O N T H E P O I N T O F T H E S P E A R

EXPERIENCES OF A MARINE RIFLEMAN
DURING THE BATTLE FOR THE ISLAND OF OKINAWA
IN APRIL, MAY AND JUNE OF 1945

BY

James S. White

Corporal, USMC

G Company, 3rd Battalion, 29th Marines

Sixth Marine Division

D E D I C A T E D T O :

Paul Louis Buckingham, Private, USMC
28th Marines, Fifth Marine Division
Killed In Action on the Island of Iwo Jima; March 19, 1945

Loren Leroy Mitchell, Sergeant, USMC
G Company, 3rd Battalion, 29th Marines, Sixth Marine Division
Killed In Action on the Island of Okinawa; June 5, 1945

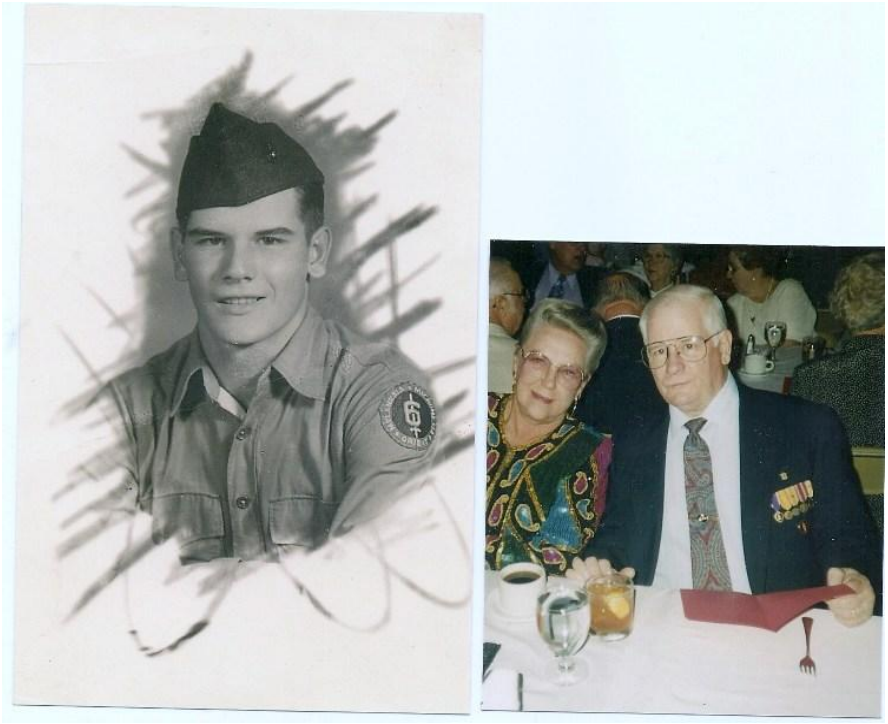
And to the men of the Sixth Marine Division ---

" ... and that's why our reunions are so important ... When the colors are presented on Saturday night and we stand at attention and pledge our allegiance, I always let my eyes look over the men of the Sixth. And at that moment I am seized with the realization that I am in the presence of true greatness. Nothing compares! Not relatives, not neighborhood friends, not important people, not wealthy people, not celebrities, no one. This group, this motley group of aging, portly, greying men once were warriors in the finest traditions of the United States Marine Corps .... And, if there is such a thing, in the finest traditions of war itself. To stand among them is to feel their spirit, their courage, their love. To know you are one of them is to experience an emotion that few men will ever know."

--- Richard A. Whitaker, Private First Class, USMC
F Company, 2nd Battalion, Twenty Ninth Marines
Sixth Marine Division

United States Marine.

To those who do not know just what that title means it has little value. But to its possessor, that title has a value that is beyond price. The title is not freely granted. It must be earned. Marine Corps training is a constant -- always tough. The process is mental as well as physical, sometimes to the limits of endurance. The philosophy is; if there is to be a breakdown, let it be in training, lest there be a later failure during dangerous times that could endanger other Marines.



JAMES S. WHITE

First photo was taken in November, 1945 in Tsingtao, China, about the time of his 19th birthday.
Second photo was taken at a 6th Marine Division reunion in 1995 with wife, Verna L. White.

Medals, decorations and devices awarded to members of the 6th Marine Division.

James S. White

Born November 6, 1926 Kansas City, MO.
Graduated June, 1943 Benson High School Omaha, NE
BS Degree June, 1950 University of Nebraska at Omaha
Married Verna Louise David November 15, 1947
Three sons, one daughter, three grandchildren
Three great granddaughters.
USMC Parris Island July 17, 1944
Camp Lejeune, NC
Camp Pendleton, CA
Overseas From December 14, 1944 to July 29, 1946
Banika, Russell Islands
Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands
Mog Mog, Ulithi Atoll
Okinawa, Ryukyu Islands
Saipan, Marianas Islands
Guam, Marianas Islands
Tsingtao, China
Action at Okinawa April 1, 1945 to June 10, 1945
Wounded In Action June 9, 1945
Decorations:
Purple Heart
Combat Action Ribbon
Presidential Unit Citation
Discharged San Diego, CA August 10, 1946
Halliburton Company August 28, 1950 to January 31, 1986
Engineer and Supervisor
Activities and Hobbies
Radio Controlled Model Sailplanes
Wood Carving
Rifle Accurizing
High Power Rifle Competition
National Rifle Matches, Camp Perry, Ohio 17 times, 1961-1988
Distinguished Rifleman Badge 1981
Presidents Hundred Brassard 1977, 1978, 1982, 1985
Member, 6-man National Civilian Rifle Team, 1966
(All above earned with M1 and M14 Service Rifles)
Master Classification, High Power Rifle
NRA Certified Rifle Instructor

On Sunday, April 1, 1945, two Army Infantry divisions and two Marine divisions landed on the western (East China Sea) coast of the island of Okinawa and began attacking a well entrenched Japanese force numbering about 100,000. They were backed up by two other Army divisions and another Marine division.

April 1st, which is always April Fools Day, was also Easter Sunday in the year 1945. The date of the landing was designated, not as D-day as in the Normandy invasion, but as L-day. In the phonetic alphabet used in those days (Able, Baker, Charlie, etc.) "L" was "Love". A bloody battle was begun on "Love Day". It was to last for 82 days. To the participants, it seemed to last much longer.

The battle of Okinawa was shunted off the main track of history by events which took place at about the same time. The Iwo Jima battle had ended a week before and President Roosevelt died a short time after the Okinawa battle began. The war in Europe ended in early May of 1945.

Okinawa was the largest battle in the Pacific Theater, the last great battle of World War II. The island was 350 miles from Japan. About 1500 ships were used to carry the assault force, more than were used in the Normandy landings on D-day in Europe. While the ships supporting the Normandy invasion traveled only hundreds, perhaps even dozens of miles; ships going to Okinawa had to sail from 4,000 to 6,000 miles.

A relatively new tactic was used by the Japanese, one that had been encountered earlier on a smaller scale in the Philippines. Suicide aerial attacks, called Kamikaze, Japanese for 'Divine Wind', were made on the ships in the assault armada. With as little as two hours of prior flight time, Japanese would fly south from Japan toward Okinawa in explosive laden aircraft.

Off shore surrounding Okinawa was a picket line of U. S. Navy ships. A Kamikaze pilot would attempt to dive onto one of those ships to damage or destroy it, giving up his life in the process. Kamikaze pilots weren't always successful, but enough of them did succeed that 36 ships were sunk and another 368 damaged, some so badly that they were later scuttled. More sailors were killed off Okinawa (4907) than were lost on the island by either the Army (4675) or the Marines (2938). And, in a most unusual war time statistic, there were more sailors killed than were wounded.

On shore, the Japanese employed tactics that were similar in character. But, unlike the Kamikaze, they did not recklessly throw away their lives in hopes of inflicting damage on the

enemy. They remained in their fortified emplacements, fighting until they were overrun. The strategy of the Japanese had changed as the war dragged on. In earlier island battles they had sought to destroy the invading forces at the landing sites. On Okinawa, they did little to oppose the landings on the beaches. Instead, they fortified the southern part of the island with strong defensive positions in hills honeycombed with manmade caves and tunnels. The Japanese fought almost to the last man, choosing to die in place rather than surrender. The same tactics had been used earlier on the islands of Pelelieu and Iwo Jima.

Front line Marines and soldiers paid a high price, in men killed and wounded, for any ground gained. Casualty rates for United States forces had been rising the longer the war in the Pacific continued. The Marine Corps had more Marines killed and wounded in the first six months of 1945 than for the total of the previous three years of the war.

Nearly all of the 100,000 Japanese defenders died during the fighting on Okinawa. An estimated 150,000 Okinawans also died during the battle. The total number of people who died on or around the island, including combatants on both sides as well as the native Okinawans, was exceeded in World War II only by the number of Russians and Germans killed in the battle of Leningrad in the USSR which lasted four years.

The Tenth Army was the force that landed on Okinawa. It was made up of the Army's XXIV Army Corps and the Marine Corps Third Amphibious Corps.

The four Army divisions that made up the XXIV Army Corps were the 27th Infantry Division, the 77th Infantry Division, the 7th Infantry Division and the 96th Infantry Division. All had seen prior action.

Three Marine divisions made up the Third Amphibious Corps. These divisions were the First Marine Division, the Sixth Marine Division and the Second Marine Division, which made a fake landing on L-day in an attempt to trick the Japanese defenders. In June, the 8th Marines of the Second Marine Division landed and fought on the southern end of the island.

The First Marine Division and the Second Marine Division had each been proven in battle.

The Sixth Marine Division was new, formed only the previous September, but it was made up of veteran units. Seven of its nine rifle battalions had fought in at least two island battles. The remaining two battalions had a large number of Marines who had fought in earlier battles and were overseas for the second time. It was an outstanding fighting force. The Sixth Marine Division captured 65% of the land area of the island of Okinawa. Its men took part in some of the hardest fighting, killed more

of the enemy and suffered more casualties than any of the other divisions on the island.

It may seem that I have a bias in favor of the Sixth Marine Division. If so, I freely admit to it. The Sixth Marine Division was *my* division.

The United States Marine Corps made it possible that I own something that can never be taken from me. It was not a gift. The price was high. This possession is a lifetime membership in an exclusive fraternity. The requirements to belong have been met by only a comparatively few men.

Only a small number of Americans have experienced war up close. Even in time of war, fewer than two out of twenty members of our country's armed forces are ever close enough to an enemy that they hear the sounds of shots fired in anger. Only one in twenty soldiers or Marines has heard a bullet crack as it went by, has dug a fighting hole while under fire or spent a night in one in the rain. These men are front line fighters, riflemen, men who occupy stations of great peril, twenty four hours a day, sometimes for weeks at a time. Periodically, they may have to leave places of relative safety to advance against an armed enemy who is trying to kill them. These are the men who win wars.

No one who has not experienced it can comprehend the wretched conditions of ground combat: the grinding fear; the discomfort, exhaustion, lack of sleep and pain; the filth and stench; the wrenching sense of loss at the death of a comrade. Men who have endured these experiences together form a bond with each other.

Charles Reese, a journalist from Florida, describes that bond in these words:

"Combat creates a true brotherhood with the most exclusive membership rules in the world.
There's no way to cheat on membership requirements. And the ones who are in can instantly sense someone who isn't."

That brotherhood has probably been around since time began. Shakespeare ascribes these words to King Henry V, spoken in the year 1415, on the night before the battle of Agincourt:

"We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he today that sheds his blood with me shall be my brother ----
And gentlemen in England, now abed, shall think themselves accursed they were not here; and hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks that fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day."

It might seem strange that I feel fortunate, although I was wounded during the battle, that I was one who fought as a Marine rifleman during the fighting for the island of Okinawa, who "saw the elephant" and became a member of the "band of brothers".

On patriotic occasions when the bands play and the Flag goes by, my head is held high. Whenever I see members of the armed forces, I get a feeling, not of smugness, but of satisfaction. My dues are paid. For it was my good fortune that I once had the opportunity to fight the good fight -- "on Saint Crispin's day".

James S. White
G Company, 29th Marines, 6th Marine Division, 1945

One Spring morning in 1952, just after daybreak, I was moving around the upper reaches of a pond located a few miles northwest of Duncan, Oklahoma. I was picking my way over rough ground in an area near a canyon where bulldozer work had been started but not yet finished. Almost no wind was blowing. The air was cool and a light mist fell from a gray overcast sky. I was carrying a flyrod in my right hand and a fishing tackle box in my left. There was a pool on the other side of the pond where I hoped that my casting skill might irritate a big bluegill enough that he would attack my popping bug fishing lure.

While moving over the torn ground, I suddenly smelled the strong odor of a dead and decomposing animal which I later saw was a large turtle. Instantly, I experienced a feeling of alarm and alertness, maybe even of fear.

The combination of the weather, the kind of clothes I was wearing, my right hand being occupied by the flyrod as with a rifle, and my left hand by the fishing tackle box as with a box of machine gun ammunition; and walking over torn, muddy ground; had primed all of the receptors of my mind and body. All of the elements were present, of something I had experienced before. The spark was the sudden smell of death.

For a brief span of time, no more than a second or two, I had lost seven years. In my mind, it was once again the year 1945 and I was back on the island of Okinawa.

One of my paternal great grandfathers, Judge James W. White, fought in the conflict called the Civil War. Known by some as The Southern Rebellion, my great grandfather probably called it The War Between the States, because he fought on the Confederate side. The family has little that tells us about his wartime service, except that we know it was relatively short lived. We have a penciled note, written by his sergeant, testifying to the fact that he was shot in the thigh by a Union minie' bullet, on "Bloody Hill", at the battle of Wilson Creek near Springfield, Missouri in late 1861. He returned after that to the Kansas City, Missouri area where he became one of the city fathers.

I am certain that my great grandfather had some stories to tell of his experiences in the war, and I'm sure that he told them. But the persons to whom he related his experiences are now gone. Since they were not committed to paper his memories are lost forever.

To preserve some of my remembrances, I am writing this to tell of things that occurred long ago while I was a rifleman in G

Company, 3RD Battalion, 29TH Marines of the Sixth Marine Division during the battle for the island of Okinawa in 1945. As someone gets older, he finds that he can sometimes remember minute details of events that occurred a long time ago better than something that happened last week, especially if those long ago events were tattooed into his memory by being life threatening or of an unusual nature. Many wartime experiences qualify on both counts. There may be errors in this account, but they are probably confined mostly to transpositions of dates and times when events took place.

Memory does have its limits. This is not really a narrative, but more a series of anecdotes of things I remember. And, I remember less about the earlier days and events on Okinawa than I do about the later happenings. Maybe I became inured to the rigors and the dangers the longer I was exposed to them, and so, remember more.

Much rambling and extraneous information will be found here. So be it. I am writing this for myself. Anyone wanting to read it can either omit the ramblings or else struggle through them. A few people may find them of interest.

If any of my words sound bitter or smack of bellyaching, I very much regret that, for they are not meant that way. I hold no bitterness toward my country, toward the Marine Corps and most certainly none is felt toward any individual Marine. The Marines in G Company have only my love and admiration. The Marine Corps was a tough outfit and those were tough times.

I can think of nothing that could have been done at that time to change things as they were, aside from allowing the war to continue forever, or surrendering to the Japanese. We knew no better way to do it. To say that war is unpleasant and that front line combat is not a recommended way of life is to underline with understatement.

