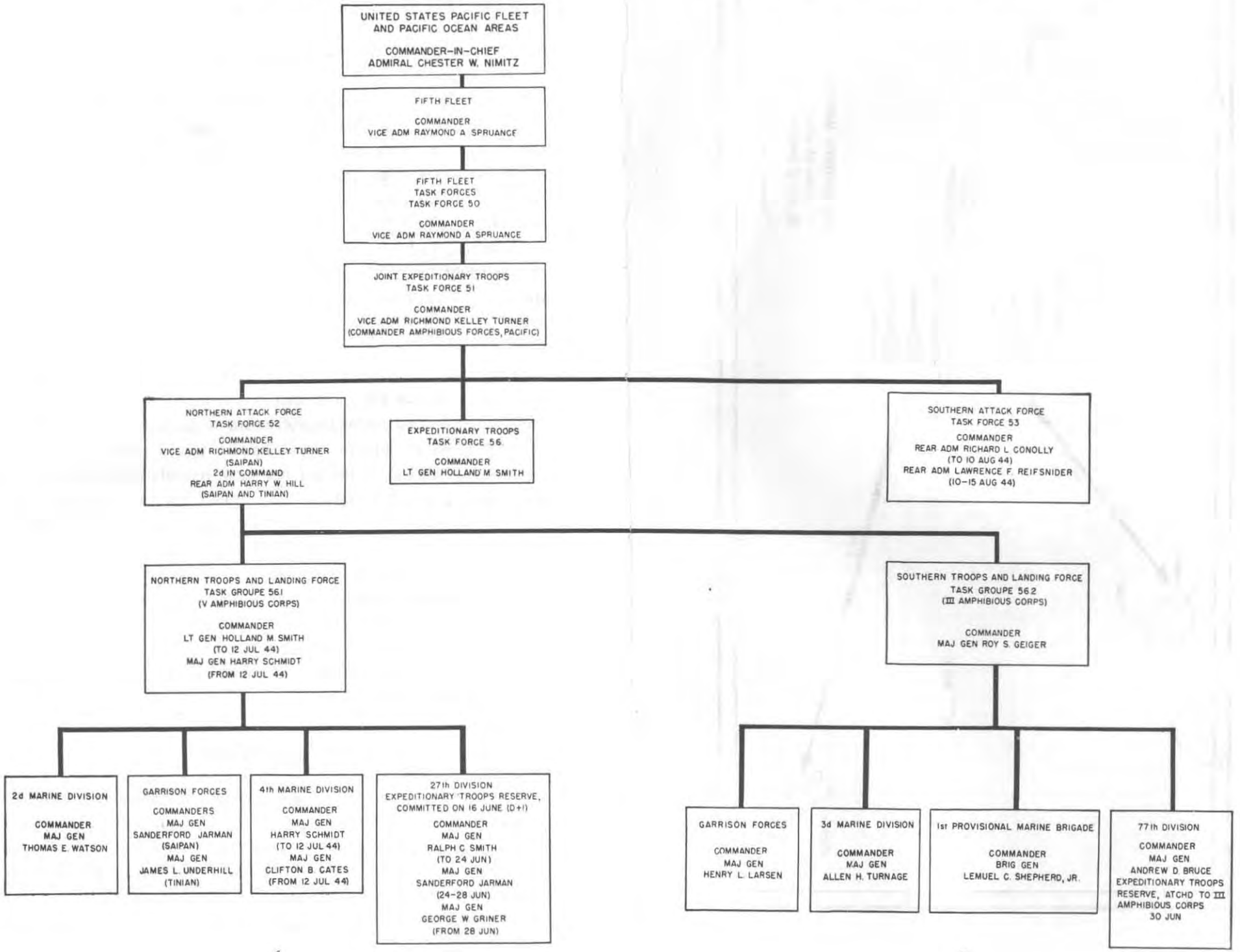
During the following months air attacks against the Carolines and Marianas intensified. On 30 March a powerful task force of the Pacific Fleet hit bases in the western Carolines, destroying or damaging 46 Japanese ships and 216 planes, and inflicting heavy damage on shore installations. The naval unit in this attack, Fast Carrier Task Force (Task Force 58), under command of Vice Adm. Marc A. Mitscher, had been organized early in the year and was to play an important role in the growing offensive. On 11 June a task force struck at the southern Marianas. Carrier-based planes attacked Guam, Rota, Tinian, and Saipan. On the 13th the force, including battleships and cruisers, steamed in to shell Saipan and Tinian.

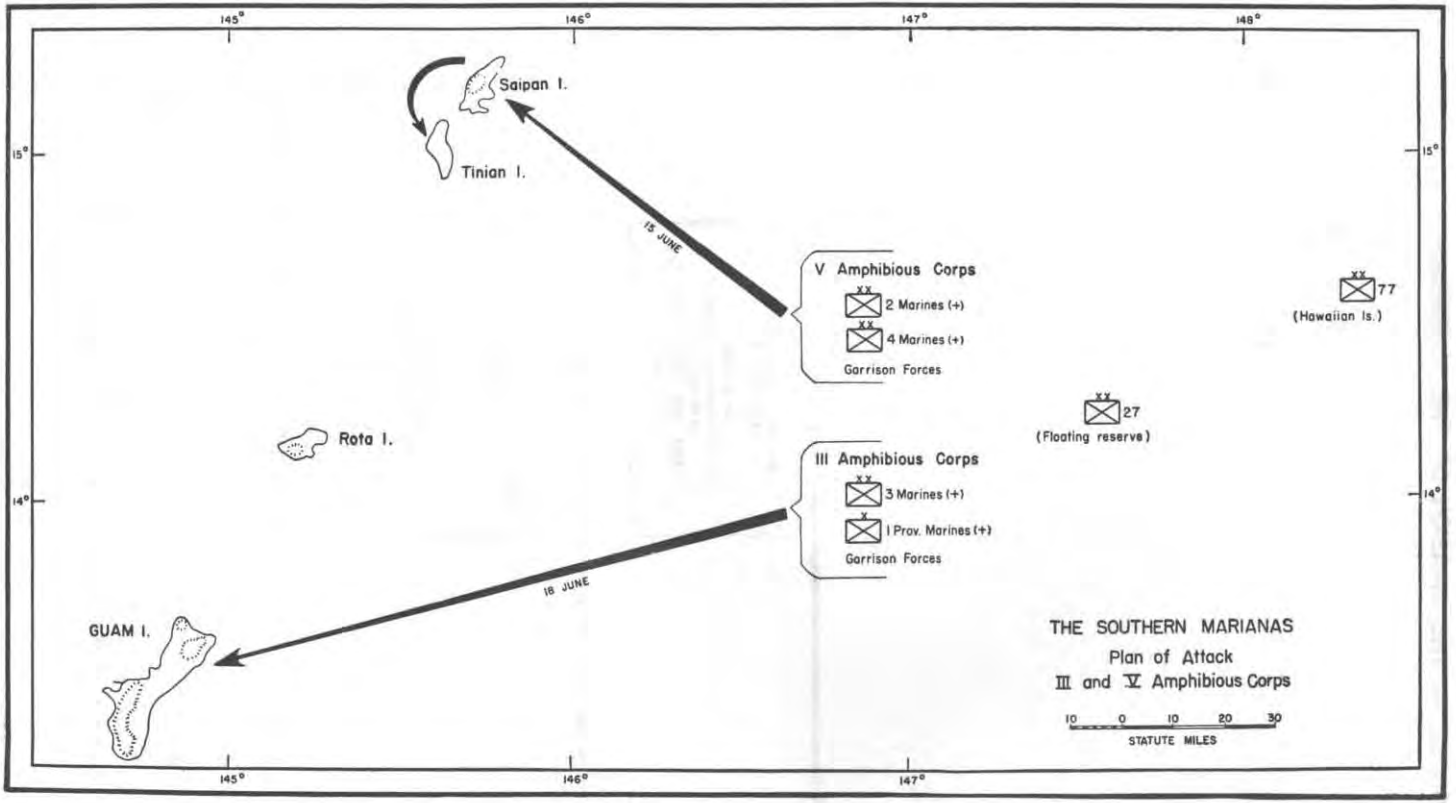
With this series of blows Admiral Nimitz's air and naval forces had paved the way for a full-scale invasion of the Marianas, despite indications of rapid enemy reinforcement of the islands. This advance into the heart of Japan's Pacific empire would represent a bound forward of 1,000 miles beyond our most recently conquered base at Eniwetok. Admiral Nimitz's forces would have to operate at distances from their main bases which once would have been considered prohibitive: 3,300 miles from Pearl Harbor and nearly twice that distance from California. His ability to undertake such an offensive reflected the great increase of American strength in the Pacific since 1942, an increase measured not only in the size of navy, marine, and army forces under his command, but in the potential of ships, weapons, and supplies furnished by war industries as far as 10,000 miles from the combat zone.

Marianas Islands

A month after the capture of Eniwetok, Admiral Nimitz decided that the southern Marianas were to be the next objectives in the Central Pacific. Strategically located 1,500 air miles from Manila and 1,600 air miles from Tokyo, the islands would provide his forces with bases almost equidistant from the Philippines and Japan, main Allied objectives. Admiral Nimitz's plan for the use of the southern

ORGANIZATION CHART FORCES ENGAGED IN THE INVASION OF THE MARIANAS




145°
146°
147°
148°
15°
14°
Saipan I.
Tinian I.
15 JUNE
V Amphibious Corps
2 Marines (+)
4 Marines (+)
Garrison Forces
77
(Hawaiian Is.)
27
(Floating reserve)
Rota I.
III Amphibious Corps
3 Marines (+)
1 Prov. Marines (+)
Garrison Forces
18 JUNE
GUAM I.
THE SOUTHERN MARIANAS
Plan of Attack
III and V Amphibious Corps
10 0 10 20 30
STATUTE MILES

MAP NO. 3

Marianas was to "establish bases for operations against Japanese sea communications and for long-range air attacks against Japan," to "secure control of sea communications through the Central Pacific," and to "initiate the isolation and neutralization of the central Carolines."

The principal force assigned to the mission by Admiral Nimitz was the Fifth Fleet, under command of Vice Adm. Raymond A. Spruance. Activities of all major commanders in the Pacific Ocean Areas and of General Douglas MacArthur, Commander of Southwest Pacific Area, were to be coordinated by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in support of the Fifth Fleet. Timing for the invasion depended upon the completion of new Marshall Island bases and the assembly of sufficient troops and supplies.

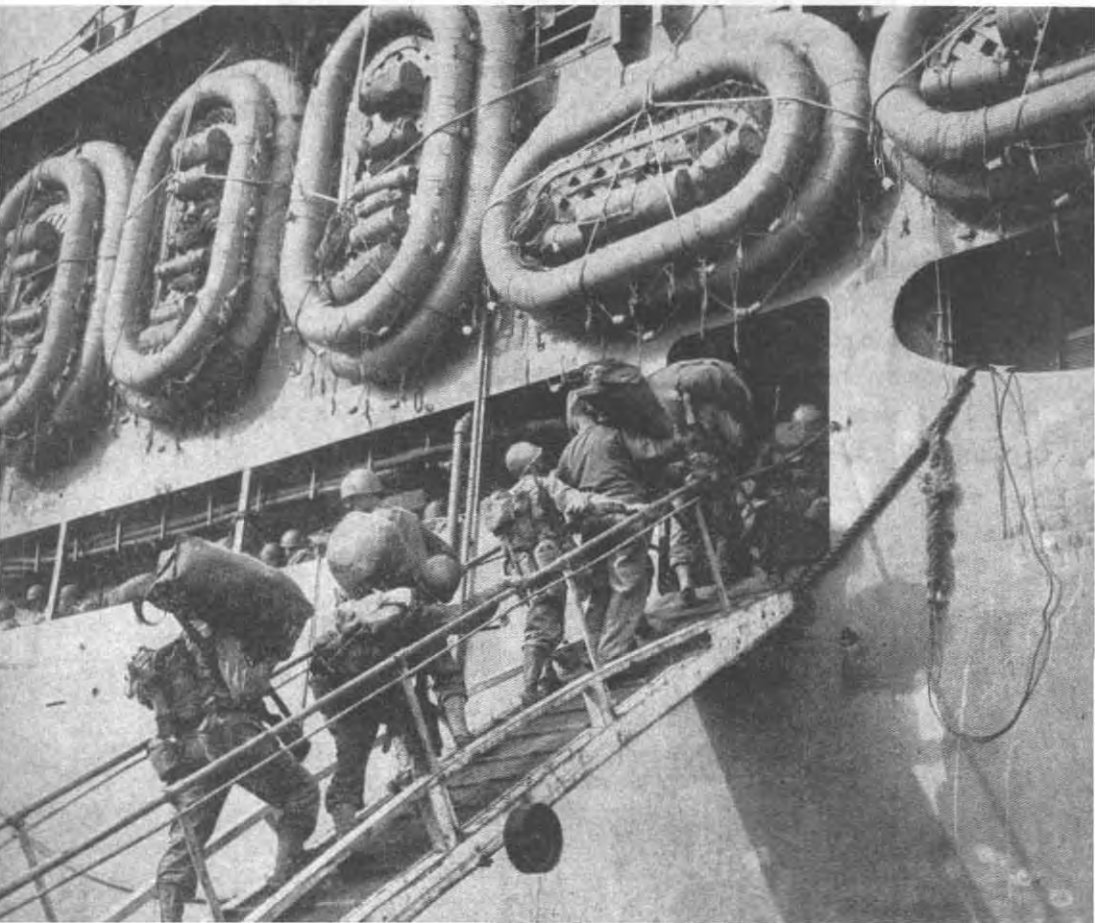
All naval and ground forces designated for the Marianas operation were organized under Joint Expeditionary Troops commanded by Vice Adm. Richmond K. Turner (Organization Chart, page 6). Admiral Turner's naval command was divided into two echelons, the Northern Attack Force under his immediate command and the Southern Attack Force under Rear Adm. Richard L. Conolly. Turner's ground units consisted of Expeditionary Troops under Lt. Gen. Holland M. Smith. The Expeditionary Troops were in turn divided into two echelons: one, the Northern Troops and Landing Force, composed of V Amphibious Corps, headed by General Smith himself; and the other, the Southern Troops and Landing Force, composed of III Amphibious Corps, under Maj. Gen. Roy S. Geiger. V Amphibious Corps consisted of the 2d Marine and 4th Marine Divisions, both reinforced, and garrison forces; III Amphibious Corps included the reinforced 3d Marine Division under Maj. Gen. Allen H. Turnage and the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, also reinforced, under Brig. Gen. Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr., and garrison forces. The army's 27th and 77th Divisions, commanded by Maj. Gen. Ralph C. Smith and Maj. Gen. Andrew D. Bruce, respectively, were both in expeditionary troops reserve.

While carrier-based planes and submarines made photographic studies of the enemy island defenses, the forces, comprising 500 vessels and 120,000 assault troops, were activated and assigned their individual missions. On D Day Northern Troops and Landing Force was to land on Saipan and then prepare to seize Tinian (Map No. 3, page 8). Capture of Saipan would help cut off the flow of enemy

reinforcements to Tinian, Rota, and Guam to the south. On W Day, Southern Troops and Landing Force was to invade Guam. The 27th Division was to be in floating reserve for any one or all three of these proposed operations. The 77th Division was to be held in strategic reserve in the Hawaiian Islands. D Day for Saipan was set for 15 June. W Day for Guam, designated tentatively as 18 June, depended upon the progress of land operations on Saipan and upon the movements of the enemy fleet.

Northern Troops and Landing Force proceeded to Saipan as planned. On the beaches the marines suffered heavy losses from mortar and artillery fire. The 27th Division was committed on D + 1, and the Southern Attack Force was brought in as floating reserve. After ten days of bitter fighting, marine and army units occupied approximately one-half the small island. The advance

TROOPS OF 77th DIVISION *embark from Oahu for Guam to join III Amphibious Corps. Soldiers carry battle packs and duffle bags.*



during the last days of June was slow and costly, and not until 9 July was all organized enemy resistance declared at an end. The battle cost the 27th Division alone 4,038 casualties.

Enemy ground opposition on Saipan, combined with a powerful surface attack, slowed up the whole Marianas operation. Fifth Fleet's forces were engaged entirely in protecting Joint Expeditionary Troops at Saipan. Even if the Southern Troops and Landing Force was considered strong enough without reserves for the Guam invasion, the fleet could not cover the landings as planned. On 16 June the battleships of the Southern Attack Force, initially scheduled to support the Guam invasion, maneuvered to the north of Saipan, while Admiral Mitscher's Fast Carrier Task Force moved westward into position in the Philippine Sea to protect the troops at Saipan from an impending enemy fleet attack. The next day cruisers and destroyers of the Southern Attack Force reinforced the Fast Carrier Task Force west of the Marianas. The enemy fleet attack materialized on 19 June when the Japanese Fleet Striking Force launched carrier planes against Admiral Mitscher's task force. The enemy planes made three heavy but uncoordinated assaults. Mitscher's fighters met each of the three enemy formations as they approached their targets on the 19th, and next day his whole air force delivered full-strength blows on the Japanese fleet. The enemy carriers had evidently planned to launch planes against the Fifth Fleet and then retire, leaving their fighters to escort the bombers to Guam airfields. From these strips torpedo bombers would then continue the attack. By the time the Japanese fleet retired to the west, it had lost nearly 400 aircraft and 14 ships.

The demands of the Saipan battle delayed the attack on Guam and Tinian, and W Day for Guam was indefinitely postponed. The transports carrying the Southern Landing Force, which were cruising in the area east of the Marianas, were ordered to sail to Eniwetok on 25 June to await further instructions. On 30 June Admiral Conolly and General Geiger flew from Guadalcanal to Saipan to confer with Admiral Turner and General Smith. They decided to set 21 July as W Day; to attach the 77th Division to the III Amphibious Corps; to make one RCT of the 77th available on W Day, and the remainder of the division not later than W Day + 2. The change in W Day allowed time for transports to bring forward the 77th from Hawaii, reinforcing Southern Troops and Landing Force for the Guam attack.


144°45'
GUAM
AGANA BAY
APRA HARBOR
AGAT BAY
PAGO BAY
13° 23'
0 1 2 3 4 5
MILES
144°45'

MAP NO. 4

The Island of Guam

Guam, Japanese-held since December 1941, is the southernmost of the Marianas. Its area of 228 square miles, the largest in the Central Pacific between the Hawaiian Islands and the Philippines, is approximately equal to the total area of the other 14 islands in the 600-mile-long Marianas chain (Maps Nos. 4 and 27, page 12 and inside back cover). The extreme length, north to south, is about 34 miles; the width, east to west, varies from 5 to 9 miles.

From a strategic standpoint Guam was important because it was large enough to become a principal forward staging area for further advance toward the Philippines and Japan. Apra Harbor, on the west coast north of the Orote Peninsula, provided safe anchorage deep enough to accommodate medium-sized vessels. The harbor also afforded landing and take-off lanes for seaplanes, which had been used by the Navy and Pan American Air Lines before December 1941. On land Guam had many sites for airfields suitable for the heaviest bombers. At least two fields built and used by the enemy were already in existence. One, a mile-long strip, was on Orote Peninsula; the other was east of Agana. In possession of United States forces, the island would be denied to the enemy as a refueling, supply, and aircraft staging area.

Approaches to Guam present formidable obstacles to invading forces. Less than ten miles of the coast line are suitable for an amphibious assault, and these stretches only at higher stages of tide. Coral reefs, high cliffs, and heavy surf combine to deny most of the shore to landings in any force. The reef, continuous except for small breaks, fringes the entire island and fills many of the coastal bays. The greater portion of the reef ranges in width from 25 to 700 yards; to the southwest it extends toward Santa Rosa Reef for 2½ miles. The lowest reefs are covered by a few feet of water at mid or high tide, allowing only boats of two-foot draft to pass over them. Reinforcing the reef barrier along all the northern shore are high cliffs, rising sheer from the reef shelf or the narrow beach to heights of 600 feet. In the Apra Harbor area only small groups of men could attempt the cliffs extending around the western tip of Orote Peninsula, where an occasional ladder, concrete steps, or narrow trail through a notch lead from the shore to the mainland. The rough waters on the southeast side of the island also prohibit a landing

in force; there are a few openings in the reef, but the heavy surf restricts approach through these narrow breaks. At no point would the landings be easy. The least hazardous beaches are in Agat Bay from Facpi Point to Haputo Point, and to the northeast from Asan Point to Adelup Point. Along both these stretches men could wade from the reef to the shore, if their landing craft could not pass the reef barrier. A further advantage was that neither stretch was blocked by a cliff. Their beaches are bordered by a coastal plain, a half mile to a mile in width, over which the men could push inland.

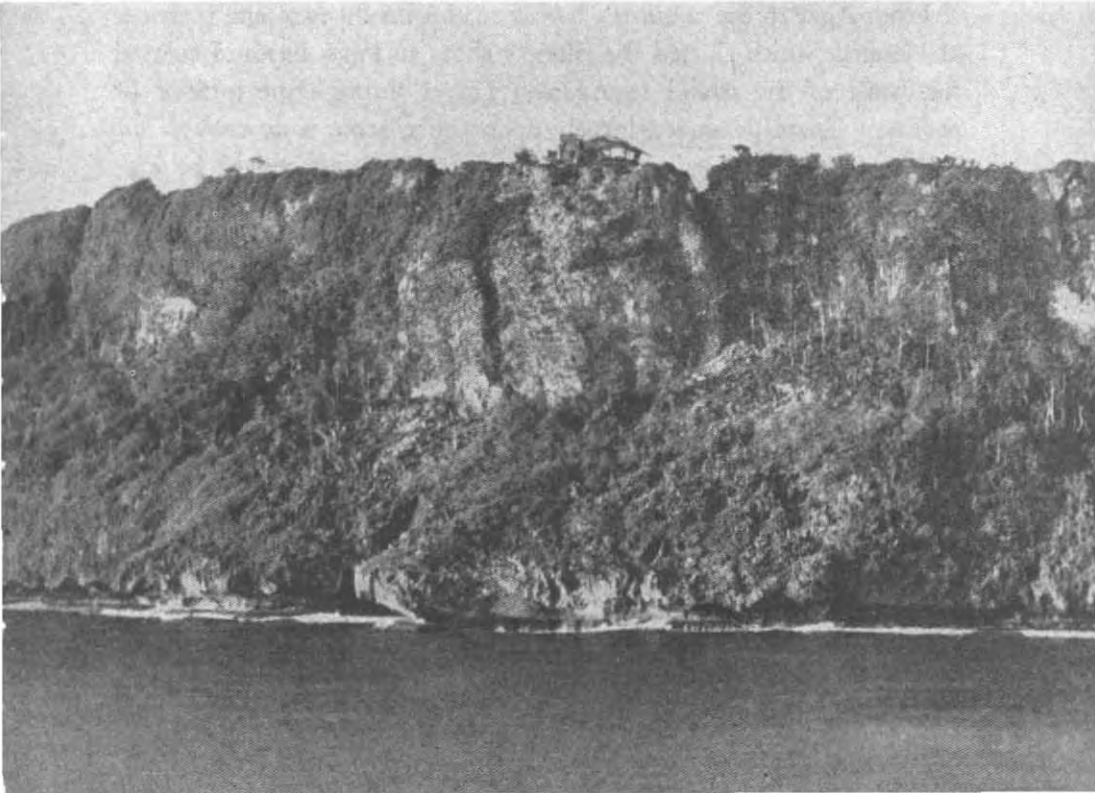
Overlooking these beaches the terrain rises from the coastal plain to a range of hills which dominates the western shore of the southern half of the island. Peaks in this range, the key hills for control of the entire island, reach heights of more than a thousand feet about two miles inland. Mt. Alifan (869 feet) and Mt. Tenjo (1,022 feet) command the southernmost of the two beaches; Mt. Chachao (1,046 feet) and Mt. Alutom (1,082 feet) command the northern. On the east side, the range gradually slopes down to foothills and a plateau stretching to the coast 100 to 300 feet above sea level.

Heights, primarily volcanic rock, are rugged and sparsely covered with tall, coarse, sharp-edged grass and scrub growth, except between Mt. Alifan and Mt. Lamlam (1,334 feet) where timber is found in large stands. Orote Peninsula and Cabras Island, on the west, and the coastal regions, on the east, are underlain by coral limestone. Here ravines and lower lands are heavily wooded and thick with tropical growth. Weeds, trailing vines, and tropical vegetation, consisting of strand trees intermingled with lianas, air plants, and underscrub, grow to six or eight feet, and at such rate as to make even roads impassable if they are not used constantly. Rice paddies and coconut groves are cultivated in the marshes and lowlands.

The topography of the northern half of the island differs markedly from that of the south. From Agana and Pago Bay a forested limestone plateau rises gradually to more than 600 feet at the northern end of the island. East of Agana, approach to the plateau is through an area of low hills, covered with palm trees. These hills merge into the plateau broken only by Mt. Barrigada (674 feet), Mt. Santa Rosa (870 feet), and Mt. Mataguac (600 feet). Four natural clearings exist in the forest, on Mt. Santa Rosa, Mt. Mataguac, at Finegayan, and near Pati Point; man-made clearings are restricted almost entirely to roads, limiting a military advance to the channels



BLUFFS RISING 600 FEET *above the water make a barrier of the Guam coast. Because of cliffs, landing points for large invading force were limited. The oblique above shows a two-mile stretch on Orote Peninsula. Below is a close-up of a rugged coastal section.*



of the existing road network. Because porous coral subsoil absorbs all rainfall, the section has no rivers. Pago River, northernmost of the island's five streams on the east coast, flows from the foothills of Mt. Chachao to Port Pago.

Tropical growth on the entire island thrives in the constant temperatures, with daily averages ranging throughout the year between 79° and 83° F. The rainfall is seasonal, with ranges from 15 inches a month upward. The summer monsoon period (July–October) is the wettest season, rainy days averaging 20 a month and the humidity staying near 90 percent or above.

About 100 miles of hard-surfaced, two-lane motor road existed on the island in 1940. This type of Class A road, built of a kind of soft coral rock, ran from Agat northward along the coast through Agana and beyond Mt. Machanao. A section of it extended inland and across the island to Barrigada, Finegayan, and beyond Yigo. Some stretches of this road were safe for speeds of more than 40 miles per hour, but for heavy traffic every mile of surface would require constant maintenance. A network of Class B roads, of single-lane width with no surfacing, supplemented the Class A two-lane highway through most of north Guam. Except during heavy rains, these secondary routes were good for light, rapid traffic moving in one direction.

From Agat to the south a Class B road joined a two-lane highway at Umatac, which skirted the island's shore to Pago Bay and crossed the waist of the island to Agana. Travel through the interior of southern Guam depended largely upon trails, some wide enough for bull carts. Military movement through south Guam would be limited almost entirely to the coastal two-lane highway.

The status of these roads in 1941 was the latest information the invasion forces had; it seemed unlikely that the Japanese had undertaken the difficult task of extending or improving them. However, engineers estimated that in northern Guam they could cut at the rate of a mile an hour a route wide enough for transporting artillery pieces, to relieve the existing roads of some traffic.

According to the 1940 census, there were about 22,290 permanent residents on Guam, more than half of whom lived in the main city of Agana. The remainder of the population lived in very small villages; only 8 towns, including Agana, had more than 500 inhabitants. Many of the natives, called Chamorros, are descendants of

the Spanish, Mexican, and Philippine soldiers who occupied the island after 1670, but others have American, British, Chinese, or Japanese forebears who came later and intermarried with the natives. Most of the Chamorros are Catholic, and almost all of them can speak some English. Although 80 percent engage in agriculture, their methods are so poor that the staples of their diet have to be imported. Evidence that the natives are loyal to the United States was their attempt to keep alive after December 1941 the six American survivors of the Japanese assault. The enemy discovered and killed all except George Ray Tweed, Radioman 1c, whom the natives guarded for more than two years as a symbol of continued American sovereignty over Guam. Generally friendly and docile, they had grown increasingly restive under the Japanese, but the extent of their opposition before American invasion was not known.

Japanese rule of Guam began after they overwhelmed the navy and marine garrison of 555 men, who put up what resistance they could. At the time, despite its importance to the United States, the island was not fortified. Defending marines had only a few .30-caliber and .50-caliber machine guns and no mobile artillery to use against an enemy task force estimated at three cruisers, three destroyers, and a convoy of eight merchant ships. The Japanese took over the naval

THE ENEMY TASK FORCE *landed at Agana in December 1941, according to this picture from an illustrated review of Japanese naval operations. The enemy force moved on the western coastal road to Cabras Island and Orote Peninsula, thus securing the entire harbor area.*




144°45'
ENEMY DISPOSITIONS ON GUAM
JULY 1944
① 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry
② 48th Independent Mixed Brigade and part of 29th Division
③ Rest of 29th Division
④ 5th Company, 38th Infantry
⑤ 54th Keibitai
⑥ 38th Infantry
⑦ 10th Independent Mixed Regiment
Contour interval 300 feet
0 1 2 3 4 5
MILES
Tumon Bay
Finegayan
Agana Bay
Cabras I.
Agana
Orote Peninsula
Agat
Pago Bay
13° 23'
300
Umatac
Inarajan
144°45'

MAP NO. 5

installations in Apra Harbor, the storehouse and repair shops at Piti, and cable facilities and marine barracks at Sumay. They recruited slave labor from the natives to assist in maintaining their base.

Enemy Forces on Guam

Once before in our history American assault units had appeared off Guam, but then it had been comic opera. On 20 June 1898, shortly after the beginning of the Spanish War, the *Charleston* fired a few shots from its secondary battery on Fort Santiago as a preliminary to occupation. The Spaniards did not know of the opening of hostilities far to the east; legend on Guam even has it that they interpreted the gunfire as a friendly salute. At any rate, their only defense was four small guns of obsolete design, formerly used for saluting but at that time condemned as unsafe even for that purpose. The island was occupied without opposition by marines and by 2 companies of the 2d Oregon Infantry Regiment, taken to the shore by 25 rowers.

No one expected comic opera in 1944. The experiences of Tarawa, Makin, Kwajalein, and Eniwetok had shown the ferocious quality of Japanese resistance. The strategic importance of Guam indicated the probability that the enemy garrison would be strong, and the island's extensive land mass led the Central Pacific forces to expect a longer defense than that encountered in earlier operations. The fighting on Saipan did nothing to alter this estimate.

After the invasion of Kwajalein the III Amphibious Corps C–2 learned that the Japanese were transferring army troops from Manchukuo to Guam to reinforce the *54th Keibitai,* nucleus of the naval units in complete charge of the island's defense (Map No. 5). The reinforcing army units from China, organized under the *South Marianas Area Group,* arrived on Guam in March. The group included the *29th Division* (with the *18th* and *38th Infantry Regiments*) commanded by Lt. Gen. Takeshi Takashina, and the *6th Expeditionary Force.* The *force* was composed of three infantry battalions, a field artillery battalion, and an engineer company of the *1st Division;* and an infantry group headquarters, three infantry battalions, one mountain artillery battalion, and one engineer company of the *11th Division.* In June the *6th Expeditionary Force* was dissolved. The units of the *1st Division* formed the *10th Independent Mixed Regiment*

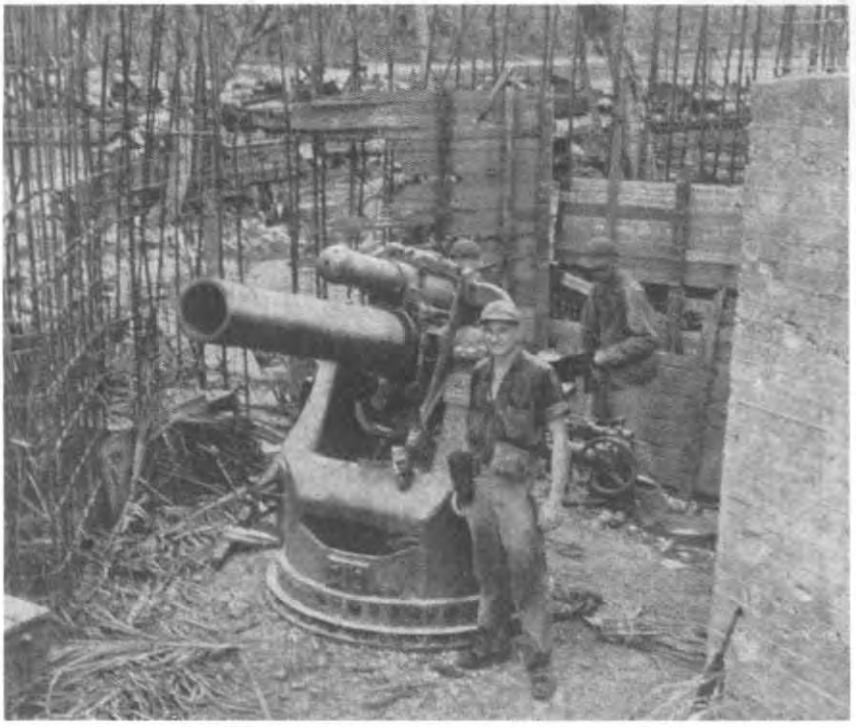


GENERAL TAKASHINA AND COLONEL SUENAGA *inspect the defenses along Agat beach. The 38th Infantry, under Colonel Suenaga (at left), manned positions in the Agat area, later assigned to the Marine's 1st Provisional Brigade and to the Army's 77th Division.*

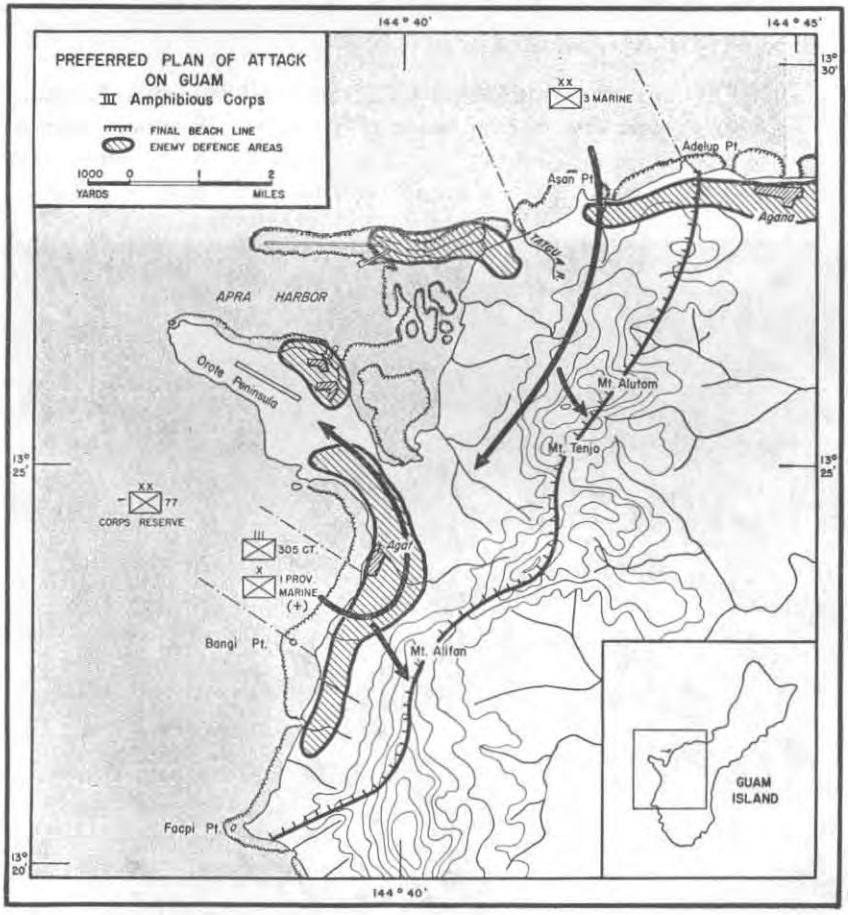
under Lt. Col. Ichiro Kataoka; those of the *11th Division* became the *48th Independent Mixed Brigade* under Maj. Gen. Kiyoshi Shigematsu. Before the invasion of Guam, III Amphibious Corps estimated that the total enemy strength on the island was about 18,500, of which 13,000 were army troops and 5,500 naval. On 14 July intelligence officers of the 77th Division were inclined to revise their estimates of the number of Japanese troops on Guam upward to more than 36,000. Division's higher figure, almost twice that of Corps', was based partly on units identified on the island, and partly on the potential capacity of the enemy to land additional troops on Guam until 15 June.

Known locations of Japanese army and navy troops in June placed the *2d Battalion, 18th Infantry* in northern Guam, the *48th Independent Mixed Brigade* and part of the *29th Division* in the Tumon Bay area, the rest of the *29th Division* in the waist of the island between Agana and Pago Bay, the *54th Independent Guard Unit* on the Orote Peninsula, the *38th Infantry,* except for the *5th Company* on Cabras Island, in the Agat sector, and the *10th Independent Mixed Regiment* to the southeast. Because the whole of the Agat sector was relatively isolated by limited routes of communication from the more populated areas to the north, the *38th Infantry,* defending it, was more or less independent of the rest of the island command. Although in June the enemy had stationed his forces to cover the entire island, during July he began to shift them to the areas most vulnerable to an attack from the sea.

JAPANESE 200-MM COASTAL DEFENSE GUN, *emplaced on Bangi Point in Agat Bay, is examined by III Corps men. Revetment, destroyed by pre-invasion bombardment, was never completed. Other revetments had protective roofing. This is one of two naval shore guns on the point.*



Captured documents indicated that the enemy considered these areas to be along the central portion of the west side of the island, where the coastal features presented the least formidable barrier to an invading force. According to the chart of installations compiled by the III Amphibious Corps, the enemy in the sector from Agana to Agat Bay had about twenty-five 75-mm mountain guns, ten 70-mm to 90-mm howitzers, two 37-mm antitank guns, and more than thirty-five machine guns. These were supplemented by at least 25 naval coastal defense and dual-purpose guns. Rifle pits, trenches, and barbed wire added to the strength of the beach defenses, and mid-July studies indicated that the enemy was increasing their depth



MAP NO. 6

daily. The Japanese were also believed to have a large amount of mobile artillery and some tanks to lend support to their fixed positions along the shore.

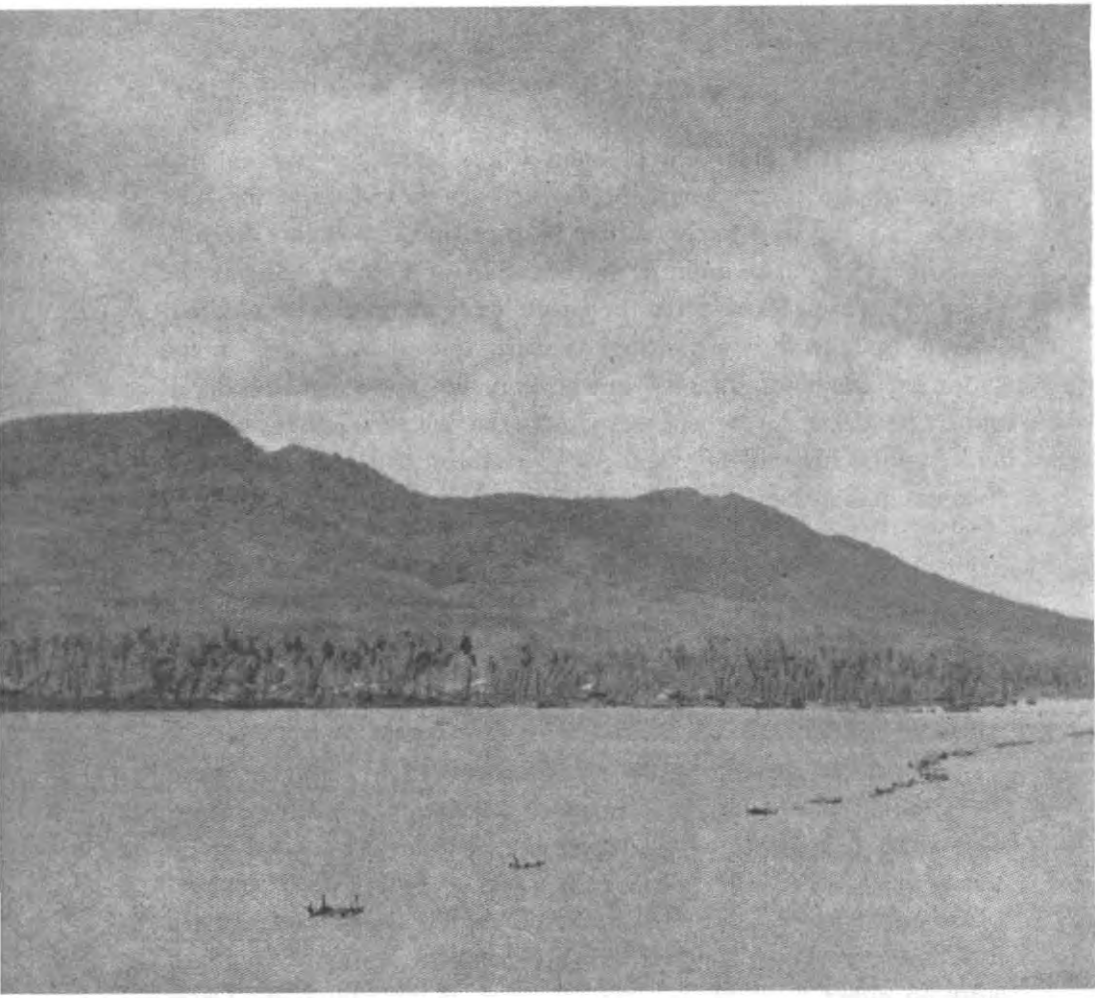
Planning staffs of III Amphibious Corps knew that the enemy's defense of the island would be favored by the reef and the hills overlooking the most likely landing beaches, and that enemy defenses in those areas might indicate the intention of fighting hard at the shore. They later learned that the Japanese commanders were ordered: "While the enemy is advancing from the line of coral reefs to the shore, the combined infantry and artillery fire power will be developed. In particular when they reach the water obstacle, oblique and flanking fire will be employed to establish a dense fire net and thus annihilate them on the water."

Plan of Attack

The preferred plan for the assault phase of the operation on Guam, which the III Amphibious Corps had prepared in April and May, remained substantially unchanged after the capture of Saipan. The revisions, made possible by the postponement of W Day, increased the duration of the preparatory naval bombardment, strengthened Southern Troops and Landing Force, and provided for limited reconnaissance of the beaches prior to W Day.

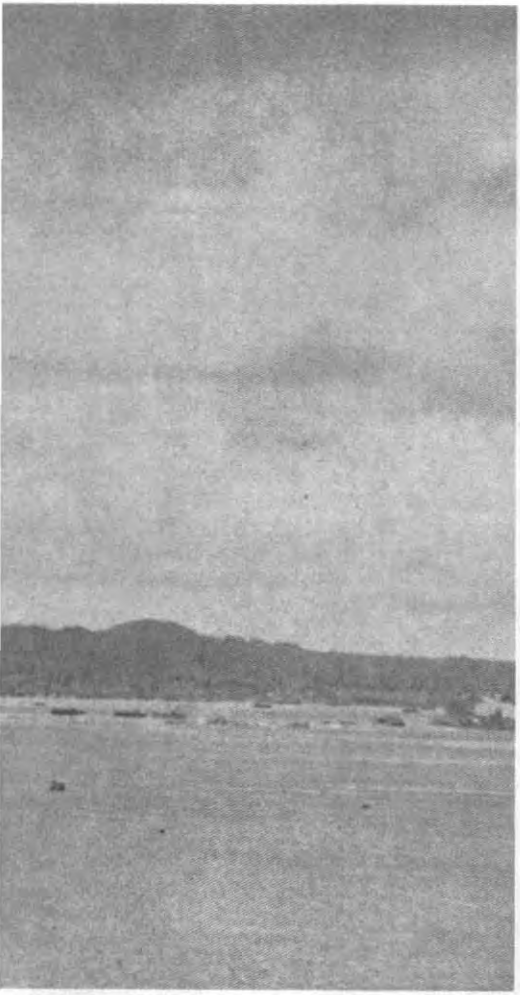
Although the plan for the assault phase was simple it demanded close cooperation of all arms. The attack was to develop simultaneously on either flank of the military heart of the island, the Orote Peninsula, with its air strip, and Apra Harbor, with its installations (Map No. 6, page 22). Because high cliffs and a strong enemy coastal defense made a frontal assault on the peninsula and the harbor impossible, the plan involved landings north and south of Apra Harbor. From the north one force of the III Amphibious Corps was to drive toward the base of the peninsula and there meet the other force, which had meantime landed and approached from the south. The combined forces, having secured control of the hills commanding Orote, were to isolate and "pinch off" the peninsula from the rear.

Beaches chosen for the landings lay within the two stretches of shore most favorable for an amphibious assault. On the northern stretch, the landing beaches were designated at Asan between Adelup Point and the Tatgua River. On the southern stretch, they were



designated in Agat Bay between Agat village and Bangi Point. Although these beaches were the easiest portions of the island to assault from the sea, they afforded limited routes of approach to the interior, especially to the southern part of the island. Troops moving from the beaches could use the highway running along the coast in either direction, but the mountainous regions in the south were accessible only by trails and a few miles of surfaced and dirt road.

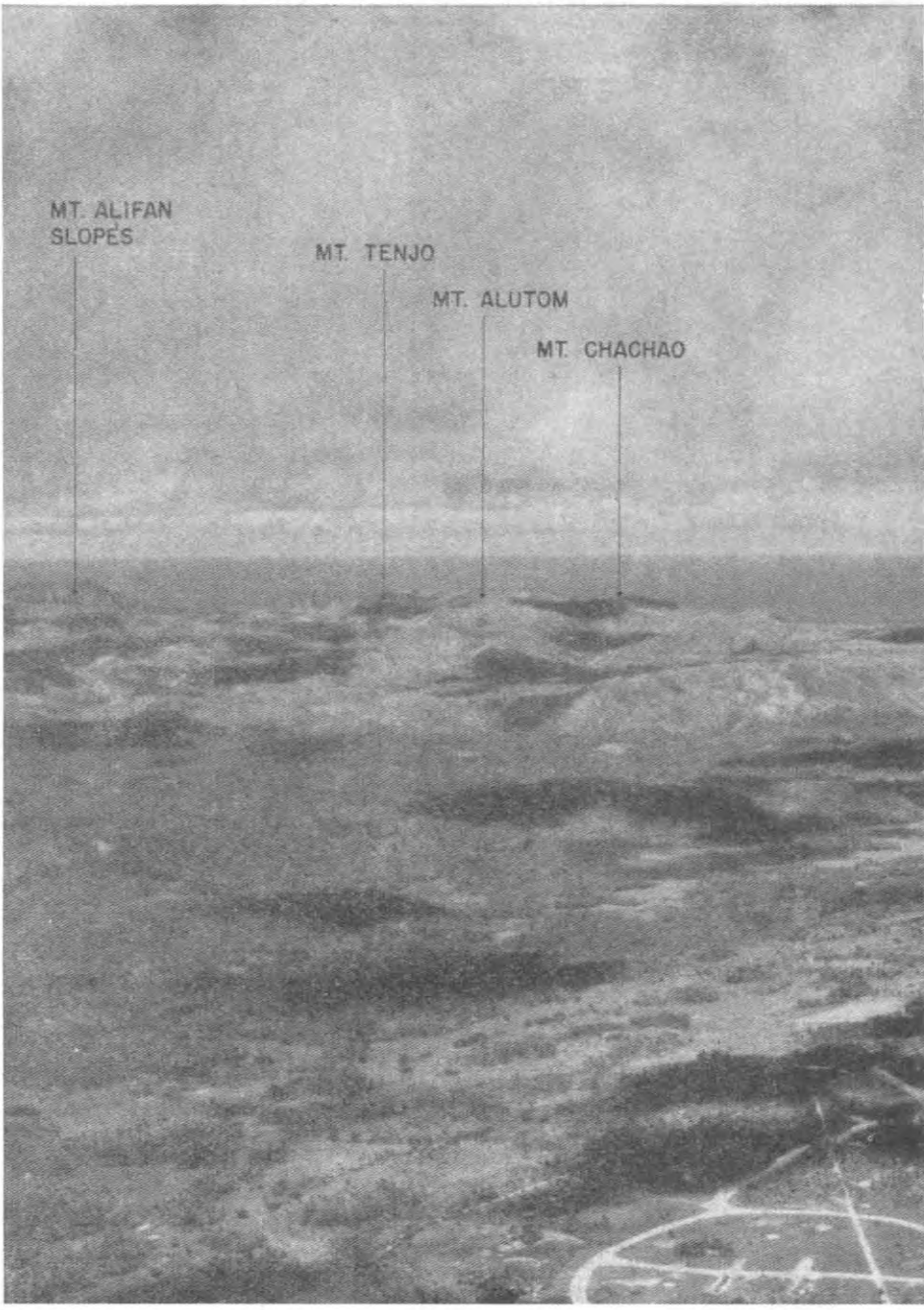
Using the limited routes from the beaches, the III Amphibious Corps was to secure a beachhead by seizing a final beachline on the ridge that commands both landing areas. The line was to extend from Adelup Point along Mt. Alutom, Mt. Tenjo, and Mt. Alifan

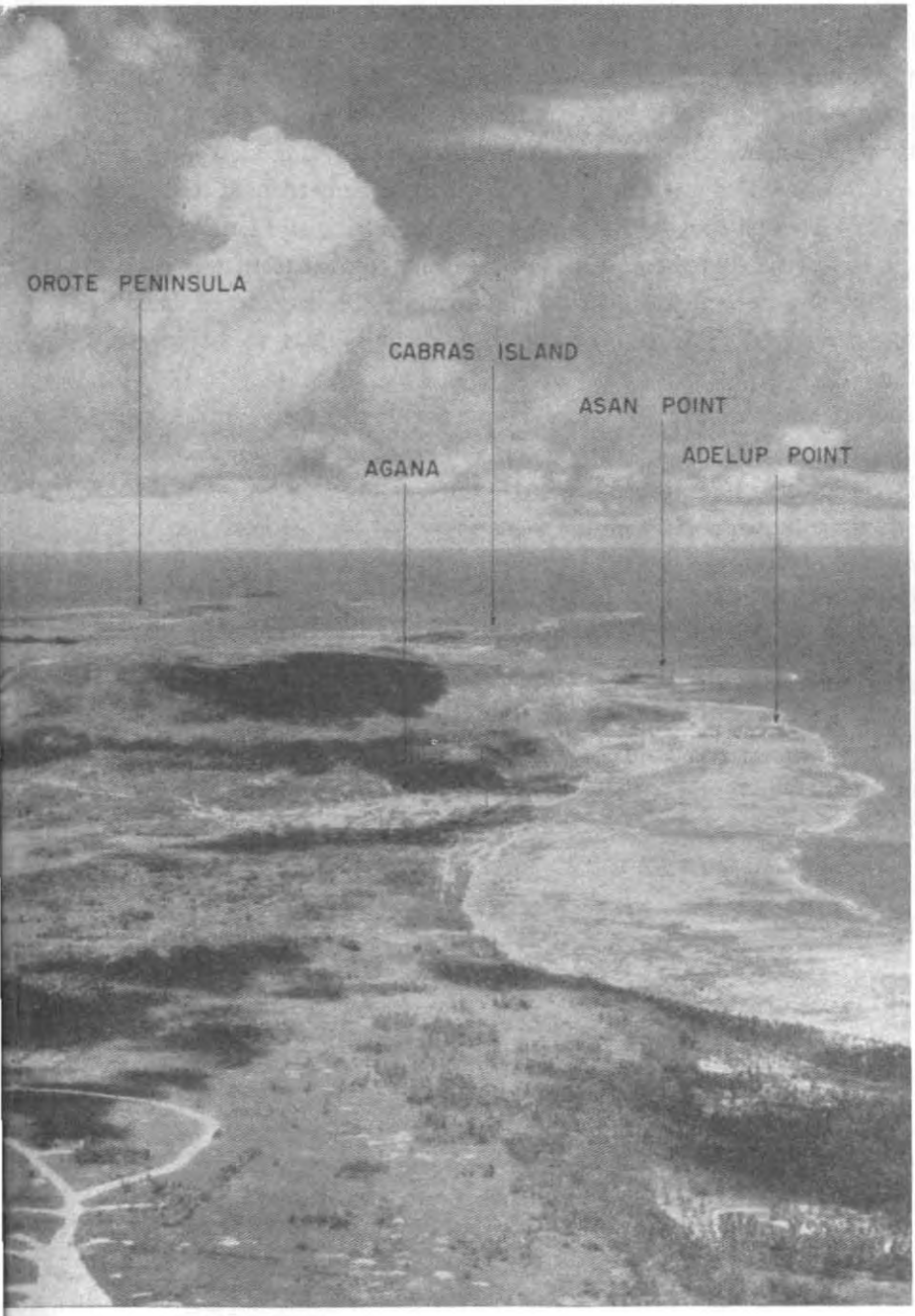


LANDING BEACHES *between Agat village and Bangi Point are at foot of coastal range and are dominated by Mt. Alifan, seen on left. Water obstacles, similar to those in left foreground, are removed from area where boats shuttle from reef to shore. Photo taken W + 4.*

to Facpi Point. Once in control of a beachhead anchored on the final beachline, the corps would first attack Orote Peninsula from the east and then prepare to capture the rest of the island.

Corps assigned the northern and most heavily defended sector to the 3d Marine Division, which would land on the beaches between Adelup Point and the mouth of the Tatgua River, advance to the south, and occupy the area lying east of Apra Harbor. As the marine division moved to the south, it was to secure and defend the final beachline in its sector. The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was to land on the beaches between Agat village and Bangi Point and then turn north in a wheeling movement into the base of the


MT. ALIFAN
SLOPES
MT. TENJO
MT. ALUTOM
MT. CHACHAO



HILLS IN WESTERN COASTAL RANGE, *commanding Orote Peninsula, rise a thousand feet above airfield and harbor areas. Mts. Chachao, Alutom, Tenjo, and Alifan are high points on final beachline, objective of Assault Phase to "pinch off" Orote. Taken from 1,600 feet.*

Orote Peninsula. The 305th RCT of the 77th Division was chosen to support the brigade in this landing. The 2d Battalion with a platoon of the 706th Tank Battalion, boated in LCM's (Landing Craft, Mechanized), was to assemble between the launching area and the line of departure at H Hour + 120 ready to land on brigade order. The 1st and 3d Battalions were to debark and land whenever the brigade called them. Once ashore, the combat team was then to occupy and defend the final beachline while the brigade attacked up the peninsula. The rest of the 77th initially was to be in corps reserve.

Two alternative plans were prepared by the corps, in case last-minute information disclosed that either of the beaches scheduled for landings under the preferred plan was too heavily defended or otherwise unsuitable. One of these provided for the entire invading force in echelon to go in over the beaches between Agat and Facpi Point, seizing Orote Peninsula and Apra Harbor, and overrunning the rest of the island from this beachhead. The other alternative plan was substantially the same as the preferred plan, except that the brigade would land between Bangi Point and Facpi Point instead of between Agat village and Bangi Point. However, the adoption of neither of these plans was necessary; the preferred plan was followed.

W Day had been set for 21 July; H Hour was to be 0830.

Assault Phase

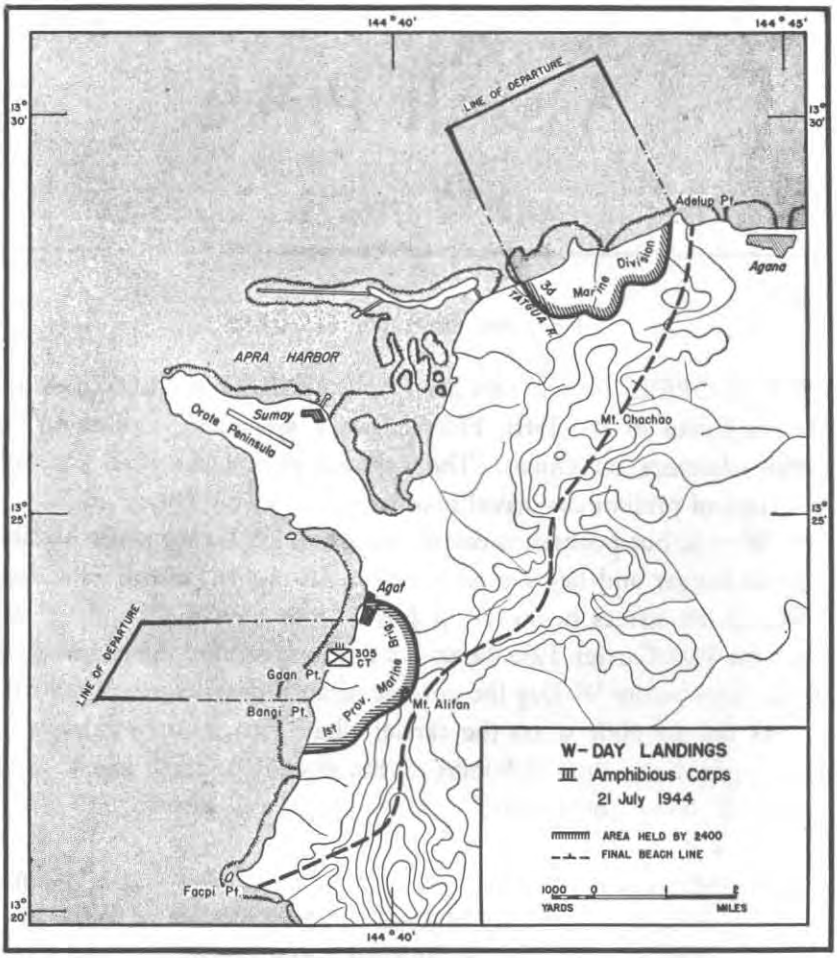
Preparations for W Day

AS THE OPERATIONS ON SAIPAN NEARED A CLOSE, air and surface forces of the Fifth Fleet began a systematic "softening" of enemy defenses on Guam. The original plan had called for only two days of preliminary naval bombardment, to take place on W − 2 and W − 1, but postponement of the attack on Guam made possible a much longer and heavier preparation, lasting 16 instead of 2 days.

Naval air strikes began on 5 July. From then to 21 July planes from the Fast Carrier Task Force bombed and strafed the island daily. Three days before W Day the volume of air blows increased, reaching a peak on the 20th when the carrier planes made 614 strafing runs and dropped 486 tons of bombs on the already battered island. This series of blows neutralized Guam's principal airfield, on Orote Peninsula.

The preliminary air strikes were coordinated with naval gunfire. On 8 July four cruisers of Southern Attack Force led off with a 3-day bombardment, firing five thousand five hundred 5- and 8-inch shells on the coastal defenses. From the 12th through the 16th, four battleships fired more than three thousand 14- and 16-inch shells. During the next 4 days 3 battleships were joined by 2 others and by 6 cruisers, and they blasted the island with more than 16,000 shells. LCI(G)'s (Landing Craft, Infantry [Gunboat]), closing to within a few yards of the reef, raked trenches and pillboxes and reported the location of enemy positions to the heavier ships. Destroyers screened the larger ships and delivered harassing fires at night. Admiral Conolly, directing the bombardment from the flagship, supervised the destruction of every known gun emplacement that would seriously endanger the assault landing.

Meanwhile, during the 16 days of air and naval preparations, the III Amphibious Corps at Eniwetok waited for orders to return to



MAP NO. 7

the Marianas. While the troops waited, they had a chance to leave the cramped quarters of their transports for the first time in more than a month to exercise ashore on the limited atolls of the Marshalls. On 6 July General Smith attached the 77th Division to the corps. The 305th RCT left Oahu to join the force at Eniwetok as early as 1 July. The rest of the 77th Division sailed direct from Oahu to Guam. The corps, including the 305th RCT, moved from Eniwetok on 18 July aboard the transports of the Southern Attack Force to arrive off Guam the morning of W Day, 21 July.

En route the troops went through final, exhaustive briefings. They pored over tactical maps for details of the landing beaches, roads,

towns, and enemy installations. They studied the terrain models of the island, showing graphically the natural characteristics of the shore and the hilly, wooded inland. As the transports neared the objective, the men gave their weapons a last check and prepared to disembark.

The Landings

The bombardment on W Day opened at 0530 when thunder of 16-inch guns of the Southern Attack Force offshore at Guam broke the early morning quiet. Between the heavy salvos from battleships, sharper reports of 5-, 6-, and 8-inch guns echoed across the island's western beaches into the mountains above. Six battleships, four heavy cruisers, five light cruisers, and seven destroyers moved slowly along, their guns trained on the dark bulk of the land mass. Bursts of flame lit up the dawn as shells exploded on the beaches and in the hills behind.

At 0803 the slow, deliberate shelling of coastal installations and bivouac areas stopped, and the ships turned their guns to intensify the fire on the beaches. At the same time, carrier planes, flying above the naval gunfire trajectories, dropped depth charges along the shore and strafed the landing areas. Under this air and naval protection, LVT's (Landing Vehicles, Tracked), packed with the first wave of marine assault units, assembled in position on a quiet sea several thousand yards from the Asan and Agat beaches and on signal crossed the line of departure for the shore.

Eight minutes before H Hour, naval guns bearing on the landing beaches speeded up their volleys. All 5-inch guns began firing at the rate of ten rounds per gun per minute, and 6- and 8-inch guns also increased their rate of fire. Forty-eight carrier-based fighters and bombers strafed and bombed the beaches. When the first wave of marines was 1,000 yards from the beach, hundreds of rockets, fired from LCI(G)'s, hit the shore with terrific impact. The LVT's crawled over the reef and waded through the two feet of high water toward the beaches.[1] When the men were 300 yards offshore, the fire lifted and concentrated on the flanks and rear of the beaches. The planes shifted their attack farther inland.

[1] High tide in the morning of 21 July was at 0712. Its height at 0833 was 2.4 feet.



THE FIRST WAVE OF LANDING CRAFT *heads for Agat beaches. Smoke from targets, hit by air and naval bombardment preceding the invasion, rises along shore. Orote airfield, an objective of marine brigade, is seen at top left. (Photograph taken from 5,000 feet.)*

The first wave of the 3d Marine Division hit the Asan beach at 0828, and three minutes later the leading wave of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade landed at Agat (Map No. 7, page 30). The bombardment had knocked out virtually all the enemy positions on the beaches, but a few Japanese machine gunners fired from caves near the water's edge before being overcome. Emplaced in the hills commanding the beaches, enemy mortars and artillery put fire on the troops. Air strikes silenced some of this fire against the 3d Division. At Agat, where the enemy had mined the reefs and the beaches, the 1st Brigade's landing was more difficult. Enemy guns on Gaan and Bangi Points sank 20 LVT's; dukws bogged down in the silt on the reef. However, by 0900, 30 minutes after H Hour, tanks were ashore and in action.

As the troops of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade pushed inland, they came under more fire from mortars and artillery. They held off

two small, spirited enemy counterattacks, which indicated that the Japanese might be able to attack when the Americans had committed sufficient forces to make the effort worthwhile. Nevertheless, by evening of W Day the marines had penetrated inland 2,000 yards on a 4,500-yard front. For support in holding this beachhead against an expected counterattack that night and in expanding the area the following day, the brigade had summoned during the afternoon the 305th RCT of the 77th Division, commanded by Col. Vincent J. Tanzola.

The 2d Battalion, Lt. Col. Robert D. Adair commanding, was first on call. It had debarked from the transport into landing craft during the opening hour of assault; then the battalion waited, circling in the assembly area. Since the marine brigade was meeting only moderate opposition at the start, the 2d Battalion was not summoned to shore

SMALL BOATS LEAVE ASAN BEACHES *for men and supplies. On W Day 3d Marines start an eight-day battle for hills dominating shore.*





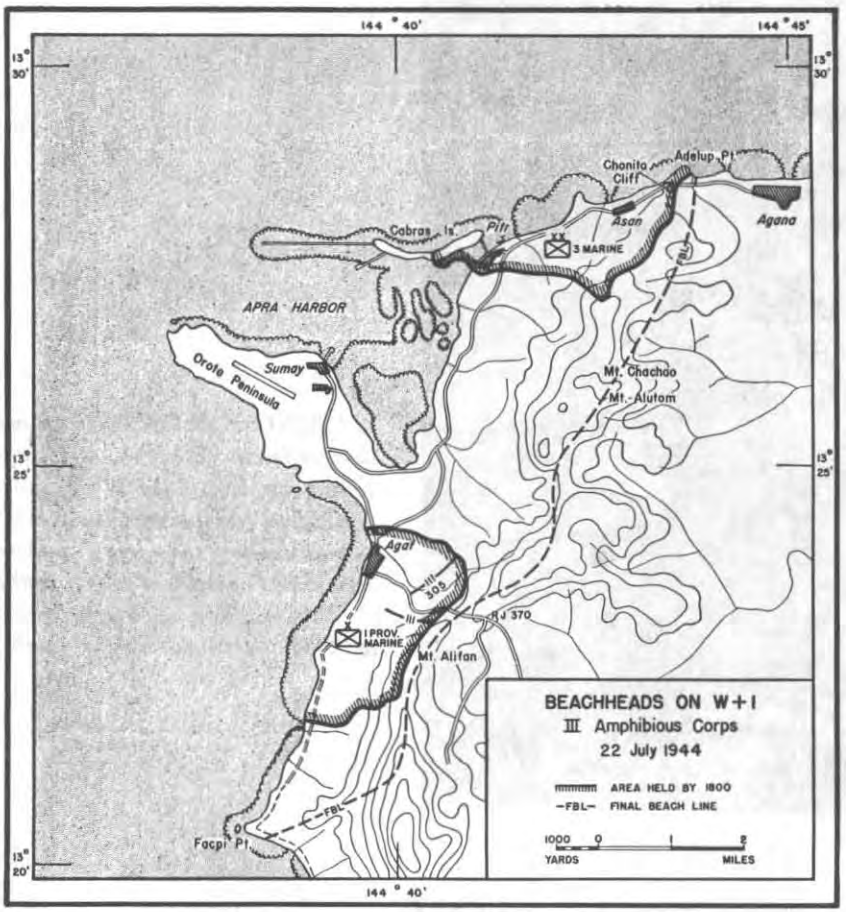
until 1300. When they reached the reef, there were no LVT's to pick the troops up and carry them in. They waded ashore in water waist-deep,[1] falling into occasional submerged shell craters. In order to avoid these and keep their weapons dry, the 2d Battalion men tended to bunch on the axis of a narrow channel where the footing was good. Fortunately, though the beach area was open to the fire of enemy guns, the Japanese were fully occupied by the marines, now pushing forward a half mile inland. The 2d Battalion received little fire.

[1] The average rifleman carried a steel helmet and liner, gas mask, life belt, rifle, bayonet, grenade launcher, and light pack. He also had two bandoleers of ammunition slung around his chest, a bag full of rifle grenades hung from his neck, a pouch of hand grenades strapped to his thighs, a two-foot long pair of wire cutters tied to his pack, two canteens of water, first aid pack, and a machete hanging from his cartridge belt. Heavy weapons company men had to carry most of this equipment plus part of a mortar or heavy machine gun. "Have you dubbed your shoes?" they asked one another as they pushed through the deep water.



WAITING FOR ORDERS *to land at Agat beach. The 305th RCT, supporting the brigade on W Day, debarked from transport to Coast Guard-manned landing craft before H Hour and circled outside the reef until Brigade called for reinforcements to hold beachhead during night.*

The remainder of the 305th had even greater difficulties in making shore and was even more lucky in that enemy fire did not take advantage of the situation. Colonel Tanzola received orders, at 1530, to land his other two battalions at 1530, the message having been delayed an hour in transit. He had only enough craft to land one battalion, pending return of the 2d Battalion's craft, and so informed Brigade. The 1st Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. James E. Landrum, debarked at 1615, then was held up by naval boat control officers who said they had no instructions to allow movement toward shore at that time. It was 1730 before Brigade settled this issue. Darkness was now close at hand, and Colonel Tanzola suggested that unloading be suspended. Brigade ordered the movement to proceed. Some slip-up had occurred in coordination or communication between Brigade and the Navy, and naval control officers had not called for the LVT's at the reef. The men waded in, this time in higher water, and were



MAP NO. 8

often forced to swim past the deeper holes. By the time they reached the beach, the units were intermingled and thoroughly lost in the darkness. Colonel Landrum found they had veered several hundred yards south of their planned touchdown and were dangerously near enemy held territory. With staff officers and guides, he found the assembly area, and managed to get most of his battalion there by 2130.

The 3d Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Edward Chalgren, Jr., was waiting for the return of craft that had taken in the 2d, and these were delayed in getting back. The transport was suddenly ordered out to sea because of a report of enemy submarine attack. It steamed out 10 or 15 miles, then came in again, arriving at 2120. Debarkation finally commenced, though some craft were still missing. As a result of the darkness and lack of craft, the whole movement was delayed,

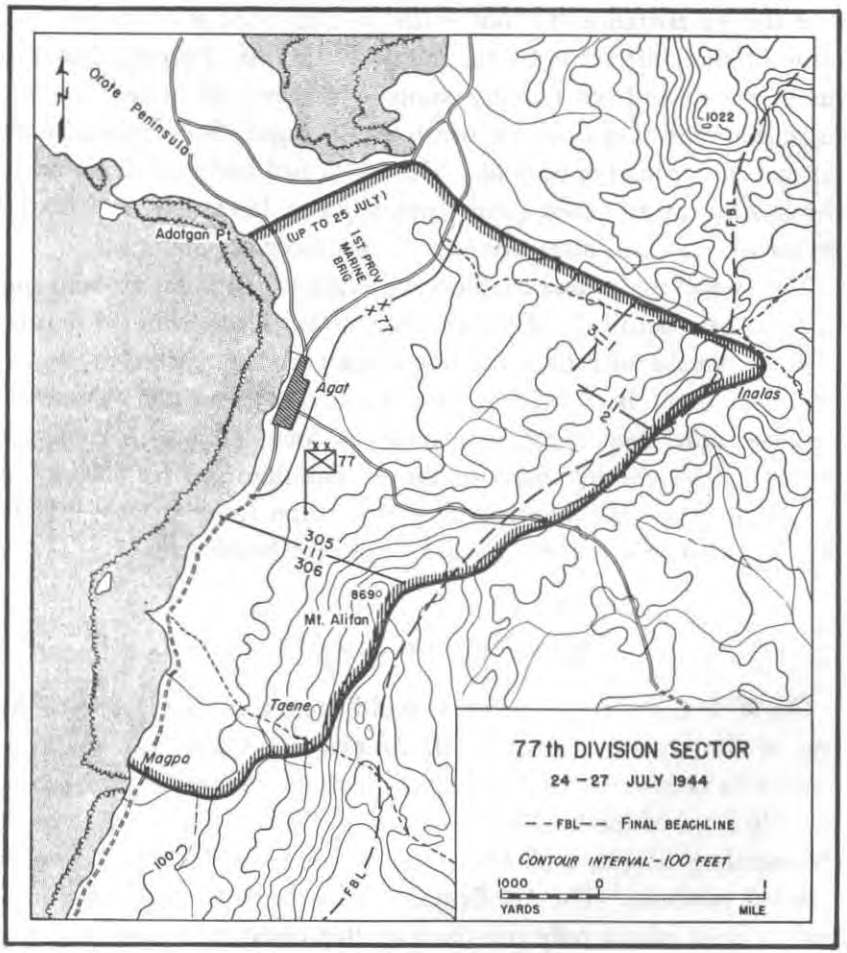
and the 3d Battalion did not reach the reef until 0330 on W + 1, some of the craft scattered far south of the rest. Fearing that they might draw fire from friendly troops if they moved inland, the disorganized units dug in on the beach for the night. Some elements did not get to dry land until 0600. The 305th had had its first lesson in the liability of all plans (and particularly in landings) to upset by reason of "changing situations" and "unforeseen developments."