My boondockers often contained the first Caucasian feet ever to tread on the soil of some areas of Okinawa. I was a front line Marine. A rifleman. The front line, from which nothing was forward but enemy territory, was usually defined by our rifle muzzles and delineated with our blood. If armed forces can be likened to a spear, my company was usually on the tip of the spear point, the part of the spear closest to the enemy.

Some people look down upon men who were front line fighters. As a former Marine rifleman, I naturally cannot be numbered among the people who feel that way. Occasionally, in stories, a soldier or Marine, accused of some crime, is threatened with being sent to be a private in a rifle company, as if front line combat were some kind of punishment. A prolonged ordeal it might have been for us, but it wasn't a punishment. Our only transgression was volunteering to fight for our country. It

certainly was not a privilege to do so, but it was an honor. Someone had to do it. We did do it.

Aircraft can bomb, strafe and rocket. Tanks can wheel and maneuver. Artillery can throw shells and missiles at an enemy. Sixteen inch naval guns can create great craters in the earth. But wars are not won by powerful weapons alone. Ultimately, to declare a battle won, men, traveling on two feet with weapons in their hands, must expose their bodies to the dangers of contact with the enemy and defeat that enemy. Those men, whether they be soldiers or Marines, are usually riflemen, for riflemen, the men on the ground, are the people who actually win wars.

No matter the size of his unit, regardless of the number of people alongside him, each man ultimately goes it alone, fighting from within the fortress of his own skin.

Not everybody in the service in World War II was exposed to the dangers we faced in G Company on Okinawa; in fact, not many. After I got out I didn't think much about my military service. Most of my friends had spent more time in the service than I had. I was proud of being a Marine. I thought I had done my part, or at least all that my age gave me time to do (I went in at age 17), but not as much as most men had, because I didn't go in until 1944. Many of my friends had been called up in 1943.

I guess my background is limited also, consisting only of being in a wartime Marine rifle company. I was at Parris Island, Camp Lejeune and Camp Pendleton. I was never on the main base at any of those places except for eating my first meal in the Marine Corps at the main mess hall at Parris Island. So, I don't know what the rest of the Marine Corps was like and I have little experience with the other services other than time spent aboard ships and that was limited mainly to troopships.

But, as years passed and I learned of other people's wartime service, I became aware that we in G Company had some uncommon, if not unique, experiences. We had done what men in the armed services are supposed to do; participate in armed conflict, engage in combat, confront the enemy; in other words, fight. This in contrast to what many men had done in WW II, who lacked the same rare "opportunities" that we in my Rifle Company had.

Today, perhaps one in nineteen people are in contact with an enemy under front line conditions. In 1945, in the Marine Corps, the ratio was something like one in fourteen. That is, there were thirteen people supporting one person whose body was within rifle range, perhaps even within grenade range, of the enemy.

We had good officers in G Company, competent and dedicated.

Their job was dangerous and they became casualties much too quickly. They were not fearless, but they were courageous. There is a difference between the two. Fear is a *sine qua non* for courage. There is no bravery unless fear is present.

Some of the non-commissioned officers in the 2nd and 3rd battalions of the 29th Marines were unsuccessful officer candidates. Many of them had been promoted to the rank of corporal and transferred to the 29th Marines when the regiment was formed. Their bad luck was the result of someone else's good fortune. The number of Marine officer casualties in some of the later battles of the war and the consequent need for new officers had been less than predicted. Otherwise, some of those men who wore corporal's chevrons might have worn lieutenant's bars.

Due to the manner in which men were assigned to the various units in the 29th Marines, many of their names seemed to start with letters in the last sixth of the alphabet. There were seven Whites in G Company on Okinawa. Six of them were wounded in action during the battle and the seventh was injured. Another White, a rifleman in I Company, was also wounded.

Parts of northern Okinawa were hilly and wooded. There were streams that looked as though they could have had trout in them. That part of the island was pretty, even under the circumstances. The southern part of Okinawa, north and south of the city of Naha, was open rolling country, onto which had been randomly sprinkled large hills with sheer sides. I never thought that part of Okinawa was pretty, but perhaps I'm being unfair. Maybe the countryside in that area is pretty when it is not muddy, not marred by shell craters and not smelling of death.

Simply stated, the tactics we employed were to attack enemy strong points, usually hills, and try to occupy them. Once on a hill, a perimeter defense was set up and we dug individual fighting holes, usually called foxholes. From these positions a defense could be made should there be a counter attack by the Japanese. But the main purpose that the holes most usually served was for survival, to provide protection against the Japanese machine gun, mortar and artillery fire which usually blanketed a hill during and after an attack.

The valleys which surrounded the hills were dangerous places, traversed only when it was necessary, and then quickly. They were unoccupied during daylight hours. There was activity in the valleys by small bands from both sides at night.

Since we were usually attacking, we saw very few live Japanese. During the daylight hours they were concealed in

caves which honeycombed the hills. Most of the dead Japanese I saw to the north of Naha were soldiers in the Japanese Army. South of Naha on Oroku Peninsula there were more naval personnel, misnamed Japanese Imperial Marines. Unlike the average Japanese, many of these were large men, some over six feet in height.

We were equipped with steel helmets with camouflaged cloth covers, haversack back packs, cartridge belts and leggings. And ponchos, it rained a lot during the "dry" season on Okinawa.

Our clothes consisted of a utility (dungaree) jacket and pants, made of a cotton twill of a gray-green color. Our underwear (skivvy) shirts and shorts were green. It was sometimes cold on Okinawa that time of year, so nearly every one of us had a wool sweatshirt and some people had a field jacket of some variety, carried in the pack when the weather was warm. Some men had managed to scrounge dark tan wool shirts.

On our feet were double-soled brown wool socks, and boondockers, high top shoes with rubber composition soles and with the smooth side of the leather on the inside.

The clothes were usually ragged, always dirty, sometimes filthy.

And then there was the Entrenching Tool, Shovel; not exactly a weapon, but certainly a personal defense item. This was a short handled shovel whose formed sheet steel blade could be locked into three positions; extended, at a right angle to be used as a pick, and folded down against the handle. When folded, the entrenching tool fit in a shaped pouch fastened to the top flap of the haversack, with the short wooden handle hanging down the back. The tool could be easily reached while lying prone. We all became fast-draw experts with our entrenching tools and most of us had occasion to dig a foxhole while someone shot at us.

A foxhole was like a shallow grave, 12 to 18 inches deep, and with the dirt that came from it thrown up around its perimeter. An enhancement to a foxhole was a hole in one corner, a foot in diameter and a foot deep, into which an enemy grenade could be knocked or kicked if one came into the hole. And, if the bottom of the foxhole were slanted toward this smaller hole, rain water could be more easily bailed out of the hole using an empty ration can. The smaller hole was not always feasible, since it required a more erect stance to dig, more time than circumstances would usually allow and more additional effort than our weary bodies had left to give.

A steel helmet on the head made a good pillow. With the

helmet, and enough exhaustion, it was possible to sleep in any position, even face down with the nose an inch from the ground. That is, if water in the bottom of the hole was not too deep. With enough loss of body heat and shivering, which probably resulted in some mechanical heat, rain water in a foxhole could approach body temperature, which sometimes made it feel almost comfortable until it was necessary to change positions.

We seldom, if ever, had hot food furnished to us on Okinawa by the Marine Corps. On the north end some Marines shot goats, butchered them and cooked them over open fires. I tried some of the goat meat and didn't like it. On one occasion I did have a tasty dish. I provided it myself. It went like this:

The long length of the island of Okinawa lies on a roughly northeast-southwest axis. A third of the way southwest of the northern end of the island is Motubu peninsula, which juts out toward the west. On the south side of that peninsula, where it joins the main part of the island, was the village of Nago. Near Nago is a stream which drains the hills above the village. On April 1st, "Love Day", a sixteen inch shell landed in the mouth of this stream and the edge of the resulting crater dammed it up. Toward the end of April, I watched as a bulldozer cleared the mouth of the stream so water could once more flow. At low tide I walked on rocks in the stream and noticed some variety of crayfish in the water. Three of us gathered two one-gallon cans of them and I boiled them in sea water. When they were cooked, the other two men had no stomach for them. I gave one can to the first sergeant and ate the other can myself. Delicious.

The food we usually ate was called "C" rations. These came in two metal cans per meal; one heavy, one light.

The Light can contained such items as crackers, a drink mix (instant coffee, lemon powder, etc.), sugar, a three-pack of cigarettes (El-Cheapo brands such as "Fleetwood" or "Sensation") and a small supply of folded sheets of toilet paper. To keep it dry, I carried the toilet paper inside my helmet, above the suspension straps of the helmet liner.

The Heavy can contained a condensed stew that came in various flavors, such as Beans and Wieners, Ham and Eggs, Vegetable Stew with Meat, Pork and Beans, etc. These were invariably eaten cold, at "can" temperature.

Prior to the landing on Okinawa; while training in North Carolina, Banika in the Russell Islands and on Guadalcanal; C rations were of an earlier and older version with only three varieties of Heavy. These were Meat and Vegetable Hash, Meat and Vegetable Stew and Meat and Beans. The Meat and Beans was the only really edible variety of the old style Heavy. The "New"

C's were a welcome change.

There was one Heavy variety in the new type C's that I usually passed up, and that was "Pork and Rice". We would sometimes take ground and dig holes in places near which lay the bodies of men who had been killed several days previously. When I opened a can of Pork and Rice and looked at the contents, I couldn't convince myself that the grains of rice were not moving. With hunks of gray meat nestled in a mass of white rice grains, the appearance was similar to that of the gray rotting flesh, abounding with writhing white maggots, of a human body torn by artillery fragments and exposed too long to the weather and the flies.

Maggots had no preference for either Japanese or Marine flesh. On those occasions when it was too dangerous to quickly recover the bodies of dead Marines, their bodies could reach the same state of maggot development as did the bodies of the Japanese.

Due to the primitive living conditions, the lack of sanitation and the irregularity of meals, my solid waste excretionary system either failed to function or it performed altogether too well. There didn't seem to be an in between. I was either bound up tight or loose as a goose.

I frequently had diarrhea. We all did. As a consequence, I lost quite a bit of weight. Paregoric, an opium derivative, was brought up to us for the diarrhea, but I never took any of it.

All of the water that we had was brought up to us in 5-gallon Jerry cans, whose designed use was for storing gasoline. The cans were most often lugged up by people for the last five hundred or thousand yards. There was sufficient water for drinking only. It was too precious to be used for washing or bathing. And, no one shaved on the front lines. A lesson had been learned by the time of the Okinawa campaign that the gasoline should be thoroughly cleansed from the cans before they were filled with water. The water only tasted of a purifying chlorine chemical.

We each had two canteens, carried in cloth canteen covers fastened to the cartridge belt so that they rode high on the buttocks. Some twenty years after my Marine Corps service I bought a cartridge belt and two canteens at a surplus store. I adjusted the belt to fit my waist and attached the two canteen covers to it in the usual positions. When I put on the belt, something didn't feel right. I finally realized that my waist had grown and the canteens rode farther to the sides than my body remembered. I didn't know until then that buttocks had a memory.

A canteen cup was carried in one of the canteen covers. This was an aluminum vessel, about 4 inches high, with a folding handle. It had a kidney shaped top profile so that a canteen would fit inside it. The canteen cup was made in two designs. One version had a flared rim. It was the preferred kind. The other type had a rolled rim which seemed to store heat. When the liquid contents of the cup were luke warm, the rolled rim would still be hot enough to burn the lips.

I was not destined to be fortunate enough to be the permanent possessor of a canteen cup with a flared rim. I had one for a short period of a few days. I had salvaged it from the cartridge belt of a man who had been wounded and evacuated. The cup was made useless when a mortar fragment hit the canteen on my right side. The next cup I salvaged had a rolled rim.

Water for instant coffee was heated in the canteen cup, sometimes over fires which used the waxed cardboard cartons that some rations came in for fuel. But often the fuel we used was C2 explosive material. I had received two days of demolition training at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. And, as a boy, I enjoyed shooting firecrackers to celebrate the Fourth Of July. You usually don't fear something you know about or are familiar with, so I have never feared explosives. Some members of the company were assigned the job of using Satchel Charges (we called them pack charges) to blow up and collapse Japanese cave emplacements. Ed Maigarie was hurt while doing this by rock fragments from an explosion.

A Satchel Charge looked like a small back pack, with a cloth loop by which it could be carried suspended from a shoulder. It contained an earlier version of the explosive material which is today called by the French word: "Plastique". The official designation for that material is "Composition 4", or C4.

Back then, our satchel charges contained "Composition 2", or C2. C2 was a gray-tan malleable material, of a consistency slightly more grainy than children's modeling clay. The Satchel charge contained blocks of C2 wrapped in waxed paper. I don't recall the weight of a block, or how many were in a satchel, but I believe that the whole unit contained ten pounds of C2.

A chunk of C2 could be pinched off of a block and rolled into a thin worm about ten to twelve inches long. When lighted at one end the worm burned slowly, with a smoky flame. As the C2 burned, a canteen cup was moved to keep it above the flame until the water in the cup was heated. This was our only hot food. There was no danger of an explosion. Even the impact of a bullet would not cause C2 to explode. It could only be detonated by a blasting cap.

Cases of cigarettes were occasionally brought up and cartons distributed to each man who smoked, which was almost everyone. The cigarettes were usually good brands, such as "Lucky Strike", "Camel" and "Chesterfield". Nearly every one of us had at least one carton of cigarettes in his pack.

We were armed at the platoon level with Caliber .30 M1 rifles and Caliber .30 Browning Automatic Rifles, called by us the BAR (pronounced "Bee Ay Arr).

We also carried KA-BAR knives which were shaped like small Bowie knives and carried in a leather scabbard. The scabbard had a pocket which contained a small whetstone. Many of us had naked forearms where we had tested the knife edges, after sharpening them, by shaving the hair on our arms.

"KA-BAR" stands for "Killed A B'ar". Early in its history, the company which made the knives changed its name for advertising purposes after the receipt of a letter from a customer describing the use to which one of their knives had been put. Another company, Camillus, also made identical knives, but a real KA-BAR was preferred. Regardless of which company had made them, each knife was called by the generic name of KA-BAR.

Officers and some NCO's carried carbines, which fired a smaller (and much less powerful) .30 caliber cartridge.

Each platoon had a Bazooka rocket launcher and most of us carried (and cursed) a rocket for it.

We had three kinds of grenades; Fragmentation, White Phosphorous and Smoke of various colors. We never had enough Fragmentation Grenades. They were heavy to lug around, but very useful and we always ran out of them quickly when they were needed.

I was good with grenades in training. I could throw a practice grenade almost 50 yards and more often than not have it land where I intended. When I used them for real, I was usually too sick, weak and tired to throw a grenade as far as 20 yards.

Grenades were designed to be held with the safety lever, or "spoon", in the palm of the right hand. This oriented a ring, attached to a cotter pin that kept the grenade safe, so that the pin could be pulled out of its aligned holes with the left hand. This released the spoon so the grenade could arm itself when it left the hand as it was thrown. The pin was removed by separating the hands, pulling the elbows apart with arm and back muscles. It required some degree of exertion.

I once heard someone say that it takes seventeen pounds of pull to remove a cotter pin from a grenade and only fifteen pounds to break a tooth. I've never measured the tension

required for removing a pin or the force to break a tooth, but removing a pin with the teeth seems like doing it the hard way. I've only seen it done that way in the movies.