The assault troops had established precarious footholds at Asan and at Agat, near both ends of the final beachline. Neither the 3d Marine Division nor the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade had reached the beachline in its zone. Both holds on the island, each about two miles wide and one mile deep, were vulnerable to counterattack from higher ground. Over the left flank of the 3d Division and both flanks of the 1st Brigade, Mt. Chachao and Mt. Alifan towered from 300 to 500 feet above the highest ground within the beachheads.

Expanding the Beachheads

On W + 1, before the Japanese could strengthen their forces to the rear of the landing areas, the III Amphibious Corps was to secure both of its beachheads by reaching the high ground on the final beachline. In front of the 3d Division, Mt. Chachao was the northernmost commanding height, and it lay about 3,000 yards from the unit's forward positions. The 1st Brigade, with the 305th RCT attached, had to push inland only one-third of this distance to reach the top of Mt. Alifan, the highest point to the east of the Agat beach. The rest of the 77th Division, in corps reserve, was approaching Agat Bay aboard 12 transports and 2 LST's (Landing Ship, Tank), ready to reinforce the marines on either beachhead.

Until daylight the corps troops were harassed by small-scale but determined counterattacks. Shortly after midnight mortar and artillery fire became so heavy that the 3d Division suspended unloading activities on Asan beach. At dawn the enemy launched an attack against the division's left flank from Agana and the hills behind Chonito Cliff (Map No. 8, page 36). The marines on the main defensive line, with tank, carrier-plane, and naval fire support, turned the enemy back. Meanwhile, Japanese forces east of Agat attacked the right flank of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade. Aided by tanks and artillery the enemy soldiers fought their way through the brigade's positions, and



MAP NO. 9

a few infiltrated as far as the perimeters of the 305th RCT. The marines counterattacked, destroying five tanks and driving the enemy off.

During the day the corps' progress was slow. The 3d Division made very little gain toward the high ground on the final beachline. Enemy opposition on the left and center of the beachhead was so strong that the marines' advance was held at a standstill except south of Asan. There they pushed 1,000 yards toward Mt. Chachao. On its right flank the division captured Piti Navy Yard, and one battalion landing team, executing a shore-to-shore movement, seized part of Cabras Island, north of Apra Harbor, which was not strongly defended except by aerial bombs emplaced as land mines.

The 1st Brigade continued to push up the sparsely covered slopes of Mt. Alifan, climbing in the open under fire from the Japanese positions concealed by thick wood on the top. In support of this direct advance toward the summit of Mt. Alifan, the 305th RCT cut north to reach the ridge running northeast from Alifan and to secure the high ground above Road Junction 370. By 1700 the brigade and the combat team were on their objectives and had control of more than 3,000 yards of the final beachline.

While the corps troops were attempting to secure their beachheads on 22 July, General Geiger issued an order for the relief of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, to enable that unit to reorganize and get into position for the attack on Orote Peninsula. The defense of the beachhead from Inalas southwest to the coast near Magpo would be taken over by two RCT's of the 77th Division, including the 305th RCT, which would revert to the division when the relief of the brigade was effected (Map No. 9, page 38). While the 77th protected the corps' southern flank, the brigade was to prepare to capture Orote Peninsula. One RCT of the 77th was to remain afloat in corps reserve until ordered to land.

The 306th RCT was designated by the division to take over the southern sector held by the marine brigade. A party headed by Col. Douglas C. McNair, Chief of Staff, and including Col. Aubrey D. Smith of the 306th Infantry and his battalion commanders with their staffs, went ashore on the 22d to reconnoiter the area and coordinate plans with the brigade. Shortly before noon next day the 306th began landing at Agat.[1] The 3d Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Gordon T. Kimbrell, reached its position between Mt. Alifan and Taene, and the 1st and 2d Battalions, under Lt. Col. Joseph A. Remus and Lt. Col. Charles F. Greene, respectively, went into assembly areas near the beach.

---

[1] The unloading itself was a difficult operation. As a reserve division, the 77th had no LVT's. Assault divisions normally have two battalions. There were 60 dukws but these had to be reserved for cargo and to get the light artillery ashore. Consequently, plans had to be made to carry troops to the reef in landing craft, after which they would wade ashore at low tide carrying all equipment. Vehicles were to be dragged from the reef to the beach by bulldozers. The Division G–4, operating from an SC1319 (Submarine Chaser) just off the reef, was to coordinate all landings. Although the troops got ashore without difficulty, most of the vehicles drowned out in the water between the reef and beach, and practically all vehicles' radio sets, even the waterproofed, were completely ruined. One medium tank dropped in a large pot hole and disappeared from sight.



306TH RCT COMES ASHORE *on W + 2. Soldiers wade to land from landing craft at the reef's edge. The men file along a shallow channel where they can keep their weapons above water. Amphibious vehicles, at right, continue unloading supplies. Third tractor in line tows a jeep.*

Relief of the 1st Brigade continued during the morning of 24 July. At 0800 the 306th assumed responsibility for the sector, and at 1400 the last elements of its 2d Battalion were in position. Action during the day consisted principally of skirmishing with enemy patrols and cleaning out caves and dugouts within the sector. During the early hours of darkness the enemy attempted to infiltrate through the lines, but he was driven off without casualties to the 306th.

The 305th RCT had in the meanwhile extended its area north of the 306th sector. Within the line from Adotgan Point to Inalas on the final beachline, the 305th was holding all the ground to the east of Old Agat Road. Behind these forward regiments, the 307th, commanded by Col. Stephen S. Hamilton, and division troops were brought ashore and supplies were being built up on the beaches. The brigade, now grouped at the base of Orote, defended only enough space in which to prepare for the attack on the peninsula.

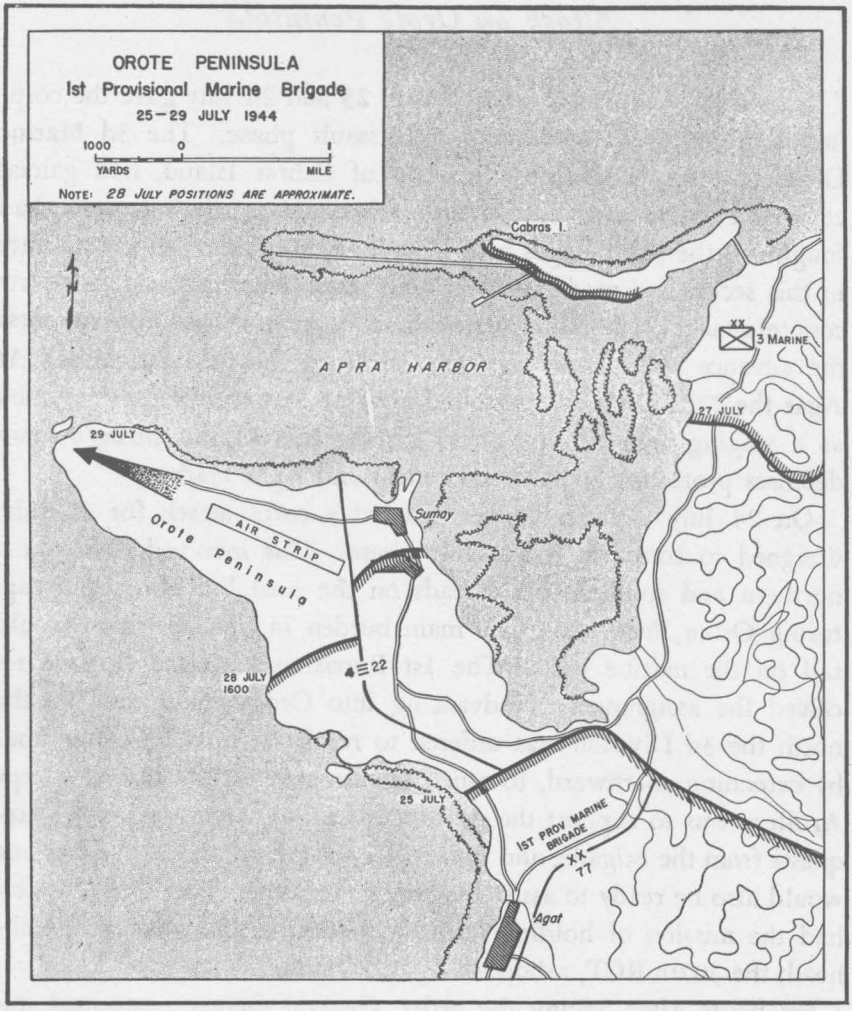
Attack on Orote Peninsula

Extension of the beachheads during 23 and 24 July gave the corps necessary room for continuing the assault phase. The 3d Marine Division, completing the occupation of Cabras Island, had gained command of the north side of the harbor and, on the left flank, had fought up the steep slopes near Chonito Cliff. Although the marines in this sector had made slow progress, they had withstood an enemy counterattack of battalion strength, and were in position to press the advance toward the high ground along the final beachline. At Agat the 77th Division controlled a sector that was being developed as a staging area for the attack on the rear of the enemy's main defenses protecting the Orote air strip and Apra Harbor.

On 24 July General Geiger ordered a corps attack for 25 July, designed to complete the assault phase. This involved linking the northern and southern beachheads on the final beachline, and capturing Orote Peninsula. The main burden in this operation would fall on the marine units. The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade received the assignment of advancing into Orote Peninsula. To the north the 3d Division was ordered to reach the final beachline and, by extending southward, to pinch off the area east of Orote. Corps Artillery was to support the coordinated effort, giving priority to requests from the brigade, and the artillery of the 3d and 77th Divisions would also be ready to assist the attack on Orote. The 77th Division had the mission of holding its present lines in the southern beachhead; the 307th RCT, ashore at Agat, remained in corps reserve.

Six hours after issuing the order, General Geiger postponed the time of jump-off for the Orote attack until 0700 on 26 July. The brigade needed an extra day in which to prepare for the assault and develop the enemy position at the base of Orote Peninsula. The supporting efforts by the rest of the corps proceeded as originally ordered. The 77th Division started to consolidate its line, while the 3d Division pressed toward the high ground on its front.

At daybreak on 26 July the 77th Division artillery, commanded by Brig. Gen. Isaac Spalding, opened the attack on the Orote defenses. Although some of the batteries were not yet in position, the 305th, 306th, and 902d Field Artillery Battalions, under Lt. Col. Edward B. Leever, Lt. Col. Jackson P. Serfas, and Lt. Col. Leo B. Burkett, respectively, joined in the opening concentrations. Altogether



MAP NO. 10

seven battalions of artillery, including those of the corps and the 3d Division, took part in the bombardment. Some batteries fired two rounds of preparatory fire per minute until the start of the brigade's infantry assault. Naval support units, planes, and 90-mm guns of the defense battalion established on Cabras Island were employed in an effort to break the Orote defenses.

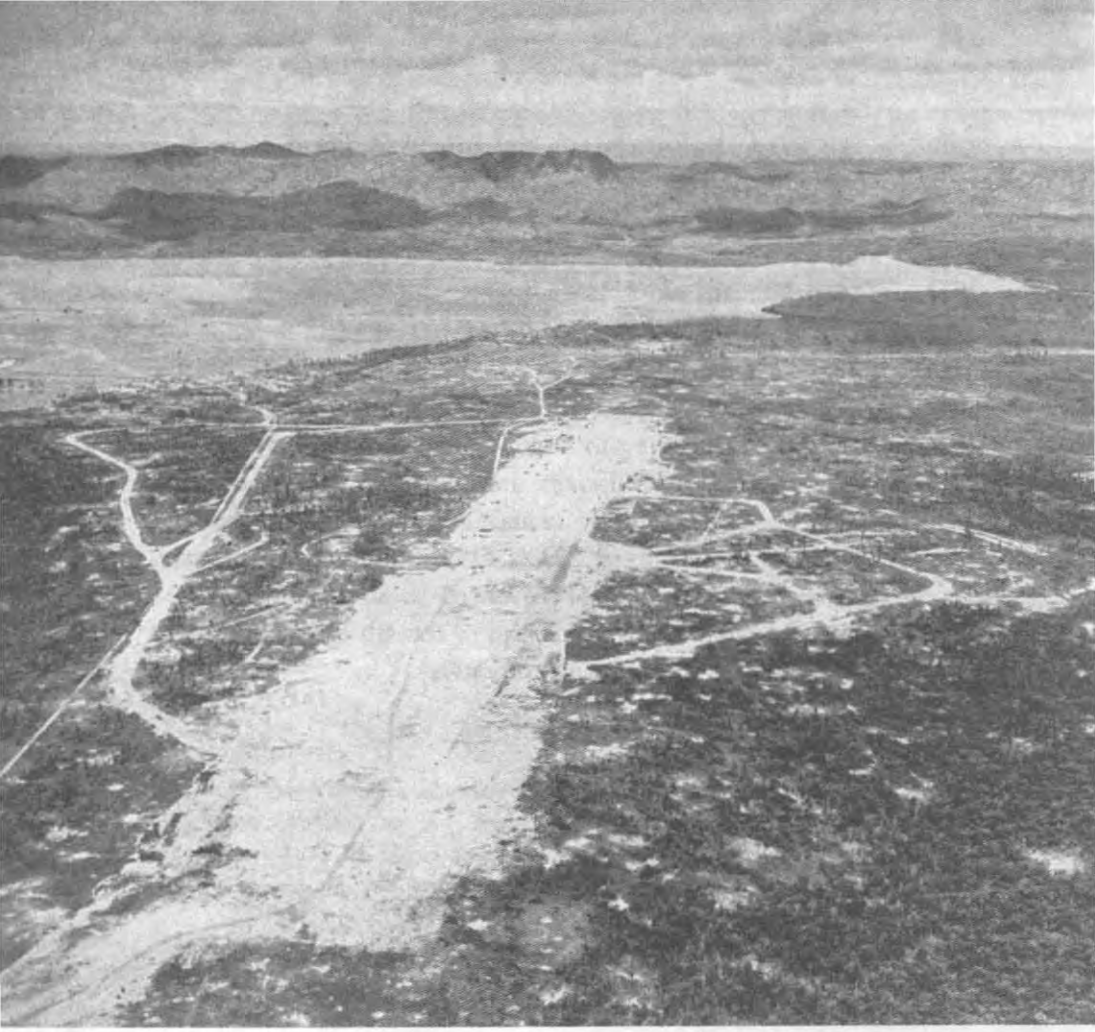
The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade jumped off on schedule. Dense undergrowth and jungle at the base of the peninsula slowed its progress, and many Japanese had survived the bombardment to resist with mortars, machine guns, and small arms. The narrow

peninsula restricted deployment of the brigade's forces, especially at the base where the land was only three-quarters of a mile wide, but by evening the troops had pushed 1,500 yards from the jump-off position and were more than halfway to the eastern end of the air strip (Map No. 10, page 42).

Advances the next day, beginning at 0715, resulted in a dangerous alignment of the 1st Brigade's forward units. While the 22d Marine Regiment, on the right, was meeting light resistance along the approaches to the air strip, the 4th Marines had come up against prepared enemy positions in pillboxes and dugouts. The regiment's assault elements, suffering heavy casualties from mortars, machine guns, and grenades, were pinned down. On the right flank, however, the men of the 22d Marines had advanced so steadily that by 28 July they were more than 600 yards ahead of the 4th Regiment. Their left flank was exposed to enemy counterattack.

CLOSE-IN FIGHTING *on Orote Peninsula. Infantrymen stand by in support while tank puts point-blank fire on concrete shelter near Orote airfield. The brigade called for army tanks on 28 July when the marines reached the airfield defenses, the strongest on the peninsula.*





OROTE AIR STRIP *was captured on 29 July by marines with army tank support. A pier at Sumay in Apra Harbor is seen in background.*

To give more support to the 4th Regiment, General Shepherd, commander of the brigade, called for medium tanks from the 77th Division. But only light tanks of the division's 706th Tank Battalion, under Lt. Col. Charles W. Stokes, had landed, and some of these had been damaged in coming ashore. A platoon of five light tanks was quickly organized from elements of three units of Company D and dispatched under 2d Lt. Charles J. Fuchs. After reporting to the 1st Brigade early in the afternoon of 28 July, the platoon was sent to the 4th Marine's sector. An attack was scheduled for 1600; in the meantime the marine infantry was consolidating its position. Two platoons of the brigade's medium tanks, which had been shifted

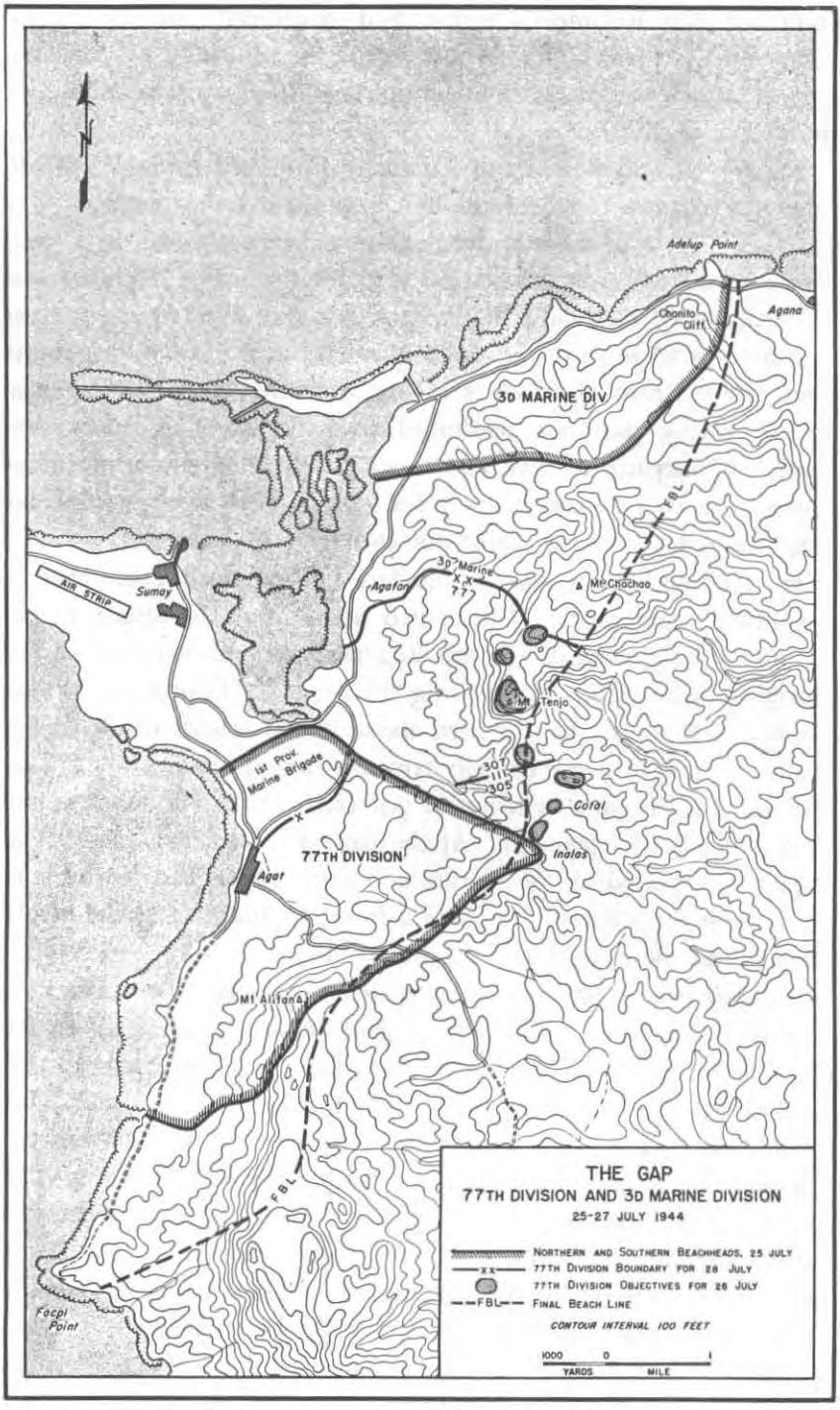
from the 22d Regiment's sector, had reinforced the flank units. Company D's platoon, joined just before the attack by two medium tanks from Headquarters Company of the 706th, was to strengthen the center of the line.

At 1600 the light tanks of Company D moved through the 4th Regiment against the defenses that had slowed the marines. The tanks advanced cautiously over shell-torn terrain, and in a part of the zone each tank covered 50 yards of the front. Fighting was so concentrated that most of the tank fire was directed at positions within 10 or 15 yards of the tanks. At that range the 37-mm gunfire, often sighted through crevices in log structures, was effective even against enemy positions reinforced with tin sheeting, rocks, and brush. Infantrymen followed the tanks closely, mopping up positions and grenading Japanese in their fox holes. They also guarded the tanks so that the enemy could not close in with grenades.

The Japanese weakened in the face of combined operations of the infantry and tanks. Within two hours after the attack started the forward elements of the 4th Regiment were abreast of the 22d Marines on the right. In restoring the brigade's front line the tank platoon of Company D had fired about 10,000 rounds of .30-caliber ammunition, 100 rounds of high explosive, and 20 rounds of canister. The light tanks alone destroyed 4 pillboxes, numerous dugouts, and approximately 250 Japanese. At the cost of a few casualties the 1st Brigade, supported by the marine and army tanks, had cleaned out the area on the left and now held a line stretching across the peninsula around the eastern end of the air strip.

At 1000 on 29 July the brigade, again supported by tanks, continued the attack on Orote and pushed across the air strip to the tip of the peninsula, about two miles to the west. The hardest fighting was for the mile-long strip, which the Japanese defended with small arms and mortars and where they chose to die in dugouts, pillboxes, and even a hangar rather than surrender. Less than five hours after the attack began, the marines had reached the western end of the air strip. Without stopping they pushed down the jungle trails to the ocean. At 1700, when the peninsula was completely taken, Company D, 706th Tank Battalion was relieved.

In 4 days the brigade had killed between 2,000 and 3,000 Japanese defenders on Orote and had gained possession of the peninsula, with its harbor and airfield, extending 4 miles westward from the mainland.


Adelup Point
Chonito Cliff
Agana
3D MARINE DIV
FBL
AIR STRIP
Sumay
Agafan
30 Marine
Mt Chachao
Mt Tenjo
1st Prov. Marine Brigade
307
105
Coral
77TH DIVISION
Inalos
Agat
Mt Alifan
FBL
Facpi Point
THE GAP
77TH DIVISION AND 3D MARINE DIVISION
25-27 JULY 1944
NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN BEACHHEADS, 25 JULY
77TH DIVISION BOUNDARY FOR 26 JULY
77TH DIVISION OBJECTIVES FOR 26 JULY
FBL FINAL BEACH LINE
CONTOUR INTERVAL 100 FEET
1000 0 1
YARDS MILE

MAP NO. 11

Establishment of Final Beachline

In the corps attack that began on 25 July, the 3d Marine Division had been given the mission of reaching the final beachline in its sector and making a juncture to the south with the 77th Division, thus sealing off the Orote area and protecting the rear of the 1st Marine Brigade as it drove into the peninsula. A 4-mile gap separated the 3d and 77th Divisions on 25 July, and the enemy still held Mt. Chachao, the key high ground in the northern zone (Map No. 11, page 46). Japanese resistance on this front had been stubborn since the opening day, and the 3d Division had been slowed both by frequent enemy counterattacks and by the necessity of taking individual positions in frontal assaults that demanded use of flamethrowers, demolitions, and tanks.

Heavy opposition continued to meet the 3d Division's efforts on 25–26 July. On the 26th the division had to deal with a counterattack in force by units identified as the *18th Regiment* and elements of the *48th Independent Mixed Brigade*. Next day the marines extended their lines 1,500 yards on the right flank and 200 yards across Chonito cliff on the left. But in the center, forward marine positions showed little change from W + 1, and were still 2,000 yards short of Mt. Chachao.

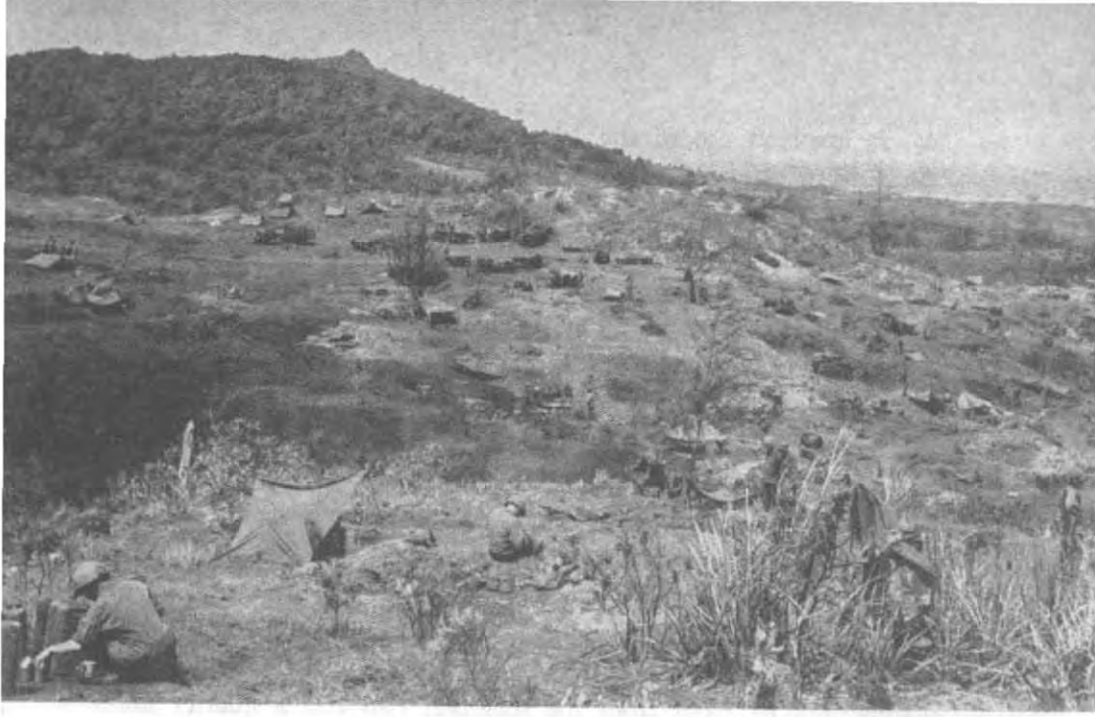
On 27 July the 77th Division, at General Bruce's request, was ordered to take part in the effort to link the beachheads, east of Orote, by attacking to the north. The 77th was to extend its hold two miles and a half northward, leaving the 3d Division less than two miles to cover in its advance. On the southern portion of the final beachline the 77th's sector was now to include the northern approaches to Mt. Tenjo. The division boundary established by this order followed the unsurfaced road and trail leading east from Old Agat Road through Agafan to the junction of the road from Mt. Tenjo to Mt. Chachao.

The new assignment of the 77th involved occupying Mt. Tenjo, the highest point on the beachline in its wider sector. General Bruce ordered that the 305th Infantry, with not less than a company, reconnoiter the approaches to Tenjo to determine the enemy strength on the hill. The 2d Battalion of the 307th Infantry, commanded by Lt. Col. Charles F. Learner, would assemble in the rear of the 1st Battalion, 305th. If Mt. Tenjo were not occupied in strength, the 2d

Battalion, 307th, moving out from Inalas at 0700 on 28 July, was to seize and hold the mountain, including the end of the ridge south of the peak and two knobs to the north. The 1st Battalion, 305th, was to establish contact with the 2d Battalion, 307th, and hold the high ground from Inalas to the ridge north of Cotal. On order the 3d Battalion, 305th, was to send patrols north as far as the division boundary through the area west of Mt. Tenjo. When General Bruce issued his order, intelligence reported little activity on Tenjo, although Japanese prisoners of war had declared that a force of 3,000 was in the vicinity.

AN ANTITANK CREW *of the 305th RCT defends the final beachline, firing from its position on the coastal ridge overlooking Harmon Road.*





THE 2D BATTALION, 305TH RCT *in bivouac west of Mt. Alifan. The unit is engaged in holding the ridge between Mt. Alifan and Mt. Tenjo.*

Moving out from its nearby assembly area at dawn on 28 July, Company A, 305th Infantry, met almost no opposition and reached the top of Mt. Tenjo by 0830. Because enemy resistance on the way had amounted to little more than scattered sniper fire and the summit was not occupied, Company A remained on the hill until it was relieved by the 2d Battalion, 307th, at 1500 that afternoon.

While holding the hill, Company A experienced one of the difficulties attendant upon air-ground coordination. Planes suddenly appeared and began to strafe and bomb the troops, who ran for what protection they could find on the bare slopes. When the planes were coming in for a second attack, Pfc. Benno Levi seized some signal panels and dashed into the open under fire to display them. As soon as the pilots saw the panels, the strafing ceased, and the men of Company A consolidated their position on the mountain.

This same day saw the 3d Marine Division complete its hard task on the north, conquering Mt. Chachao and Mt. Alutom and securing the road running from Adelup Point to Mt. Tenjo. The division had also reached a junction with the 77th by an attack to the south

which involved use of the 3d Battalion, 307th, under Maj. John W. Lovell, attached to the marines from corps reserve. The 3d Battalion, 307th, and the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, attacked abreast with the division boundary as their objective. Enemy opposition was light, and by 1800 army and marine units were on the boundary in contact with the 77th Division.

By evening of 28 July, while the battle for Orote was nearing its close, the corps had pinched off the ground behind the peninsula. The capture of Mt. Tenjo by the 77th Division and of Mts. Chachao and Alutom by the 3d Marine Division secured the entire beachline and completely closed the gap that had existed between the divisions. Any enemy west of the beachline was trapped.

For two days, while the 1st Brigade completed capture and mopping up of Orote Peninsula, the 3d and 77th Divisions consolidated positions on their final beachline. Since 24 July the 77th had been maintaining its front from the seashore, two and a quarter miles south of Agat, along the Alifan ridge to Inalas by sending out platoons of scouts 2,000 yards from the beachline. On the 28th, when the northern part of the beachline was established, the 3d and 77th Divisions initiated patrolling in that area.

Reconnaissance platoons, threatening large-scale attacks, kept the enemy off balance and at the same time gathered information on his movements. They burned shacks and high grass to smoke out well-camouflaged pockets, and occasionally directed mortar and artillery fire. The patrols were so effective that the enemy did not launch a single attack in force during the daytime.

The Japanese were quick, however, to detect this method of defense, and on several occasions they tried to ambush the patrols. On 29 July one of these ambushes put up a strong enough fight to force a patrol of the 77th Division to call for help. While searching out the ambush, one squad of scouts was pinned against the steep side of a ravine in which the enemy was hidden. Within a few seconds two men were killed and three others were wounded. A distress flare, shot up by the scouts, brought reinforcements from the 305th Regiment. The additional firepower of the regimental platoon freed the trapped squad, and the patrol worked its way back to the final beachline, leaving its dead behind. The next day 14 dead and 1 wounded Japanese were found in the center of the ravine. They had been amply supplied and well dug in.



MEN OF COMPANY B *of the 305th RCT on the high ground above Agat beach. Elements of this company, in defending final beachline, formed reconnaissance patrols that threatened enemy with large-scale attacks.*

Division patrols were active during the day, but they stayed within their lines at night, when the Japanese assumed the initiative. After dark infantry companies on the final beachline organized battalion perimeters on high points, arranging automatic fires to cover lower areas between the perimeters. Although fields of fire were cleared wherever possible and commanding ground was occupied, nearly every night small groups of the enemy employed skillful infiltration tactics to penetrate the line.

The Japanese seemed to follow no standard plan for infiltration. They used a variety of weapons—mortars, small arms, sabers, and even hatchets. Sometimes the first evidence of the enemy was a grenade thrown into the perimeters; sometimes an enemy soldier in plain sight slowly walked toward the division's lines; occasionally, heavy fire and grenades landed in the positions along the perimeter, and small enemy groups tried to move in where confusion had been



CRANES AT REEF'S EDGE *transferred supplies from landing craft to LVT's and dukws which could cross reef at any time regardless of the tide. The barge, being used as a platform for crane in this photograph, is preparing to load fuel on an Alligator. (Photo taken W + 4)*

created; in other cases enemy mortar fire preceded an infantry attack. But mortars were used less frequently at night than other weapons to pave the way for small groups attempting to harass the men or pass through the perimeters.

During the first two nights the green 77th troops caused most of the confusion by their own movements and firing, but they soon grew battle-wise. The soldiers learned to stay immobile in their slit trenches, never venturing outside even if they had diarrhea. In order to reduce the enemy's chances of discovering their positions, they learned also to hold their fire until they had a definite target. Trip flares that illuminated the whole area when set off by an infiltrating group were employed successfully and trapped a few Japanese.

Patrolling during the day and organizing perimeters at night, the 3d and 77th Division held the corps' final beachline until the completion of the attack on Orote. With that accomplished, operations

of the assault phase ended. The corps, during this 10-day phase, had gained Apra Harbor, which was found to be in excellent condition, and Orote airfield, which was already being used for emergency landings. The assault operations had cost the III Amphibious Corps 5,987 casualties, mostly in the marine units. Of this number 958 were killed, 4,739 wounded, and 290 missing. The 77th Division, engaged in holding its sector of the final beachline, lost 217 men.

Battle of Supply

The reef that had kept the landing craft of the assault troops from getting to the shore was also a barrier to the supply boats, no matter how high the tide. However, III Amphibious Corps had planned on transferring supplies at the reef's edge to smaller vehicles and had carried equipment for mooring ponton barges and causeways off the reef. Twenty-five light cranes, mounted on the barges, were to be used to transfer cargo from the LCVP's (Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel) and LCM's to dukws and LVT's, which in turn would carry the cargo across the reef to the beach. LST's were to beach against the reef, drop their ramps, and be unloaded by dukws and LVT's.

At first supplies were loaded into LVT's and dukws in the transport area. During the first few days, the dukws moved cargo from the ships directly to dumps inland. After the beaches were secure, the plans for direct transfer of supplies from LST's to dukws and LVT's at the reef's edge were put into effect. Numerous other expedients were used to get the 77th's supplies ashore. The division borrowed cranes, ponton barges, and LVT's from marine and navy units. Supplies were even floated ashore on life rafts from transports and on 10-man rubber boats which had been brought along for the use of the Reconnaissance Troop. The 60 dukws of the division were pooled and operated under G–4 control. An officer on each of the six crane barges used by the division supervised operations with walkie-talkie radio communication ashore. The 77th Division command or regimental commands ordered certain supplies or equipment from supply officers; shore personnel informed the officers on the crane barges of the desired cargo, and these officers in turn directed that cargo ashore to the requested area.



BULLDOZERS CLEARED ROADS *to beach dumps for the tracked amphibious vehicles which carried the supplies from the reef to storage and dispersal areas on shore. Along the reef (at center) a crane loads a tractor; the transport ships are anchored farther out to sea.*

Unloading was not accomplished without difficulties. Jeeps and other vehicles driven ashore drowned out even at low tide. The dumps, selected before the landing from maps and photographs, were limited in area, and many were located on marshy lowland where little satisfactory storage space existed. Tropical rains and constant grinding traffic produced a sea of mud on the roads to the dumps. Tracked movers sometimes took 3 hours to make a round trip from the beach to the dumps—a distance in most cases of only 600 yards. Wheeled vehicles repeatedly bogged down and had to be towed out by tractors. To keep beach roads and dump areas in operating condition, some of the shore party had to be diverted from unloading and storing supplies.

Because of these conditions it became clear fairly early that the ships of the 77th Division could not be unloaded on a dawn-to-dark basis

only. Fortunately, since the enemy seemed unable to produce air support or to lay artillery fire on the beaches, it was possible to illuminate the beaches at night. Floodlights powered by generator units of the shore parties enabled work to proceed on a 24-hour basis. This expedient enabled the APA's (Transport, Attack) to be 80 percent unloaded by the end of the fifth day.

Landing supplies on this 24-hour basis imposed a tremendous strain on men and equipment. Of one group of 20 dukws working on Agat beach, 6 were out of commission at the end of the first day of unloading operations (chiefly from bent screws, damaged rudders, bent propeller shafts, and burned-out propeller shaft bearings), 2 more the following day, and 6 more on the next. The men worked with little rest or sleep; their food consisted of the regular combat rations.

SUPPLYING THE 77TH DIVISION *over "the toughest reef in this war" was a major operation. Photo shows the severe strain on equipment.*



RCT's operated the dumps until 24 July. On Agat beach the Corps Service Group, which had landed on 23 July, relieved the brigade of supply responsibilities. The brigade had maintained the 77th Division on marine stock for three days. On W + 7, after a week of clear weather and calm, the 3d Marine Division and the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade had all their supplies ashore. The 77th Division completed its unloading on W + 10, except for two commercially packed ships.

By the time the assault phase was over, the units had ashore an adequate store of matériel.[1] Food, clothing and equipment, fuels and lubricants (Classes I, II, and III) were available in amounts sufficient for 20-days' supply. Only hard work and numerous field expedients had kept supply on schedule for the battles ahead. A naval officer, veteran of Guadalcanal, Attu, Tarawa, Kwajalein, and Saipan wrote to General Bruce, "Your people landed and supplied themselves over the toughest reef yet worked by any outfit in this war."

---

[1] Of the five classes of supplies for the 77th Division, Class I was initially of most importance. The "10-in-1" ration pack, seven days' type "C," three days' type "K," twenty days' supply of ration accessories, and other special types were landed. Water was carried on transports at the level of two gallons per man per day, making a total of 190,000 gallons for the division carried in 5-gallon and 55-gallon drums. Most of this supply was brought ashore, but the early establishment of distillation units on the beach enabled the 77th to keep some of its water in reserve.

Clothing and equipment made up Class II matériel. Clothing alone amounted to tremendous bulk because the division was required to carry impregnated protective clothing for all its men. The division developed a standard roll in an attempt to supply the troops without having to segregate rolls by companies and individuals. However, owing to transportation difficulties these were never delivered to the troops. This roll consisted of a shelter half, one blanket, mosquito bar, one "K" ration, cake of salt water soap, pack carrier, tent pole, five pins, a pair of mosquito gloves, and a waterproof clothing bag.

Class III supplies were packed in 5-gallon and 55-gallon containers, and in 55-pound pails for heavy gear lubricants. It was necessary to carry aviation gasoline for the liaison planes; leaded gasoline and diesel oil for trucks, tractors, and tanks; white gasoline for kitchens; and a variety of weights of engine oils and gear lubricants.

Class IV supplies consisted mainly of engineer and chemical warfare equipment. Approximately 225 tons of engineer items were carried, including fortification materials such as barbed wire, pickets, and sandbags.

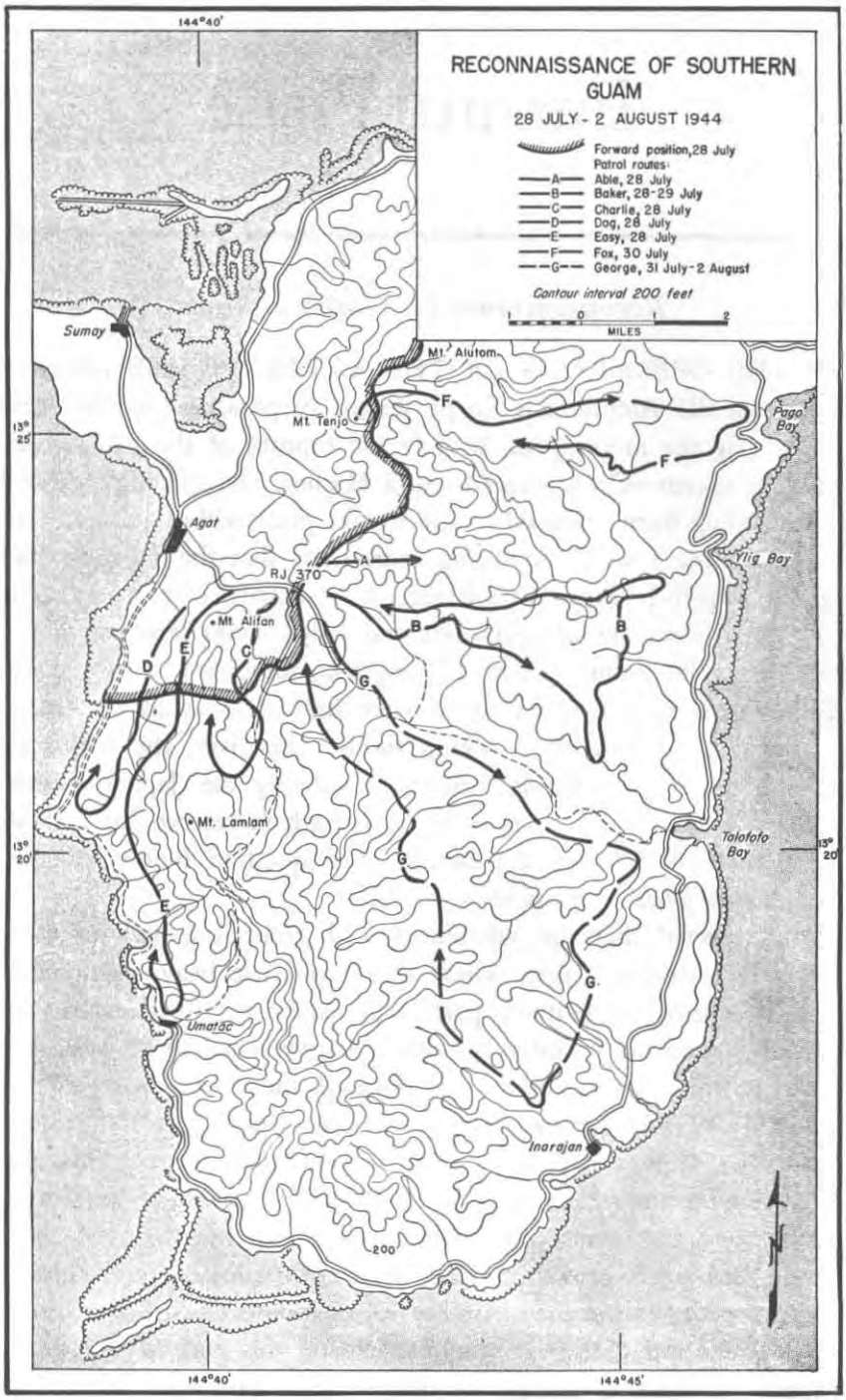
Heaviest of all were Class V supplies, loaded at the level of ten units of fire for antiaircraft weapons and seven units of fire for all others. The magnitude of this class of supplies can be seen from the fact that the 77th used 46,000 hand grenades alone in the operation.

Pursuit Phase

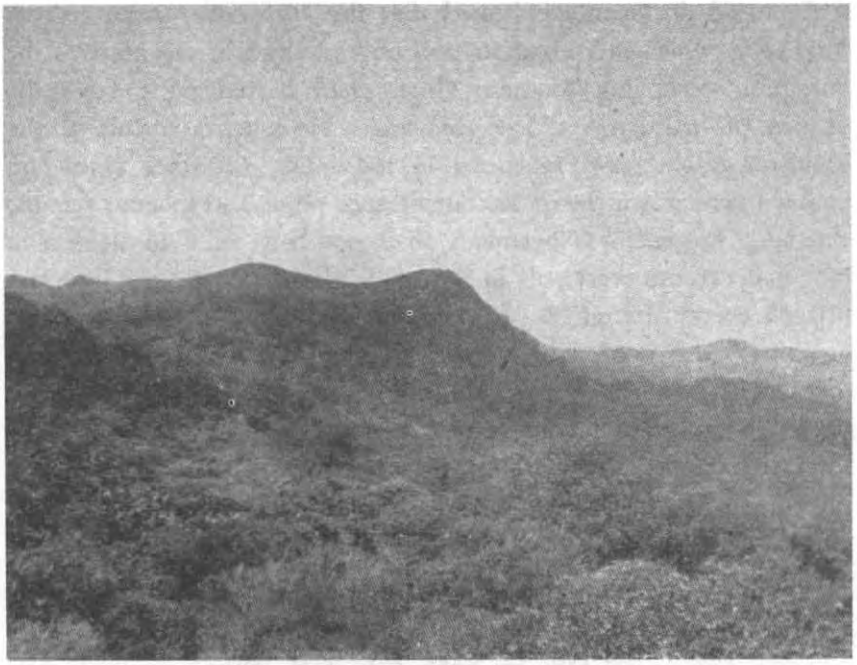
Reconnaissance of Southern Guam

AS THE OPERATIONS OF THE ASSAULT PHASE neared a close, the III Amphibious Corps started preparations for the next phase. By the morning of 28 July the capture of the main objectives on Guam—Orote airfield, Apra Harbor, and the high ground commanding them—seemed certain to take place within a day or two. However, there were convincing indications that the Japanese had not used up their means of resistance in the defense of this area. The corps had taken only 30 prisoners and killed 4,000 Japanese, about one-fifth of the estimated enemy strength on the island. Furthermore, the corps casualties, about 5,000, were half as many as the troops on Saipan had suffered in taking similar objectives, the Aslito air strip and its commanding heights. Evidently the Japanese were holding a considerable part of their strength in reserve for a stand in some other part of the island. The question before General Geiger was where this stand would be.

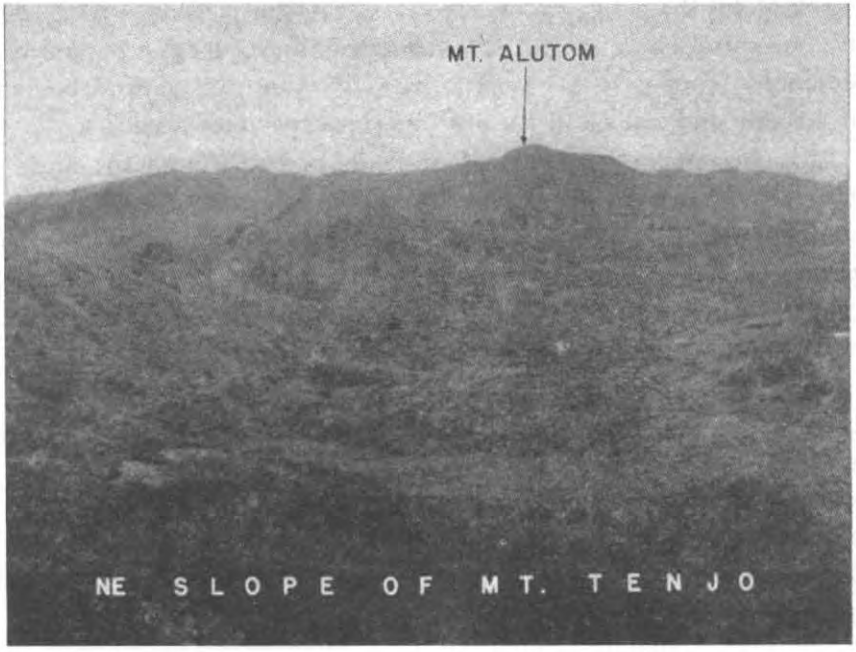
He expected that the Japanese would group the bulk of their forces in northern Guam, where they could use heavy equipment. Any defense of the southern part of the island would necessarily be by small elements of infantry with light weapons; there were few roads to the inland regions and none of them were passable for motor traffic during the extremely rainy months of July and August (Map No. 4, page 12). In contrast, a good road network throughout the whole northern area would provide freedom of movement for large enemy units and their supplies. In addition the thick jungle and scrub growth on the limestone plateau would conceal their installations and their marches. Strongpoints on Mts. Barrigada, Santa Rosa, and Mataguac would command this part of the island. Because of these advantages of defense the enemy was believed to have set up supply dumps, fortifications, and emergency headquarters in northern Guam.


RECONNAISSANCE OF SOUTHERN GUAM
28 JULY - 2 AUGUST 1944
Forward position, 28 July
Patrol routes:
A Able, 28 July
B Baker, 28-29 July
C Charlie, 28 July
D Dog, 28 July
E Easy, 28 July
F Fox, 30 July
G George, 31 July - 2 August
Contour interval 200 feet
MILES
144°40'
144°45'
13° 25'
13° 20'
Sumay
Agat
Mt. Alutom
Mt. Tenjo
RJ 370'
Mt. Alifan
Mt. Lamlam
Umatac
Inarajan
Pago Bay
Ylig Bay
Talofofo Bay
200
A
B
C
D
E
F
G

MAP NO. 12



AREA PATROLLED by *77th Reconnaissance Troop before the beginning of Pursuit Phase. On 28 July Patrols Charlie, Dog, and Easy moved into wooded region south of Mt. Alifan (see picture above); 2 days later Fox reconnoitered to Pago Bay from slopes of Mt. Tenjo (see below).*



Captured documents indicated that the *10th Independent Mixed Regiment,* which according to previous intelligence reports was the only unit occupying southern Guam, had moved north from the vicinity of Inarajan to the Agana area. However, elements of the regiment might have remained in the south, or other units had perhaps gone down there. Reconnaissance pilots and lookout guards, watching for enemy movements, had not been able to determine how many troops were still in the south. Far more definite information on enemy strength to the east and south of the 77th Division's beachhead was needed before an advance from the final beachline could be started. Even scattered enemy groups, in position to attack the III Corps right flank, might seriously endanger a maneuver to the east and north.

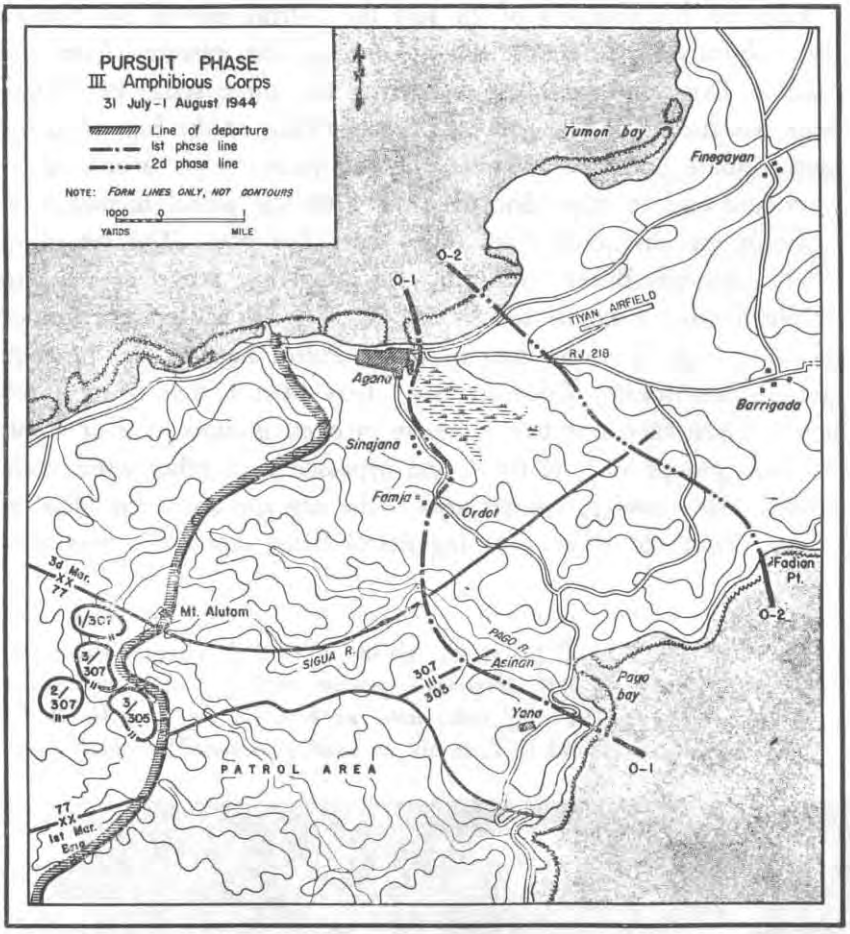
The mission of getting more intelligence about enemy strength in southern Guam fell to the 77th Reconnaissance Troop, which would move out on foot and search the ridge south of Mt. Alifan to Umatac, and the eastern coastal area between Ylig Bay and Talofofo Bay (Map No. 12, page 58). Five patrols of about five men each, with native guides, would penetrate six miles each way south and east of Alifan into unknown territory. Patrols Able and Baker would proceed east from Road Junction 370 to the coast and return. Patrols Charlie, Dog, and Easy would move directly south along the ridge. Routes were laid out by division command, but the patrols were instructed that they could vary these if it seemed desirable. They were to report in by radio every two or three hours if possible and could call for artillery support if they needed it.

The assignment was a dangerous one, particularly so for green troops. All indications were that the Japanese did not hold the southern island in force, but they might have left behind strong parties for missions of harrying the beachhead. The five-man patrols of the 77th would have to match their wits with an enemy who was noted for his ability in hide-and-seek warfare and who knew every inch of the island. The patrols would lack the usual advantage of U.S. troops—enormous fire power—and would be at the mercy of any large enemy group. But they would benefit by a psychological advantage which General Bruce had prepared by sending beachline patrols on increasingly long trips during the previous week. These had made little contact with the Japanese, and their reports were reassuring.

Early on the morning of 28 July the patrols moved out toward their objectives, Able and Baker covering the eastern shore and Charlie, Dog, and Easy reconnoitering the ridge south of Alifan. Able, assigned Ylig Bay, got less than halfway to the bay when the native guide and two members of the patrol were overcome by fever and had to stop. Shortly after 1200 the patrol turned back, reaching the divisional lines later that afternoon. The return of Patrol Able left Baker responsible for the whole area from Ylig to Talofofo Bay. Commanded by 2d Lt. Jack B. Miller and guided by Tony Cruz the four men in Baker Patrol headed for the high ground overlooking Talofofo Bay. Less than a mile from Road Junction 370 they saw five Japanese in open ground to their front, but both groups went to cover and bypassed each other without incident. The scouts continued toward the bay and spent the night in a cave near there. Next morning Patrol Baker received orders from

PURSUIT PHASE BEGINS. *Colonel Vincent J. Tanzola studies the overlay showing 77th Division's portion of 0–1 line, first objective of the phase. His staff takes notes as he talks over a radio at his command post. 305th RCT, in his command, is responsible for right wing.*





MAP NO. 13

division headquarters to go to Ylig Bay, taking over Able's mission. Approaching Ylig the scouts met a small group of Chamorros, who greeted them joyfully and reported that many Japanese troops were to the north but that only small groups of 10 or 15 were still in the southern area. On the return trip to the road junction the men found tracks and other signs confirming the natives' report of Japanese movement to the north.

At the same time Patrols Charlie, Dog, and Easy proceeded along both sides of the range south of Mt. Alifan. On the slopes of Mt. Lamlam the scouts of Charlie and Dog were held up by sniper fire and decided to go back to the division lines. Patrol Easy reached Umatac and swung around to take the beach road north. The Easy

scouts reported that they had seen little enemy activity and that the natives were friendly.

The information gathered by the 25 scouts of the 77th Reconnaissance Troop verified General Geiger's expectations that the enemy had organized his main defenses north of the Agana–Pago Bay line. He could now go ahead with plans for the second phase, arranging for only a small security detachment from the 77th Division to protect the right flank of the corps when it crossed to the waist of the island, and to deal with the Japanese in southern Guam when the corps moved to the north.

Pursuit to the North

W + 9 found the III Amphibious Corps ready for further conquest. Controlling a 25-square-mile beachhead which the corps had developed since W Day, the 3d Marine Division and the 77th Division awaited instructions from General Geiger to pursue the enemy to the northern part of the island, where the enemy had an area about 15 miles long and 5 to 8 miles wide in which to choose his ground for maneuver and last-ditch defense. Back on the beaches, corps supplies had been accumulating for this large-scale advance.

The pursuit phase, as defined in General Geiger's order of 30 July, was to swing the corps across the waist of the island, cutting off the northern area (Map No. 13, page 62). The first objective, the O–1 line, started east of Agana, followed the Agana–Pago Bay road to Famja, and then curved to the southeast along the high ground south of the Pago River. The O–2 line, farther to the north, ran through Road Junction 218 to the east coast about a mile west of Fadian Point. From the jump-off positions, those held by the corps along the final beachline, the maneuver would involve a wheeling movement to the northeast. As pivot, the 3d Division on the north would advance two to five miles from the line of departure, while the 77th Division on the circumference of the wheel swung nearly ten miles from the Tenjo–Alifan ridge. As a secondary assignment, the 77th Division would protect the corps' right flank and patrol to the south until relieved by the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade on the final beachline. The brigade was to conduct distant patrolling to the south from the beachline. The time for the jump-off was set at 0630, 31 July.

All three regiments of the 77th Division would participate in the pursuit. The 307th was to lead the advance, followed in turn by the 305th and the 306th. Both the 305th and the 306th Regiments would wait on the beachhead until the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade took over from them the protection of the corps' right flank. Within the 77th's zone of action the initial objective on the O–1 line was the high ground south of the Pago River. The 77th Reconnaissance Troop was to send out an advance guard to Pago Bay and continue patrolling to the south.

Operations of this phase for the 77th Division, working for the first time on Guam as an integrated unit, presented major problems of transportation and movement. From the Tenjo–Alifan ridge to

MACHINE-GUN NESTS *on the final beachline are occupied by men of 306th Regiment. This unit held the FBL during advance to O–1 line.*

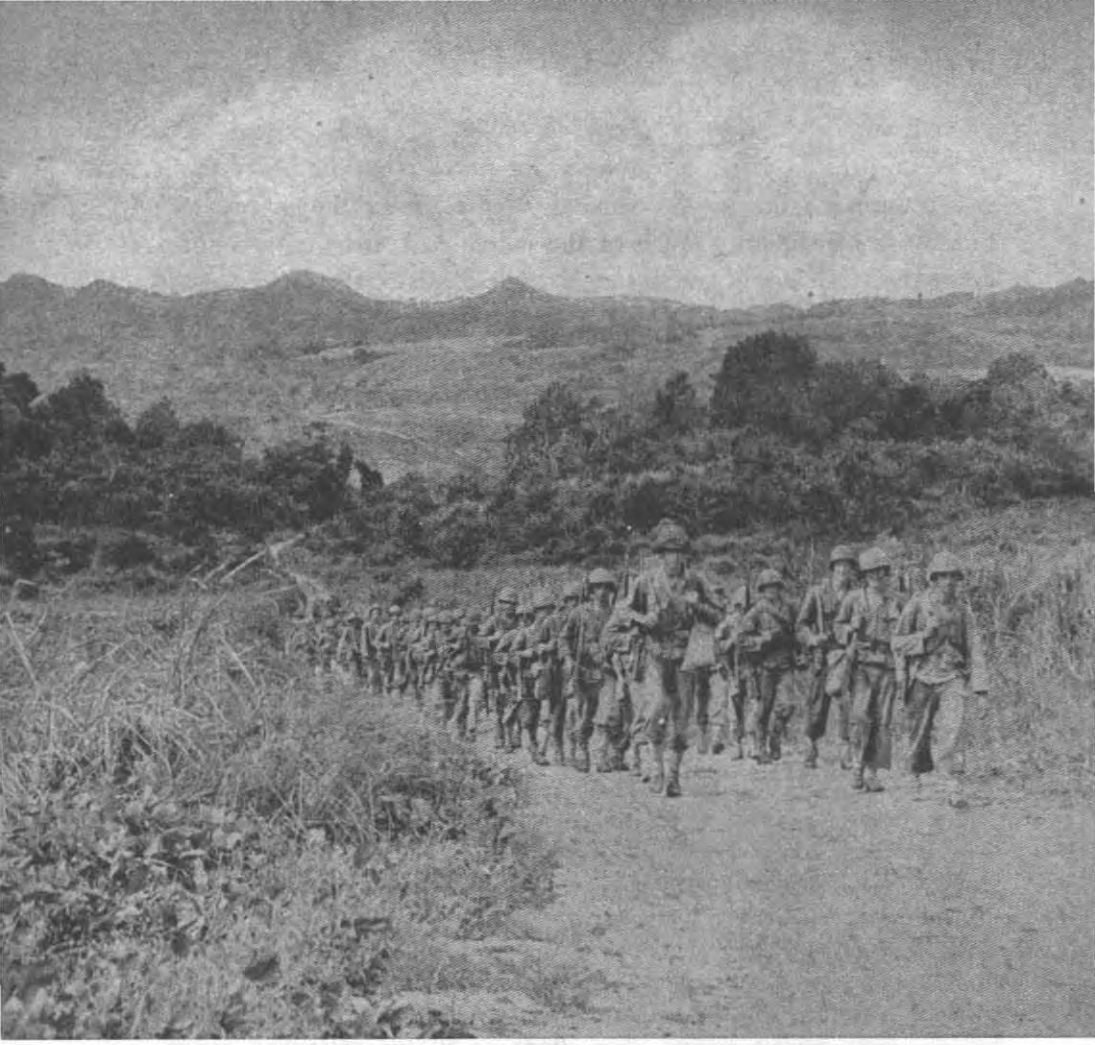


Pago River, a distance of about six miles, no roads existed. The trails, unsurfaced and narrow, were not suitable for the heavy traffic that a supply route would demand, and even for the infantrymen they were inadequate. Much of the march had to be cross-country, down the steep slopes and through the foothills of the range toward the eastern coast.

The 1st and 3d Battalions of the 307th with the 3d Battalion of the 305th (temporarily under 307th control) moved out on schedule from the vicinity of Mt. Tenjo. The 1st and 3d Battalions of the 307th were the leading elements in the 307th's sector, on the left; the 2d Battalion was initially in reserve. The 3d Battalion of the 305th was on the right of the 307th. Battalions marched in a column of companies, most of the time with platoons abreast. Because of the lack of a road across the island, the infantry carried heavier loads than usual. Men of the heavy-weapons companies labored under their burdens of machine guns, mortars, and ammunition. Jeeps were able to follow part way, but soon the terrain became too rough. As one man wrote later:

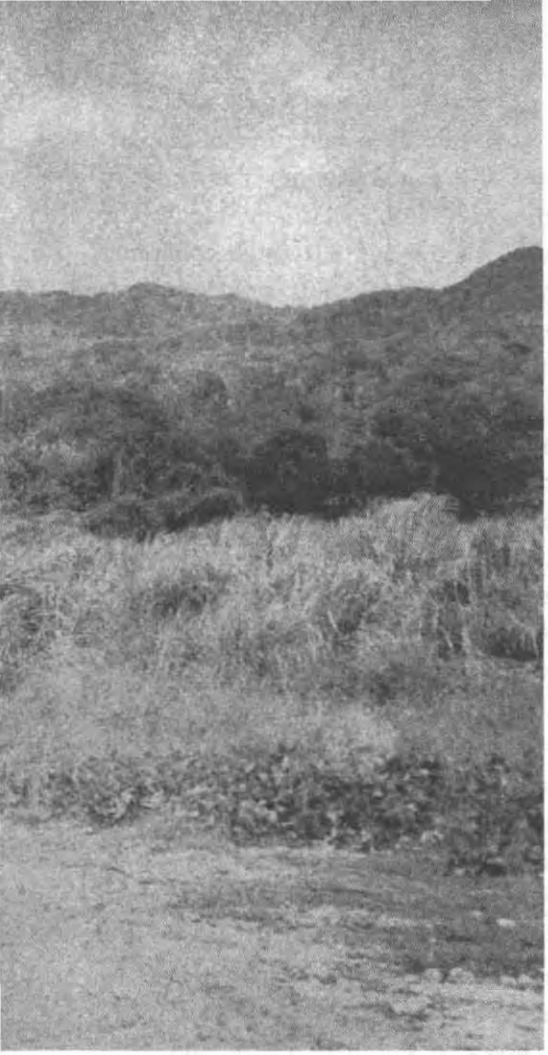
> The distance across the island is not far, as the crow flies, but unluckily we can't fly. The nearest I came to flying was while descending the slippery side of a mountain in a sitting position. . . . After advancing a few yards you find that the handle of the machine gun on your shoulder, your pack and shovel, canteens, knife, and machete all stick out at right angles and are as tenacious in their grip on the surrounding underbrush as a dozen grappling hooks. Straining, sweating, and swearing avails you nothing so you decide on a full-bodied lunge—success crowns your efforts as all the entangling encumbrances decided to give up the struggle simultaneously. Just before you hit the ground a low swinging vine breaks your fall by looping itself under your chin, almost decapitating you and snapping your helmet fifteen yards to the rear, narrowly missing your Lieutenant's head. He glares at you as though he suspected you threw it. What a suspicious nature. You untangle your equipment, retrieve your helmet, and move on. The flies and mosquitos have discovered your route of march and have called up all the reinforcements including the underfed and undernourished who regard us as nothing but walking blood banks. We continue to push on. . . .

Reconnoitering one day ahead of the forward regimental units, Patrol Fox of the 77th Reconnaissance Troop reported back from Pago Bay that no Japanese were seen in the area and that only natives were moving about near Yona (for this patrol's route, see Map No. 12, page 58). This report, and the progress of the leading battalions despite the rough route and their heavy burdens, led the divisional



command to direct that they reach the O–1 line south of the Pago River that night. An artillery observation plane dropped General Bruce's order to this effect.

Following these instructions, the 1st and 3d Battalions of the 307th and the 3d Battalion of the 305th pushed ahead. As the men of Company I, 305th, commanded by Capt. Lee P. Cothran, moved rapidly along the dirt road entering Yona from the southwest, they discovered that Patrol Fox had overlooked some enemy troops in that village. The first two Japanese running across the trail in front of the 2d Platoon put Company I on guard. When the platoon opened fire, the Japanese disappeared in dense brush on the side of the road. Company I's men moved forward under



COMPANY G, 305TH RCT *moves southeast of road junction 370 into position for the march across Guam. G follows 307th and units of 305th.*

small-arms fire, and more Japanese were sighted running hastily among the grass huts in the town.

Facing continued scattered fire from huts and pillboxes now visible to the 2d Platoon, the squads formed a skirmish line to sweep through the enemy positions. As the 2d Platoon moved along on a 150-yard front, the squads lost contact with one another, but they went about their work systematically, grenading the buildings and shooting down their occupants with rifles and BAR's.

The Japanese were evidently taken by surprise. Some of them ran out of the buildings naked or half-dressed and made off for the brush. Others fired occasionally from dugouts and buildings but then waited to be killed.

Other elements of Company I were rapidly coming up in support. The 1st Platoon moved out toward the highway on the right to protect the flank and rear of the 2d Platoon in the village. The 3d Platoon went to the left (north) of the 2d. Although communication with the battalion command post was out, reinforcements arrived as regularly as in any practice exercise. Company K moved in behind Company I, and with this support Company I pushed rapidly through the village. The weapons platoon set up its light machine guns and the heavy machine guns from the attached elements of Company M on the forward slope of a small knoll running into the town. The machine guns fired into the flimsy huts, from which the Japanese could put up only slight resistance. As the last buildings were neared, the enemy survivors fled into the jungle beyond the village. They left behind a considerable supply of hand grenades, small arms, and ammunition. One of the buildings, obviously used as a Japanese barracks, was littered with dirt and trash and looked as though it had never been cleaned. The natives stated that Yona had been a supply center and garrison for several hundred soldiers, and that they had been forced to work for the Japanese.

The skirmish at Yona made the men of the 3d Battalion, 305th, uneasy about the night, for they were getting close to areas which might be well defended. They arrived near the south bank of the Pago River after dark and set up their perimeter on a hill overlooking the bay. Their uneasiness increased as the hour grew later because they had little time to dig fox holes in the hard coral, and their perimeter was separated from the 307th to the left by a large gap. During the night they once heard Japanese marching on the road below and held their fire in order not to attract the attention of any large group of enemy that might be near. However, the night passed without any further alarms.