When the safety lever was released after the pin has been pulled, the lever was lifted and thrown free of the grenade by the rotation of a spring-loaded striker, which traveled through an arc and impacted on a primer. The exploding primer lighted a fuse which was designed to burn for 4 to 5 seconds before igniting a detonator that fired an explosive charge in the body of the grenade, causing the body to burst and propel high velocity fragments in all directions.

Japanese grenades were designed a little differently. Instead of a safety lever and a spring-loaded striker, their grenades had a free floating firing pin which was made safe by a pin. To arm a Japanese grenade, the pin was pulled and the firing pin was pounded against something hard like a rock or even a helmet. From that point on the grenade functioned much like ours did. I don't know what the delay time was from when a Japanese grenade was armed until it detonated.

When a grenade was used in the conventional manner, the spoon was held in the palm of the hand as the grenade was thrown. The primer made a loud crack as it was hit by the striker shortly after the grenade left the throwing hand.

This helped the 'target' in two ways.

First, he knew that a grenade had been thrown and from where.

Secondly, It gave him the maximum amount of time to evade the grenade; or, if he had the guts and the inclination, to pick it up and throw it back.

Usually, we used a different technique. The grenade was grasped with the safety lever held by the fingers instead of the palm of the hand. This positioned the cotter pin so it could be removed less awkwardly and with less effort, by pushing the right hand down while pulling the ring up with the left hand.

Before throwing the grenade, the spoon was released by the fingers in a hole or behind cover. The noise of the striker was less audible to the 'target'. Then, a count to two or three before actually throwing the grenade gave no advance warning and little time to pick up or evade the grenade before it exploded. Many grenades thrown in this manner would burst while still in the air, making them even more effective.

I never knew of an occurrence when a live grenade was fumbled and dropped or when a fast fuse was encountered. If there were any, they were far outnumbered by casualties from grenades thrown in the conventional manner which were picked up

by an enemy and thrown back. And a count of two or three, in the heat of battle, often took not much more than a second and a half.

Finger and wrist action is inhibited by having to hold the spoon in the palm of the hand. The grenade then tends to be tossed mainly with an arm and shoulder motion, similar to the traditional manner in which the English pitch a cricket ball.

Releasing the spoon before throwing a grenade allows it to be thrown in a manner that most American young men have spent a lifetime learning. The grenade can be thrown as when throwing a baseball or football, using finger and wrist action to achieve longer distance and greater accuracy.

Grenades are not capable of the terrific explosions often seen in war movies, where they raze small buildings and can propel a human body six feet into the air. They do not have that much explosive force. Their purpose is to wound by fragmentation. I believe that any explosion capable of propelling a human body very far would break the body into chunks before doing so.

One rainy night on Oroku Peninsula, my foxhole was about twenty feet from another hole occupied by three members of my company. One man was wrapped in a poncho, asleep. The other two men were sitting in opposite corners of the hole.

A Japanese grenade sailed into the hole and came to rest on the poncho. The grenade exploded and wounded the thigh of the man under the poncho. A few small fragments went into his leg, some went completely through it, but he recovered completely and rejoined the company several months later. The other two men in the hole suffered only from hurt feelings and temporary hearing loss.

A normal grenade, U.S. or Japanese, would probably have killed all three occupants of the hole. The entire blast of that errant Japanese grenade must have been directed upward.

Later that same night I heard, or maybe “sensed”, a Japanese in the valley about ten yards from my hillside foxhole. The night was pitch black and it was raining. We seldom, if ever, fired our rifles at night. I threw a grenade where I believed the Japanese was moving. As it grew light at dawn there was the body of a dead Japanese lying face down in that area.

A note: In the early 1990s when I was first writing this I had young grandchildren. I was concerned how they might receive the idea that Grampaw was a killer. So I omitted lethal

“confrontations.” I’ve been persuaded by my wife and by others that they are part of my experiences. Several more occasions have been included in this re-edited version.

A few men still had bayonets. A bayonet is like a short sword which can be fastened on the muzzle end of a rifle so the rifle can be used as a pike or lance. A bayonet is an anachronism from the days when muskets were single shot weapons which became spears after their black powder charges had been fired. I can conceive of situations when a rifle couldn't be fired, such as when a man was out of ammunition, or in the middle of a melee where there might be a danger of shooting one of his own people. But, in such an event, I had planned to try to use the rifle butt or get past an adversary's bayonet and use my KA-BAR. I firmly believe that rifles are for shooting.

In the Company there was a 60 Millimeter Mortar section and a .30 caliber Browning M1919A4 light machine gun platoon.

Caliber .30 rifle ammunition (the same cartridge as commercially loaded .30'06 Springfield ammunition) came in wooden boxes with an inside metal lining that opened like a big sardine can. Cartridges were packaged in eight-round clips in cloth bandoleers of six clips. The eight-round clip fit the magazine of the M1 rifle. A "round" is one cartridge -- one shot. The cartridge belt had ten flap-covered pockets, each of which held an eight-round clip, for a total of eighty rounds. Most of us usually also carried at least one bandoleer of six clips.

Not counting Tracer, caliber .30 ammunition was of two types. One type was called Ball, M2. Its bullet was made with a lead core and a pointed, copper plated steel jacket. The other type was called AP, M2 (Armor Piercing). Its bullet had a hard steel penetrator inside the copper plated steel jacket.

I believed then that the Ball ammo was more accurate. I know now that the AP, which had a heavier bullet with slightly less muzzle velocity, was probably just as accurate. With the exception of Tracer, all .30 caliber ammunition was designed to shoot to about the same point of impact at 600 yards.

Tracer was usually loaded in belts of machine gun ammunition. Every fifth round was tracer. Tracer ammunition has a pellet of combustible material in the base of the bullet, which is ignited by the heat of firing and burns and glows for a second or two, allowing its path through the air to be visible. Tracer bullets lose weight as they burn, are not very accurate and are good mainly for starting grass fires. At longer ranges, where they would have the most utility, they follow a different

trajectory than the conventional bullets that they are supposed to track.

By the time we landed on Oroku Peninsula in June I was shooting my rifle, of whichever kind I had at the time, nearly every day. I would shoot it to check the zero and to clean the barrel. In the rainy weather that we usually experienced, if a rifle wasn't shot or cleaned every day, the inside of the barrel could almost heal shut from corrosion. I found out years later that this was caused by the type of primer that the Caliber .30 ammunition was loaded with.

We rarely saw live Japanese north of Naha, due to the caves and emplacements they fought from. I had few chances to shoot at them. After we had made a landing behind the Japanese main line on Oroku Peninsula, south of the Okinawa capitol city of Naha the emplacements were not as effectively situated and there were fewer of them. Even then most of the Japanese I shot at were moving fast or were semi-hidden.

In a platoon at full strength, there were 9 BAR's; three per squad. I never have thought too highly of the BAR. Now that I know much more about shooting than I did while I was in the Marine Corps, that feeling is justified, or at least it is to me.

I believe that no fully automatic weapon should be hand held. Machine guns are fine when fired from a mount, such as a tripod. I know that M60 machine guns were frequently fired from the hip, by shooters festooned with belts of cartridges. I've seen Rambo movies and I've seen Vietnam "Knockumentaries". I still believe that, in almost every case, more hits can be had with a semi-automatic rifle, whether by aimed fire from the shoulder, or, by fast, instinctively aimed fire from the hip, which can be surprisingly accurate.

The BAR had a fairly slow cyclic rate of fire. Most bipods had long since been discarded to save weight. While advancing, the BAR was sometimes carried upside down, with the sling over the left shoulder so the rifle could be used for "assault firing". This gave good accessibility to the magazine well, so magazines could be replaced quickly. It also put the operating slide on the right where it could be more easily used.

The BAR fired from an open bolt. Depressing the trigger allowed the bolt to go forward, strip a round from the magazine, push the round into the chamber and fire it. Gas pressure from the firing would then open the bolt. If the trigger was still depressed it would repeat the cycle and fire another round.

When the trigger was released while firing, the bolt stayed open and the chamber was empty. This prevented a round from "cooking off" after prolonged firing had heated the barrel. The operating slide was used to pull the bolt back and cock the weapon. Then the slide was pushed forward so that it wouldn't slam forward as the bolt was released by the trigger when the weapon was fired.

When the BAR was fired while suspended by the sling, the firing was not instinctive as it is when a rifle is fired from the hip, holding it in both hands. This was of little import when the shooting was for the purpose of spraying an area. But when a BAR was fired at a specific target, by the time the shooter had started shooting, adapted to the recoil, observed where he was hitting and made corrections, enough time would have elapsed that more hits could have been made in the same length of time with a semi-automatic M1 rifle. And, with far fewer rounds expended and while carrying much less weight. The BAR weighed about 19 pounds, the M1 about 10 pounds. The BAR did have a twenty round magazine as compared to the eight round en bloc clip of the M1 rifle. It needed it.

The first time that I was shot at personally (that is, someone was trying to kill me specifically, instead of just anyone in the group I was with) happened in early April on the road toward Nago on the west coast of the island. A halt had been called and we all took off our packs and got off our feet along the side of the road.

The seaward side of the road at that point overlooked a steep cliff that dropped to a narrow beach. The inland side of the road was a two or three foot high earthen bank. The top of the bank sloped upward gradually to a large hill. I sat, not on the road with my back to the bank, as most of the others did, but on a large flat rock on the edge of the bank. I had my rifle on my lap and my feet dangled over the edge of the rock as I gazed out at the sea.

There was a sudden Snap! -- a loud noise that was familiar. It took me several seconds to identify the noise and I almost delayed too long in getting off of the rock. The noise had been the sonic crack of a bullet going by me. The second Snap! was accompanied by a shower of dirt and followed by the noise of a ricocheting bullet traveling out to sea. The source of the bullet was not visible. I learned a valuable lesson. When not moving, stay under cover.

A supersonic bullet (one traveling faster than the speed of sound) makes a loud Snap! or Crack! noise if it is close to you when it goes by. This is identical to the sonic boom made by a

supersonic aircraft, but on a lesser scale. The noise is caused when the shock wave traveling outward from the bullet contacts the ear. Actually, there is a shock wave from both the point and the base of the bullet. Most of us have heard a supersonic airplane make a double "Boom" sound. A bullet is so short that the two noises are almost simultaneous and sound like one noise.

Anyone who has ever pulled targets at a rifle range has heard the noise. It is not the bullet hitting the target material that makes the sound.

I have been in the butts at Camp Perry, Ohio (where the National High Power Rifle Championships are held) while thousand yard rifle matches were being fired. Some bullets that are fired with insufficient muzzle velocity lose enough velocity while traveling the 3000 foot distance that they are going slower than the speed of sound when they hit the target. A bullet traveling at subsonic velocity makes almost no sound when it hits a target. A hole magically appears in the target.

A bullet fired in a direction away from the listener, if heard from off to one side on a quiet day, makes a continuous "Whushing" sound as it travels away. A bullet fired near the listener from some distance away makes a Snap! noise as the bullet passes, followed by a Thump noise when the sound of the gun firing reaches the ear of the listener.

Before Okinawa, I had always heard that you never hear the sound of the bullet that hits you.

This is true.

The sound of an artillery shell rushing through the air is difficult to describe. It is a very distinctive sound that I can still hear in my "mind's ear", but language does not usually make it possible to put such a sound into words.

The noises made by some mortar shells that landed close to me did not always sound exactly like explosions. The blast noise was sometimes almost masked by the high pitched sound made by flying fragments.

The defensive line that ran across the island east and west, north of the city of Naha, was located in terrain which was nearly ideal for that purpose. Most Japanese firing positions were located in manmade caves inside hills. The caves were connected by tunnels that meandered inside and between the hills which made up the in-depth defenses. Occupants of a firing position were often some distance back from a cave's opening to the outside. This reduced the noise made by the muzzle blast of the gun firing and also gave an added measure of protection.

Should a cave entrance be destroyed by artillery fire or collapsed by the explosion of a satchel charge thrown into the cave from outside, the occupants would have a good chance for survival. They could then move back into the tunnel system, travel to another firing position and fight another day.

Many firing positions had small openings which were usually well camouflaged. This made them very difficult to detect even while the guns inside them were being fired, especially when they were masked by live vegetation. Live vegetation also seemed to deaden the noise made by the gun. We sometimes received large volumes of machine gun fire but could neither see nor hear from where it was coming.

When a gun was located well back from a small opening, this combination allowed only a narrow field of fire. It was possible to move only a few feet to be completely out of the line of fire of a machine gun. But the move might be into a position which was in clear view of another gun. Firing positions were usually mutually supporting. Dead spots were possible, either from the nature of the terrain or because of the destruction of the firing positions covering them. Within dead spots it was possible to move around in almost perfect safety, but not for too long at a time. Dead spots were usually covered by artillery and mortar fire.

I have heard it said that the portion of Okinawa over which we fought while attacking the defensive line north of Naha in May had been a Japanese artillery range prior to the battle. That seemed as if it were true, although I'm sure it wasn't. But various locations on that line were well registered and zeroed for artillery fire. Japanese artillery was highly effective and deadly. Single rounds could have devastating effect.

A few days after we moved from the north end of Okinawa to the south and into the lines west of the First Marine Division, G Company occupied the forward slope of a large hill. (In this tract, a forward slope was the part of the hill that we occupied, the reverse slope was the side of the hill that the enemy could see.) The hill angled upward at about a twenty degree angle. Several of us had been ordered to go down to an LVT (we called them AMTRACS) at the base of the hill and carry mortar shells to near the crest where the company 60 Millimeter mortars were located. The shells weighed about three pounds apiece and were packaged in a "clover leaf" of six shells, with a wire carrying handle. I believe I was carrying twenty four shells, with my rifle slung on my right shoulder.

About a third of the way down from the crest of the hill a

relatively level dirt road had been cut into the slope and ran around the hill. The uphill side of the road had an embankment which was about two or three feet high. The men of the Third Platoon had just arrived on the hill and were strung out along the road, sitting with their backs to the embankment. A single shell came over the top of the hill, not from the direct front, but on an angle, and exploded on the corner of the cut, on the edge of the embankment. About a dozen Marines were hit, half of them were killed. One of the Whites lost a leg. I was walking up the hill, somewhere between 30 and 50 yards away from the place where the shell exploded and was hit in the right cheek by a piece of meat. I thought I'd been wounded at first until I saw what had hit me. I don't know what size shell it was, but it landed in the most optimum spot it could possibly have found to maximize its effectiveness.

Later, I buried a severed hand which was laying near my foxhole.

I was almost buried by a shell that caved in my foxhole one morning. My recollection of this occurrence is hazy. It was after we had been pulled back from Half Moon (G Company's part of the battle for Sugar Loaf Hill) and we were on a hill that was east of Charlie Hill and farther north. I believe it was on the morning of the 19th of May. An artillery shell hit outside the left front of the hole that I was occupying by myself. All I can remember is afterward, after someone had pulled me out of the hole. I don't remember now who that was. Later, my mouth felt funny. Several teeth had been chipped. This has affected my bite in later life. Being as I had a concussion (was knocked out),I consider this as my first occasion of being wounded in action. I received no medical treatment for it. No medical corpsmen were with the company at that time. All had been hit.

Our own artillery always had their guns located behind the front lines. So, when fired, shells would have to pass over Marine front line positions on their way to targets, which, it was hoped, would be in territory occupied by the Japanese. It wasn't called "Friendly Fire" as it is today when badly aimed artillery or mortar shells fired by our side hit too close for comfort. In those days our terminology was "Short Rounds".

Martin Field on Guadalcanal, the 29th Marines athletic field, drill field or whatever that multi-purpose clearing was, had been named for the first Marine from the regiment who had been killed in training by a short round. I knew several people in the regiment who had scars from mortar shell fragments they got in training. You didn't get a Purple Heart for that kind of

wound. Our mortar men had to learn their trade and it probably saved lives in the end.

The Japanese made a practice of firing a round or two at our positions at the same time that our artillery was firing. This would result in a shell exploding in our general area at the same time that we heard "outgoing" shells passing over our heads. When this first occurred, there were hurried attempts to communicate with the 15th Marines, calling on them to "raise your fire" or even to cease firing. After it was determined what the Japanese had done, we knew to stay in our foxholes and keep buttoned up whenever shells were passing overhead, regardless of whose artillery was firing.

The 15th Marines, which was the artillery regiment for the Sixth Marine Division, had forward observers (FOs) assigned to front line units. The function of these men, who were almost always officers, was to initiate artillery firing missions and to spot the locations where shells were hitting and call for aiming corrections so that the shells would come down onto the desired targets. An FO was equipped with binoculars and either a radio or a sound power telephone. FO's did good work.

We also had FOs for the 60 MM mortars in our company, usually an NCO from the mortar section. I accompanied a corporal forward of the front lines in May to give him some backup, while he spotted for our company mortars. I wanted to shoot at the many Japanese we could see but that would have alerted them. We hit many more with the mortars than I could have hit with my M1.

South of Charlie Hill and north of Sugar Loaf Hill was a wide valley. Forward of the front lines, in the middle of this valley was a small round hill with a flat place on the top of it. The flat area was about 25 feet in diameter. I was with a mixed bunch that went to this hill to accompany an FO who intended to use the location for observation and artillery spotting. We did a little dirt work to make an earthen wall between us and the Japanese, which made the top of the hill almost a large foxhole. A short time after he began to do some spotting for artillery targets, the FO, who was a lieutenant from the 15th Marines, was hit in the head by a rifle bullet probably fired from Sugar Loaf Hill. He was killed instantly. After that happened we stayed on that small hill for a while, but when we learned no one would be sent to replace the dead FO, we made our way back to the larger hill where the rest of G Company was located.

Sometime in May, I spent a short time in a foxhole at the

edge of a large valley, through which ran a muddy road down which trucks periodically ran the gauntlet. It was after the rains had started and the ground was water soaked. Intermittent Japanese artillery shells landed near the road, several hundred yards from my hole. About a fourth to a third of the shells failed to explode when they hit the soggy ground. A dud shell had an interesting effect which a shell that did explode did not have. A second or two after a dud shell failed to explode when it hit the ground, I would feel a tremor in the ground in the bottom of the foxhole.

I don't think that it is an ethnic slur to state that the Japanese had an aptitude for using mortars.

Conventional guns with flat trajectories gain distance by elevating their muzzles. A mortar extends its range by depressing the muzzle. If a mortar were to be pointed exactly straight up, a shell fired from it (if there was no wind and the rotation of the earth were to have no effect on the path of the shell) could conceivably fall back down into the tube. To have the mortar shoot farther away, the tube must be angled down from the vertical. The Japanese seemed to have much skill in knowing exactly how much to depress the muzzle in order to hit something with the first shell they fired.

I helped carry W. W. (Red) White from a foxhole after he was wounded. A single mortar shell had landed in a hole where it had killed one Marine and wounded three others, including Red.

Many Japanese mortar positions were underground with only a small hole in the top, through which the mortar shells exited when they were fired from beneath the surface of the ground. These positions were very difficult to find.

Our side frequently fired salvos of rockets at area targets. The rockets were fired from 4X4 trucks which had three racks, each rack stacked with about a dozen rockets. The truck would be driven up and positioned facing a hill which was at a distance of a quarter to a half mile away. The three Marines on the truck would prepare and aim the rockets for firing. When they began firing, the bottom rocket in each column would fire, the stack would drop and each bottom rocket in turn would fire until all three racks were empty. All of the rockets would fire within a time period of 10 to 12 seconds. The rockets were not capable of very great accuracy, so the hill at which they were fired would be blanketed by explosions. Probably, very few Japanese were ever hit by the rockets, but the explosions would remove most of the vegetation from a hillside and expose any cave openings on it.

We soon learned to vacate the area or find deep cover when one of these trucks arrived. We knew what was coming. As the last rockets were dropping down into battery and firing, the driver of the truck would already be starting to move. The last man still on foot would run and jump on the truck and then hang on as it slewed around and headed for the rear.

Almost immediately, Japanese mortar shells would begin to drop on and around the spot that the rocket truck had occupied only moments before while it was firing.

I watched as a hill was bombarded one day. I didn't know until much later the name of the hill. The hill got the name of Sugar Loaf from its shape. Many Marines were killed and wounded in the battle for Sugar Loaf Hill and its other mutually supporting hills.

The fighting for Sugar Loaf Hill and its environs was as savage and costly as any fighting in the Pacific Theater, perhaps the toughest in all of World War II.

I saw a number of men immediately after they had been struck by enemy fire, but very few at the exact instant that they were hit.

About the Twelfth of May I was standing on top of a hill which overlooked a wide valley in the direction of Sugar Loaf Hill and the city of Naha. I was looking away from the direction of the Japanese toward a sergeant who was on his feet, watching some men as they prepared to dig foxholes. My eyes weren't focused on his back, but I was looking right at him when the bullet hit him. All of a sudden he began to fumble with the clothes around his beltline. He sat down, then leaned to one side and fell over. A bullet, fired from long range, had hit his back, penetrated his body, was stopped when it hit his cartridge belt and was burning the skin of his abdomen. The bullet had gone by me but I hadn't heard it.

One day in the middle of May, two of us, I don't remember now who the other man was, had just arrived at an embankment which was about three or four feet high. We were looking over it at the terrain beyond it when we heard a voice behind us. We both squatted down with our backs against the bank as we turned to see who it was. Standing there was a bandsman from the 29th Marines regimental band. Band members were stretcher bearers when the regiment was in combat. I remember that this man was a trumpet player. He asked us if we knew where any casualties

were or maybe he asked where a specific wounded man was. One of us mentioned hearing of a wounded man over to his left. He turned his head to look in that direction.

I was looking directly up into his face at the instant a bullet hit him in the chin. His head didn't hardly wiggle as a hole suddenly appeared in his chin where the bullet went through it from right to left. He grabbed his chin and blood began running between his fingers and down his wrist. I said something to him, but he didn't reply. He took off running back to where he had come from. The Japanese rifleman who shot him was probably in the process of trying to shoot one of the two of us looking over the embankment when the arrival of the bandsman caused us to hunker down below the top of the bank and the bandsman was wounded instead of one of us being wounded or killed.

I saw another man at the instant that he was hit by a bullet. That incident will be described later.

The night skies north of Naha in the middle of May were often lit by parachute flares. They were put up in the sky by mortar and artillery fire.

Our company 60 Millimeter mortars were kept busy some nights when the noises of Japanese activity could be heard. I once overheard some of our mortarmen talking about the extreme distances they had shot the previous night in order to put flares over some people who were occupying a hill far out in front of the mortar position. The mortars were laid down at such an angle that they had to literally throw the shells down the tubes in order to get them to fire.

Destroyers and other Navy ships off the west coast of Okinawa in the East China Sea would shoot flares from 5 inch guns at intermittent time intervals. These flares remained in the air much longer than the ones shot from mortars. The larger flares from the ships were higher in the air when they exploded and deployed and they also were more stable. The smaller flares from the mortars were less stable and would swing back and forth under their parachutes. Flares could make the terrain under them almost as visible as in daylight. Since flares were point sources of light, the shadows those moving lights caused sometimes gave strange appearances to ordinary objects as the flares approached the ground.

A group of us were changing locations one coal black night and were in the middle of the treeless valley near Half Moon Hill in what would have been called "No Man's Land" in World War I. Several times we were caught by flares. The recommended action to take when caught in the open by a flare is no action.

Freeze and stay frozen. Each time a flare caught us it seemed like we stood there for thirty minutes before it either went out or reached the ground.

On May 16, 1945, G and I Companies of the 3rd Battalion 29th Marines were badly mauled on Half Moon hill north of Naha. We never knew the names of the hills we were on until some time afterward. Half Moon was one of three mutually supporting hills occupied by well emplaced Japanese. The other two hills had been named Sugar Loaf and Horse Shoe by the people in the rear with the gear. The action was called the battle for Sugar Loaf Hill. No one from G Company was ever actually on Sugar Loaf Hill, but a large number of G Company men were killed or wounded by machine gun fire coming from that hill or by mortar and shell fire directed from it.

Charlie Hill was the starting place for the assault on Half Moon. When the company was ordered to leave Half Moon it returned to Charlie Hill. Twenty men were left in the company out of some 255 who had landed with it and the dozen or so replacements who had joined it in April. Some men were strayed, had attached themselves to other companies, but most of the absent ones had been wounded or killed. All of the officers in the company had been wounded or killed. G Company was commanded by a sergeant named Loren Mitchell.

I dug in on Charlie Hill with Francis West. Or, rather, West dug the hole while I stood watch as it grew dark. There was a chance that we might be counter-attacked.

The foxhole that I shared with West that night was one of the deepest that I ever inhabited. West had been hit through his helmet by a machine gun bullet fired from long range. I then and there lost any faith in a helmet's ability to protect against anything more powerful than a thrown rock. The bullet hit near the top of West's helmet and went through steel and plastic liner. The helmet did not deflect that bullet as much as one second of angle.

In many military units it is an unusual occurrence for someone to be wounded or killed, but not so in G Company. Nearly everyone who survived the battle was wounded at least once.

West was never wounded and never received a Purple Heart. He should have received something, because he spent every minute that it was possible to spend on the front lines.

Francis Ward was another Third Platoon man who was never hit. He had a young looking face and a dense, black beard.

Another member of the company who was never wounded (at least bad enough to warrant a Purple Heart), and spent every minute possible on the front lines, was H. Ross "Tennessee"

Wilkerson. Tennessee did get a Bronze Star Medal. He modestly claims that the decoration was not warranted, but I don't believe that is true.

When the company pulled back from Charlie Hill, we went a short distance back of the front lines where we dug in. Near my hole was a dead Marine lying face down. He had been killed a short time before. He was in E Company of the Second Battalion, Twenty Ninth Marines at the time he was killed. He had been hit from the front but his whole back had been blown out, exposing his intestines. I dug in his pack for a poncho to cover him. The Marine's surname was stenciled on his pack. The name was familiar so I lifted him by raising his pack enough that I could see his face. In North Carolina he and I had been foxhole and shelter-half (pup-tent) mates. We had dug in together many times in training.

About 21 May the 3RD Battalion, 29TH Marines was relieved from the front lines and marched back about five miles to an area that we had left around May 1. It was near a sea wall on the west coast of the island. Most of us were carrying at least one BAR in addition to an M1 rifle. We were walking slowly, some of us limping. Our clothes were ragged. We were used up.

The battalion was in a column of two's, with G Company at the head of the column, followed by H and I Companies. The column was a short one and probably looked like a single company which had suffered a number of casualties.

A major in a starched khaki shirt and shorts drove by. He throttled his jeep down to match our speed and asked who the company commander was. Loren Mitchell was in the lead of the column and I was a short distance behind him, so I was able to hear this. Sgt. Mitchell spoke up and said that he guessed that he was the company commander. The major asked what company this was. Loren told him that it wasn't a company, it was the whole 3RD Battalion of the 29th Marines. The Major looked back toward the rear of the column, then speeded up and drove away.

At the sea wall, We received replacements. Also, men who had previously been slightly wounded began to return from the hospital and those who had been with other companies also returned. The company strength was soon up considerably and continuing to grow. But, several more men went to the hospital. I had dug in with R. R. White. He visited the Battalion Aid Station and was sent to the hospital, although I didn't know it until later. Sgt. Mitchell went to the hospital with some mortar fragments in his ankle that he had received several days previously, which were beginning to fester.

The day after we got to the sea wall, Clyde Bower and I were assigned the job of returning to Half Moon to gather up BAR's which had been abandoned when the company had left that hill. The fighting had moved south of there. Half Moon was now in Marine controlled territory.

I was feeling bad and had a fever. Clyde and I sat in the rain in the back of a 4X4 truck driven by two men from 3rd Battalion headquarters. They parked the truck on the south edge of the large valley that was bounded on the north by Charlie Hill and on the south by the rise that led to the Half Moon. The truck would not have survived more than ten seconds in that location just a few days before.

Clyde and I went up toward Half Moon to look for BAR's. We went near where the company had been before, the area of the narrow gauge railroad tracks and up the hill.

We each found two or three BAR's and went back to put them in the truck. The truck was gone. We thought that we might have come back to the wrong place until I saw the tracks the truck had made when it turned around. They had left us there. Clyde threw the BAR in his right hand so that it stuck muzzle first in the mud. We dropped the rest of them in a pile and started walking back through the rain toward the sea wall. We only had to walk a couple of miles before we were able to catch a ride. The walk in the rain didn't help my fever much.

Clyde was in a different platoon than mine when he was wounded on Oroku Peninsula in June. He was climbing a steep hill when a Japanese shot down at him with a rifle. The bullet hit the top of his shoulder, toward the back, and came out just above his waist. He spent time in the Navy hospital on Guam and rejoined the company on Guam in late August.

Clyde and I frequently played chess together after we got to Tsingtao, China. He never did beat me. In fact, in all the time I was overseas, no one else did, either.

I was feeling bad after Clyde and I got back to the sea wall. I went to the Battalion Aid Station, but my temperature wasn't elevated enough for me to be sent to the hospital. The corpsman who examined me asked if I was dug in with someone. Since I didn't know that R. R. White had already gone to the hospital, I told him yes, but I really didn't understand the reason for the question. The corpsman gave me a handful of pills. Unbeknownst to me, some of them were sleeping pills. I awoke the next morning on my back in my foxhole, shivering like a dog defecating peach seeds. I was lying in cold water up to the level of my ears. It had rained hard that night. R. R. White and I had strung shelter-halves and ponchos over the hole, but water was pouring into it from the adjacent field, on its

way toward the sea wall. I usually slept on my stomach. Had I slept with my face down that night I might have drowned.

I really felt bad. I went to the hospital with a high fever and swollen lymph glands in my neck, armpits and groin. A year or so later I saw my medical record and found that I had been diagnosed as having tonsillitis, even though my tonsils were removed when I was five years old. I suppose I was just suffering from general lack of maintenance. Compounded by a cold soak.

The 6th Marine Division Hospital was in tents, with bare cots and blankets. I slept a major portion of the 5 or 6 days I was in the hospital. I slept in two hour stretches. Every three hours, 24 hours a day, I was given a massive injection of penicillin in one or the other of my buttocks.

The penicillin was ice cold so the afflicted area would throb for about an hour or so, and it took that long to get back to sleep.

We got hot food in the hospital. The cans of "C" rations were heated in a large tub of hot water before the cans were opened.

One thing I missed by my stay in the hospital was a lot of rainy weather and mud. The island of Okinawa became one big quagmire.

When being discharged from the hospital, the procedure was to go first to 6th Marine Division Headquarters for processing. Most people also had a shave, a shower, a haircut and new clothes. I got the shave and one set of new clothes. There wasn't time for the shower or the haircut. We were not issued 782 equipment (Cartridge Belt, Canteens, Haversack Pack, Shelter Half, Poncho, Entrenching Tool, Etc.), but I had kept my helmet when I went to the hospital.