An outstanding event of the day for the "Statue of Liberty" Division was the liberation of 2,000 Chamorros who were huddled in a concentration camp near Asinan. Patrols of Company L, 307th, found the camp unguarded. They let the natives out and directed them back toward their homes on the west side of the island. The ex-captives were almost beside themselves with joy. Not knowing whether to kiss their liberators, bow to them, or shake hands with them, they tried to do all three at once. Many carried tiny American flags which they had hidden from the Japanese. "We wait long time

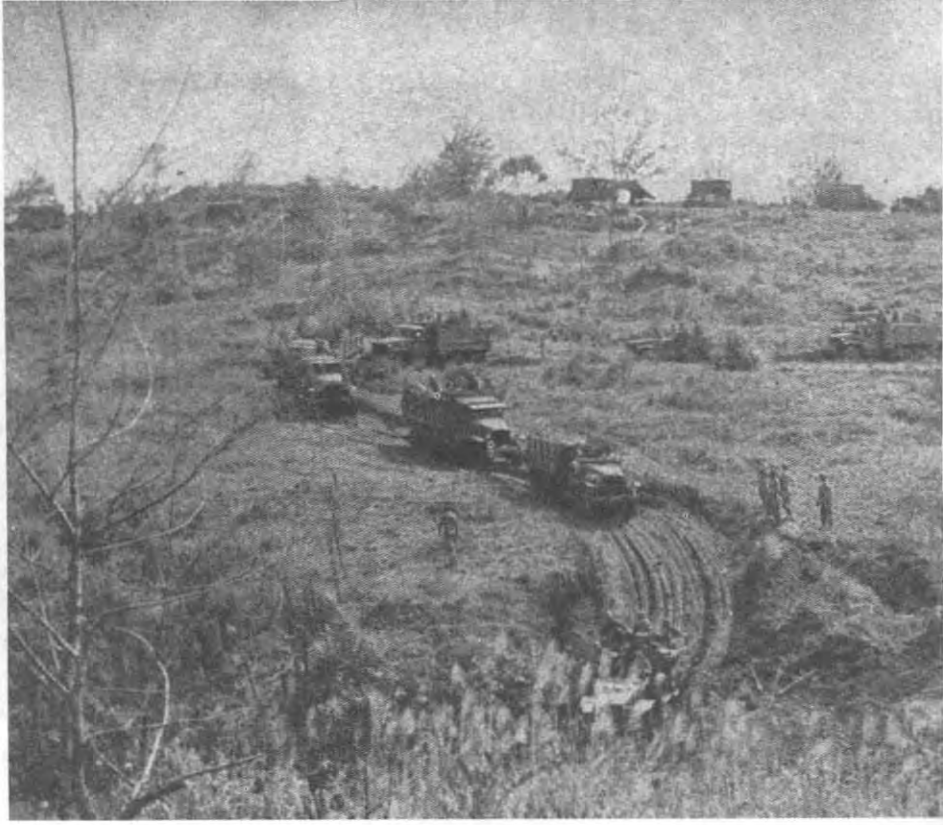


NATIVE CAMP *southeast of Agat. Until the Chamorros could rebuild their houses they lived in tent areas located and protected by III Corps.*

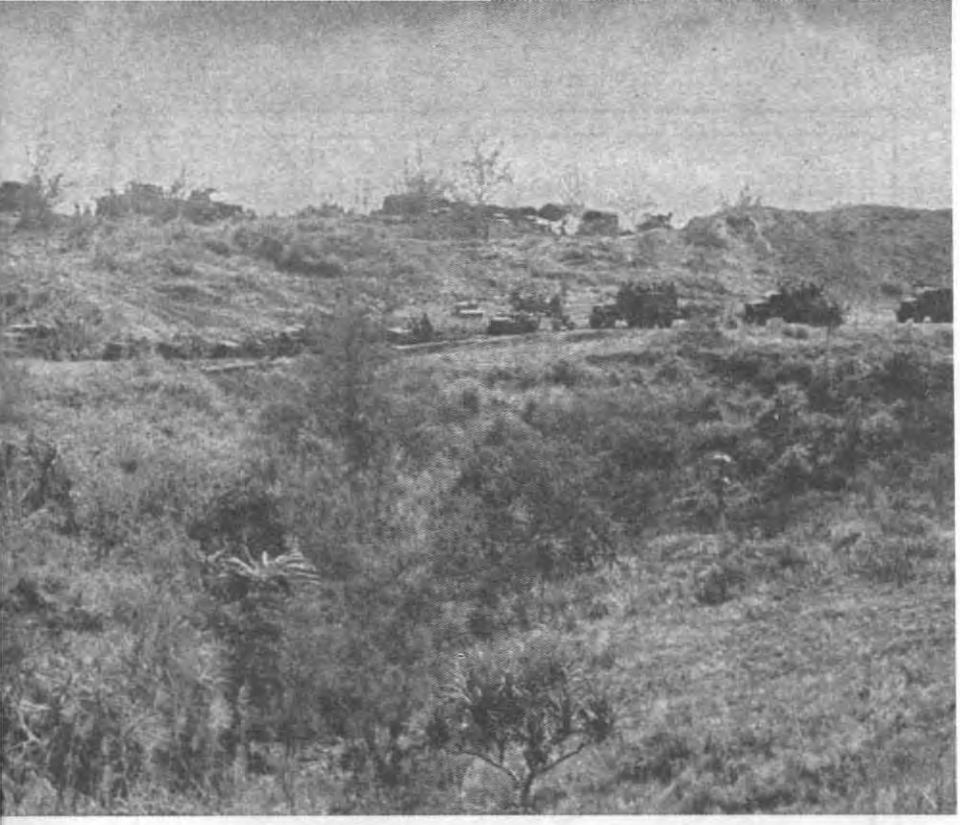
for you to come," some of them said. Their faith in the return of the Americans had apparently never faltered, although as one Chamorro scornfully said, "We were told by the Japanese that the U. S. A. was being defeated, that Japan had control of the Hawaiian Islands, and that the Americans had only one ship left as the rest had been sunk."

The weary infantrymen were immensely moved by the joy of the natives as they passed back through the lines. Soldiers who had been complaining because their rations were low gave away what few cigarettes they had. While watching the tiny children who carried huge baskets, and the women who trudged along with half their household possessions on their backs,[1] the soldiers realized the meaning of liberation for these enslaved people.

[1] The natives passed under the jurisdiction of III Amphibious Corps when they reached their homes and farms. The Insular Patrol Force, a former volunteer native military organization, was reestablished as the Local Security Patrol Force on 8 August. Those who returned to Agana found their homes largely destroyed by the pre-invasion bombardment, and the inhabitants of Agat found no town left at all. But they set about rebuilding their towns, and during the operation many of them helped maintain roads to keep supplies moving forward to the front lines.



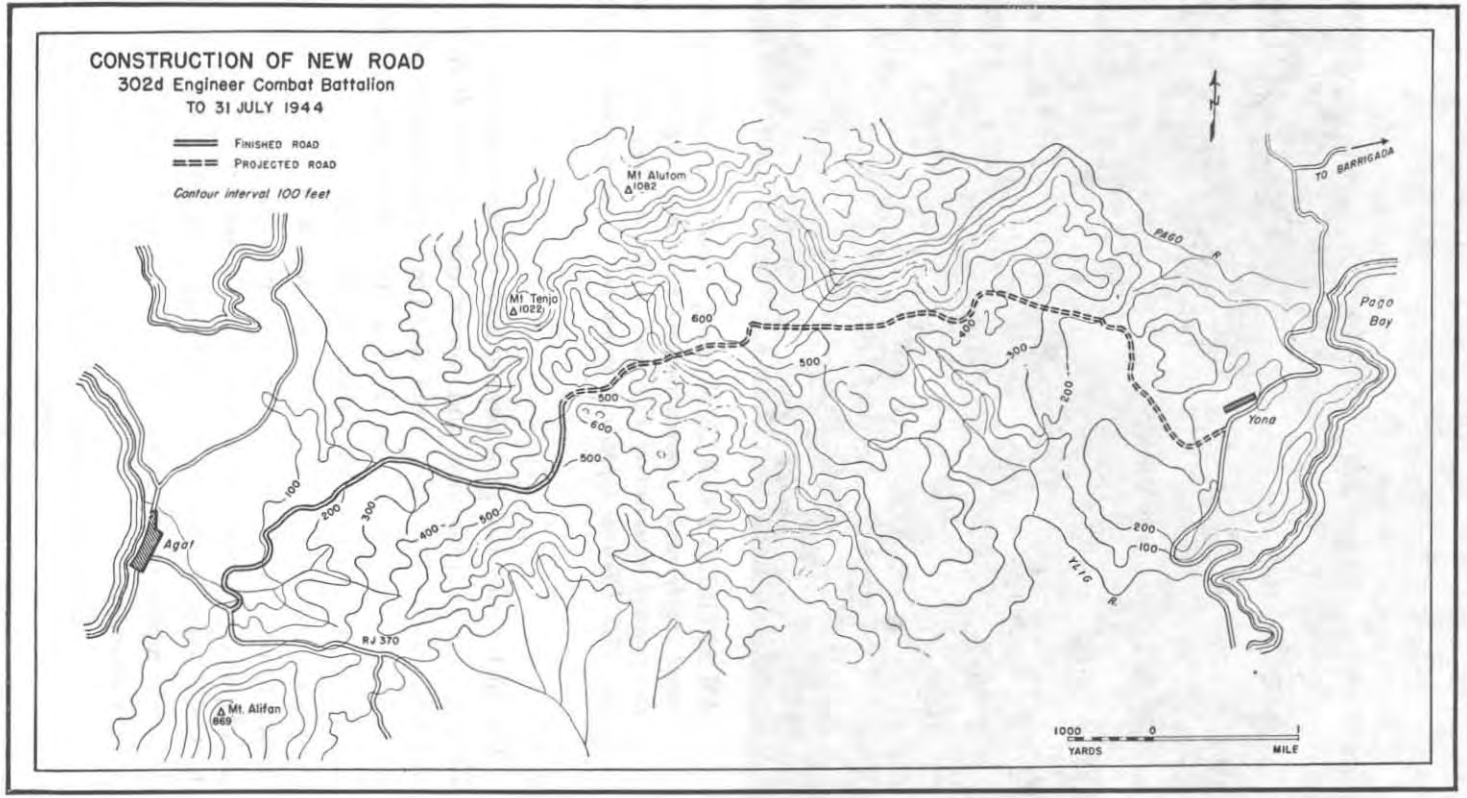
Apart from the resistance at Yona, the 77th Division had met only small groups of Japanese on its march to the O–1 line. The Pago River was the first natural barrier where the Japanese might attempt strong defense, but patrols crossing the river had found no installations along it. From additional information at his disposal, General Bruce believed that the enemy must be preparing his stand farther north. Interrogations of natives revealed that 800 Japanese had moved from the Yona area toward Barrigada. The 3d Division, on its front, also continued to hold this view, despite an undated pigeon message which the division had captured indicating that the enemy planned a withdrawal only to the Agana–Pago Bay road. "Because of unusual conditions," the message read, "move to Sinajana or Ordot. Fire being received in depression to our front making movement difficult. . . . Hold on."



AN ARTILLERY COLUMN *moving inland from Agat beachhead over rutted supply road. Construction and maintenance difficulties prevented the projected extension of this road as far as Pago Bay. After 31 July 77th Division supplies went over the coastal highway via Agana.*

The 3d Division had gone beyond both of these towns before noon without meeting resistance, and information received from natives and divisional patrols pointed out that the enemy must be preparing defenses at Tiyan airfield or Tumon Bay. This field intelligence confirmed General Geiger's belief that for both the 3d and 77th Divisions 1 August would be another day of pursuit. The enemy seemed to be north of the O–2 line. A principal gain in the second day of pursuit for the marine and army divisions would be to secure the entire length of the Agana–Pago Bay road, which could be used as a main supply route from the beachheads to the forward positions of both divisions.

The 77th Division pressed forward early in the morning of 1 August. The 3d Battalion, 305th, now under the control of its own regiment, continued on the right, the 1st and 3d Battalions of the


CONSTRUCTION OF NEW ROAD
302d Engineer Combat Battalion
TO 31 JULY 1944
FINISHED ROAD
PROJECTED ROAD
Contour interval 100 feet
Mt Alutom
Δ1082
Mt Tenjo
Δ1022
TO BARRIGADA
PAGO R.
Pago Bay
Yona
Agat
RJ 370
Mt. Alifan
869
YLIG R.
100
200
300
400
500
600
1000 0 1 YARDS MILE

MAP NO. 14

307th on the left in contact with the 3d Marine Division. Necessary for a rapid advance was the bridge over the Pago River on the Agana road. Company K moved out first to make sure that it was intact and not defended. The 1st and 3d Battalions, 307th and the 3d Battalion, 305th followed Company K. Their route of march was cross-country through jungle and over rough terrain to the O–2 line. On the way the troops found an enemy dump containing knee mortars, light machine guns, rifles, and bayonets, but they saw no Japanese. They also found some canned salmon and strawberry gum drops which the troops devoured because the supplies which they carried with them were running out. Their canteens were empty, so they drank coconut juice instead of water; some of them had what tasted like a "warm Tom Collins" which they made from a pint of saki, three packages of synthetic lemon powder, and two lumps of sugar. These "extras" kept the men going until their supplies of rations arrived. They reached the O–2 line by evening.

Behind them other elements of the division moved up, the foot troops following the trails across the island while the units with heavy weapons, such as artillery and tanks, took the coastal highway from Agat through Agana and into the waist of the island toward the 77th's sector. This route between Agana and Pago Bay was now entirely under corps control, for the 3d Marine Division had swung up to the O–2 line in its sector by early in the evening.

77th Division's Supply Route

In the 77th Division's zone the pursuit phase involved a special challenge to the engineers. It was impossible to move supplies directly across the island from Agat to Yona without first building a road which would extend from the Harmon Road leading out of Agat to the coastal surfaced highway near Yona (Map No. 14, page 72). The division had proposed the building of such a route, involving construction for ten miles, and Companies A and C of the 302d Engineer Combat Battalion had begun work on it soon after landing. By 31 July when the 77th Division moved out toward the waist of the island, the engineers had finished the road to south of Mt. Tenjo. However, this 2- to 3-mile stretch had required work on a 24-hour schedule for 5 days.

On 31 July the 302d Engineers started into very rough country where their task increased in difficulty, though the problems already encountered were discouraging enough for rapid completion of the route. When bulldozers (D–6's) leveled a two-lane width, the seemingly bottomless clay offered no firm foundation. Heavy rains made the clay a quagmire, and coral or other rubble had to be hauled in great quantities to give the top soil a harder surface. Furthermore, the engineers did not have equipment to construct good drainage systems. Initially they improvised culverts out of coconut logs, but later they used oil drums with the ends cut out and welded together in three or four lengths. Preparing either the coconut logs or the oil drums was a process which slowed the work. The prospects of finishing a satisfactory route within a short time was doubtful when all these problems combined with those presented by rough terrain near Mt. Tenjo. Even the short stretch of road which had been completed required day and night maintenance. On the 31st, the 77th's construction work was stopped and the route was abandoned.

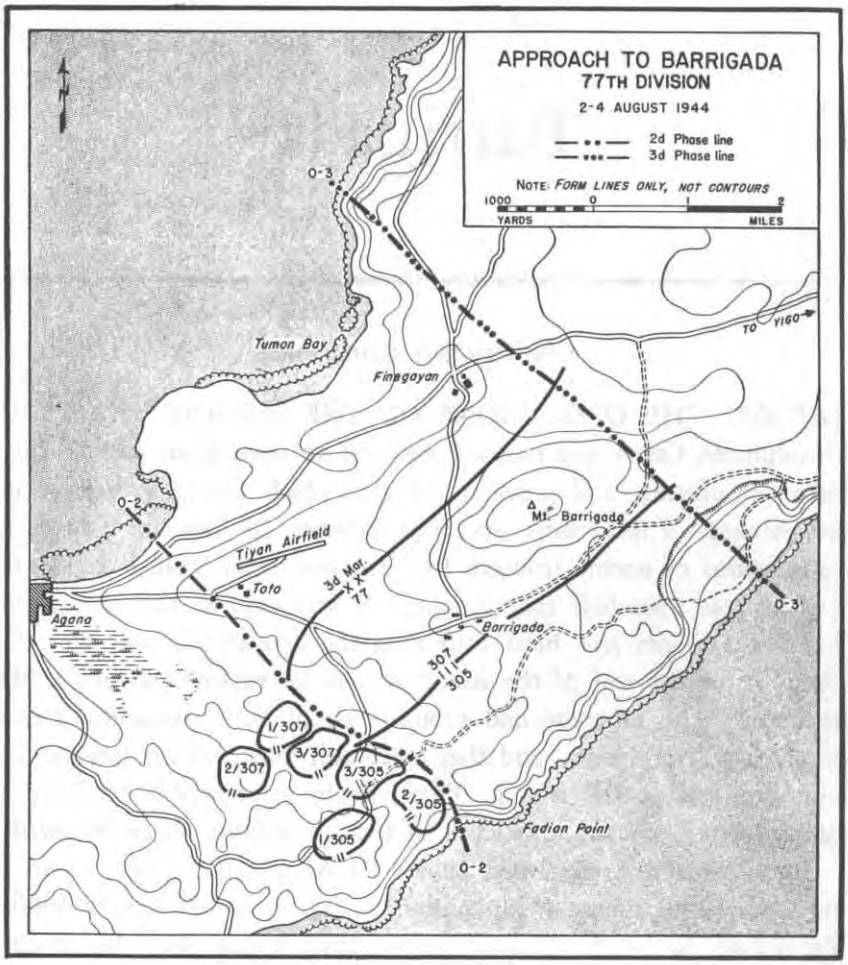
Fortunately the corps' advance to the O–2 line would provide a solution for the 77th Division's supply problem. The division had proposed that it be allowed to reroute its supplies over the coastal highway in the 3d Marine sector, and General Geiger approved a plan on 31 July for the 77th Division to use this highway as soon as it was in corps possession all the way from Agat through Agana to Pago Bay. The continued pursuit on 1 August made the road available to the 77th. Although it was already overburdened by traffic serving the marines and corps artillery, absence of attacks by enemy artillery or planes made its use by the army possible. All available trucks, with their lights on after dark, began grinding over the road and kept food and ammunition moving forward to two combat divisions. Of the use of a single supply road by two divisions General Bruce said later, "The book would say it can't be done, but on Guam it was done—it had to be." Before noon on 1 August the men of the 77th Division, who had been living on a restricted diet, were delivered a new supply of rations for their breakfast.

Barrigada

The Pursuit Continues

DURING THE OPERATIONS OF THE PURSUIT PHASE, III Amphibious Corps had received new information from patrols, captured documents, and prisoners of war which forced a revision in the estimate of the enemy situation. Between 28 July and 1 August, calculations of enemy strength had dropped from 14,000 combat-fit men to less than half that number. It was evident that the major battle for Guam had been fought at the beachheads and that the conquest of the rest of the island was to be easier than previously expected. The Japanese had grouped all of their remaining forces in the north of Guam, and they were still withdrawing toward the northern end of the island. They clearly were unable to leave a token force in the south, or even to attempt holding all of the north.

Intelligence now possessed by the III Amphibious Corps revealed that not more than 50 Japanese soldiers were still in the south. Patrols of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade and the 77th Reconnaissance Troop, combing the whole area (for extent of these patrols, see route of the 77th's Patrol George on Map No. 12, page 58), sent back to headquarters reports of skirmishes with scattered groups not larger than 15 men. In the north, field intelligence indicated that the Tiyan airfield and Barrigada regions were not to be held for major stands as previously believed, but only as delaying positions covering a withdrawal of main elements to Yigo, about ten miles from the waist of the island. Near Tiyan airfield marine patrols had encountered no large enemy forces. They had brushed with a single Japanese soldier manning a light machine gun and had found some 100-pound bombs emplaced as land mines. Natives reported that during the night of 31 July/1 August about 800 Japanese had left Pago Bay for Mt. Barrigada, key hill for control of the approach to north Guam. A captured document further showed that on Mt.



MAP NO. 15

Barrigada the enemy had emplaced four type-10 (1921) 120-mm fixed dual-purpose guns (navy), two type-96 (1936) 25-mm machine cannon (fixed single mounts usable as dual-purpose guns), and two type-93 (1933) 13.2-mm machine guns.

Between 28 July and 1 August the corps' count of enemy dead had almost doubled the previous total, reaching 7,418. In addition, 3,500 was now considered by intelligence officers a conservative figure for casualties not included in the number of bodies counted. This figure made an allowance for troops killed and buried by the enemy plus the wounded that had been evacuated. Of the effectives available, 2,000 or 3,000 were thought to be labor personnel armed only with

hand-made spear knives on bamboo poles. Once these casualties and non-battle troops were deducted from the original strength estimate of 18,500, only 6,000 combat-fit troops remained.

Since the enemy capabilities were so limited, General Geiger could now employ all of his forces for a quick and efficient conquest of the north of Guam. From the south, even a weak threat was no longer possible. The corps commander therefore arranged to transfer units guarding the rear of the 3d Marine and 77th Divisions to the front line in north Guam. He ordered a regiment of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade to move to an assembly area in corps reserve behind the 3d Marines. The regiment was later to relieve the 3d Marines on the left so that they could concentrate against the Japanese defenses near Yigo. The Garrison Force was to assume responsibility for the defense of Orote Peninsula and Cabras Island at 0800, 2 August.

To the front-line units General Geiger sent a message directing them to continue the pursuit on 2 August: "Reliable information indicates all Japanese have moved to the general vicinity of Yigo. All possible speed will be made by the two divisions to gain contact with the enemy, prepared to attack him. Commander Task Force 53 requested work over [area] with naval gunfire not required in direct support of divisions during day and [deliver] harassing fires during night."

The phase lines set for the first part of the advance on Yigo would take the corps about five miles, from the O–2 to the O–3 line (Map No. 15, page 76). The boundary between the 3d Marine and 77th Divisions gave slightly more than half of the width of the island to the 77th. In their zone the marines would be responsible for Tiyan airfield, Tumon Bay, and Finegayan; the 77th would have responsibility for both the town of Barrigada and Mt. Barrigada, about a mile northeast of the settlement.

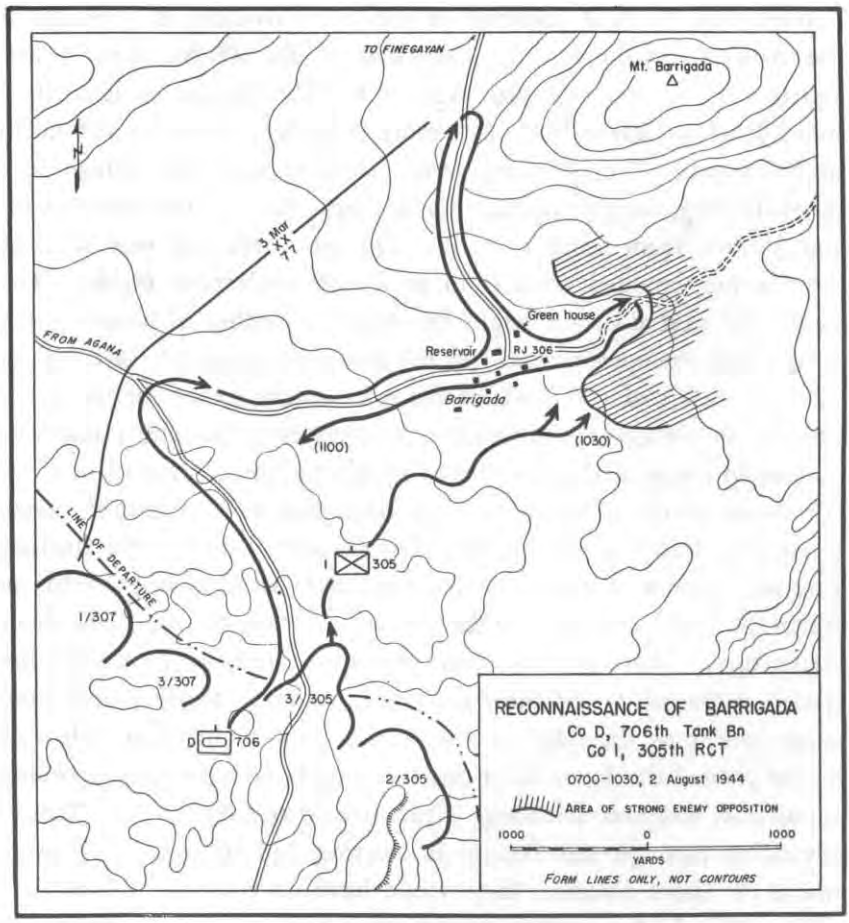
While the 3d Marine Division prepared to move out again at 0630, 2 August, General Bruce made arrangements for his troops to advance at 0700. The 305th and 307th RCT's would remain abreast on the 77th Division's front of two and one-half miles. The 307th, maintaining contact on the left, with the 3d Marines, would advance from the O–2 line into Barrigada and proceed on to the north toward Mt. Barrigada. The 305th, on the right along a front extending to the east coast, would pass to the east of the town and the hill.


N
Green house
Barrigada

Barrigada, the first objective of the 77th Division, is a village of less than 20 buildings, lying southwest of the 300-foot rise of Mt. Barrigada (see photograph, page 78). The village is located at Road Junction 306 on the main route from Agana inland and north to Finegayan. The principal terrain feature near the village is a large clearing, roughly rectangular in shape, ⅓-mile from east to west and ¼-mile from north to south. On the north and east sides of the clearing, wooded areas form an almost continuous border. The south and west sides are edged by irregular patches of jungle which extend into the open ground. In the southeast corner of the clearing, within a radius of 300 yards of the road junction, most of the buildings of the village are grouped. On the west a temple, a reservoir and pump house, and a few shacks stand in scattered clumps of trees. Northeast of the junction, a large tin-roofed shack, painted green, is the only building of any size. The largest section of the clearing stretches northwest from the junction and becomes open field on which the grass, even during the first days of August, was only about a foot high. From east and west, the ground rises gently toward the center of this field, and the north–south swell is clearly visible from lower points at the edge of the woods in any direction. On this higher ground the Japanese at one time emplaced four guns, probably antiaircraft weapons defending Tiyan airfield and Agana Bay. Troops advancing through this Barrigada clearing had to cross open areas where for short distances they would have no protected routes.

The 77th had a special reason for wanting to reach Barrigada quickly. The reservoir and pump, located 100 yards northwest of Road Junction 306, could supply 20,000 gallons of water daily to the troops. Until now, the men of the division had quenched their thirst by getting water from streams and creeks. But in the northern part of Guam there were no streams, and the reservoir would be the only source of supply. Nevertheless, the division was cautious, for it did not know how strong a delaying position the town and the height would be, and a report was received during the night that 2,000 Japanese were on the road between Finegayan and Barrigada. General Bruce ordered reconnaissance by tanks and requested observation by air.

LOCALE OF BARRIGADA ACTION. *The village, at center, is at junction of road from Agana through Barrigada and road to Finegayan.*



MAP NO. 16

Feeling Out Enemy Positions

The first elements of the 77th Division moved forward about 0700 from the O–2 line to reconnoiter the enemy positions near the town of Barrigada (Map No. 16, above). In the 307th's zone, while the infantry battalions waited for their day's rations, Company D of the 706th Tank Battalion drove rapidly along the Agana road on a preliminary reconnaissance mission, to find out if the 2,000 enemy soldiers reported north of the village had arrived there. When the 12 tanks in the column got within a mile and a quarter of Road Junction 306, they drew moderate fire. The tanks' crews machine-gunned suspected areas and returned to the regiment to report that they had seen only eight Japanese soldiers and a machine gun.

At 0800 the tanks left the O–2 line again on a second reconnaissance mission, this time to go north to Mt. Barrigada and east of the town. They retraced their course along the Agana road, passed through Barrigada, and turned up the Finegayan road without difficulty. An empty pillbox at the junction and a deserted road block 500 yards up the Finegayan highway were evidence that the Japanese had intended at some time to defend the town and to restrict movement through it. The tanks were almost abreast of Mt. Barrigada, more than a mile from the junction, when they met Japanese soldiers hiding behind three enemy trucks blocking the road. The leading tanks killed the Japanese, estimated to be 35 in number, and demolished the trucks with machine-gun and 37-mm fire.

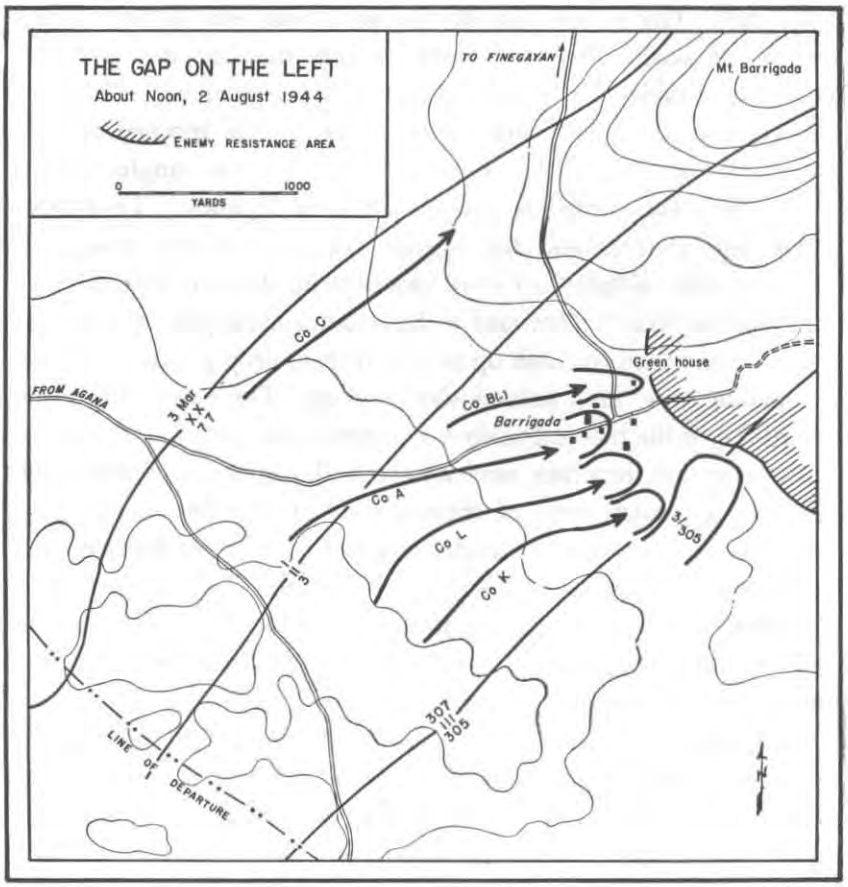
Returning to the road junction in Barrigada, the tankmen swung left and drove rapidly over the road which skirts the southern edge of the hill. The jungle east of the town was even denser than it was to the north; the road itself became rougher and narrower. When the vehicles had moved only a few hundred yards from the junction, one tank got hung up on a stump and blocked the rest of the column. When the tanks were stopped, the jungle on each side of the road seemed to come alive with Japanese. They threw 20-mm and machine-gun fire against the sides of the tanks, into the vision slits. While their comrades kept up this fire from dugouts, other Japanese crawled forward with grenades, closing in on the tanks. As one enemy tried to climb up on one tank to drop grenades through the openings, the tank behind shot him off. The enemy fire began to diminish as the tank crews found targets in the jungle and returned even heavier fire than they received. Some Japanese killed themselves with their grenades; most of them filtered off into the woods.

Meanwhile the tank commander reported back to headquarters that 150 Japanese were near his position and asked, "Can I come home?" Permission was granted. After the tank on the stump had worked itself off, the vehicles swung around and reached the regimental lines without incident at 1100.

At the same time that the tanks moved out, the 3d Battalion of the 305th started off from the O–2 line on the left of its regimental zone. The battalion pushed ahead along a winding trail connecting with the road from Barrigada east of the town. Company I was leading; S/Sgt. Chester B. Opdyke, Jr.'s squad of the 2d Platoon was the point of the column. Advancing in squad columns, the rest

of the company was spread out behind the point. The heavy weapons of Company M attached to Company I were in the center of the column. The main body of the battalion followed several hundred yards to the rear.

When the men of Opdyke's squad came out on open ground in a draw approaching the southern edge of the Barrigada clearing, about 0930, they oriented themselves on the buildings in Barrigada which they could see about 300 yards to the left. The reservoir and a two-story building, later found to be a temple, were visible near the road junction. The scouts could see no movement in the village, and they heard no sounds in the woods nearby. Then Pfc. John Andzelik, on the lookout for enemy activity, spotted 3 Japanese



MAP NO. 17

soldiers crossing a trail 200 yards ahead. Opdyke held up his group and sent some of his men to investigate a shack to the right, a likely shelter for more enemy soldiers. They had moved a few yards when Japanese snipers opened up. Although the fire was scattered at first, it was well aimed, and the two leading men were casualties.

The enemy fire increased and seemed to come from an arc stretching from the left to the center front. Members of the point squad tried to get to cover. Opdyke started off toward the shack at the right, but he was stopped by a hit on the arm. Some of the men put fire into the brush ahead before they withdrew, and several more were hit as they ran back for cover.

Despite the heavy fire, the other two squads of the 2d Platoon came up on both wings of the point and formed a rough skirmish line in a slight defilade. The 1st Platoon, commanded by 2d Lt. Edward C. Harper, moved up behind the 2d Platoon. Company Commander, Captain Cothran, was with the 1st. Under Cothran's direction this platoon got around to the right in a more covered area. Slowly the 1st and 2d squads were brought up on a line. Fire was coming from an enemy machine gun concealed in woods to the left. Two BAR men, who had been watching for smoke or flash from the gun, noticed leaves moving under its muzzle blast and directed their fire where they thought the machine gun was located.

Lieutenant Harper now tried to get around the enemy's flank by moving his men across a small open draw to some woods beyond. They did not know whether the machine gun on the left was out of action or how many more guns were in position to command the draw, so they dashed at intervals to the woods. Others were on their way when fire broke out again from the left. "For Christ's sake, go back and tell Cothran a machine gun has opened up," Harper shouted to one of his men. Just as he spoke, several men started across the draw for the woods, and all of them were killed or wounded.

Company I was effectively stopped, at least for the time being. Its 2d Platoon was still pinned down, and its 1st was unable to advance on the right. Other troops from the 3d Battalion were now moving up behind Company I's line. Machine gunners and mortar men from Company M set up their weapons and put fire on suspected areas. But they had difficulty finding targets. The enemy was well concealed, and he seemed to have a trick of cloaking the sound of his firing by shooting short bursts just after Company

M's weapons opened up. While they tried to find enemy gun positions, the heavy-weapons men had to fight off snipers who seemed to be all around them. Taking the place of a wounded machine gunner, Pfc. Edwin L. O'Brien picked up a smoking machine gun, cradled it in his arms, and fired into a tree almost directly above him. The Japanese soldier who had wounded the first gunner tumbled down. Even the heavy weapons were not able to neutralize the enemy's fire, and the leading elements of the 3d Battalion were stymied before 1030.

These first contacts at Barrigada had indicated some enemy strength well concealed in the heavy jungle to the east of the junction, in position to command both roads out of the town. Company D, 706th Tank Battalion, and Company I, 305th RCT, had engaged two groups of Japanese infantrymen in that general area at about the same time, and both units had found the enemy ready to put up determined resistance. Company I estimated that at least a company, with plenty of automatic weapons set up in cleared fields of fire, held the woods beyond its forward line. As long as the Japanese controlled the road to Finegayan and the one from Barrigada to the east, reinforcement of their position at Barrigada was easy. Much now depended on the attack of the 307th Infantry, through and west of the Barrigada clearing.

The Gap on the Left

The 307th RCT, on the left, now commanded by Lt. Col. Thomas B. Manuel,[1] was ready to move forward in a zone which would flank the area of Japanese resistance so far encountered (Map No. 17, page 82). Objective of the 307th was Mt. Barrigada. On the regiment's left the 1st Battalion, under Lt. Col. Joseph B. Coolidge, was to maintain contact with the 3d Marine Division, reach the Finegayan road north of the village, and take the western slopes of Mt. Barrigada. The 3d Battalion, on the right, was to maintain contact with the 305th, push directly through Barrigada town, and continue on to take the southern slopes of the hill. Each front-line battalion was to have one company in reserve; the 2d Battalion was to be in regimental reserve.

The 307th RCT was to advance at 1030 abreast of main units of

[1] Colonel Hamilton was evacuated at about 1600, 1 August because of illness.

the 305th. The men of the 307th, who had received rations after 0930, hurried through their morning meal and were ready within an hour. When they started toward Mt. Barrigada, Company C was on the far left in contact with the marines. On its right was Company A, which tied in with Company L. The 3d Battalion's right wing was formed by Company K. These four companies were to go forward on an azimuth of 45°, which would bring L and K astride Barrigada and put A and C in position to flank the village through the woods on the northwest.

Heavy sniper fire delayed Company A at the start, forcing it to veer too far to the right off its 45° azimuth. The company soon came out on the Agana road and followed it toward Barrigada. Meanwhile Company C had found its zone clear and moved out, and L and K were pushing northeast on the prescribed axis. As the units approached Barrigada, Company A collided with L in the zone assigned to the 3d Battalion. Company L in turn was forced to the right, pinching out K on the 305th boundary. As a result, these three companies were crowded into an area not wide enough for two, and the balanced attack toward Barrigada was thrown off. Company L, the only unit that succeeded in maintaining its normal frontage, had shifted its axis of advance to the southeast and was now heading for the Agana road east of the junction.

The effects of the crowding were felt as soon as contact was made with the enemy. When Company A's advance elements reached the edge of the clearing about 1130, they found the first houses of the village unoccupied, and two light tanks, coming into A's lines from the east, reported seeing no Japanese that morning. Any mistaken conclusions that might have been drawn from this report were quickly corrected; rifle and machine-gun fire started up on the right and front of Company A's advance as soon as the tanks left, and the fire grew in intensity until it sounded like the steady crackling roar of a rifle range. Taking advantage of a very slight defilade, the squads deployed near the temple on a line facing roughly east. As members of the 2d Platoon moved to the right of the temple they encountered Company L coming into line and were crowded out. As a result of the crowding on the 307th's right, when it came to organizing a front of fire to bear on the enemy resistance Company A had only one effective platoon; Company K had almost no front at all. Furthermore, this crowding on the right resulted in a large



THE GREEN HOUSE (*left shack*) *offered little shelter to Companies B and G, 307th Infantry when they, in turn, tried to support the units pinned down at the Barrigada road junction. This sketch is a copy of one drawn by a member of the 77th Division after the action.*

gap between Company A on the Agana road and Company C on the left wing. The development of this gap, extending 1,000 yards across the north section of the Barrigada clearing, reduced the possibilities of putting flanking pressure on the enemy positions near Barrigada. Some further disadvantages were to be felt later in the day.

At about noon Maj. Gerald G. Cooney, the 1st Battalion executive officer, heard that Company A was in Barrigada and that it had been pinned down, along with the 3d Battalion, near the temple close to the road junction. He immediately assumed temporary command of the battalion in order to adjust the unit's front line and relieve the pressure on Company A and the 3d Battalion. Colonel Coolidge, commander of the battalion, had gone off with Company C, and he was now out of contact. Part of Company B had already been sent in the direction of C in an effort to maintain contact along the front. As a first move, Major Cooney committed his battalion reserve, the rest of Company B, on Company A's left to reduce the width of the gap between A and C. The 2d Platoon, under 2d Lt. Willis J. L. Munger, on the Agana road approaching Barrigada, was ordered to go diagonally across the grass field, the widest and most open section of the Barrigada clearing, moving up on Company A's left.

Munger's objective, on the east side of the Finegayan road, was the 2-story green shack that had a concrete base and appeared to be a good position from which to put fire on the enemy positions near the junction and outflank the resistance holding up Companies A and L.

In short rushes, groups of two and three men of the 2d Platoon slowly made their way across the field. Their left flank was in the air, but while they worked through the field all seemed quiet in the woods to the north, as well as in the woods behind the green house. The enemy silence did not last long. Just as the first men of the platoon were crossing the road, a machine gun opened up from the woods east of the house. They dived for ditches on each side of the road and sent word back for a section of machine guns to deal with the enemy gun. The men remained in the ditch as the machine-gun section, having suffered one casualty in the field, came up under heavy fire.

Before the section had a chance to set up its weapons in support of the 2d Platoon, the 3d Battalion machine gunners and mortar men near the temple, who had been working for some time trying to find the enemy, finally located a target—a grass shack on the road

east of Barrigada. The shack burst into flames, and as it did so a Japanese medium tank shot out of it and sped along the Agana road toward the lines of Companies A and L. Three soldiers riding on top were quickly knocked off when machine guns, BAR's, and rifles opened up all along the 307th's front. But the tank kept going, undamaged by the fire. Its turret swung back and forth returning the fire of the 307th with cannon and machine guns.

The Japanese tank reached the road junction, turned right, and stopped. Ahead of it, still lying prone in the ditch, were some of the men of Company B's 2d Platoon. The rest of the platoon had dashed to the green house for safety. For a few seconds the tank stood still and machine-gunned the helpless men near the road, killing one and wounding two others. Then it turned back on the Agana road and headed toward the corner of the temple near the junction, where Pfc. John E. Raley of Company A was manning a machine gun. The tank crashed into this building, changed gears, and forced its way through the side. Raley stuck to his post, although the tracks of the tank missed him by a foot. The roof of the temple caved in, pinning Raley to the ground, but the vehicle emerged from under it, restricted in its movement only by a piece of thatch roof covering its vision slit. The tank crew, despite their limited vision, continued on their way and overran another machine-gun position.

Now in the midst of the 307th's lines, the enemy tank was receiving concentrated fire from every weapon that the excited men could handle—rifles, machine guns, BAR's, hand and rifle grenades, and bazookas. Of Company A's three bazookas in the line, two failed to go off, and the gunner of the third did not pull the safety pin until the tank was out of range. When it stalled on a coconut log, riflemen got their aim, knocking ammunition boxes off the top. The tank itself, impervious to the fire, backed off the log, dropped the thatch that had been over the vision slit, and raced down the Agana road. It swept with fire a battalion aid post, a battalion command post, and the 307th Regimental CP in rapid succession. Finally, two of the division's light tanks got in the race, as the Japanese tank went out of sight into the rear areas. Curiously enough, no available records tell what happened to it later or how it was destroyed; the 307th at any rate saw no more of it.

The enemy tank, going through the lines before the 307th had been able to consolidate its position at the green shack, had left a

chaotic situation behind it. Men of Companies A and L, near the temple in the areas exposed to the tank's fire, had broken lines and rushed back for better cover. The formations were now more disorganized than ever. The course of the tank was marked by bleeding men and abandoned positions.

The solo tank action seems to have been impromptu, forced by the direct hit on the shack, for enemy infantry did not follow its attack. Instead the Japanese waited in their positions for another move by the 307th. The 2d Platoon of B Company, in its exposed position, took the brunt of the enemy fire during the next few minutes. From a pillbox 20 yards behind the green house and from other emplacements in the woods, bursts of automatic fire tore through the upper portion of the house where all of the 2d Platoon, except the wounded, had now taken refuge. This fire isolated the men in the green shack from their lines. One BAR man was shot as he fired through a window. An attempt to get two wounded men from the road to the house brought down heavier fire. Lieutenant Munger's men were able to bring in one of the casualties; the other man lay near the road calling to those inside for help until he died.

Lieutenant Munger realized that the house offered no protection against mortar and artillery fire and gave his men a chance to find better cover if they could. "Anyone who wants to go can leave—I wouldn't blame you," he said. "But I'm sticking." Sgt. Charles J. Kunze volunteered to return to the company headquarters for reinforcements. He sprinted from the house, dived into the ditch, crawled through a culvert, and then darted across the exposed field to Capt. Frank L. Vernon, company commander. Kunze told his story and then made the perilous trip back to the green house with orders from Captain Vernon to withdraw. Company A would cover the 2d Platoon as it retired across the field toward the Agana road.

Just as Kunze arrived, several artillery explosions rocked the shack. The men immediately dashed out of it. As they plunged across the road, they dropped into ditches for cover from the continued enemy machine-gun fire and then rose again to make another few feet across the field. Kunze, who was heading through the open field for the fourth time that day, was hit, along with several others, including Lieutenant Munger. Most of the members of Company A, covering the withdrawal of Company B's men, fell back because of the artillery fire. Machine gunner Raley, Pfc. Alfred A. Pucci, and

Pfc. Stanley J. Mrowka, however, stayed in their positions although the shells were falling within 20 feet. They continued to fire on enemy positions until the last wounded man of Company B was taken to the rear.

Back at his CP Major Cooney was surprised to find that the shells landing near the green house were part of a friendly rolling barrage moving to the left. He had no idea who had ordered the support and tried every phone until he located the artillery liaison officer to have the fire stopped before the 307th renewed its attack.

By 1500, after three hours of fighting, the Japanese opposing the regiment were as strong as ever, and they were still in command of the Finegayan road and the reservoir. The gap still existed within the 307th's line northwest of Barrigada.

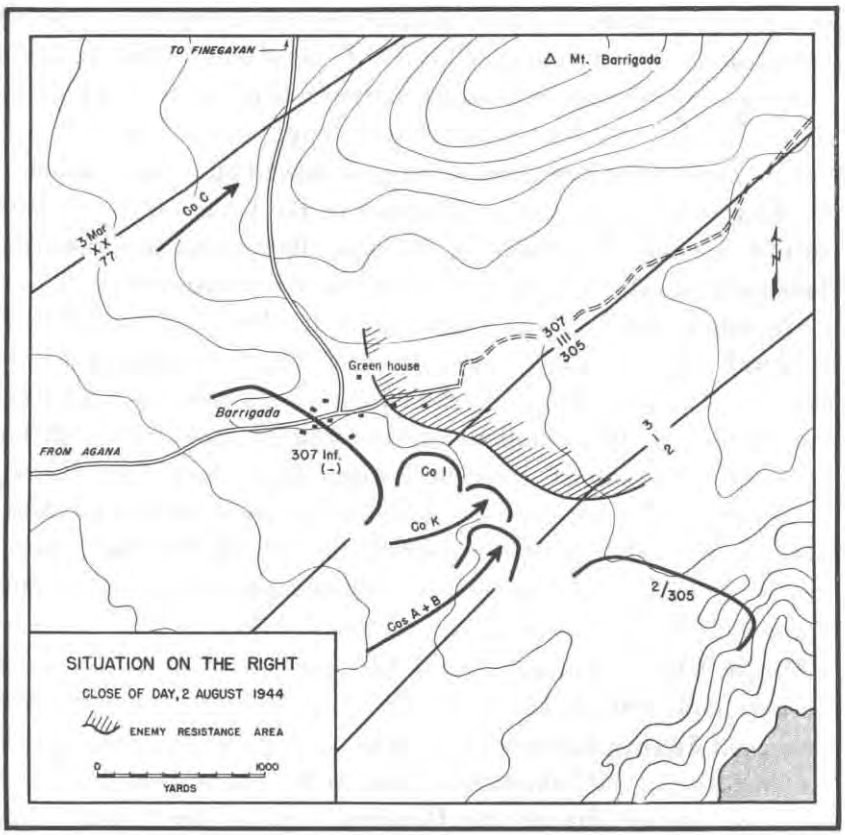
Tanks Support the 305th

Meanwhile, on the 77th Division's right, the 305th had organized and attempted an advance in its zone. The 3d Battalion was on the regimental left, the 2d Battalion on the right (Map No. 18, page 91). One company of each assault battalion remained in reserve. Only the 3d Battalion was in any position to help the fight at Barrigada.

After the repulse of Company I in the morning, the 305th paused to build up its line in the 3d Battalion zone, where its main effort would be made in the afternoon. At 1330 Company K moved from behind Company I to attack on I's right. Attached to Company K were five light tanks from Company D of the 706th Tank Battalion.[1] Company K and the light tanks edged out until they were parallel with the lower end of the draw where Company I had been stopped at 1030. The tanks were in the lead with infantrymen on both sides for close-in protection. Directly behind the tanks were two platoons of infantrymen. The enemy positions which commanded the draw were not known to have been reduced, although considerable machine-gun and mortar fire had been put on the general area during the three-hour interval.

Four tanks and part of the infantry moved across the draw without trouble, but just as the last tank was crossing, machine-gun and can-

[1] Light tanks were used because the mediums of the three other companies of the 706th Tank Battalion were still on their way to Barrigada along the Agat–Agana highway.



MAP NO. 18

non fire opened up from the left. Bullets and fragments ricocheted off the side of the tank toward the men guarding it, killing Sgt. Dexter W. Berry and wounding two others. The infantrymen beyond kept out of the lines of fire by lying low in the brush. The leading tanks returned the fire, but it was hard to find any targets, and their shots did not seem to have much effect. Shortly thereafter the tanks pulled back to a less exposed position. The men of Company K, who had been following the tanks, remained where they were, not daring to move. Colonel Chalgren, commander of the 3d Battalion, held a conference with his company commanders to decide how to attack the Japanese in the woods. Lieutenant Harper of Company I, who had already crawled up under fire close to the woods, volunteered to direct a tank up to the enemy firing position.

Lieutenant Harper climbed into 2d Lt. Charles J. Fuchs' tank, "Dirty Detail," and moved up the draw. The tank got within five

yards of the position and then machine-gunned it through the leaves and brush. The enemy returned the fire. In rapid succession a Japanese machine gunner scored hits on the trailing idler, the drive shaft, and the side of the tank. One bullet missed Harper by six inches. "Dirty Detail" could not move forward; when it backed up its track dropped off. Harper and the crew tumbled out of the tank and ran back to friendly ground. The crews of the other light tanks destroyed the abandoned vehicle in order to prevent the enemy from using it.

The enemy position still commanded the draw and seemed able to absorb any amount of fire. Colonel Chalgren decided to try artillery. The men who had reached the woods were ordered back. They retired to the battalion line by running around the extreme right end of the draw, three at a time. Even there they did not escape enemy fire; one man was killed before he reached a protected position. After the commanding officer had all his men pulled back, he was told that he could not get artillery support because elements of the 77th Division were so far advanced on the left.

To get supporting fire, Colonel Chalgren called in a platoon of medium tanks which had just arrived behind his forward units. Lieutenant Harper volunteered to direct them, and the tanks moved out four abreast until they came close to the enemy position. Then the crew directed fire on the Japanese. One of the 75-mm shells knocked off part of a construction which had been camouflaging an enemy tank, leaving it in full view.

"Is that a *tank?*" an excited tank man shouted over the radio.

"Hell, yes!" the commander shouted back.

"Ours?"

"No."

Whereupon the crew demolished the Japanese tank with cannon fire at short range.

It was now dark, too late to follow through on the reduction of this position, and the men of the 3d Battalion prepared to bivouac for the night.

Late in the afternoon Companies A and B had come up on the right, to support the 3d Battalion in its attack and to relieve it on the regimental left next morning. The 1st Battalion's advance through fields and jungle had been delayed by snipers in the trees, and by riflemen and machine gunners in pillboxes and dugouts. Darkness closed in before the 1st Battalion was able to help the 3d.

Meanwhile the 2d Battalion had advanced in its zone on the regimental right, keeping abreast of the 3d Battalion without meeting opposition. The progress on the extreme right verified the reports of the reconnaissance units that the main Japanese defenses were protecting the roads to the north and east of Barrigada.

Attempt to Close the Gap

The 307th had been held short of Barrigada in the morning, largely as a result of the crowding of units toward the right of the regimental zone (Map No. 17, page 82). Not only were six (plus) companies advancing on so narrow a front that they could not bring their full power to bear, but they were committed in an area where the terrain favored the enemy defense. As the 3d and 1st Battalions tried to reach the village from the south and southwest, they had to come across the corner of the Barrigada clearing on ground swept by Japanese fire from the northeast and east. Companies L and A had been stopped by this fire west and southwest of the road junction less than halfway across the clearing, L making only 75 yards' progress during the morning. When Company B had attempted to flank the opposition by swinging north of the crossroad, it uncovered a new area of enemy firing positions and, with both flanks exposed, was not strong enough to carry beyond the green house.

After the failure of this attack, Colonel Manuel called General Bruce for his approval to commit the 307th RCT's reserve, the 2d Battalion under Colonel Learner. The Commanding General gave his consent at 1500, and an hour and a half later the 2d Battalion was directed to pass through the 1st, filling the gap which had existed on the regimental front north of Barrigada. Company E on the left would try to contact C, while Company G moved into the green house area. Company G, supported by light tanks, would make the regiment's second attempt to break through at the junction and the green shack (Map No. 19, page 95).

Taking over the area on the left of the 1st Battalion and moving through it, Colonel Learner planned a two-pronged attack toward the green house. The main effort was to be on the right, pushing directly through the Japanese positions at the junction that had stopped Company A earlier in the day. Following four light tanks,

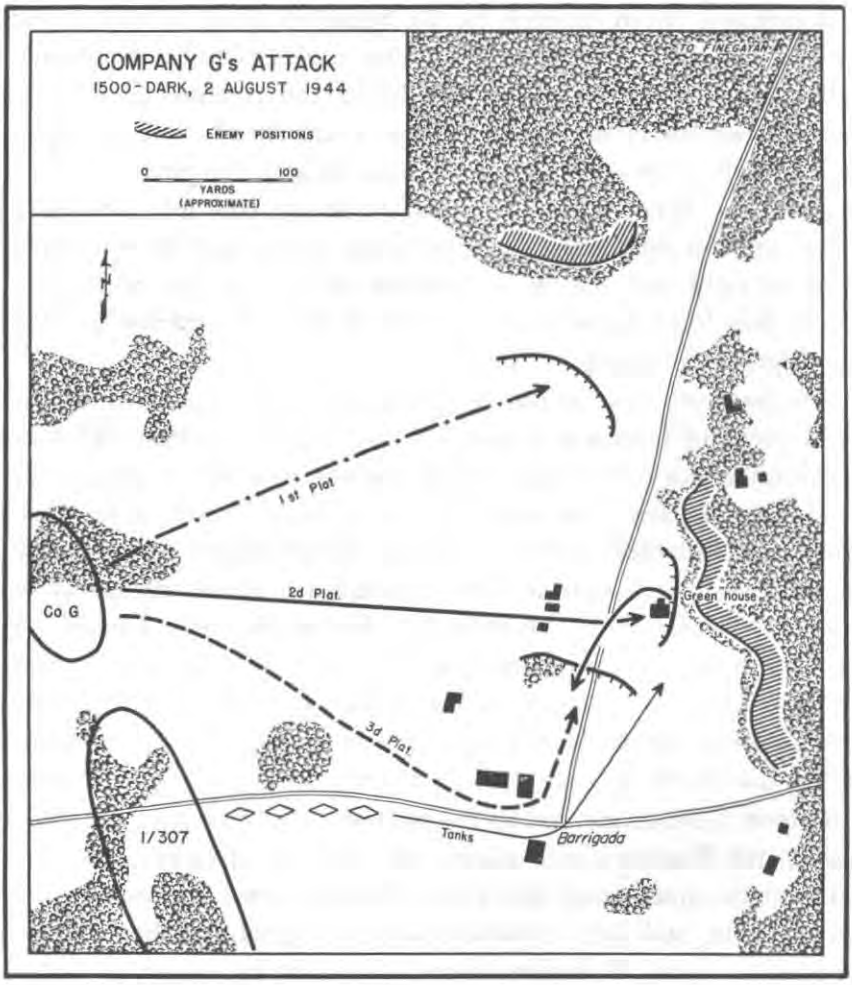
the 2d Platoon of Company G, under 1st Lt. Robert C. Smith, was to proceed along the Agana road to the junction and approach the house from the south. At the same time the 1st Platoon of Company G, under 1st Lt. James T. Whitney, was to advance to the Finegayan road north of the house. The infantry platoons would thus skirt the Barrigada field which the 2d Platoon of Company B had crossed in the earlier attempt to establish a flanking position at the green house.

Unfortunately, when Lieutenant Smith, leader of the 2d Platoon, Company G, reported to 2d Battalion headquarters for orders his company commander, Capt. John F. Gannon, was not there. Lieutenant Smith therefore talked on the phone with Colonel Learner, who merely directed the 2d Platoon to move up on the left of the 1st Battalion. Lieutenant Smith believed that this was his complete order, and he departed to carry it out. Captain Gannon reached headquarters later expecting to see Smith and to give him the full plan of the two-pronged attack, in which the 2d Platoon was to support the tanks on the Agana road.

Following his order Lieutenant Smith located Captain Vernon of Company B, the left wing of the 1st Battalion, to find out where his platoon was to start. He brought his men up on the left of Company B, and by a series of squad rushes guided them into the Barrigada field on the protected side of the swell. At the top of the rise the men began to receive sniper fire, and they crouched in shell holes for protection.

At this position a runner from company headquarters reached Lieutenant Smith to tell him that the order from Captain Gannon was "to follow the tanks in" through the town. Smith was puzzled by the discrepancy with Colonel Learner's instructions. His platoon, having deployed to the left into the field, could not now catch up with the tanks on the Agana road before they got to the shack. The tanks had already gone 200 yards from the 1st Battalion's line and were nearing the junction.

Faced with the problem of rectifying his situation, Lieutenant Smith worked out a scheme on the spot to coordinate his movement with the tanks as quickly as possible. He decided to continue advance of his men across the field in the direction they had started. By this route they would try to arrive at the green house at the same time the tanks did, or if the tanks were stopped at the junction, the men would be in position at the house to support the vehicles.



MAP NO. 19

In a series of rushes, Lieutenant Smith moved his platoon forward as fast as he could, and he overtook the tanks on the Finegayan road near the green house. The enemy fire had increased as the platoon made its way across the field. By the time the first men reached the road, the fire was coming in heavily from the left. The 1st Squad went over to the right of the house, where the tanks were firing into the building and the woods behind. The infantrymen tried to designate targets to the tanks, but the men had no means for communicating with the tank crews. However, tank hits seemed to silence the enemy in the woods.

Lieutenant Smith ordered the 2d Squad to work its way to the left side of the house, where the enemy fire had been most intense. The men threw grenades into the house and returned fire on the enemy positions in the woods. Japanese activity had already begun to diminish when the tanks came over to add the power of their guns to the fight. After the enemy resistance lessened, Lieutenant Smith and his men investigated the green shack, and the open field both to right and left of it, without stirring up any opposition. Smith then formed a skirmish line east of the house extending along the edge of the woods.

To the northwest, in the field west of the Finegayan road, the 1st Platoon of Company G was now in action. Lieutenant Whitney had received his order from Captain Gannon to extend Company G's line to the left along the woods bordering the north side of the field. Lieutenant Whitney's route of advance would require him to move across a wide and open area to the northeast, where any enemy to the north would have a clear field of fire on his men. Though, so far, no enemy fire had come from this area, Whitney felt he was ordering his men out on a dangerous mission. He had his platoon move with the left squad trailing, for security against whatever might be in the woods to the north, almost parallel with his advance.

Colonel Learner shouted to the platoon, "Get that left flank up!" Lieutenant Whitney's men started off on a run. Unfortunately, the tanks at the green house had just withdrawn down the road toward the junction, and their departure was the signal for the Japanese to open up again. This time the open flank, left by the gap produced in the morning's advance, was to show its full possibilities for causing trouble. From the woods on the left of the 1st Platoon, Japanese machine gunners and riflemen in dug-in positions brought down heavy fire on the men. The same fire hit the 2d Platoon at the green house. An enemy machine gunner also reopened fire from the woods east of the house. Neither platoon of G was in position to support the other.

Out in the field, some of Lieutenant Whitney's men hit the ground where they were; others tried to reach the Finegayan road. They searched for shelter in the open field; some got to shell holes, but most lay in the short grass in clear view. With communication back to headquarters impossible, the survivors could only wait for the fire to let up. In the skirmish line at the green house two of

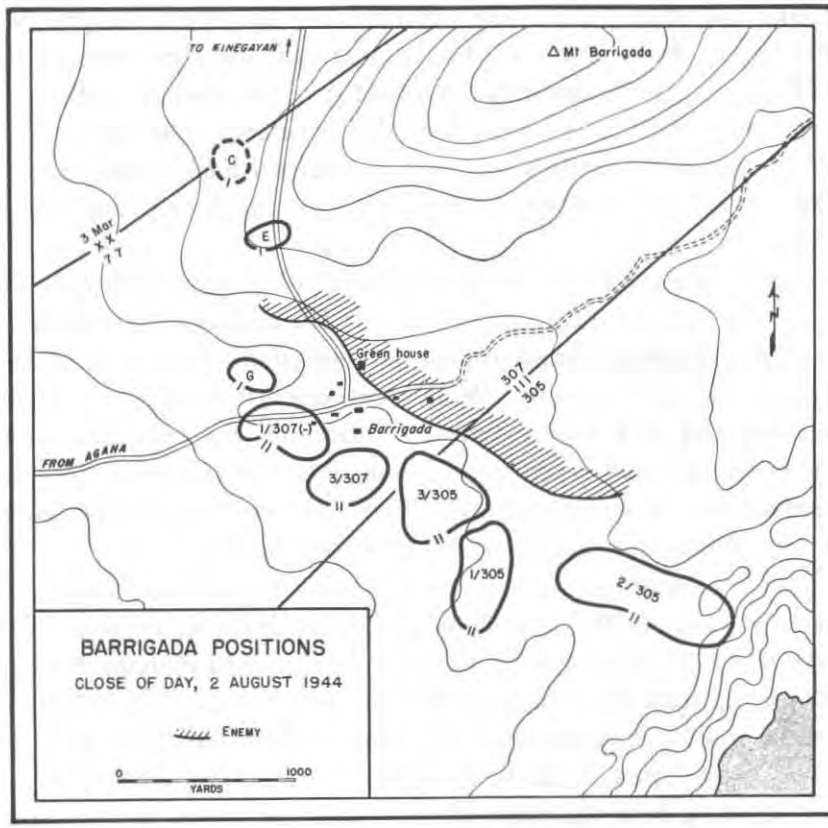
Lieutenant Smith's men were wounded, and they were dragged into the house. Four others tried to run around the right side of the building to silence the enemy machine gun; all were hit with automatic fire. Captain Gannon was also wounded. The men of the 2d Platoon left their line for cover and carried their casualties, now seven in all, to a protected side of the shack until help could reach them.

S/Sgt. Edward E. Whittemore volunteered to cross back over the open field to get aid, just as Sergeant Kunze had done earlier in the day. Lieutenant Smith wanted fire support and medics, and asked to have the tanks return. Whittemore reached Company G headquarters and told 1st Lt. Garret V. Rickards, the executive officer succeeding Captain Gannon in command of the company, "The 2d Platoon are almost all casualties. They are over there in that green house. We need stretchers and help to get them out."

While Lieutenant Rickards went over to the 1st Battalion to get tanks to support the evacuation of the 2d Platoon, he sent word back to 1st Lt. Walter E. Seibert, Jr., to get the 3d Platoon of Company G up front immediately. Without definite knowledge of where the 1st and 2d Platoons were, Lieutenant Seibert started off with his men. At the swell in the field, Seibert could not see either platoon, but he could hear the noise of guns near the village and assumed that at least one platoon was there. In squads deployed as skirmishers, his men went rapidly across the field toward Barrigada.

As the 3d Platoon reached the village, Sergeant Whittemore, following the unit to give it the exact location of the 2d, overtook Lieutenant Seibert and told him what was happening at the green house. Leaving one squad near the junction to secure the right flank, Lieutenant Seibert moved two squads toward the house. Approaching on the road, the squads met heavy fire and stopped to set up a light machine gun in a grove west of the road. The men sprayed the tree tops with BAR, rifle, and machine-gun fire. In return, the Japanese wounded the first and second gunner.

The firepower of the forward elements of the 3d Platoon was quickly built up. Two heavy machine-gun crews from Company H moved in near the green shack, and an 81-mm mortar section emplaced its weapons behind the lines. The machine guns and mortars, selecting targets which had been pointed out by Sergeant Whittemore, were soon joined by two of the 1st Battalion's tanks which had



MAP NO. 20

just arrived on the road west of the shack. Although a great deal of enemy opposition was still coming from the woods north of the field, Lieutenant Seibert localized all his fire in the vicinity of the house, because he did not know where the 1st Platoon was.

Protected by the heavy weapons and tanks, 18 men of the 3d Platoon went forward to carry out the casualties of the 2d Platoon. Some were placed on the tanks, others were put on stretchers. All the wounded were brought back except for one man, who could not be located and lay out near the green house until he was picked up next morning. When the tanks and stretcher bearers had made their way to the rear, the rest of the 2d Platoon retired about 100 yards, as far as the 3d Platoon's position.

It was now getting dark and heavy weapons were running short of ammunition. At this time orders reached Lieutenants Smith and Seibert to withdraw their platoons. Retreat was not easy, for the

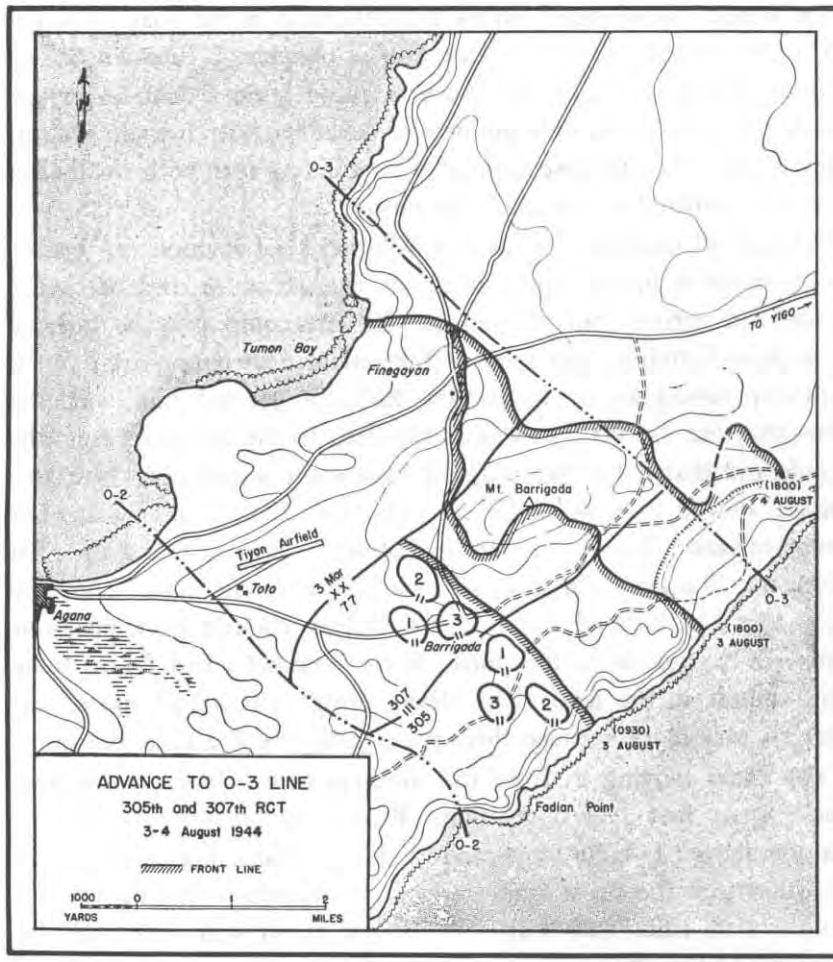
men were to move again across the field west of the road. To give the main elements as much protection as possible, Lieutenant Seibert left two BAR men and one heavy machine gunner, and Lieutenant Smith left several machine gunners to cover the withdrawal. Despite their efforts, the Japanese sprayed the retreating men with small-arms fire and inflicted a few more casualties.

During all this time, Lieutenant Whitney's 1st Platoon was pinned down helpless in the open, north of the action around the green house and entirely out of contact. Its fate could only be guessed at back at battalion. As soon as Lieutenant Seibert appeared at the company headquarters, Lieutenant Rickards greeted him with the news that the 1st Platoon was in the field to the northeast near the woods and that it had been almost completely wiped out. Rickards, Seibert, the 3d Platoon, and three tanks immediately left on another rescue mission. This party, led by Colonel Coolidge, found the men of the 1st Platoon scattered across the length of the field. The only ones who had escaped the Japanese bullets, coming from positions less than 100 yards to the north, were those who had found some kind of hole in the field. The others, lying in foot-high grass, had been an easy mark because their packs had revealed their positions.

The tanks moving in from the south gave the Japanese in these woods their first real opposition. Following the vehicles, the 3d Platoon started to collect the men of the 1st Platoon. So many were casualties that the relief force ran out of stretchers and had to improvise with rifles and coats. When the count was taken the 1st Platoon had lost 26 men, most of them killed. One squad alone had eight killed and one wounded. Lieutenant Whitney was dead. Colonel Coolidge, in charge of the evacuation, was hit. Rescue completed, the 3d Platoon returned to the ridge on the west of the field and dug in for the night with the rest of Company G. The day's action had cost Lieutenant Seibert's unit three wounded.

This ended the fight at Barrigada. Company A had been able to make no headway from its morning positions near the temple. Companies L and K, supported by tanks, had tried during the afternoon to neutralize the enemy in the woods east of the road junction; they knocked out some emplacements, but because of approaching darkness were unable to follow through.

On the left of the gap, Company C of the 307th had pushed along its designated course with a platoon of Company B and some sections



MAP NO. 21

of Company D attached (Map No. 20, page 98). Company C was out of contact with the rest of the regiment all day, and therefore could play no part at Barrigada. But the unit had troubles of its own in the dense jungle, where advance was slow and control of elements difficult. One platoon split away from the main body and ended up in the 3d Marine's zone. Late in the afternoon Company E followed out on C's route to gain contact with C. Reaching the Finegayan road leading south into Barrigada, E started to take the enemy from the flank. Sniper fire delaying its advance, the company, although headed in that direction, did not reach the green house area in time to help the situation there.

As darkness closed the battle of Barrigada, the 305th and 307th

RCT's reorganized and bivouacked for the night. To most of the men of the 77th Division the 2d of August had been a day of frustration. Few had ever seen the Japanese, so well concealed were their men and weapons. The enemy had held the division short of Mt. Barrigada, but the size of his force was impossible to estimate. His toll on the 77th Division for the day was 29 killed and 98 wounded.[1]

North to O–3 Line

When the 77th Division dug in for the night of 2 August, it was more than two miles short of its objective, the O–3 line (Map No. 21, page 100). The Japanese had been so successful in holding Barrigada, and in retaining control of the roads to the north and east, that G–2 began to feel the division had hit the forward installations of an enemy defensive system guarding north Guam. Intelligence estimates suggested that the retreating forces might have positions in depth near Mt. Barrigada. The division troops themselves began to worry about a Banzai attack. They had heard of the charge of 5,000 Japanese on Saipan who overran and decimated 2 battalions, and they expected such a charge any night. However, the darkness of 2 August brought no enemy activity; the morning came without incident. The 77th started the day with another chance to break the defenses in the town, claim the reservoir, capture Mt. Barrigada, and get to the O–3 line.

The main difficulty which the 77th had faced on the 2d had resulted from the bad start which Company A of the 307th had made in the morning, leaving a gap on the left of the Barrigada road junction and crowding the units attacking on the center through the Barrigada clearing. Before the advance on 3 August, General Bruce pulled back his forward units and organized a new front line to carry out the coordinated attack on the town and height which he had planned for the day before. Regimental boundaries remained unchanged. In the 307th's area the 2d Battalion occupied the left wing, relieving the 1st Battalion there; the 3d Battalion, shifted to recover its normal frontage, continued on the right. In the 305th's area the 1st Battalion relieved the 3d on the left, while the 2d Battalion kept its place on the right.

---

[1] Breakdown of casualties is as follows: The 305th RCT had 7 killed and 35 wounded; the 307th RCT had 22 killed and 63 wounded.

At 0630 the attack jumped off, and by 0930 the regiments had advanced through the Barrigada clearing, beyond the enemy positions that had held them at a standstill the whole day before. This time the troops encountered only a few snipers; evidently the Japanese had had enough. During the night they had evacuated their dead and wounded and had withdrawn north of the village. The 77th Division occupied the village and secured the important reservoir.