From the 6th Marine Division Headquarters, several Marines from other companies and Sgt. Mitchell and I from G Company rode a truck to the 29th Marines Regimental Headquarters. We were ushered in to see a lieutenant colonel. I think he might have been the regimental executive officer. The colonel told us to find some chow. Transportation back to our units would be arranged later. The building where the 29th Mar HQ was located had a huge room on the first floor. Sgt. Mitchell asked the colonel if we could stay inside the building that night. The colonel told us that he had already told us to find a place outside. It was raining and almost dark. We had no ponchos or shelter halves.

Near the big building someone had built a hut from some

room divider panels that were found in most Okinawan houses. These dividers were just over 6 feet long (probably 2 meters) and about half that in width, made of framed thin plywood. The hut was about ten feet square and about three feet high.

The hut leaked and the ground inside it was muddy. We were used to mud. What we couldn't get used to were the hundreds of mosquitoes that inhabited the inside of the hut. A hand swished through the air inside the hut would touch dozens of them. The mosquitoes won and got to keep the hut. We spent the night squatting on our helmets under a narrow overhang of the building just barely out of the intermittent rain. It was a long, miserable night, with much mosquito slapping and little sleep.

By morning the rain had lessened. Loren and I went back to see the colonel to find out when we could get back to G Company. Marine lieutenant colonels have veins in their foreheads which distend when they shout at people. I don't know if you have to have those veins in order to get to be a Lt. Col. or if you grow the veins after you have already become one. Majors also sometimes have those veins. The colonel told us that he would get us back to our company when he was Got Dam good and ready, and for us to get the Hell out of here. We did.

Outside, Loren looked at me and I looked at Loren.

He said, "What do you think?"

I said, "Let's go."

We left the 29th Marines Regimental Headquarters and started walking south to find our company which was probably on the front lines.

I suppose technically we went AWOL, but our intentions were honorable. We wanted to reduce that colonel's work load and at the same time get back to the front lines to improve our living conditions.

All that we possessed we were wearing. As I mentioned before we had no 782 gear. We also had no weapons.

I hadn't known until then how many people there were behind the front lines. The number of people in a battle is directly proportional to the distance from the enemy. The closer to the front the fewer the people. Front line foxholes can be very lonely places, especially if you are pinned down and can't raise up to look around without taking a chance of being badly hurt.

We hitched a ride on the back of a south-bound 6X6 truck with two Marines in the cab. The truck made several stops, picking up and delivering various items.

At one place where we stopped, the building was being used as a bakery. The two truck drivers went inside the bakery while Loren and I waited in the back of the truck. They came out of the bakery chewing large mouthfuls. They brought two large

envelopes full of hot rolls and laid them in the back of the truck. The envelopes were waterproof and padded with some sort of insulation to keep the rolls warm. The envelopes were about 4 feet long and 2 feet wide and each had two layers of rolls inside.

At the next place we stopped, one of the people there sidled over, looked in the truck and spotted the rolls. He sounded off and immediately half a dozen people swarmed the truck, tore open one of the envelopes and helped themselves to several handfuls of rolls apiece.

Loren and I eyed each other. On the front lines we had, on one occasion only, received about one and a half rolls each with a little marmalade. The rest of the time we subsisted on "C" rations. Those rolls had been delicious and were the closest thing to hot chow we had seen on the front lines.

At the next stop, when the swarm again came for the rolls, Loren moved the envelopes to the front of the truck bed and announced that he would kick the head off the first man who tried to touch the rolls. Someone asked Loren who the Hell he thought he was. Loren answered that he was the man who was going to kick the head off the first person who reached for the rolls.

Soon after that the two Marines in the cab of the truck left us at a road junction. We were about a mile from the northern outskirts of the city of Naha. It was a rainy, overcast day. The Fourth Marines had fought through this area a few days before. The terrain was open farmland, uncultivated that year because the farmers had moved north, away from the fighting. We could see for quite a distance in every direction. There was little vegetation other than new grass and we were the only humans around. Or so we thought.

Someone shot at us with a rifle. When a shot fired from some distance off goes close by, the bullet gets to the target before the noise made by the rifle firing. The snap of the bullet is heard first as its sonic crack hits the ear, followed by a distant thump from the sound of the rifle. It is usually difficult to determine exactly from what direction a shot has been fired. We hit the deck and waited a little while. When we rose up to look for the shooter, he shot at us again.

We scooted out of there and kept low until we found a covered route which allowed us to continue moving south.

On the northern outskirts of Naha we found a number of M1 rifles and picked out the two best looking ones. There were cartridge belts with ammunition for the rifles, and haversacks, all probably abandoned when the previous owners had been wounded or killed. The site had been the location of an aid station.

We scavenged some of the packs for items of clothing to use for cloth with which to clean the two rifles. We even found a toothbrush. Marines did brush their teeth in those days, but the main use for a toothbrush was to keep a rifle clean and functioning.

We stood on a pile of rubble next to a stone wall which was of a convenient height to field strip and clean the two rifles. All of a sudden the rubble I was standing on gave way and I was ankle deep in the desiccated chest cavity of a long dead cadaver.

We couldn't clean the bores of the rifles, except by firing, but we cleaned the chambers, and brushed out and lubricated the rubbing parts with Lubriplate from the small containers in the buttplate recesses. The rifles cleaned up well enough that they both fired with no malfunctions. Both of us counted the rear sight elevation clicks down, memorized them, and then put them back on. We shot at some stones on a wall, from a distance of about a hundred yards, with enough success that we were confident that the rifles were probably zeroed well enough.

How we knew I don't remember, but we reckoned that we should go east from where we were to find G Company. There was a road and we started walking east on it. We began to go through wooded areas. No one shot at us. Maybe any by-passed Japanese in that area were out of the weather trying to keep dry.

There had been canteens on the cartridge belts that we had picked up and we had filled them from other canteens, so we had water, but no chow. A 6X6 truck passed us going east on the road we were following. The truck didn't stop for us. It may have been driven by the two Marines who had given us a ride before and they didn't want us to abuse any more of their friends.

The truck was carrying wooden cases of "C" rations. When it slowed for a deep, water-filled hole on the muddy road, I was able to catch up with it and pull off one of the cases of rations.

Later we encountered a group of Marines and asked one of them if he knew where G Company was. He pointed out another group a short distance away. We knew them. They were part of G Company. We were home.

The Company had not yet been back up on the front lines, but had been sending out a few patrols. We hadn't missed much while we were in the hospital, except some rainy weather.

We were both assigned to the third platoon; Loren Mitchell as

the platoon sergeant, I as a rifleman/runner.

As far as communications were concerned, we might as well have been fighting in World War I. The "Walky Talky" radios in use at that time, even when available, employed vacuum tube circuitry which used up batteries quickly and was often prone to failure from shock, wetness or even fungus infection.

Runners were used to communicate between units. Young men who were fleet of foot and possessed of a reasonable level of intelligence (or a complete lack thereof) were employed to keep higher echelons informed of progress and to guide wire men and people carrying ammo, water, rations, etc. up to newly captured positions. After helping to attack a hill, after his unit had set up a perimeter defense, a runner would then have to find a safe way to get back to company headquarters with "The Scoop". Runners were also used to communicate with other companies and sometimes ranged all over a battlefield.

Once wire had been laid, Sound Power telephones were used and gave good service. The severity of the fighting in an area could often be gauged by the amount of communication wire left laying on it.

On June 4, 1945 the 4th Marines and the 29th Marines made a landing behind the main Japanese defensive line on Oroku Peninsula, which is across a bay south of the city of Naha. We were ferried around Naha to the west end of the peninsula in LVT's (Landing Vehicle, Tracked; a sort of bulldozer boat that could travel on land as well as water). We usually called them "AMTRACS" (Amphibious Tractors).

There was a sea wall where we landed. The top of an LVT was less than half a foot below the top of the sea wall. I don't know if someone had established the time of the landings so that the tide would be right for this to happen, or even if each LVT rode at about the same level in the water regardless of load. It was probably just a fortuitous coincidence.

The landing ramp was in the rear of an LVT. The coxswain (pilot, driver?) backed his LVT up so that the closed ramp was against the sea wall and held it there by revving the engine with the tracks turning in reverse. Long range fire from a machine gun was hitting the vicinity of the sea wall. The modus operandi for getting ashore was to stand facing the sea wall with your rifle held with both hands at port arms. When the machine gun fire was not hitting that area of the sea wall.\, two men would then grab you by the elbows and the seat of the pants. As you bent your knees and then jumped, the two men added to your momentum to lift and toss you up and over the sea wall. You rolled over, got to your feet and vacated the area

quickly. This procedure reduced exposure time to the machine gun fire. No one in our platoon was hit getting over the sea wall.

The Oroku beachhead was also exposed to fire from Japanese "Screaming Meemie" rockets which were launched from fixed wooden troughs. The rockets would scream like a banshee when they were first launched, becoming silent after the rocket fuel had burned out. Then they would coast until they impacted the ground and exploded. I never saw one from close up, but they were over a foot in diameter and about five feet long. It was possible to spot them in flight. They looked like flying seabags. It was noticed that they repeatedly hit the same part of the sea wall area. That area, several hundred yards across, was roped off and very few casualties resulted from those unguided missiles.

On June 5, I had just returned to the platoon area from company headquarters when I saw the platoon leader being carried on a poncho. He had been shot through the neck and later died. I don't remember his name today, but he was a Good Guy.

Later that day, the Third Platoon was moving up to attack a hill. We were moving southeast in single file next to a ridge which was northwest of the hill which was our objective. There was some shrubbery and a few trees, but no real cover between us and the Japanese. The new platoon leader was Lt. McNulty. I was immediately behind him, followed by the rest of the platoon. The platoon sergeant, Loren Mitchell, was at the rear of the file.

A Japanese 47 Millimeter dual purpose cannon (anti-aircraft or anti-personnel) fired at the platoon from some distance away. This gun normally fired three round bursts, shots being at about half second intervals.

Three shells hit near the front of the platoon. The farthest shell hit about 10 yards away, the closest about 10 feet from me. Lt. McNulty was hit. The three men behind me went down. I was hit in the right thumb, the left forearm, the left knee and left hip. The fragment that hit my thumb was the biggest piece that hit me and caused me to drop my rifle. I quickly wrapped a handkerchief (really more of a rag) around my hurt thumb. The other three fragments were small and the wounds from them only about as bad as a shot from a big hypodermic needle. The small piece in my left forearm had migrated to the inside of my arm by the time I extracted it almost five years later in April of 1950.

When Sgt. Mitchell realized that the platoon leader was

down, he ran up to the front of the file. I was still on my feet, so when he ran by me he said "Let's go, Whitey". I picked up my M1 and followed him across a road in an open valley about a hundred yards wide, to the base of the hill which we were attacking.

Sgt. Mitchell went straight up the hill and apparently went over its crest. I angled over to the right side of the hill. To the right of the hill, and at a lower elevation than where I stopped, was a small wood frame building, little larger than ten feet square. A Japanese Nambu machine gun, easily recognizable from its high rate of fire, began firing from inside the building toward the Marines who were coming across the valley. I don't remember if the gun had shot at Loren and me when we crossed the valley. I couldn't see the gun or the Japanese who were firing it, but I fired several clips from my M1 through the walls of the building and the firing from it stopped. This kept me occupied for a few minutes. One of the others who had arrived on the hill a short time later said that Loren Mitchell was dead. This was a shock to me. Some men seem indestructible. Sergeant Mitchell was such a man.

I went to the top of the hill and looked over it. Intermittent machine gun fire came just over the top of the hill, but I was able to sneak quick peeks. About 100 feet from the crest and slightly down hill was a Lewis Gun on a bipod. The gun was resting on a ridge which came into the southeast side of the hill at a right angle. There were no Japanese, alive or dead, visible near the gun.

The body of Sgt. Mitchell was lying just past the crest. We found out when we recovered his body that the Japanese firing the Lewis Gun had hit Sgt. Mitchell several times in the chest.

Maybe the reason that Sgt. Mitchell went over the crest of the hill was that he saw the Japanese and went after them. Or, maybe he arrived at the top of the hill, was hit and fell over the crest. But, for whatever reason, he went over the top of the hill and was killed. Our country lost one of its stalwarts. The Marine Corps had lost a hoss. I had lost someone who was more than my sergeant. He was my friend. He was a friend to a lot of people.

The Lewis Gun was still there when we left that hill to attack another one.

I'm a rifleman. I liked the M1 and had little regard for a carbine. I wound up with a carbine anyway.

When Lt. McNulty had been wounded, and I had been hit in the right thumb by a fragment from the same 47 millimeter shell,

the lieutenant was evacuated because the wound in his arm made him unable to grasp his carbine. My hurt thumb made it hard for me to carry my M1 rifle with my right hand, as I frequently did while running. So, I asked the lieutenant for his carbine, which was lighter than an M1, and he gave it to me. It was loaded with a full 15 round magazine. There were two full magazines in a pouch on the butt and he gave me another couple of loaded magazines which I carried in a pocket of my dungaree jacket.

The next day we occupied a hill that was about 200 to 300 yards from the hill where the Company Headquarters was located. On the way the platoon passed a cave dug into the side of a small hill. The hill we had taken was not visible from the hill where the company headquarters was located.

Sometime later I was sent back to Company Headquarters. As I trotted by the cave in the small hill a Japanese inside the cave shot at me with a rifle. The bullet went side to side through the pack on my back. The bullet missed me but really messed up a carton of Lucky Strike cigarettes in my pack.

There was no "push" from the bullet but I was surprised by the noise and stumbled and fell about twenty feet beyond the cave entrance. There was a foot high ramp made from the dirt from the cave. It ended about ten or twelve feet from the cave mouth. I looked back toward the cave and saw a Japanese soldier come out onto the ramp. He was looking down at his rifle as he operated the bolt to reload and finish me off.

I was lying on my right side. I wrestled the carbine free, pushed the safety off and shot from the hip. I shot until the Japanese fell. I checked to make sure he was dead then I threw a grenade into the cave. Then I got a mild case of the shakes.

I told of the happening at Company Headquarters and later that same day someone used a satchel charge to collapse the cave.

The time that elapsed from when the Japanese shot until I shot and killed him, was only a few seconds. Had I been carrying an M1 rifle I don't believe that I would have been able to use it as quickly as I used the carbine. I'm convinced that having that carbine saved my life.

A related anecdote:

In 1948 many veterans were taking advantage of the GI Bill Of Rights at the University where I was enrolled. A number of us were in a student lounge. "Sea Stories" were being told.

How it came up I don't know, but a young lady asked me if I had ever killed anyone in the war. When I told her that I had I could tell she didn't like my answer. She asked me how I felt

as I looked down at the body of someone whose life I had taken. What kind of feeling did I have, knowing that there might have been people, who, because of me, would never be born in the future.

I told her that I had a feeling of relief that I was able to see his body and realize that he hadn't killed me. I was remembering that day in early June of 1945.

A new lieutenant had become the platoon leader. He led an advance which caused the platoon to again be the target of that 47 Millimeter gun. The lieutenant had reached the top of a small embankment at the start of our advance and was about to start down it. I was at his side, slightly behind him, with my good sense turned off. I was going to follow wherever he went. The 47 Millimeter gun fired three shots which hit at the base of the embankment. The lieutenant backed up and we went down the side and around the embankment. This gave the 47 Millimeter gunner time to reload and shoot three more shells at us. None of the six shells hit anyone in the platoon and after a few more yards we were masked off from the gun by an intervening hill.