The close of the Barrigada action seemed like an anticlimax after the preparation of the morning, but the 305th and 307th Regiments soon became absorbed in problems of movement. Beginning now and lasting for four days, difficulties of operating in jungle country were to harass the 77th and to cause more trouble than enemy opposition. The vegetation north from Barrigada became so dense that forward units were divided into a number of spearheads, out of touch with each other. Columns veered to the right and left, picking their way through the almost trackless jungle. Patrols had to be sent out to locate adjacent units. In addition, the maps were not accurate, and aerial photographs, supplementing them, had been taken when clouds covered the most important areas.

Because the troops could not rely on the maps and photographs, they were not able to send back to headquarters an accurate location of their positions. Forward units often were hundreds of yards from their reported front lines. Air and artillery support was limited; artillery, when it was called, was many times misdirected. Company E, 307th, was getting into line on the division's left wing when an artillery concentration killed several of the men and wounded others, including Colonel Learner (battalion commander). When the men came under artillery fire they invariably suspected that it was their own, and sometimes it was. General Bruce found it necessary to order his regimental commanders to "stop accusing our own artillery of firing on our own troops until the facts are known."

Losing their way, hacking out new paths through a tangle of trees and vines, hurrying to reach night defensive areas in time to dig in properly, the infantrymen began to experience the full misery of operations in the tropics. The rainy season was now at its height, and drenching showers alternated with terrific heat. At night, when the men could use warmth, they sat in flooded fox holes and found their teeth chattering; during the day, their fatigues stayed wet with perspiration. Mosquitoes were a torment at night, and the flies took

over at dawn. Always, there was the mud; helmets, uniforms, equipment, and their own skins turned the dirty red color of Guam's soil.

As the division started on toward the O–3 line, the 307th, with the 2d Battalion on the left and the 3d on the right, was responsible for taking Mt. Barrigada. The 305th, on the division's right, would clear the area south of the height. The 1st Battalion was to maintain contact with the 307th, while the 2d Battalion pushed along the east coast.

The 307th had by now lost its original regimental commander and each of its battalion commanders from wounds or sickness. Led by Colonel Manuel, executive officer, the regiment was ready shortly after noon on 3 August for an attack on Mt. Barrigada. The 2d and 3d Battalions (then under command of Maj. Thomas R. Mackin and Maj. Joseph W. Hanna) pushed off from the Finegayan road behind a rolling barrage 200 yards ahead of them. Tanks spearheaded the drive and beat a path through the jungle. The troops met scattered resistance on the lower slope of Mt. Barrigada, but this diminished to only occasional sniper fire near the top. At 1500 the 3d Battalion reached the summit and found itself out of contact with the 2d. Even within the 3d Battalion lines a gap of 400 yards separated Companies K and L. The 3d Battalion reorganized and sent out patrols to contact neighboring units.

In its zone the 2d Battalion could not keep abreast of the 3d Marines, and before long lost contact with them. The battalion's advance on Mt. Barrigada tended to pull it to the right as the elements in the line drew together to keep in touch with each other. A tank patrol from Company A, 706th Tank Battalion, failed to reach the marines because of mines and Japanese machine guns.

About 1,000 yards to the right of the 307th, the 305th was involved in a series of isolated small actions in which the companies had to fight separately, without support on their flanks, because of the dense growth. The 1st Battalion of the 305th, with Company A leading, found its road out of Barrigada suddenly dwindling into a rough trail. The scouts and leading squad of the company were well into a clearing when Japanese in ambush positions along the trail opened fire on them from the right rear. A wild skirmish followed. So confused was the fighting that Capt. Arthur G. Curtin, company commander, mistook grenades exploding among his men as their own. "Get those grenades up in there if you're going to throw them,"

he shouted. As they tried to organize resistance, Captain Curtin and 1st Lt. John F. Scullen, 3d Platoon leader, were wounded.

To wipe out the ambush required close-in action. S/Sgt. John Kane, running through the brush, fell into a hole, already sheltering two enemy soldiers. "Bring me a bayonet," he yelled. One of the Japanese tried to grab his leg; Kane kicked him in the face, jumped out of the hole, and opened up with his BAR. As he fired, one of the Japanese exploded a grenade, which killed both of the enemy in the fox hole. S/Sgt. Benjamin J. Szafasz found another Japanese dug in under a clump of brush. Szafasz threw a white phosphorous grenade into the clump; the enemy soldier, crying "Me no wanna die!" threw it out before it went off. "Come on out then," Szafasz shouted back. But a hand grenade exploded in the hole; the Japanese had decided to finish himself off.

Company A lost several men killed and wounded in this skirmish. Colonel Landrum, 1st Battalion commander, ordered Company A to lead the battalion 300 yards forward; he did not want the men to feel that they had to stop when they had a few casualties. Then he passed B through A to take the lead next day. The 1st Battalion tied in for the night with the 2d Battalion.

Owing to the difficult movement through the jungle on its left and to small-scale actions on its right, the 77th Division had gained only one mile on 3 August. Next day Division exerted more pressure on its lower units to advance as fast as possible toward the Yigo area, and at the same time to maintain contact with one another. The 77th in turn was under pressure from General Geiger, who early in the afternoon of 4 August notified General Bruce he regretted that it would be necessary to hold up the advance of the 3d Marine Division until the 77th lines were better organized and the gap between the divisions closed. The marines had been moving forward steadily, meeting light and scattered resistance.

With the going no easier on the 4th, the 77th pushed forward on the last mile toward its objectives. The 307th secured Mt. Barrigada and gained contact with the 3d Marines, although under unfortunate circumstances. A section of tanks with infantry following set out to reach the marines, in the second attempt made during the day. The tanks overcame two enemy road blocks, and when they were approaching a third block, they were quick to put 75-mm and machine-gun fire on it. Instead of throwing a colored grenade, a signal used



THE WOODED PLATEAU *north of Mt. Barrigada (seen in background of this picture) slowed the 77th Division's advance northward to a mile a day. Roads were hard to find and often overgrown. Contact was difficult to keep. Bare slopes in foreground are at base of Mt. Santa Rosa.*

by the corps for friendly identification, a man came running up the trail into the teeth of the fire, waving his hands. He established that the road block was a marine position, but before he did so, five marines had been wounded.

Meanwhile, on the right wing, the 305th's progress was still slow because of the narrow and indistinct trails. The 1st Battalion, leading the advance, was parallel with the southern slopes of Mt. Barrigada when Company B, at the front of the column, took the wrong trail. While B retraced its steps, Colonel Landrum had Company C take the lead. Medium tanks, at the head of C's column, beat down the brush on each side of the trail and reconnoitered occasional clearings. The infantrymen followed close behind.

At 1300, when the advance elements halted at a bend in the trail, Colonel Landrum went ahead to find out why they had stopped. He overtook Capt. Frank E. Barron, Jr., commander of Company C, in the middle of the bend. Just behind him, the troops and tanks were crowding up, trying to funnel through the heavy growth. Colonel Landrum sat down by a coconut tree, looked around, and suddenly realized that he himself was the point. There were no scouts out. Just then a member of the company 40 feet behind the colonel spotted a Japanese soldier lying in the woods and shot him.

Colonel Landrum stood up, scanned the jungle, and said to Captain Barron, "This looks like an ambush."

As he spoke, he saw an enemy soldier lying on the ground in a clearing a short distance away. Before the Japanese could raise his rifle, Colonel Landrum shot him.

"This *is* an ambush," the colonel exclaimed as he moved back and ordered Captain Barron to take cover.

The men were already hitting the ground as fire came in from the jungle on both sides of the track. From the woods at the bend, where they commanded the route, the Japanese opened up with automatic fire. Company C formed a rough skirmish line along the trail and tried to return fire. Some of the Japanese were less than ten feet away, but the troops found it almost impossible to locate them. Grenades rained into C's line.

Farther down the trail other elements of Company C quickly deployed. Part of the infantrymen set up mortars in the woods, while the rest started out to envelop the ambush. With tanks clearing a way through the brush, they circled through the woods on the left and closed in on the enemy from the rear. The Japanese, who had no defense against such an attack, gave up. After the skirmish the troops looked over the ambush area and found that the Japanese had left behind at the bend a heavy and light machine gun and an ample store of supplies. Apparently they were not expecting combat so early, for their positions were not well dug in and they had been caught preparing their noon meal.

The ambush cost Company C four men killed and nine wounded, most of them from automatic fire. Captain Barron and one of the platoon leaders were wounded.

The 1st Battalion continued its advance late in the afternoon and made contact with the 2d Battalion, a short distance ahead. Company G had also suffered casualties during the day in skirmishes with the enemy along the trail. It was after 1800 when the battalions set up their defensive perimeters for the night.

The 4th of August marked the end of the phase from the O–2 to the O–3 line. The 77th Division had moved abreast of the 3d Marine Division, which the day before had passed through Finegayan and beyond the Tumon Bay area and was waiting for support on its right flank. At the O–3 line the 77th prepared for further movement toward the Japanese main defenses at Yigo.

Final Pursuit Phase

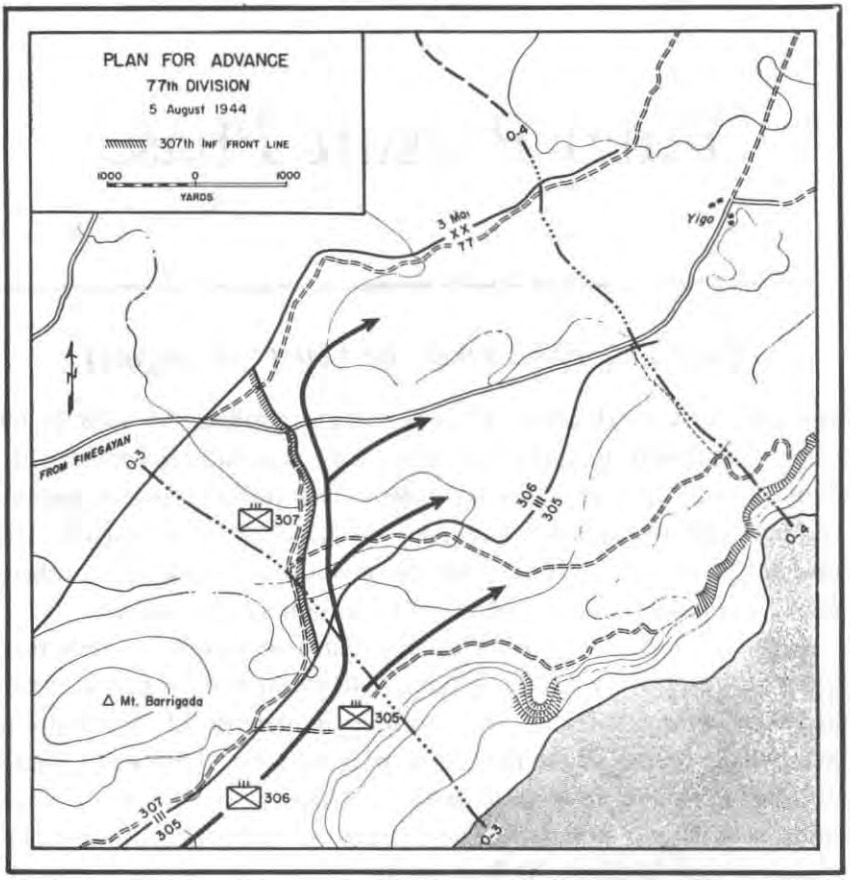
The 306th Takes Over the Left (5–6 August)

AT 1837 ON 4 AUGUST General Geiger notified the units of his corps that it was apparent that the enemy was falling back on Mt. Santa Rosa. The divisions were ordered to continue vigorous pursuit, in their previous zones. The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, less one battalion, was relieved from its mission guarding the southern flank, and would march northward to become corps reserve.

General Bruce was already making plans to employ a fresh regiment on his left. The 306th Infantry had so far had no part in major actions. After eight days of patrolling in defense of the southern beachhead, the regiment had been in reserve for the pursuit phase, and had been used to mop up behind the leading units. On the afternoon of 4 August it was ordered to prepare for moving at 0700 next morning, pass by the right flank of the 307th, and then extend northwest toward the division boundary (Map No. 22, page 108). This would pinch out the 307th Infantry, which would get a day's rest.

Although it would not be carried out in the face of an aggressive enemy, the maneuver of the 306th was difficult under the conditions imposed by jungle terrain, poor trails, and inaccurate maps. The artillery liaison plane helped spot the infantry's position as the columns advanced, 1st and 3d Battalions leading (Map No. 23, page 109). On reaching the Finegayan–Yigo coral road three miles southwest of Yigo, the 1st Battalion began to meet enemy groups well concealed in ambush positions along the route of advance.

Company A required over 2 hours to overcome a force estimated at 50 Japanese. After neutralizing the enemy fire ahead, the company was hit on the flank by Japanese who filtered through the jungle to launch an attack behind heavy machine-gun fire and a barrage of grenades. The attack broke the column in two, separating the mortar and headquarters section from the rest of Company A. Finally, using



MAP NO. 22

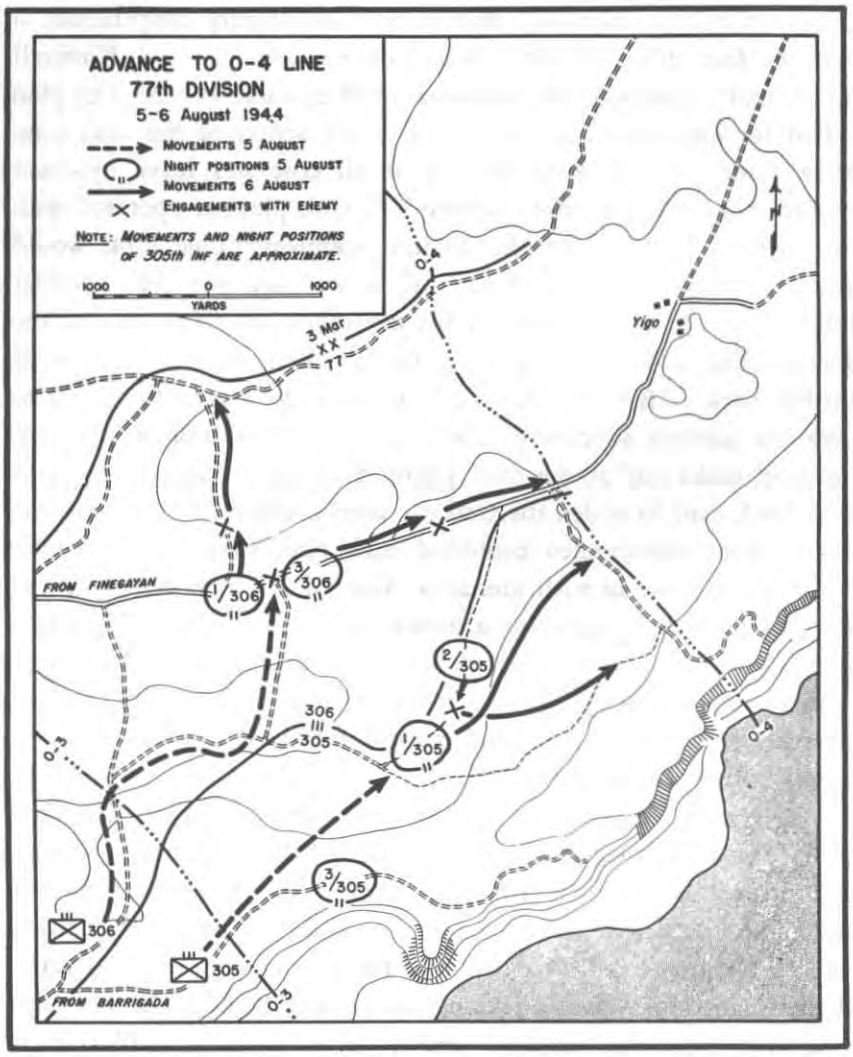
everything available—tanks, artillery, mortars, machine guns, and small arms—the company drove the Japanese off, at a cost of three killed and seven wounded. Nineteen enemy bodies were counted.

As a result of this and other delays, the 306th's advance for the day was about a mile, and it was still 1,000 yards from the division boundary. General Bruce ordered the battalions to consolidate their night positions carefully, reminding them of the possibilities of a Banzai counterattack. His plan for the next day was to continue the push of the 306th toward the division boundary; the 307th would prepare to move up to the Finegayan–Yigo road, and take its place in the center of the division line.[1]

The 1st Battalion of the 306th spent the night of 5/6 August

[1] This was in preparation for the next phase of advance, with three regiments abreast, according to warning orders issued 5 August by corps commander (see later, p. 117).

fighting off Japanese infiltration in a heavy rain; one machine-gun post alone accounted for 12 enemy dead. Next morning with Company B leading, the battalion moved past Road Junction 363 on a trail leading north toward the division boundary. A short distance up the trail, Pfc. Henry J. De Felippo, lead scout, came on several Japanese drying their shirts on trees. They caught sight of the Americans at the same moment. De Felippo killed three, but was shot as he tried to work back under heavy fire to report the



MAP NO. 23

enemy positions. This was the start of another delaying action in thick jungle. Company B suffered six casualties while waiting for machine guns, mortars, and tanks to come into action. Their fire broke up the enemy resistance. The Japanese scattered, leaving 38 dead. The 1st Battalion pushed on toward the zone boundary, but their trail petered out. The last half mile was made by hacking a way through jungle and breaking up coral limestone so that vehicles could follow.

Meanwhile, the 3d Battalion was advancing northeast on the Yigo road. Within a few hundred yards, the unit had an opportunity to try out the 77th Division's theory on tank-infantry cooperation; it was, in fact, this battalion under command of Colonel Kimbrell which had worked out the divisional SOP on these tactics. The plan called for aggressiveness and speed in the action of the lead company, which was to keep moving at all cost and leave bypassed enemy groups to the next company. A tank platoon operated with the support elements of the leading company. One tank would advance through the brush just off a trail on one side, another followed by 20 to 30 yards on the other side of the trail, and the 3 remaining tanks of the platoon moved along the trail 100 yards further back. This formation was designed to enable the tanks to give one another support on meeting an antitank weapon, to keep the lead tanks out of the trail (most likely to be covered by antitank fire), and to widen the trail for units coming up following the tanks. Four infantrymen protected each tank from Japanese who might try to close in with grenades. One of the four moved just in front of the vehicle, guiding it around holes and large stumps, and watching for mines. A basic feature in this scheme—and the most controversial aspect of it—was that infantrymen (i.e., the forward elements of the lead company) should precede the tanks and not simply follow them into action.

This system brought good results on 6 August, along the Yigo road. The lead scout of Company I spotted the muzzle of a 47-mm gun in the brush about 10 yards ahead. He halted the column quietly and reported back to 1st Lt. William P. DeBrocke, platoon leader. DeBrocke skillfully deployed his platoon to within 30 yards of the enemy gun. Then a Sherman (medium) tank was brought up.

So well concealed was the enemy position under a blue-green camouflage net that the first tank was almost abreast before seeing

it. It was a Japanese tank. As the U. S. gunner traversed right, the enemy tank fired one shot, which flattened a bogie wheel, and opened up with its machine guns. Fire also broke out from the bushes on each side of the tank. Then the Sherman went into action. Its 75-mm gun put two AP and one HE shots into the enemy vehicle at almost point-blank range. Bursting into flame, the tank began to sputter and crackle. A quick rush by the infantry platoon accounted for Japanese soldiers around the stricken tank. As the 3d Battalion S–3 later wrote of this action: "Result—1 Jap tank knocked out, 18 enemy killed. Casualties to our troops—none. Time expended—10 minutes! Undoubtedly the Japs expected to mow down a column of infantrymen from their ambush position, and got the surprise of their lives when a tank appeared on the scene so quickly."

By the close of 6 August, the 306th Infantry was on the division boundary, and the 307th Infantry had come up behind it to reach the Yigo road, ready to take its place in the division center.

Two Japanese Tanks

On 5–6 August, the 305th Infantry continued to push northeast in its zone on the division right. During the 5th, progress was limited by difficult jungle. The 2d Battalion, using tanks and self-propelled guns to beat a trail, made an estimated 2,000 yards, but was so uncertain of its location near the end of the day that a trail was cut toward the coast in a futile effort to determine position. The 1st Battalion, a half mile to the rear and southwest of the 2d, bivouacked in a more or less isolated position. Here as elsewhere, the troops were expecting possible Banzai attacks, and that night the 1st Battalion was to experience the 77th's nearest approach to such an action. It came in unusual form—no blind rush by shouting hordes in suicidal desperation, but a daring raid by two tanks and a handful of infantry.

The use of tanks had been a feature of enemy operations throughout the battle for Guam. By 5 August, G–2 had estimated remaining enemy armored strength at a maximum of 20 tanks. The *9th Tank Regiment* had been identified, with its *1st* and *2d Companies,* as well as a tank unit of the *29th Division.* Of an original force of about 64 enemy tanks, 35 had been destroyed, 6 probably destroyed, and 3 captured. The remainder, of which the enemy could probably muster no more than 14 at one time, were nevertheless regarded as

still presenting a threat to the pursuing American forces. The 77th Division had already encountered their use, as single units, for strengthening delaying positions.

About 0200 on the morning of 6 August, men of Company A, 305th Infantry, guarding the northern sector of the battalion's defensive area, heard tanks and infantry approaching slowly from the north. The troops had been warned that friendly tanks were about, and the approaching noise came from the direction of the 2d Battalion's bivouac area; nevertheless, the guards watched carefully and were on full alert. As the moon came out from under a cloud, its light showed two Japanese tanks and a group of enemy soldiers who were setting up machine guns.

Company A immediately opened fire all along the line. A storm of bullets and grenades hit the Japanese. There was no response from the enemy infantry, but the tanks moved off toward the battalion perimeter just to A's right. A Japanese soldier on top of the first tank cried out, "American tank—okay, American tank—okay," but a stream of fire came from its turret. The 1st Battalion's men had not been able to dig deep slit trenches that night because of the hard coral, and many of them broke from their positions in the face of the oncoming tanks. The Japanese threw grenades from the tanks, to add to their destructive fire.

Antitank gunners, as the tanks penetrated the battalion lines, shifted their weapons for better fire. Immediately, the tanks changed direction and cut out of the line of fire. Once inside the perimeter the tanks separated; one stopped and sprayed with fire the area to the left, while the second plunged farther to the right. They seemed to have thoroughly scouted the bivouac area and carefully planned their maneuver.

The tank moving right struck into the men so quickly that they hardly knew what was on them; terrified, they ran off before its blazing guns or sprawled on the ground when caught in its line of fire. Throughout the area excited men turned their rifles and machine guns on the enemy vehicles, but the fire only ricocheted off steel sides into fleeing men. The moving tank collided with a Sherman, backed off and rolled over a jeep, crushing it, and then sprayed other vehicles with machine-gun fire. Joining, the two tanks charged north toward the perimeter. The Company A men who had first sighted the attack were still there, in position, having killed off the

enemy infantry. They were ready for more attacks from outside, but had no defense from the rear. One man, wounded, staggered to his feet and fell under the onrushing tanks. The rest huddled in their V-shaped shallow trenches and escaped harm, though two soldiers had their rifles smashed as the tanks ground over them. The Japanese soldier who had ridden into the perimeter on top of a tank was still there as the vehicles rolled out; a last rifle shot knocked him off.

A trail of devastation was left behind. The 1st Battalion had lost 16 killed and 32 wounded, many of the casualties resulting from friendly fire as the troops on the perimeter concentrated on the tanks ranging through the bivouac. An artillery forward observation team had been almost wiped out, losing six men. Smashed and bullet-riddled equipment littered the area. And the enemy tanks had escaped, seemingly unscathed. The 1st Battalion spent the rest

DISABLED JAPANESE LIGHT TANK. *The enemy, at Barrigada and south of Yigo, expended the few tanks he had in determined but uncoordinated attacks. This tank was hit by a bazooka at a range of 15 yards.*



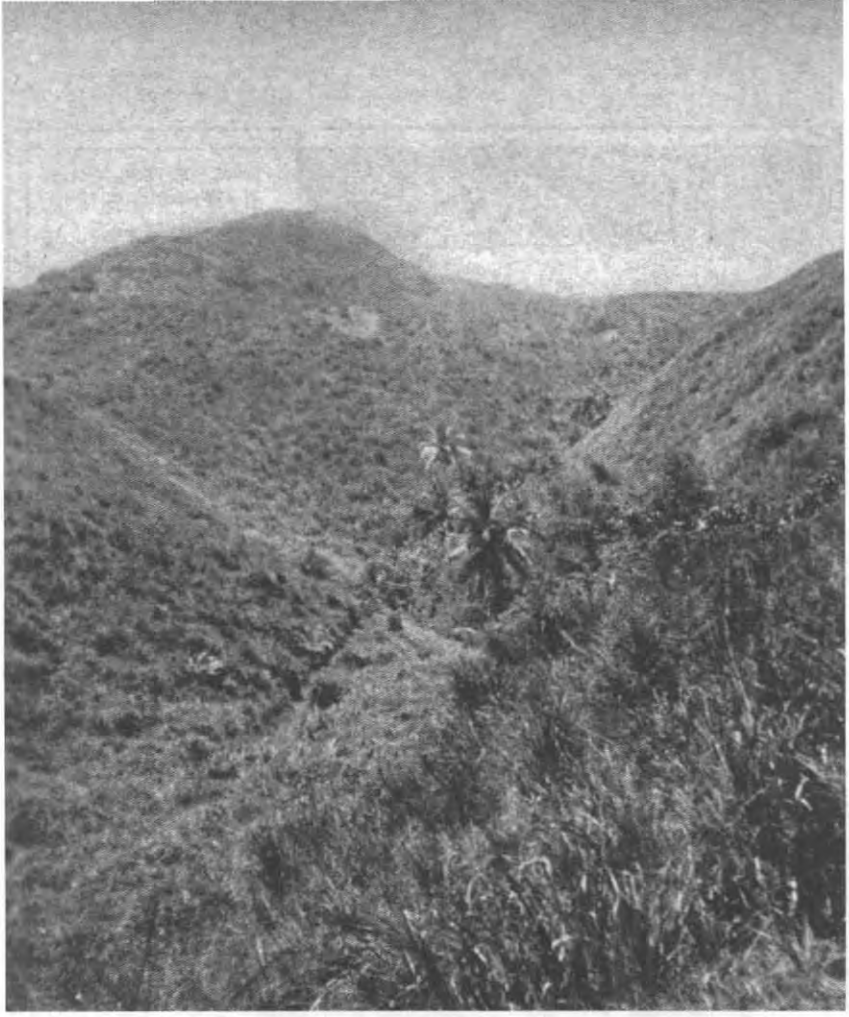
of the night holding off Japanese efforts to infiltrate behind grenades and sniper fire.

The story of the enemy tanks did not end here. When last seen by the 1st Battalion, they were heading north on a trail that led toward the 2d Battalion's bivouac. En route, one of the tanks broke down, and the Japanese crews stopped to work on it. Meanwhile, the 2d Battalion was about to retrace its course of the previous day and return on that very trail, since ahead of it lay impenetrable jungle, so thick that "a man cannot step off the path without cutting." General Bruce authorized the battalion to work to the west and even go into the 306th's zone, if necessary, to find a better route.

The track was so narrow that in order to make its preliminary move back, the 2d Battalion had to do an "about face." This put Company E in the lead, with mortars and heavy machine guns from H attached. It was difficult to say which was more surprised when, just after moving out, the four-man point encountered a Japanese soldier in the trail. The enemy shouted something to hidden comrades, the Americans passed the word back to their column, and a vicious fire fight opened up. The enemy tanks were in hull defilade, their guns and machine guns covering the trail for 200 yards' distance. The leading men of Company E deployed to right and left of the trail in a hasty skirmish line. Because of a slight rise in the ground, the enemy tanks and riflemen were hard to locate, and Japanese fire raised havoc with the battalion column as it came up the trail in support. Tree bursts from the enemy shells sent shrapnel slashing through the woods and into the troops, causing face, arm, and back wounds. The cry went back for medics and for stretcher bearers.

American medium tanks came slowly up the trail, followed by more troops. As the lead tank came around a slight bend, a shell burst against it, and the tank stopped. The riflemen spread out on each side in the jungle. The heavy machine guns of Company H were brought up and placed in line close to the tanks. They were able to get in only a few bursts before enemy fire swept their position, killing or wounding most of the crews.

Riflemen began leaving positions under the heavy fire. The forward tank, afraid of being deserted, started to back out and thereby caused more panic. Capt. Charles T. Hillman, 2d Battalion executive officer, came up the trail and attempted to rally the men. He

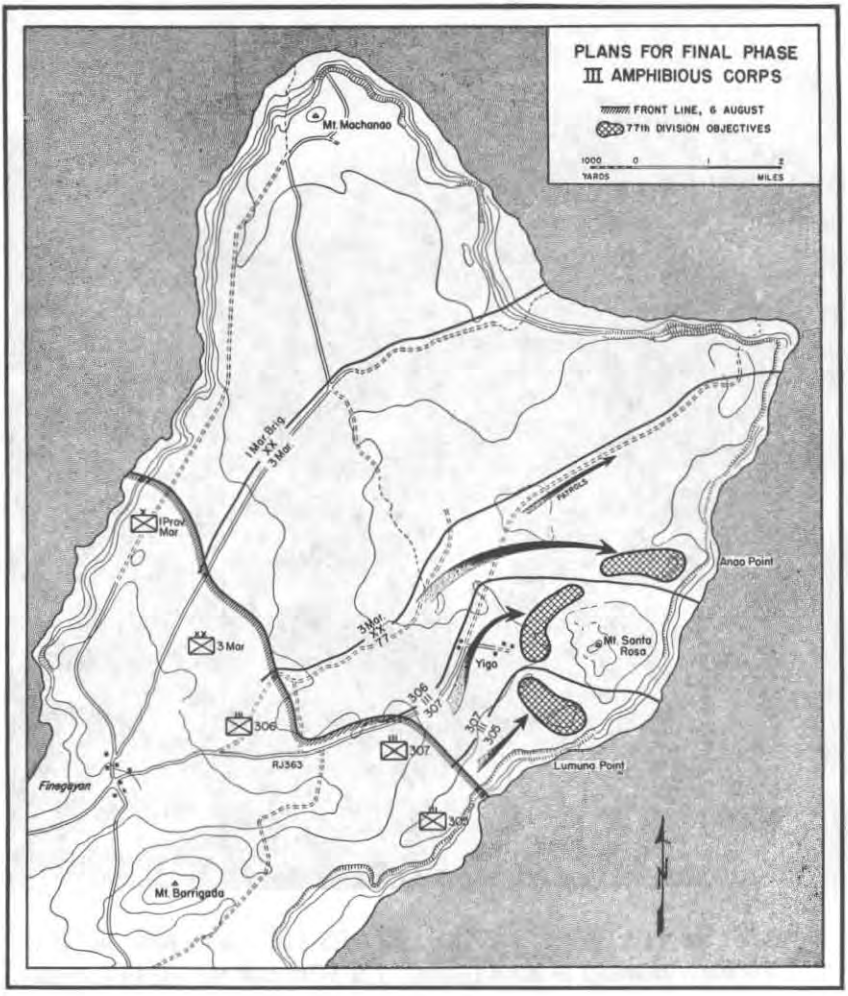


MT. SANTA ROSA'S BARE SLOPES (*at center*) *form one of the 4 natural clearings in north Guam. The 307th took the hill on 8 August.*

was wounded at once by a machine-gun bullet. Together with a wounded sergeant from Company H, Hillman was able to reorganize some of the retreating men a few yards back of their first positions.[1]

Farther back on the trail conditions were not much safer, as the terrible enemy fire seemed to be able to rake the whole length. One of Company H's mortars was never able to get into sustained operation because of the enemy fire and the jungle overhead. Another, 100 yards back, went into action with good results, lobbing shells steadily at the enemy positions.

[1] Capt. Hillman's wound later proved fatal.



MAP NO. 24

The fight ended as quickly as it had begun; the intense Japanese fire slackened, then abruptly stopped. Infantry squads pushed out through the jungle on each side to reach the enemy's rear, and drew no fire. The troops found two deserted enemy tanks, near them one dead Japanese. Two others, killed by mortar fire, were just off the trail. The rest of the enemy had fled, after inflicting a comparatively heavy toll on the 2d Battalion: 15 killed and 31 wounded seriously enough to be evacuated. Since vehicles had not been able to accompany the advance into the jungle, evacuation was a laborious job. Some wounded had to walk. Others were carried out in four hours on improvised stretchers, with eight men alternating on the job.

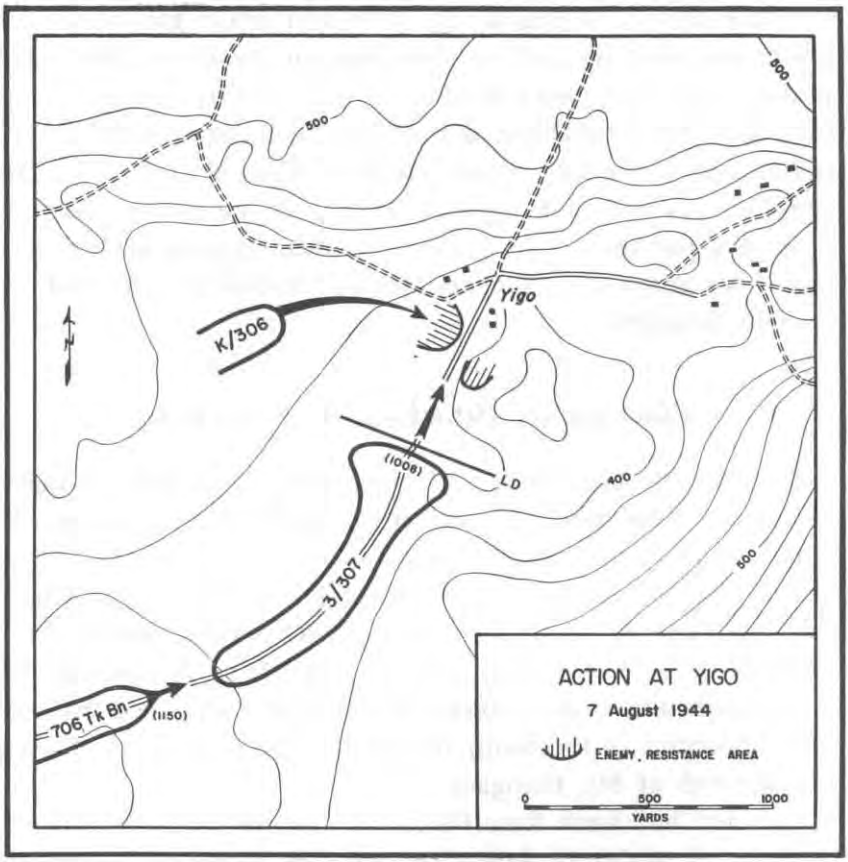
By the close of 6 August, the 305th had finally got its two battalions into place on the O–4 phase line, an advance of about 1,000 yards through the almost trackless terrain. No considerable enemy force had been encountered, but sniping was a menace even in areas considerably to the rear. Colonel McNair, Chief of Staff of the 77th Division, was reconnoitering a clearing 1,000 yards from the front lines, as a possible site for a new CP, when Japanese soldiers fired from a hut at the edge. Colonel McNair returned their fire and was mortally wounded.

Plans for the Attack on Mt. Santa Rosa

The III Amphibious Corps' advance to the O–4 line on 6 August left less than one-third of Guam in the hands of the Japanese. To defend it, they now had little more than 2,000 men, one-ninth of their estimated original strength. In this northern part of Guam, only the Yigo–Mt. Santa Rosa area offered terrain suitable for a major defensive stand (Map No. 24, page 116). A captured map as well as reports from air observers and natives indicated that substantial numbers of the enemy remained in this area, on the highest ground north of Mt. Barrigada.

Yigo and Mt. Santa Rosa fell in the zone of the 77th Division, which would employ all three of its regiments to deal with a possible Japanese stand. The other two major ground units under III Amphibious Corps, the 3d Marine Division and the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, would attack abreast on the 77th's left to reach the north coast of the island. Plans for continuing the pursuit to destroy the enemy and capture the remainder of the island had been initiated by General Geiger on 5 August. The 77th Division would make the main effort toward Mt. Santa Rosa. The marine brigade, on the left, would cover a zone extending one and three-fourths miles inland from the coast; the 3d Division, in the center, was responsible for a 3-mile front. In this last big attack an unprecedented number of units would be committed; only one battalion each of the 77th and 3d Marine Divisions would be placed in corps reserve. The time of attack was to be set later.

The exposed area of Mt. Santa Rosa, only a mile from the ocean, would receive an extensive softening up. Since 3 August, warships had been shelling Santa Rosa day and night. A fleet of 131 P–47



MAP NO. 25

fighters and 74 B–26 bombers were now operating from Saipan; some of these were concentrating on Santa Rosa's smooth crest and bare slopes during the preliminary period. On the day of the attack an air strike and naval bombardment were scheduled.

On 6 August, the 77th Division issued instructions to its RCT's for the advance to Mt. Santa Rosa. Objective of the division was an area which encircled the hill; the maneuver was essentially a wide sweep by the left wing as the division pivoted on the right. The ground north of the height was the objective of the 306th RCT, scheduled to make the main assault. To seize this area the 306th would have to cover twice as much ground as the regiments on its right; therefore, it was ordered to advance without regard to other units, in a sweep along the division's left boundary. When its tanks reached the road junction southeast of the region of Chaguian, it

would turn eastward and advance to the north of Mt. Santa Rosa. At the same time the regiment was to send patrols northeast along the division's left boundary.

The 307th, supported by the 706th Tank Battalion (less Companies A and B), was to take Yigo, then turn east and advance to the slopes of Mt. Santa Rosa. Fairly good tank country opened up in the 307th's zone. Cultivated areas instead of jungle bordered the Finegayan road to Yigo and covered the area east of the town. In the 305th's sector on the right, however, dense jungle rain-forest with heavy undergrowth would make advance more difficult. Moving through the worst terrain, the 305th (less the 3d Battalion) would cover less ground than the two regiments making the sweep to the north, as it closed in on the hill to prevent any escape southward. When each regiment had seized its objective, Mt. Santa Rosa would be surrounded from Anao to Lumuna Point, and the enemy cut off from all escape except into the sea.

Attack on Yigo

Early in the morning of 7 August, General Bruce notified Colonel Manuel, commander of the 307th: "You may employ all your battalions; you do not have to get a reserve for the division. You will probably need three battalions to tightly hold. . . . Be sure to have everybody oriented. The earlier we make the attack the better it will be. Unless we are thoroughly coordinated, the effort will be fruitless."

The answer came back: "I understand, I agree, I will be ready."

The three regiments of the division moved out from the O–4 line in the morning. They were to try to be in position to attack when H Hour was announced. The 3d Battalion of the 307th, under Major Lovell, led the advance in the center of the division's sector, striking out along the Finegayan road toward its line of departure, a point on the road 500 yards southwest of Yigo (Map No. 25, page 118). The 2d and 1st Battalions, initially in reserve, were to be committed as the 3d moved forward, and to press the attack in column of battalions. On the division's left, the 3d Battalion of the 306th started north from the Finegayan road to move cross-country and bypass Yigo on the west. The 305th moved northeast off the O–4 line on the right.

The 3d Battalion of the 307th made a rapid advance. Company I, the leading element, reached the line of departure at 0900. Capt. William B. Cooper, company commander, had seen two Japanese run across the road ahead, and was expecting trouble. He sent the point up the road a short way and put scouts out on each side. He also brought up a heavy machine gun to shoot up the woods on each side of the road as a precautionary measure.

The machine guns were no sooner set up and spraying the woods than heavy fire opened up from all sides. The Japanese concentrated their rifles and machine guns on our machine-gun section, which was close to the advance scouts and in an exposed position. The men scrambled for cover; snipers seemed to be on all sides. Grenades began exploding and the troops were virtually helpless. Within a

THE MARCH TO YIGO, *77th's last objective. All three regiments of the division combined in the assault on the town and Mt. Santa Rosa.*



few minutes 11 men were casualties, most of them in the machine-gun section.

The congestion of men on each side of the road made it difficult to bring up more troops and deploy them on a skirmish line. Tanks came up cautiously; they had difficulty in coordinating their movements with the infantry. While the men combed the woods foot by foot to hunt out snipers, tanks cleared lanes of approach. Some of the snipers were killed; the rest filtered off into the woods.

Mopping up the Japanese continued until 1008 when the 3d Battalion reported that it was getting to the line of departure. Half an hour later the 307th received word from division headquarters that H Hour had been set for 1200. This meant that the artillery preparation, to be concentrated on Yigo, would start in one hour.

At 1145 Colonel Stokes, commander of the 706th Tank Battalion, received orders to report to the command post of the 307th, now located on the Finegayan road 500 yards behind the line of departure. Colonel Stokes had worked out the tank phase of the attack in a conference with General Bruce the previous evening. Immediately after the artillery preparation, the light tanks of Company D would advance rapidly into Yigo, followed by the mediums of Company C. Medium tanks of the 307th RCT would be in general support. After reducing enemy positions at Yigo, Companies D and C of the 706th would occupy high ground northeast of the village. The infantry would give close support to the tanks. H Hour had not been set at the time of the conference between Colonel Stokes and General Bruce.

Approaching the CP, Colonel Stokes saw the troops of the 307th moving up on the road and heard the artillery open up with a roar at 1150, just as he arrived. Colonel Manuel informed him that H Hour was 1200 and that he was to follow the prepared plan. As Colonel Stokes' tanks were almost a mile behind the line of departure, he had no time to discuss plans with Colonel Manuel. Hastily Stokes radioed Capt. Leonard H. Seger of Company D to move out at once and execute the prepared plan.

The artillery attack on the enemy positions in Yigo was devastating. Hundreds of 105-mm and 155-mm shells poured down on the road junction to smash installations. A curtain of fire was laid down on the trails out of town to prevent escape. An artillery liaison officer watching from his plane saw enemy soldiers run in all directions

from the terrific explosions. Some Japanese dashed toward the 307th's lines directly into the hands of the advancing infantry. Others fled along a trail running north. As they did so, a series of blasts scattered them on that exact part of the trail.

"My God, this is slaughter!" the observer was heard to cry over the radio.

At 1200 the artillery stopped, but the tanks and infantry were not in position to advance immediately into the shelled areas. They were still on the narrow road leading into Yigo. The 3d Battalion was supposed to have moved into position during the preparation, but their advance was delayed by the narrowness of the road and by enemy sniper fire. The light tanks, belatedly catching up with the troops, found it almost impossible to push through the columns of men in order to take the lead. The light tanks of Company D could not travel off the road because of the jungle on each side; the road itself was clogged with vehicles, cautiously advancing troops, and the medium tanks attached to the 3d Battalion.

Fifteen minutes after the artillery stopped, the light tanks were finally up at the head of the column of troops, 100 yards north of the line of departure and 400 yards from Yigo. The tanks moved rapidly ahead to pass through the troops. Two hundred yards farther up the road, there was an opening in the woods. Through their vision slits the tankers caught a glimpse of several machine guns manned by Japanese and dug in along the right of the road. The light tanks overran these positions and roared on. The tanks started to echelon to the right so that they could move abreast over the open ground, which rose to a slight crest on the right. The medium tanks followed along the road. Behind them the troops began to attack dugouts and pillboxes left by the fast-moving armor.

In a wedge formation, commanded by Captain Seger from his tank at the right rear, the light tanks swept rapidly over the slight crest. As they pushed on there was an explosion to the left of the tanks directly in front of Seger. He radioed to Colonel Stokes: "There's a burst in front of me—could be mine or antitank gun. Call for the mediums."

Just before the mediums came up more explosions sounded from the left. The tankers could not locate the source of the fire because of the dense woods to the left and the absence of flash and smoke. Gunfire hit Sgt. Joe Divin's tank to the far left, at the road. It stalled;

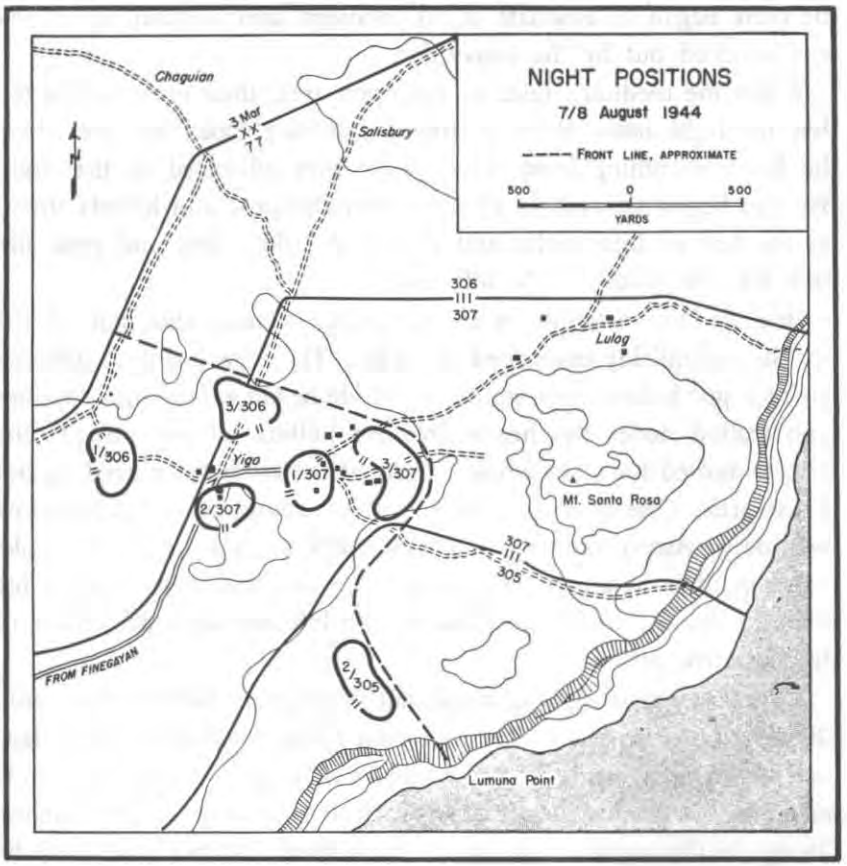
the crew began to evacuate it. A moment later another light tank was knocked out by the heavy fire.

When the mediums reached the open area, their crews could tell that the light tanks were in trouble but they could not see where the fire was coming from. Only when they advanced up the slight rise and began themselves to have steel shrapnel and bullets smash on the left of their hulls and turrets did they turn and pour fire back into the woods at the left rear.

One medium was hit in its gas tank. Flames shot out of the bottom and quickly enveloped the sides. The crew hastily clambered out of it just before the ammunition inside began exploding. Another tank stalled under the heavy fire. As bullets hit the vehicle, the tankers dashed for a shell hole. Some of the mediums moved on out of the area. One of them tried to sweep around to the right below the line of enemy fire and promptly threw a track. As more tanks came up, they swung their cannons and machine guns around for brief fire on the enemy positions to the left and then passed on to the objective ahead.

The crew was struggling to get out of Sergeant Divin's light tank. Divin was in the turret. He had been badly wounded in both legs and was in great pain. The only means of escape for the other crew members, besides the turret, were the driver and bow-gunner hatches. Owing to the construction of the tank these hatches could not be opened when the turret was traversed off center, as was the case in this situation. Sergeant Divin desperately tried to center the turret, but the mechanism had become damaged by gunfire. His strength ebbing from loss of blood, Divin put a tourniquet on his leg. With a supreme effort, he dragged himself out of the turret hatch onto the rear deck of the tank, leaving the way open for the crew to follow. The tank was now afire and was receiving machine-gun fire from the enemy positions 50 yards away. Divin stayed in this exposed position to direct the escape of his comrades. As they dashed for cover, machine-gun fire struck and killed him.

Fifty yards behind the stricken tanks the infantrymen struggled to push through the positions by the road that the tanks had overrun. Japanese still fired from a pillbox that had been blasted by the medium tanks as they raced ahead. The troops put rifle and machine-gun fire into it. They threw six grenades before one landed inside the position. The enemy continued to fire from it. A flame-thrower man



MAP NO. 26

maneuvered cautiously up to the position and put the searing flame in through an opening. The heat was too much for the defenders; one of them scurried out and fell before the American guns.

The enemy position that had harassed the tanks was still intact in the woods to the left. Those tanks that were unharmed drove rapidly on; the infantrymen were still working through the positions behind, on the right of the road. However, unknown to the Japanese and to the slowly advancing troops, an effective flanking maneuver was developing on the left, in the sector of the 3d Battalion of the 306th RCT. This battalion had been advancing through the jungle on the flank of the 307th. Its commander, Colonel Kimbrell, had expected trouble at Yigo. When he heard heavy firing break out on his right, he personally detached the 1st Platoon from Company K and led it through the jungle toward the Finegayan road.

So intent were the Japanese on blasting the targets in front of them that they were never aware of the infantry creeping up on them through the woods behind. With a short rush the Americans were on them. They dispatched the Japanese with rifles, BAR's, and bayonets. The 1st Platoon had no casualties during the brief struggle; one man was wounded a moment later, probably by friendly fire from the tanks or infantry along the road. Other elements of Company K moved up and attacked enemy positions along the edge of the woods farther north. The Americans found two tanks, an antitank gun, two 20-mm guns, six light machine guns, and two heavy machine guns almost perfectly concealed from the Finegayan road to their front, although vulnerable from the rear.

South of the road the tanks were still aflame, and some of them were shaking as ammunition exploded inside. The infantrymen were now through the positions on the right of the Finegayan road and advancing up the road toward the center of the village. Several of the men rushed over to one burning tank to extricate a wounded tanker; despite the exploding ammunition they were able to put him on a litter and evacuate him. As the troops passed through Yigo they were amazed at the devastation caused by the artillery; the place was swept clear of buildings or enemy, and there was no opposition to our advance.

The infantry found the tanks waiting when they reached the high ground northeast of Yigo at 1325. The tanks had been here 40 minutes, circling about to prevent infiltrators from closing in on them. There was little sign of the enemy. Whatever the failure of coordination at Yigo, the Japanese had been utterly routed by the power of the combined assault. The stubborn resistance from positions along the road had cost the 706th Tank Battalion two killed, ten wounded, and one missing, as well as two light and two medium tanks.

During the afternoon of 7 August the three battalions of the 307th moved into positions for the attack on the Santa Rosa area to the east, but it was too late to continue the attack that day, and the troops bivouacked for the night half a mile east of Yigo. The 1st Battalion had met no resistance in following 400 yards behind the 3d, and later in the afternoon the 2d Battalion had displaced forward to the town. The 3d Battalion of the 306th dug in half a mile north of the village (Map No. 26, page 124). During 7 August, the 1st

Battalion, 306th, commanded by Colonel Remus, had advanced on the left rear of the 3d Battalion and bivouacked that night west of Yigo. The 305th spent the day advancing slowly through the jungle toward Mt. Santa Rosa and by nightfall had moved a mile from the O–4 line.

Tank Attack Against the 306th (7/8 August)

Although the enemy had been blasted out of Yigo, he had enough strength remaining north of the town to cause trouble for the 3d Battalion of the 306th. Evidently with the hope of repeating his successful raid on the 1st Battalion of the 305th two nights before, the enemy launched a tank attack on the 3d Battalion's position. Before the attack came, enemy patrols felt out the 306th's positions. At dusk of 7 August and again at midnight, patrols hit at the battalion's position, which straddled the trail running north from Yigo. On the second occasion the men held their fire until the Japanese were within a few yards, then cut down all the enemy soldiers in sight.

Two hours later tanks were heard approaching from the north. The men lay low in their slit trenches. The leading tank appeared over a slight knoll and let loose a burst of cannon and machine-gun fire. Another Japanese tank opened up a short distance behind. The machine-gun fire from the tanks was on a flat trajectory and missed the men, but the high-explosive cannon shells hit trees just above the men and sent shrapnel down on them. A platoon of enemy riflemen behind the tanks added to the heavy fire.

A bazooka man and a flame-thrower man became casualties in quick succession when they attempted to use their weapons against the tanks. Another soldier with a flame thrower moved up but bullets hit both him and his weapon. Some of the riflemen retreated in the face of the tank fire, but Pfc. Everett W. Hatch and Pfc. Joseph P. Koeberle, manning a light machine gun, held their ground. When the leading tank was within five yards of the men, they closed in and poured machine-gun fire into its 6- by 10-inch aperture. The two men kept up the fire until the machine-gun barrel burned out. There was no more sign of life within the tank.

The Americans finally were able to put bazooka and rifle grenade fire on the second tank, knocking it out of action. A third tank pulled it away. Eighteen dead Japanese, including three officers,

were found in the vicinity the next morning. The 3d Battalion's casualties were 6 killed and 16 wounded. In the morning the battalion reorganized, to be ready for its mission in the continued divisional attack on Mt. Santa Rosa.

Push Beyond Mt. Santa Rosa (8 August)

General Bruce issued orders for the attack to continue at 0730 on 8 August. The 307th in the center and the 305th on the right were to close in on Mt. Santa Rosa, where most of the remaining Japanese were believed to have gathered. The mission of the 3d and 1st Battalions of the 306th was to capture the hamlet of Lulog just north of Santa Rosa. Out of Lulog trails ran north and east to the sea. The 306th would cut off any Japanese attempting to flee from Mt. Santa Rosa along these trails. The whole area had been softened up by fighter and bomber attacks the previous day. The western slopes had been strafed in 20 P–47 sorties which expended 20,000 rounds of .50-caliber ammunition and dropped thirty-nine 500-pound bombs. Ten B–25's, in five flights, had bombed enemy troops and guns on the south slopes.

In its drive to Lulog, the 3d Battalion quickly overwhelmed the remaining enemy, who had taken shelter in numerous huts along the trail. They had weapons and ammunition, but many of them showed little stomach for fighting. In some cases they simply sat in the huts and were killed; sometimes they fired a few shots and then killed themselves. Evidently the terrific shelling by artillery and naval guns and the bombing from air strikes had disorganized the enemy.

For the few Japanese that did try to hold out, the 3d Battalion had shock tactics carefully prepared. For the first time in the Guam operation the battalion was able to put into action its "Assault Squad SOP" which had been practiced at length in the United States and in the Hawaiian Islands. The assault squad was made up of riflemen, BAR men, one flame thrower, one pole-charge man, one satchel-charge man, and one bangalore-torpedo man. The soldiers carrying the charges were infantrymen who had been given special demolition training in order to free the division engineers for their specialized jobs of construction. On meeting one of the pillboxes, huts, or caves that lined the trail to Lulog, the assault squad went in after a

medium tank had blasted the position. The men carried any type of charge necessary to demolish the position. Supporting weapons were used as much as possible.

Basic in these tactics was to keep the column moving. Sometimes the head of the column pushed forward rapidly while the rear was still engaged in attacking positions. At one time units of Company I, leading the battalion, were engaging four strongpoints at the same time. As the attack proceeded, the battalion column became increasingly stretched out, but the troops moved forward so rapidly that the enemy was never able to organize any kind of raid on the middle or rear of the column.

It was a spectacular sight. The tanks and infantry moved in so fast that the enemy hardly seemed to know what was on him. As the flame throwers were played on the thatch huts, the straw and wood burst into flame; one flame thrower sent a Japanese crawling out with his hair and clothes afire. The attacks were immediately followed by use of the charges in order to blast out any remaining Japanese. One 2-story hut was found empty on the first floor except for a large pool of blood on the cement floor; in the room above there were eight recently killed Japanese, badly shot up and dripping blood through the ceiling into the floor below. Evidently they had become confused by the heavy fire and tried to hide in the top story.

So effective were these tactics and so stupefied was the enemy, that the only casualty during the day among the leading battalion elements was one man knifed to death by a cornered Japanese. Over 100 enemy were killed. The advance took the 306th well beyond Mt. Santa Rosa and within 1,000 yards of the ocean.

At 1700 the 1st Battalion, 306th, joined the 3d Battalion at Lulog. These troops, who advanced on the division's left flank, had a mishap while trying to contact neighboring units of the 9th Marine Regiment. The marines, advancing along the Salisbury road in the 77th's sector, evidently mistook Company F, sent out to contact the adjoining unit, for the enemy. Before the information could be relayed to the units concerned, artillery fire from the marines hit a CP and machine-gun fire fell on a mortar section, causing several casualties.

By the time the 306th reached Lulog, the 307th had captured Mt. Santa Rosa. At the approaches to the mountain 35 Japanese were killed, but no opposition was encountered on the bare steep slopes. The shelling of the previous days had been highly effective.

Seizure of Santa Rosa afforded an excellent observation post, although the jungle was so dense in the vicinity that it was difficult to see small groups of enemy unless they moved into the occasional cleared areas. By evening the entire 77th Division sector on Guam was occupied, except a small portion of the left regimental sector on the north. Effective resistance in the 77th's area was declared at an end.

That night, the difficulties of coordination in jungle country were demonstrated once again. The 306th and 307th mistook each other in the dark, and an intense fire fight broke out. Men on each side scurried for shelter with the thought that at last the much-postponed Banzai charge had arrived. After a few minutes of wild activity, including mortar and tank fire, the fight subsided, but not before there were a number of casualties.

Mopping Up

Many small groups of the enemy had been bypassed by the main lines of advance and made use of the favorable terrain to hide and harass our units. While the marines pushed on to cover the remaining short distance on the northern tip of Guam, the 77th concentrated on mopping up in its sector. Here enemy remnants attempted to infiltrate bivouac areas at night and even skirmished with the troops during the day. To induce the remaining enemy to surrender, the 77th scattered leaflets in the jungle around Mt. Santa Rosa bearing this message:

IT IS NOT A DISGRACE TO TAKE A NEW LEASE ON LIFE!
(An old proverb says that disgrace is but a momentary emotion.)

1. The superior Imperial Japanese Navy fought furiously at Saipan, but unexpectedly it was defeated with losses of three hundred planes and many ships. As a result, at the present time, your planes and submarines cannot come to your aid. Therefore, you cannot be supplied or reinforced.
2. The U. S. Forces have already conquered Saipan, and Guam is virtually conquered. The thousands who surrendered at Saipan are at present living under very pleasant circumstances under U. S. supervision.
3. U. S. Government treats their prisoners with fairness and justice.
   a. The things given you are tobacco, clothing, shelter, food, etc.
   b. You who become prisoners in the Pacific will not have your identity communicated to Japan—so be reassured!

c. Furthermore,. each prisoner receives the same medical care given to the U. S. soldier.

On Guam, at the present time, you are the only survivors besides the natives.

The results were unsatisfactory. The Japanese were unwilling or unable to give themselves up. The 77th had taken ten prisoners through 6 August; one more was captured on 9 August, but he was the last. This prisoner was a sailor who said that he had been on Mt. Barrigada with 1,000 other Japanese until the end of July, and that he had deserted with 3 others before the Americans reached that point. He stated that he had been without food for five days.

Initiating a program of vigorous patrolling, the division and its regiments dispatched patrols to all areas where activity was reported. Medium tanks were used to break a path through the jungle, aided where the jungle was thick by a tank dozer, a medium tank equipped with a bulldozer's blade. The men advanced cautiously on each side of the trail, keeping within the woods so that they could see the enemy in the jungle. While the tanks put heavy fire into suspected areas, the infantry gave them close-in protection.

The experience of patrols from the 3d Battalion, 305th, on 7 and 8 August indicated the dangers of going into the jungle after the Japanese in "rear" areas. This battalion, in corps reserve while the rest of the division pushed on toward Santa Rosa, was ordered to carry out a mass sniper-hunt in a stretch of woods near the division CP, a mile and a half south of the O–4 line. The expedition turned into a nightmare, as the hunters became the hunted. The troops tried to move through the woods in a long skirmish line to act as a dragnet. Soon the line broke into small groups, which lost contact with one another and then their sense of direction. The jungle was infested with Japanese snipers and even machine gunners. As the men groped for a way out they were gradually surrounded and picked off by the enemy. Rescue parties came in to help evacuate the wounded, only to become casualties themselves. Some of the men fought their way out by putting spurts of fire into an area ahead, grenading it, running to the area, and repeating the process to get to the next spot ahead. Lieutenant Harper of Barrigada fame was among the seven killed. The Japanese, who were estimated to have a company in these woods, had 37 killed. The rest pulled out of the area.

The last organized resistance of the Japanese was underground. Natives had pointed out an enemy defensive position or headquarters three-quarters of a mile northwest of Yigo. On 10 August the 1st Battalion of the 306th reconnoitered this area and found a basin-like depression about 100 yards long and 40 feet deep, covered with brush. As a flame-thrower man maneuvered at the approaches to the position to put fire into an opening, Japanese concealed in the thick brush around the sides of the area opened up with rifles and machine guns. A violent fire fight ensued. The entrenched enemy used mortars as well as small arms; whenever one of the 1st Battalion's men moved he immediately drew down fire on himself. The 1st Battalion was in a poor position to carry on the fight and pulled out as dusk came, with the loss of 8 men killed and 17 wounded.

The next day the 1st Battalion launched a carefully prepared attack. The troops came in at right angles to the previous day's advance, behind tank fire and a heavy mortar barrage. The tanks were unable to move down the steep sides of the depression, but the infantry passed through, two companies abreast in a skirmish line, and mopped up any Japanese that survived the barrage. Few were still alive; most of them had crept into shallow holes and covered themselves with brush and dirt, to no avail. The attack was made under the eyes of a group of marines, standing on a hill a few hundred yards away, who cheered as the infantry quickly completed its job.

On the side of the depression, foliage had been blown away, revealing small tunnels leading into caves. As the troops pulled away, the brush covering the entrances to the tunnels, one soldier was hit by rifle fire from inside. Pole charges and white-phosphorous hand grenades were put in. Two Japanese soldiers armed with rifles ran out in rapid succession and were shot down by the watching infantry. Just before the demolitions were set off, the Japanese inside were heard singing a weird oriental chant, which continued even after two series of demolitions had been set off. When evening came four 400-pound blocks of TNT, placed in the entrances, caused tremendous blasts which effectively sealed off the caves.

Four days later the caves were opened. The odor was so terrific that the men had to don gas masks. Over 60 bodies were piled up inside. The caves were large and very elaborately constructed, with 4-foot concrete walls. A huge transmitter was found in a cave, brand new and unused.

On 8 August, Radio Tokyo announced that American troops were in possession of nine-tenths of Guam. On 10 August the marines completed the occupation of their sectors on the north tip of the island. At 1500 on 10 August General Bruce received an order from Southern Troops and Landing Force that all organized resistance on Guam had ceased. However, the 77th and the marines were still committed to mopping up of jungle areas and clearing out caves. This task continued for several weeks. Although the surviving Japanese were hungry and diseased, they continued to fight to the death. After 10 August, the 77th Division suffered 52 more casualties before they finished their assignment.

On 8 December 1945, three months after Japan had surrendered unconditionally, some Japanese who had managed to hide out on Guam for 16 months ambushed and killed 3 marines, wounding another.

Conclusion

WITH ITS MISSION COMPLETED of helping the marines to secure Guam, the 77th Division established an encampment in the hills east of Agat and named it Camp McNair after the 77th's former Chief of Staff. As the rainy season was at its height during August and September, the weary men found little rest or recreation. They continued on combat rations for several weeks and often had to hand-carry their own rations for miles when the roads washed away. Construction work also kept them busy. Conditions gradually improved as some of the comforts of life were brought in to the newly secured island.

The 77th took stock of its losses. On 10 August 265 men had been killed, 5 were missing, and 876 wounded seriously enough to be evacuated. The 3d Marine Division and 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, which had taken the main burden of the operation, each suffered greater total casualties than the 77th. The 3d Marines had lost 612 killed, 2,909 wounded, and 65 missing by 11 August; the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade counted 402 killed in action, 1,741 wounded, and 51 missing.

The toll exacted from the enemy was many times greater than American losses. On 10 August the 77th Division counted 1,889 killed; by 9 August the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade had killed 3,549, and the 3d Marine Division estimated its destruction of Japanese at 5,208. After organized resistance ceased, the 77th killed several hundred more Japanese in the mopping up. Through 9 August 77 prisoners were taken. The corps' estimate on 10 August was still that enemy strength before the invasion had been 18,500. The total count of enemy killed came to only slightly over 10,000 because so many of the enemy dead were blown to bits, buried by artillery fire, sealed up in their holes and caves, or simply never found in the jungle.

The difference between enemy casualties and our own lay in our enormous fire power, as well as in the good training of our troops and

the tactics of the American command. In small-arms ammunition, the 77th expended approximately 3,600,000 rounds of .30-caliber, 750,000 rounds of .30-caliber carbine, 475,000 rounds of .45-caliber. and 46,000 hand grenades. The division artillery during the battle used 19,428 rounds of 105-mm HE, 709 rounds of WP, and 4,579 rounds of 155-mm HE, making a total of 24,716 rounds for 4 battalions of artillery.

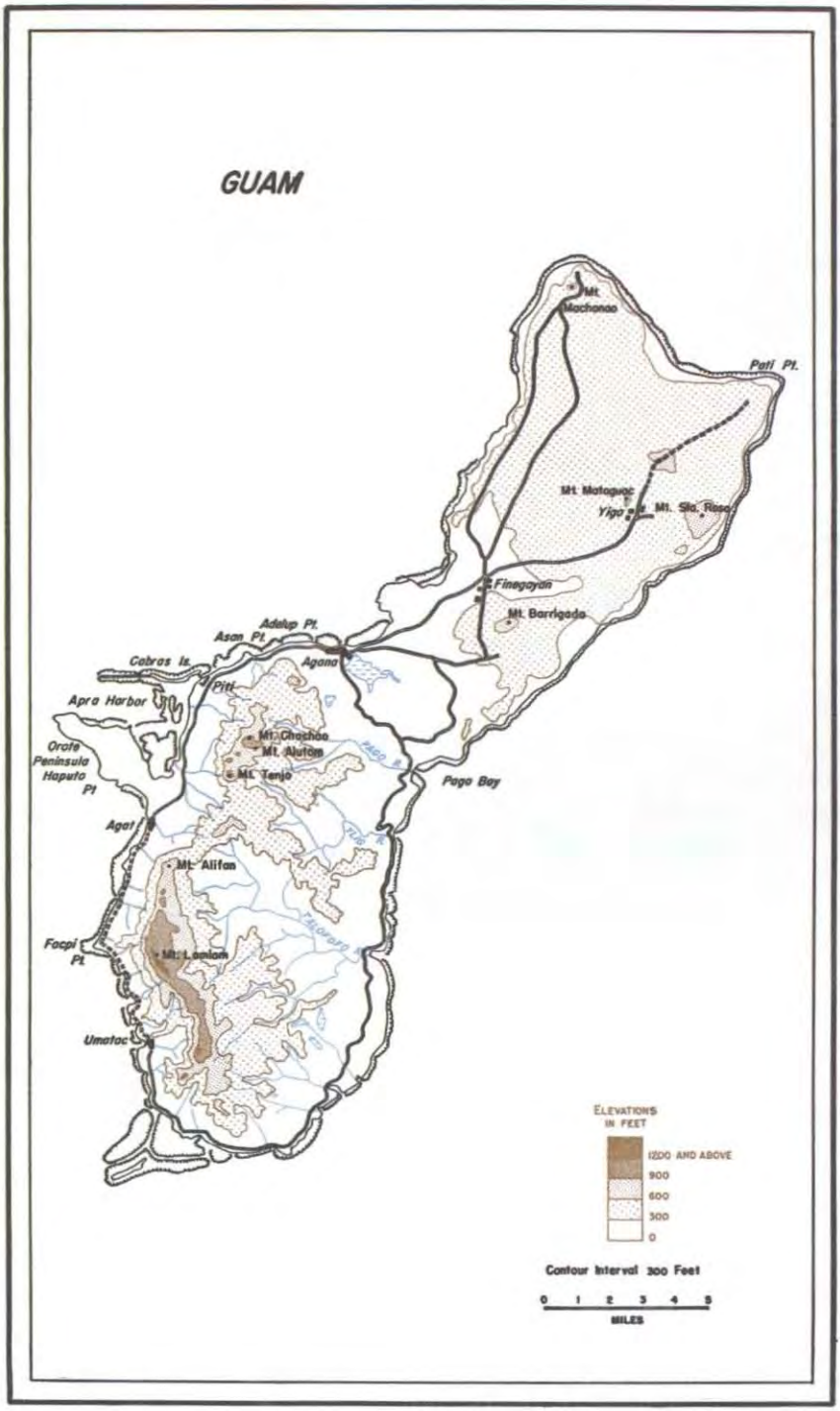
Increased knowledge of the enemy's intentions from captured documents, prisoner of war interrogations, and native reports indicated that he had planned to defend Guam with a larger force than the 18,500 encountered by the corps. However, the Japanese High Command experienced new troop requirements elsewhere, which, combined with the effects of Allied naval strength, frustrated their plan. Only small forward echelons of the *13th Division,* evidently earmarked for movement from Manchuria, ever arrived at Guam, either because the convoy involved in the movement was torpedoed, or because some new situation in China or Manchuria required retention of the division there. At least one convoy carrying units of the *29th Division* and elements of the *1st* and *11th Divisions* from Ujina (Manchuria) to Guam was attacked by our submarines. One prisoner from the *18th Infantry Regiment* stated that half the personnel on the *Sakito Maru* was lost when it sank. Survivors were taken to Saipan, where the *1st Battalion* of the *18th* remained, while the *2d* and *3d Battalions* were sent to Guam under strength.

As soon as the enemy resistance ceased, Seabees and marine and army engineers set to work on the base with the latest equipment. Apra Harbor was quickly developed so that medium-sized cargo vessels could land supplies onto quays leading from Cabras Island. After a year of construction and improvements, this harbor handled more cargo than any other forward area port in the world. Air facilities also expanded rapidly. Orote airfield was soon large enough to take heavy bombers, and within a few months B–29's were flying to Japan. The air war against the enemy homeland reached victorious proportions in 1945, when B–29's took off daily from Guam's five large air bases and eight air strips. While the base expanded, the men of the 77th Division, who had helped make possible the possession of this key base, worked and trained for their next assignment, landing at the rear of Japanese forces on Leyte, early in December 1944.

ANNEX NO. 1

Abbreviations

APA	Transport, Attack
AP	Armor-piercing
AT	Antitank
BAR	Browning Automatic Rifle
CP	Command Post
FBL	Final Beachline
HE	High Explosive
LCI(G)	Landing Craft, Infantry (Gunboat)
LCM	Landing Craft, Mechanized
LCVP	Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel
LST	Landing Ship, Tank
LVT	Landing Vehicle, Tracked
RCT	Regimental Combat Team
RJ	Road Junction
SOP	Standing Operating Procedure
WP	White Phosphorous



☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1990 250-873