That afternoon, I was right behind the lieutenant when he was hit in the head by a rifle bullet as we rounded a small hill.

Gunnery Sergeant John Quattrone took over as the leader of the Third Platoon. Gunnery sergeants are called "Gunny" in the Marine Corps. In the Marine Corps at that time, gunnery sergeant was a much more exalted rank than it is today. Or, maybe it was that gunnery sergeants were more exalted to me then than they are now. Gunny Quattrone was platoon leader number seven for the third platoon. That is, he was the seventh man officially designated as platoon leader. We had several others who acted as platoon leader for short periods after the regularly appointed one had been wounded or killed. And usually the man who took over was himself killed or wounded. Sgt. Mitchell was in this category. Gunny Quattrone was also wounded while acting as the Third Platoon leader.

On June 7, 1945 the 3rd Platoon took a hill. The platoon had received some replacements and was up to 15 Marines and a corpsman. About 600 yards from the hill that our platoon had taken, was another hill which was about the same height as the one we were on. That hill was off to our left on the Japanese side of the front line. We called it Flat Top, although I have never seen that designation on any map.

An FO, a lieutenant from the 15th Marines, was with the

platoon. With his binoculars, the FO spotted three Japanese lying on top of Flat Top. He didn't think he would be able to hit them with the first shells fired if he were to call a fire mission, and they would be able to slip away before corrections could be made.

We had no machine guns with the platoon. Gunny Quattrone and I decided to try to hit them using BAR's. He and I were each carrying a carbine at the time so we each borrowed a BAR. With no bipods on the BAR's, we got into prone positions using loop slings like on a rifle range. Since it was off almost to our left, we were able to shoot at Flat Top while being behind cover from our front.

The sights on the BARs were not zeroed for the distance to the hill where the three Japanese were. I was on a high school rifle team and belonged to a rifle club which was affiliated with the National Rifle Association while I was in high school. The club had an instructor who was a former World War I soldier and had fought in France. He had shot Model 1903 Springfield rifles a number of times at the National Rifle Matches at Camp Perry, Ohio. From the shooting experience, and the knowledge of how to zero a rifle that the old gentleman had given me, finding the zero of that BAR held few mysteries for me.

The Gunny and I zeroed the BARs by firing at marks at the base of Flat Top. The impact area was out of the sight of the three Japanese and probably 20 feet below them. The FO spotted the bullet strikes for us with his binoculars. With the front side of Flat Top as steep as it was, we were able to fire at marks that were within a few yards of the same distance from us as the Japanese were.

The BAR had a leaf rear sight. I raised the aperture slide up a small amount from where it was and used point of aim. My first shots hit low, according to the FO. I made another adjustment and my next burst was centered on the place I aimed at on the base of Flat Top.

According to the FO, two of the Japanese were lying within a foot of each other and another was lying a short distance from them to their right. They were not looking at us (according to the FO) and probably didn't know we existed. We were looking at them from almost straight to their left. The Gunny and I couldn't actually see the Japanese, but several small bushes still remained on the top of Flat Top and they were easily visible references. The FO told us where to aim relative to one of the bushes.

The gunny and I fired together at a verbal signal from the FO, with him watching through his binoculars. We raised a cloud of dust on top of Flat Top. The FO told us to cease firing. He said that he could see one of them still lying there.

Almost 50 years later, in June of 1995, I met a man at a Sixth Marine Division reunion whom I hadn't seen since 1946. On Okinawa, Don Honis had been in I Company which was on the left of G Company on Oroku Peninsula.

At the reunion, during a conversation, Don happened to mention "Flat Top". That designation is not on any maps I have seen, and I thought only men from my platoon called it by that name. I queried Don about it, asking him if he had been on Flat Top. He said that I Company had taken that hill. I asked him if there was a dead Japanese on top of Flat Top. Don said there had been THREE dead Japanese on Flat Top. The Gunny and I had killed all three of them – from 600 yards away.

Don Honis had been hit back to front above the left knee by a Nambu machine gun bullet on May 16, 1945. He was hit while he and three other Marines were carrying Barney Wright away from Half Moon Hill on a poncho. Barney Wright had lost both feet while trying to fend off a Japanese grenade. At an Army hospital, after the initial first aid to control bleeding, etc., the treatment Don's bullet wound received was rolled up gauze, soaked in vaseline, inserted in and left in the wound channel, but changed on a regular basis.

A week or so after Don was wounded, the doctor told him, "You're just doing splendidly. I'll have you back with your outfit in no time."

Don's reply was probably a tongue-in-cheek, "Thanks a lot, Doc." Don, bandages still on his wound, was back with I Company by June 7 or June 8, less than a month after he was hit by the machine gun bullet.

Don had recovered a canteen from one of the dead Japanese on Flat Top. In 2008 he brought the canteen to a reunion of the Sixth Marine Division. I was able to hold in my hand a canteen taken from the body of a Japanese killed from 600 yards away by Gunny Quattrone and me.

The three Japanese were either officers, on the hill observing the situation first hand, so they could better control their troops; or they were spotting for artillery or mortar fire. In either case we probably saved a few Marine lives by getting them off of the top of Flat Top.

One pitch black, rainy night on Oroku Peninsula I was dug in with a new man. He complained that the BAR he was armed with kept malfunctioning. I asked him when was the last time he had cleaned it and he told me he didn't know how to field strip it

so he could clean it. So, I cleaned it. Or, rather, I stripped it and put the pieces in my pockets, and we cleaned them and oiled them before I reassembled the BAR. We did this by feel, since it was raining and we worked under a poncho which made it too dark to see anything. Luckily, we didn't drop any parts into the mud on the bottom of the hole. The next morning that BAR operated like a sewing machine.

I'm not sure on just which hill this occurred, but it was on Oroku peninsula in early June. A wire on a pole on the very top of a large hill was suddenly severed by a machine gun bullet. I don't know whether it was a Marine bullet or a Japanese bullet that hit it. The wire fell down from the pole and began to rewind itself into three foot diameter coils, all the while coming down the hill at high speed. Several of us had to duck out of its path. The pole the wire was trying to reach was quite a distance away so a large quantity of wire was involved. I saw the wire when it finally came to rest. It was uninsulated copper, about 5/16 inches in diameter. A bullet had hit it dead center and had sliced right through it on a slight angle. If the sharp end of the wire had struck someone, at the velocity it was traveling and as heavy as the wire was, it might have done them some hurt.

Also on Oroku Peninsula, and again I'm not certain on which hill this happened, one of our 37 Millimeter guns wheeled up and started firing directly over the foxhole occupied by Francis West and me. The gun about 30 yards to our rear, firing at something to our front. We heard the first shot (it almost deafened us) and raised up enough to see behind us. One of the gunners on the 37 Millimeter gun noticed us and signaled us to get down. They kept firing for about a half dozen rounds and we stuck our fingers in our ears after the first shot. We were pretty peeved. West wanted to throw a grenade in their direction so they could hear some noise too, but I talked him out of it.

A man with the title of "Corpsman" was regarded with great affection by all the Marines in the unit to which that man was assigned. He was usually called "Doc". The Marine Corps has no medical personnel. A Corpsman was a Navy “Hospital Corpsman", a sailor with a medical specialty who thought he had joined the Navy. Instead, he had been assigned to a Marine unit. Each rifle platoon had a corpsman assigned. He went wherever the platoon went. They had all volunteered to be with Marine units. A corpsman held the Navy rank of Hospital Apprentice if his rank was lower than petty officer and Pharmacist Mate if he was a

petty officer. It was the corpsman's job to give first aid to Marines who had been wounded. All of them had been to Navy schools to learn their skills. The instruction probably assumed that their work would be done aboard ship in clean operating rooms.

On the front lines, with the Marines, they had to work in unsanitary, often extremely hazardous conditions. It was a difficult job (to me a distasteful job) that they did extremely well. Corpsmen saved the lives of countless Marines.

The corpsman who had bandaged my thumb had been wounded himself soon after that, and was replaced by another corpsman the next day. He was an older man who told me he had a son who was a Marine. He was nervous about being up on the front lines. We had just taken another hill and the new corpsman and I dug a foxhole together as dusk was approaching. At his suggestion we recited the Lord's Prayer together when night overtook us.

Our platoon was dug in on the forward slope of the hill. Usually, after I had completed my runner's chores, going back to company headquarters, bringing up wiremen et al, I didn't get the choicest of locations for a hole. The corpsman had been busy bandaging some wounds, so the hole that he and I dug that evening, was on the platoon's left flank in a relatively exposed position. The sun was setting behind us and might have made us hard to spot as we dug in. The hole overlooked a valley and a much larger hill that ran alongside the valley in the direction of the enemy. We were several hundred yards from a small village, which was at the southern base of the hill. I Company occupied the forward slope (to them) of the hill across the valley from us. The Japanese made a habit of moving around at night, retreating here, moving up there.

I am not a golfer. I've proved that on numerous occasions. My golf is competitive rifle shooting, something I've done pretty well over the years. In 1951, when I first saw the 16th green on the golf course of the Duncan, Oklahoma Elks Lodge Golf and Country Club, I had a feeling of déjà vu. The golf green was elevated, about six feet higher than the surrounding area. It was almost like a small mesa. I had seen a similar place on Oroku Peninsula on Okinawa. The golf green in Oklahoma was about the same size, shape and height as a flat area on Okinawa.

As three of us rounded the steep side of a hill and saw that flat area a shot fired from a rifle made us hunker down. I threw a grenade. It was one time when arming the grenade and waiting a few seconds before throwing it was the right way to do it. A grenade picked up and thrown back over the edge of the flat area would have done in the three of us.

When the grenade went off we peeked over the edge of the flat area and saw a downed Japanese. The dead enemy soldier was lying face down and face up. His entire face, hinged at the hairline on his forehead was extended out from his head. The grenade had either hit the man in the chest as it exploded or the man had picked up the grenade just before it went off. Bodies with fresh, massive wounds have a peculiar smell. The body of that Japanese gave off that smell.

The three of us had patrolled in a valley way out in front of the platoon, in the open and in broad daylight until someone had shot at us. We couldn't see them but we shot in their general direction and then ran for cover behind a low stone wall that was on the outskirts of the small village. By the time we started back from the valley, a Nambu had picked us up, and maybe a couple of riflemen, but they couldn't have been any closer than 250 yards. We followed the wall and stayed in some trees as long as we could, but eventually we had to run for the cover of a ravine where some of the men from the platoon were located. As I jumped into the ravine just ahead of bullets from the Nambu, my picture was taken in mid-leap by a Marine combat photographer. I never have seen that photo. Maybe taking my picture damaged the man's camera.

The Japanese occupied the village and the hill it adjoined sometime after we had come back from the valley.

After we had occupied our hill, I went back to company headquarters and brought three men back up to the hill with me. One of the three men was Captain Tomasello, the company commander. The route had several places where it was necessary to run across open spaces to places where there was cover. Part of the way ran through the ravine. While we were walking in the bottom of the ravine, the company commander climbed up the side of the ravine for a looksee. When I noticed him I yelled at him to get down from there. He came down with a sheepish look on his face. I hurried us along in the ravine and apologetically explained to the captain about the mortars and the Nambus that had the area pinpointed. It was the first and last time that I ever commanded a captain in combat.

After his visit to the hill, I accompanied the captain back to company headquarters so I could bring some wire men and some people with water and supplies back to the hill where the platoon was. On the way back we stopped in the ravine and watched several tanks in action. The tanks were in the valley slightly forward of the left flank of the hill occupied by the Third Platoon. The tanks were firing flamethrowers and machine guns toward the base of the hill to our left and toward Oroku Village with the stone wall where I had been the day before.

The flamethrowers were mounted in the tubes (cannon barrels), so the tanks were unable to shoot projectiles.

The flamethrowers shot a thumb-sized stream of fire for nearly 100 yards. Where we were in the ravine was about 50 to 100 yards from the tanks. One of the tanks was hit by fire from the village and lost a track. Three men got out of it safely and ran to the ravine where we were.
One of the men was an Army lieutenant. He wore his bars, his insignia of rank, something that no officer in our company would do for fear of drawing sniper fire. The lieutenant was peeved at losing his tank. As he passed us in the ravine he shot several squirts from his Reising grease (sub-machine) gun into the side of the ravine until the magazine was empty.

One man was awake at all times in each foxhole. That meant that only half a night's sleep was possible with two men in a hole. That much sleep was not usually actually had by each man, what with alarums and nocturnal activities by the Japanese and by us. I probably wouldn't have been able to remember when I had two hours of uninterrupted sleep. Probably during my stay in the hospital. I was exhausted. The new corpsman's nervousness allowed me to have more sleep that night than I ordinarily would have had. Every time it was my watch, the corpsman would raise up and ask me if I could stay awake. Then he would usually take over the watch.

Sometime during the night, the corpsman shook me awake and whispered that he had heard a noise. There was a Japanese out there and he was going to throw a grenade at him. I was instantly awake then and watched the corpsman. He wiggled the pin out and threw the grenade without first letting the spoon fly and waiting a few seconds. The grenade snapped as it armed itself when he threw it. He then peered out into the darkness to watch it. I pulled him down into the hole just before it went off. Fragments from the grenade hit around our hole.

At just about dawn I was asleep when I heard the corpsman shoot twice with his carbine. He said he had shot at a Jap about 200 yards away on the other hill across the valley, and he was sure he had hit him. Several minutes later a mortar round hit one of the "safer" locations on our hill, not as exposed as the hole that the corpsman and I shared. The word was passed for the corpsman and he left our hole to tend to some Marines who had been wounded by fragments from the mortar shell.

After the corpsman had left I was staring sleepily out across the valley when a bullet fired from the other hill struck

the parapet of the hole and sprayed me with dirt. I hunkered down and the Japanese shot again and hit the inside of the back of the hole. I thought the corpsman had missed the Jap or there was another one there. I jumped out of the hole and ran to some shinnery and cut some branches with my Ka-Bar. Then I ran back to the hole and reached up to stick twigs and branches around the hole so that I could look around without being seen.

I Company made a sweep toward that area of the hill across the valley and I watched them. When they approached the location from where that Japanese had fired at me, I yelled over to them and warned them. Soon there was firing in that area. I found out later that one of the Japanese they killed there had already been wounded in the body and was bandaged. I believe that a carbine bullet fired by the corpsman had hit him but had not killed him. Ken Long, from I Company, was in the group that made the sweep and remembers me yelling across the valley to warn them.

I had just filled my canteens and was going back to my hole. There were two Marines in a foxhole on a part of the hill which had a steep slope. Their names were Arlin Roe and Wilbur Wilson. They were sitting up, using the slope of the hill for a backrest, heads together, talking. As I passed them a mortar shell hit and exploded between their heads. Wilbur Wilson was an older man (in his twenties) whom I had trained with and been with all the way from Camp Lejeune.

I was hit on the right cheek by a chunk of something that might have been brain tissue, in nearly the same spot where I had been hit by a piece of meat almost a month before. There was also a hole in my right canteen, the one with the canteen cup. If the fragment had gone clear through the canteen it would have missed my hip, but my hand had been on the canteen only seconds before.

On the 9th of June the three platoons of G Company had advanced quite a distance, maybe over 500 yards. Gunny Quattrone was still our platoon leader. The gunny had told us the day before that if we could go another 2000 yards the worst of the battle might be over for us. We were running out of hills to take and Japanese to take them from.

We were running out of us, too. This was our 70th day on the island of Okinawa. A Marine rifle platoon in those days normally had 42 men. The Third Platoon had 19 men in it. There were 11 men from the Third Platoon (mostly replacements), the Navy medical corpsman, and 7 men from G Company’s Machine Gun

section.

We ran into some opposition and stopped at the bottom of the forward slope of a large hill. The First and Second Platoons stopped on the forward slope of a smaller hill about a hundred yards ahead of us and to our right. A valley or gap ran between the two hills. Their hill had a more gradual forward slope. Ours had a steep forward slope and an almost vertical side next to the valley between the two hills.

When we reached the hill, Gunny Quattrone wasn't with us. I later found out that he had wound up on the other hill with the First and Second Platoons.

Across the valley from us to our right, probably 75 yards away, and slightly behind us, was another small hill which overlooked the rear of the hill with other two platoons.

Suddenly, a Japanese Nambu machine gun opened up on the rear of First and Second platoons from a cave inside that hill. I could only see into the cave from an angle, but I quickly began shooting with the carbine and fired about half a magazine. I borrowed a BAR and fired a magazine from it into the cave. I couldn't hit anyone directly, but I wanted to spray them with dirt from the impact of bullets on the inside wall of the cave. By then the men of the First and Second Platoons had opened up and some of them were in a position to fire directly at whoever was in the cave.

We had a Bazooka and two rockets for it, so I got the man carrying it to fire a round into the cave. The rocket hit inside the cave perfectly but failed to explode. I knew what had happened. The man had not armed the rocket before he fired it. We made sure that the next rocket was armed and we had a more experienced man shoot it. It exploded, but the man had shot it at the wrong cave. We were out of rockets for the bazooka.

One of our men came down from farther up the hill. It was R. S. White. He had been hit with a bullet which went through his left pectoral muscle and the triceps muscle in his left arm. He said that two more men were up there.

I ran up the hill. It was almost straight up for about twenty feet to a Japanese trench which was two and a half or three feet wide and about three or four feet deep. The trench stopped abruptly on the right, so I followed it as it curved around the hill to the left.

I ran into a Marine sitting in the trench, unable to keep his eyes open after dirt or sand had been sprayed into his eyes by a bullet that had missed him. We were getting fire from Flat

Top which was now to our rear. I called down to the men below us to throw clods of dirt up in the air so we could locate them.

Then I helped the half blinded man slide down the hill to them.

I looked back at Flat Top which was now about 400 or 500 yards behind us and to our left. There were Japanese shooting from caves and positions at the bottom of Flat Top or just this side of it. One Nambu machine gun was shooting at me, so I moved back and forth in the trench and took quick peeks. I could have shot at them except for two things. I didn't have a rifle, just that carbine, which would have been ineffective at that distance. And, there were tanks in the vicinity of the caves. If I had shot at the caves, the people in the tanks might have thought that I was a Japanese shooting at them from the trench and they might have shot at me. The tanks had 75 Millimeter cannon.

I moved left in the trench as it curved around the hill, going slowly, staying below the parapet of the trench and keeping the carbine at the ready. I had thought about what I would do if a grenade came in the trench with me and I wasn't decided whether I would vacate the trench or try to throw the grenade out. The trench abruptly ran out and became a path that continued around the hill at the same level as the floor of the trench. The path was about 40 or 50 yards long and ended at an embankment on the hill. On one side of the path was the hill, on the other side was a sheer drop. I had moved around the hill enough that the location was not visible from Flat Top.

From where the trench stopped I could see a Marine sitting with his back to the embankment that made a right angle with the end of the path. I don't remember his name. He raised his rifle when he saw me, then lowered it. I stepped out and started to go to him, but he yelled at me to get back. I stopped and Nambu bullets sprayed all around my feet. I hurried back to the safety of the trench. Most probably, it had been bullets from this same machine gun that had wounded R. S. White and had sprayed dirt in the other man's eyes.

We held a shouted conversation for a while. He said that there was nothing that I could do to help him, that he would suck it up after a while and make a try for the trench. He was sure he could make it with no trouble. He was out of the Nambu's field of fire most of the way back to the trench. I tried to get him to come to the trench while I was there, but he allowed as how I had stirred up the Nambu and he would wait awhile until things were quieter.

I went back around the trench to a point above where I thought the rest of the platoon was and called down to them to throw clods in the air so I could locate them. I slid down the

hill and rejoined them. Gunny Quattrone was still not around. I thought something had happened to him. We were in a precarious position and without a platoon leader. We hadn't had anyone killed yet, but two more men had been wounded in addition to R. S. White.

I decided to go over to the other hill to see if there was an officer there who could give us a hint as to what to do. We were on the west side of our hill. The south side was very steep and ran alongside the valley that separated our hill from the hill where the other two platoons were.

A gully, about 3 or 4 feet wide and about a foot deep, ran next to the south side of our hill. It was partially filled with water. I told someone where I was going and stepped out into the gully. My plan was to follow the gully until I was close enough to run across the valley to the other hill. I edged along, keeping very close to the side of the hill. The body of a dead Japanese "Imperial Marine" was laying across the gully on his back. He was badly bloated.

After about 75 yards in the gully, I thought I was close enough to make a dash across the valley to the other hill. I stepped up out of the gully. I was about to start running when I heard someone start screaming on the other hill. I found out later that the man who screamed was named Warren Lowe and he had been shot through an elbow and the abdomen. I stopped and was just standing there, feet spread, in a semi-crouch, carbine in my right hand.

SMACK! I somehow knew instantly what had happened to me. A single bullet had hit both of my legs just below the knees. The immediate feeling was that of being struck with a club, or, maybe with two clubs. I spun to my left and dived back toward the gully. I landed with my body from the waist down still outside the gully. The real pain started then. I felt like I had a charley horse cramp in the muscles of my right calf. Using my hands and elbows, I pulled myself along until my lower body and legs were in the gully. While I was doing this, two more bullets sprayed me with dirt.

I looked for the carbine. It was behind me, with the butt standing straight up and the barrel embedded in the mud of the gully. I thought about retrieving it. I remember thinking that the carbine would probably blow up if I tried to shoot it with the barrel clogged with mud. It would have been necessary to turn clear around in the gully to get to it. I was hurting too much to do that.

I began crawling in the mud of the gully, pulling myself along with my elbows, back to where the others in the platoon were.

Out of the corner of my eye I saw someone running toward me and turned to look at him. It was Gunny Quattrone coming from the hill that I had been trying to reach. He saw me and we made eye contact, but he kept on running past me. He was probably not aware that I had been hit. It was a good thing he didn't come to me. If he had stopped near me, outside the gully, he would have been another stationary target for the Japanese who had shot me. As it was, when he had gone twenty or thirty yards past me, I saw him get hit from back to front through his right side above his cartridge belt. He seemed to stumble, then he took off, running like a turpentined cat. That was the last time I saw him.

At a wide spot in the gully I stopped to rest. I rolled over, sat up and pulled my pant leg up out of the legging and rolled it up to get a look at my right leg. The pain was fierce. On the right side of my right calf was a half dollar sized hole, not exactly spurting blood, but bleeding heavily and rhythmically. I noticed what looked like bits of fresh hamburger on the inside of my pants leg.

I also noticed something that I had observed before when I had helped people who had been hit. Blood looked black on the gray-green dungaree material of my pants.

When I got to the body of the dead Japanese I couldn't crawl around it, so I crawled over it. I got fluid from it on my front. The water and mud in the gully helped wash most of it off me as I continued pulling myself along with my elbows.

I saw heads poking around the side of the hill for quick looks at me. They were getting fire from the same place where the Japanese was who had shot me. Gunny Quattrone had been close to them when he was hit.

When I reached the place where the men in the platoon were, several of them quickly pulled me up out of the ditch to safety behind the hill.

The corpsman used a pressure bandage on my right leg, which didn't make it feel any better. I was thinking that he had used a rubber tourniquet, but he probably took it off after putting on the bandage. I bled a bunch. My left leg didn't bother me as much as the right. Maybe its pain was over-shadowed by the pain in my right leg.

No one had been killed but four of us were wounded. At least two of them were completely ambulatory. The man with the hurt eyes would need someone to guide him. I don't know how long we laid there. The other three laid there calmly, but no matter what position I tried, I could not get comfortable. I asked the corpsman for a shot of morphine, but he didn't give me one. He said with the blood I had lost, morphine might knock me out and

the situation we were in I might have to walk out of there.

I had news for him.

Finally, the word was passed that smoke would be used for cover so casualties could be carried out. They had been even harder hit on the other hill. I don't remember whether the smoke came from artillery shells or from smoke grenades.

Four people put me face down on a poncho and encumbered by their rifles and other gear they dragged me by a circuitous route, over hills and through ravines, back to Company Headquarters. My private parts became intimate with every snag and bump for what seemed like a thousand yards. I will always be grateful to those four tired, cussing Marines who dragged me out of there. I had helped to carry people out. Now, it was my turn to be carried.

The company was pulled back from those two hills. The next day, the 3rd Battalion was relieved from the front line.

I was at Company Headquarters for another half hour. While I was there, Captain Tomasello, the company commander, was hit in the neck by a bullet fired by a Nambu from long range.

I was carried to a road where there was a 4X4 truck rigged as a two-man ambulance. I was loaded on the bottom rack and we started to the Sixth Marine Division Hospital. The road was rough and the trip seemed long. The hospital was now located in Naha, farther south than when I had been in it in May. A Bailey bridge had been erected across the bay south of Naha.

The man on the top rack died on the way.

At the hospital, they laid my stretcher on the floor. The stretcher was literally filled with blood. My blood. After a while, a corpsman cut my pants off and a doctor and a nurse rebandaged my legs. They washed and shaved the skin around the holes, then used sulfa powder in the wounds before rebandaging them.

I was taken to a cot. I felt weak and terrible, probably from loss of blood. They stuck a needle in my arm and began giving me whole blood and I soon began to feel a lot better. There was always the danger of going into shock, which could be lethal. I don't know whether I had been in any danger of that happening to me.

In the middle of May I had been in a hole with a man who had been shot fore and aft through the chest. I don't remember his name. A corpsman had bandaged him and had given him a shot of morphine. Then the corpsman had left to attend to another casualty, leaving me in the hole with the man. The situation was hairy and the wounded man could not be evacuated. He was

awake and alert. I asked him if he hurt much and he told me that he did not. A lot was going on outside our hole and I didn't watch the man constantly. When I looked back at him, after what seemed only a minute or two, his face was gray and he wasn't breathing. He had gone into shock and died.

Somewhere along the line, I was given a shot of morphine. It didn't seem to affect me much. I still hurt. The same regimen was started that had been followed when I was in the hospital the first time, about three weeks before. I was given a massive penicillin shot in the buttock every three hours.

I had been relieved when I realized that iodine would not be applied to the wounds. When either my brother or I had been hurt when we were young, my father would hand the iodine bottle to the injured one and he was expected to doctor his own hurt. Tincture of Iodine had been my parents' treatment of choice for any cut, stubbed toe or skinned place and it had always stung like fire. An illustration of Iodine usage:

The first time that I was ever wounded in action was in the Fall of 1934. The place was a vacant lot located a half block from my home in Kansas City, Missouri. The lot had been covered with tall weeds which had been cut down with a scythe in late Summer. By Fall, the long stems had dried and the leaves had withered so that they could be easily stripped off of the stem. The end product was a light straight stick, six to eight feet long, composed of a hardened outer shell and a pithy core. Those sticks were ideal for use as javelins or as weapons in "Spear Fights". The butt ends of the spears were slightly less than an inch in diameter and usually had been cut at an angle by the scythe. This resulted in a point that allowed them to stick in soft ground when they were thrown properly. We also used them in play battles, choosing up into teams or armies. Any soldier hit by a thrown spear was declared dead and out of action. The army with the last unhit soldier was the winner.

In those days, young boys frequently wore knickers, those ubiquitous pants with elastic cuffs that ended just below the knees. The socks below the cuffs invariably drooped down around the shoe tops, leaving an expanse of bare and highly vulnerable flesh exposed to the elements. On one occasion I was hit by a spear which had split slightly when it had been cut by the scythe. This resulted in an inch long sharpened spur extending out beyond the rest of the point of the spear. The spur was driven into my shin, next to the bone. It broke off from the spear when I tried to pull it out of my leg. I ran home. My mother took one look. From the time I went in the front door until Doctor Mom had pulled the spur out of my leg with pliers

and had finished sticking an iodine applicator into the hole, I don't believe a full minute had passed.

The morning after I arrived at the Sixth Marine Division Hospital, I was moved to another room in the building. It had been used as a classroom in which to teach sewing. On the walls were Singer Sewing Machine instructional charts. I don't remember whether the verbiage on them was in English or Japanese.

In the afternoon I was taken to an LST and my stretcher was laid down on the tank deck along with about fifty others. There were three naval officers looking down at us from the "balcony" deck that surrounded the tank deck. One of them came down and asked me how old I was. I told him, eighteen. I have always looked younger than I was, and especially so then, as skinny as I was. I probably should have told him that I was eighteen and a half.

On the afternoon of June 10, 1945, my service on Okinawa came to an end. My stretcher was hoisted by a crane up and over the side of the U.S. Hospital Ship RELIEF. The sum total of my worldly goods was in a plastic pistol cover which I held in my right hand, and my dog tags which were attached to a long, white shoelace knotted around my neck.

The pistol cover (a soft plastic envelope about 10 by 18 inches in size and olive drab in color) contained my wallet (devoid of money, we had received no pay since January, and then just fifteen dollars), a plastic cigarette case (which I still have), an unopened pack of Lucky Strike cigarettes and a small supply of matches. That and a pair of filthy skivvy shorts, were all the possessions that I owned. I was near the base line for the measurement of poverty, but at least I wasn't in debt.

Once I was in a ward aboard the RELIEF a very officious Navy nurse ordered a corpsman to give me a sponge bath and some pajama bottoms after my skivvy shorts were cut off me and carried away, probably on a stick. The nurse made some cutting remarks about personal hygiene. She probably didn't understand that if water had to be carried, and there was barely enough for drinking, then shaving and bathing were not feasible.

My last haircut had been more than three months before. It had been nearly a shave job, so all of the hairs on my head were the same length. My hair looked like a fright wig. I hadn't shaved for three weeks and my beard was sparse, mainly a goatee and sideburns. I probably didn't look too personally hygienic.

I was lying face down, the only position in which I could

be comfortable. This exposed the bottoms of my feet to view. The nurse came by later and ranted and raved about the condition of my feet. They were heavily calloused, stained black by the chemicals used to tan the leather and had not been out of my boondockers for several months, with the exception of when I had been in the hospital before. The nurse ordered a corpsman to clean my feet. He tried, but failed. Some weeks later, a quarter inch thick layer of skin peeled off the heels and balls of both feet and they became as smooth and soft as a baby's.

Hospital ships, while under way, steamed with all lights blazing. At that time, all around the island of Okinawa, Japanese Kamikaze planes were diving into many Navy ships, sinking some, damaging others. I had heard that the Hospital Ship COMFORT had been hit. I wondered what I would do if the RELIEF were hit and I had to abandon ship. Probably the side stroke.

Captain Tomasello, my company commander, came to see me. He had been shot through the neck, not exactly, but almost from side to side. It had probably been a 6.5 Millimeter round nosed bullet from a Nambu machine gun, and from some distance off. The bullet had evidently had time to "go to sleep" and didn't tumble after it hit his neck.

He had something like a bad pimple where the bullet exited, and a small lesion where it entered. The holes were not even bandaged. He was extremely lucky.

A note about bedpans. I am still a virgin. As of this date, I have never used a bedpan. I inveigled a corpsman into carrying me the twenty feet to the head (Navy for toilet) when I had to move my bowels that first day on the RELIEF, then carry me back to my rack. We used "Ducks", long necked stainless steel vessels, for urination.

On the morning of June 11, a white-haired Navy commander, age at least 60, came into the ward, followed by a corpsman carrying a chair. The commander pointed to an open space on the deck. "Put it down there, son." Then he beckoned in my direction. "You, come here."

I looked at him. Then I realized that there was only a bulkhead behind me. He was talking to me.

"Come on over here," he said. "I want to dress your wounds. Come on, we haven't got all day."

And here I had thought that I was a cripple.

I swung my legs over the side of the rack, which was about four feet above the deck. I lowered my feet to the steel deck

and supported myself on other racks as much as I could. The muscles in my right calf were drawn up so that I had to walk on my toes. I couldn't get my right heel down. I hobbled over and sat in the chair. The commander sat on a low stool in front of me.

The commander was very careless with his scissors as he cut the bandages from my legs. He stuck the pointed end of a scissors blade into the big hole in my right calf. I think he did it on purpose. With the bandage off, blood ran down my leg onto the commander's nice white deck.

"A little hemorrhage," said the commander. "A little hemorrhage is good for the wound, you know. Cleans it out." I didn't tell him that my right leg must have a really cleansed wound in it, as much as it had bled. He rebandaged my legs, using too much sulfa powder, which later worked out of the bandages and was like someone had been eating sugar cookies in my bed. The commander had a good chair side manner. He was a talker. He kept up a running commentary as he worked. He asked me if I had lied about my age to enlist in the Marine Corps. When I told him I was 18, he made some comment about me being 18 in a few years. Thereafter, every time I would see him, he would say, "Yeah, you'll be 18 in a few years".

When he had finished bandaging my legs he told me to go back to my rack. When I had hobbled and hopped over to it, and a corpsman started to help me climb up into it, the commander said, "No. Don't help him. He has to do it himself."

This was 1945. Recovery treatment for injuries, wounds and surgery was beginning to be changed to that used almost universally today. It antedated civilian practices by quite a few years. Instead of complete bed rest and inactivity, with the need for a consequent lengthy recuperative period, hurt people were kept active. While they healed, they recuperated at the same time.

When I was back up in the rack, he said, "Hang your legs over the side. Does that hurt? Well, it's supposed to hurt. You've been shot. Do that every time you think of it. All day long. Hang them over as long as you can stand it. Now, I don't want you using a bedpan. Go to the head by yourself." There was a scale about thirty feet away from my rack. He pointed to it. "Go weigh yourself every day. Getting around will be the best thing for you."

That is how I know how much I weighed. I was eating like a horse and the chow on that hospital ship was great. I don't know how much I weighed when I first came aboard the RELIEF, but the first time I weighed, I was 128 pounds. The next day I weighed in at 132. The last time I weighed, just before debarking from the RELIEF, I was up to 136 pounds.

I was used to weighing over 150 pounds. The combination of poor or lack of chow, loss of sleep, diarrhea and stress had not gone unnoticed by my body.

The "cargo" on the hospital ship RELIEF for this trip was transported from Okinawa to the island of Saipan in the Marianas Islands group. We were taken to an Army hospital, but there were mostly Marines in my ward. The doctor in the ward was a Navy Lieutenant from Texas. There were Army nurses (female) and Army medical technicians (male) in the ward.

There was a Navy hospital on Guam, and another on Tinian. Both islands were in the Marianas Islands group, as was Saipan.

hospital ship would go from Okinawa to either Guam, Tinian or Saipan, whichever island had the most hospital beds available at the time, regardless of whether the wounded men on board were soldiers, sailors or Marines.

Our ward was in a large Quonset type building, with probably forty beds. There was a public address system in each ward. Instead of a bugle sounding "reveille" as a wake up call each morning, an orchestral version of "Out Of My Dreams" from the musical "Oklahoma!" came through the loudspeakers. The first morning that this took place I awoke, had an instant of disorientation followed by a moment of uneasiness, then I was overcome by a warm feeling, knowing that I was warm, dry and in no danger. I have always had a real fondness for that song.

The only thing to disturb this feeling of well being was the soreness in each of my buttocks from the eight times daily injections of penicillin for three weeks.

Outside of a shot or two of morphine on the night after I was hit, and anesthetics for surgery, I received no medication for pain. I had heard of wounded men in World War I developing addictions from the pain deadening drugs they received. I didn't ask for anything after a day or so, and I'm not sure they would have given me anything. The first few days were pretty rough but then the pain went away unless I would move wrong. The complete lack of any infection, due to the penicillin shots, probably eliminated most of the source of pain.

On the subject of injections, I gave shots on two occasions. Both times were spectacularly unsuccessful.

Across the aisle from me in the hospital ward was a Marine from my battalion. I can't recall his name, but his mother was the postmistress of Arthur, Iowa. He had three holes in the front of his abdomen caused by a single bullet. The bullet had pierced his right side, came out and immediately went back

inside through the same hole and then exited his left side. He had no damage to any internal organs, just damaged abdominal muscles which caused him to walk around bent over like an old man with a back problem. For some reason he received his penicillin injections in his arms. I volunteered to give him his shot one day and the medic handed me the hypodermic. Army medics would come by each bed several times a day, pushing a cart that was filled with medical paraphernalia.

I had watched Army medics and Navy corpsmen give shots. They invariably employed a technique for inserting the needle that resembled throwing a dart. They would grab the triceps muscle at the back of the arm and squeeze the flesh to give a stationary target. Then they would insert the needle very briskly. I'd almost swear that the hypodermic left their fingers. I used this technique, but the young man was so skinny that the point of the needle went clear through his arm. Instead of withdrawing the needle and starting over, I withdrew only until the point of the needle was back inside his arm, then I changed directions and pushed it into his arm. The resulting cries of pain completely destroyed any credibility I might have had as a shot giver.

The only other injection attempt that I made was done prior to this, in May, 1945, on Okinawa. Two of us had helped a wounded man back to G Company headquarters where we put him in the charge of a corpsman. The corpsman was in a shell hole that had been enlarged by digging. He was completely occupied with a man who had cracked up. The man was crying and thrashing around. The wounded man we brought back needed the corpsman's attention much worse than the man with the combat fatigue. The corpsman told me to take care of the crying man -- to hold him down. We were afraid that if he climbed out of the hole that he might be hit by enemy fire. The man was larger than I was. It was hard to restrain him. The corpsman rummaged around in his bag and threw me a small cardboard box that contained a syrette, which was like a small metal toothpaste tube with an attached hypodermic needle and contained one dose of a morphine compound.

I held the man down while I removed the syrette from the box. There was a "tee" shaped wire inside the needle, which I pulled out. I then pushed up his sleeve and stuck the needle in his forearm, all the while wrestling with him. I couldn't squeeze the tube's content's into the man's arm and asked the corpsman what I was doing wrong.

The corpsman asked if I had pushed the "tee" shaped wire into the needle to puncture the tube. When I told him that I had not done this, he gave me a long suffering look and got another syrette which he administered himself. When the man was quiet

where I did not have to hold him down, I picked up my rifle and slunk back to where I belonged.

In the bed to my right as I lay on my back in the hospital was a corporal from the 22nd Marines who had been overseas for three years but who was not yet 20 years old. He had a real talent. He could blow smoke rings which bounced off of the ceiling of the Quonset hut.

A single rifle bullet had done about as much damage to him as it was possible to do without being life threatening. He had been in mid-stride, left foot forward, when a Japanese had raised up and shot him. He had killed the Japanese and then hobbled back to an aid station.

The bullet had put a furrow in his right thigh. It had then penetrated his scrotum, missing the testes, and then partially circumcised him. It still wasn't finished. The bullet made a massive wound at the juncture of his left buttock and his left thigh as large as a man's hand. And, as a final insult, it amputated the first joint of his left little finger. I watched the first time that penicillin was squirted into that massive wound in his buttock and leg. I found other things to do on subsequent occasions.

Due to the severity of the wound to his buttock and thigh, his transportation to the hospital at Pearl Harbor had been planned, but he refused to go. He had a twin brother who was still with the 22nd Marines on Okinawa and he wouldn't go to Pearl until he had news of his brother. He would ask each new arrival in the ward if they were from the 22nd Marines. If they were, he would wring them out for news about his brother.

In the bed to my left was a sergeant from the 4th Marines who had a bullet in his right calf. His calf was swollen to about twice normal size and he would whimper like a baby when he would bump it in his sleep. The bullet had gone through the torsos of two other Marines who had been lying near him, killing both of them, before stopping in his leg.

I saw the bullet after it had been removed from the sergeant's calf after the infection had been reduced. It was about .30 caliber, colored red from being in his leg and its point was bent.

I remember that the rifling impressions on the bullet had a left hand twist, which meant that the bullet had to have been fired from a Lewis gun. This was a machine gun of British design, which fired .303 caliber ammunition and had left hand twist rifling. The gun might have been of Japanese manufacture. Or, the gun might have been captured when the British surrendered at Singapore. And, Lewis guns were exported to the Far East prior to WW II. All of the rest of the rifles and

machine guns used by the Japanese had rifling with a right hand twist.

My legs had been hit by a bullet fired from a Japanese Model 99 Arisaka rifle, which was chambered for a Type 99, 7.7 Millimeter Japanese cartridge. I believe this is so, because that was the only kind of Japanese rifle I saw on Oroku Peninsula. Most (maybe all) of the machine guns I saw were 6.5 Millimeter. I was hit in both legs by a single bullet from a rifle and the scar seemed to be of 7.7 millimeter diameter.

The bullet loaded in that ammunition was a pointed, flat based projectile of about 184 grains weight and a muzzle velocity of around 2400 feet per second. I'm sure that the rifling was right hand twist although there was no way to check it out. The bullet didn't stop in my leg. I only slowed it down some. The bullet entered my left leg about an inch below the bottom of the kneecap, slightly to the left of center. It hit at the juncture of the tibia (front bone) and the fibula (rear bone) and traveled between both bones, exiting at the right side of my left leg, just behind the tibia and about a half inch lower on the leg than the entry point. My medical record mentioned a "compound fracture of the left tibia". Entry and exit holes were approximately of bullet diameter.

My right leg was hit on its left side, about two and one-half inches below the bottom of the patella and slightly behind the center of the leg. The entry hole was of bullet diameter. Inside the right leg the sharp pointed bullet became ballistically unstable and tumbled. The exit hole was about half dollar size and opposite the entrance hole, slightly behind the center of the leg, a little lower than the entrance hole.

As far as I know, no bones were hit in my right leg. There was some nerve damage, however. My right foot and ankle were numb for a day or two. Then, for about five to ten years, the bottom of my right foot had areas with no feeling, eventually recovering completely. For several years my right foot could not feel heat or cold too well. The doctor in the hospital on Saipan tested me at least once to see if I was faking about the lack of feeling. He caught me lying on my stomach and jabbed the small blade of a pen knife into the bottom of my foot and was triumphant when I yelped, but he had stuck the wrong foot, the left one. I don't know whether he ever tried the right foot. I had surgery twice on the right leg; once with a complete anesthetic, once with a spinal block. Sodium Pentathol made me nauseous, but my leg hurt worse after the spinal block wore off.

Several times an army officer, usually a colonel, came to the ward to decorate one or more of the soldiers with the Purple Heart medal, which is awarded for being wounded in action. We were all supposed to lie at attention while these ceremonies took place. This was an Army hospital. None of the Marines received a Purple Heart there.

I had always heard of old civil war veterans being able to predict bad weather from the reactions of their war wounds.

I didn't think this actually happened until it happened to me. My right leg would hurt clear up into my hip -- before a change in weather.

In 1975 I read of tests made on the mummy of Egyptian King Tutankhamen to determine his age at the time of his death. From the extent of the ossification (hardening into bone) of the upper parts of the bones in his lower legs it was determined that he was about 19 years of age when he died, since those regions of the bones had not completely ossified. Until then, I had often wondered how a bullet was able to go completely through my left leg, through what was almost solid bone, and yet do so little damage. I was eighteen years, six months and three days old at the time of the wounding. Had I been a few years older, and the bones in my leg harder and more brittle, the injury might have been much worse, maybe even to the extent of losing that leg at the knee.

For 37 years I had a bone chip (or something) which made my left knee feel uncomfortable unless I flexed it until it snapped every 20 minutes or so, even at night. Then, in 1982, something caused my left knee to swell. When the swelling went down, I did not need to flex the knee any more. The bone chip (or something) had either gone back into place or had migrated. Maybe someday I will find that I need to flex my big toe or my elbow every 20 minutes. My left shin still has areas which are numb.

I attended a USO show while in the hospital. The band was led by Louis Prima.

I spent two months in the Army hospital, followed by a week in an Army convalescent hospital, both on the Island of Saipan. The convalescent hospital consisted of tents with green grass floors and four cots per tent. In my tent were a soldier from the 7th Infantry Division and another from the 27th Division, as well as a Marine from the First Marine Division and me from the

Sixth Marine Division.

I never saw a doctor in the CH. The only person of authority was an Army first sergeant.

After morning breakfast the day after I arrived at the CH there was a roll call formation. Following that, privates and PFCs were put on work details. The work was hard, in my case it was removing large pyramid tents from plywood platforms, folding the tents, breaking down the platforms and stacking the plywood.

After a couple of tents I was limping around and I believed I'd had enough tent disassembly. I went back to my tent and laid on my cot. After a few minutes the first sergeant poked his head in the tent, saw me and told me to follow him. We went to a trench that was being dug in coral with a pick and shovel. The trench was to drain a pond that formed when a messhall had been built and interrupted natural drainage.

Guarding me while I worked in the trench was a young Army PFC armed with an M1 carbine. I asked the soldier if his carbine was loaded and he told me that it was. I asked him would he shoot me if I got up out of the trench and walked away. He gulped and said he didn't know. I stayed in the trench, working slowly until noon chow. I never went back to the trench after chow.

The next morning after roll call I made myself scarce. Another Marine, George Bass, a corporal and exempt from work details and I began to absent ourselves from the CH during the day. We'd catch rides on trucks and travel all over the island of Saipan.

George had a cousin in the Army Air Corps on Saipan who commanded an aircraft engine maintenance unit in the 20th Air Force. The cousin arranged for a ride on a B29 bomber for George and me. We flew a four hour training mission on a plane with a crew fresh from the States. We helped the crew go through the ritual of rotating the propellers to remove oil that might have settled in the bottom cylinders and could cause damage to the engines when they were started.

We flew south from Saipan, simulated bombing a target on the Island of Guam (another island in the Marianas group) and actually did bomb the island of Rota, where the Japanese there had been bypassed.

George Bass and I flew in the waist of the B29, sitting on rotatable stools near plastic blisters, each of us encumbered

with a Mae West life preserver and a parachute. We were "armed" with a black box mounted in the blister. Moving the black box caused two .50 caliber machine gun barrels aft of us to move. Aiming through the black box we could see an orange ring. Rotating a knob on the side of the black box changed the size of the orange ring. This also caused a slight movement of the gun barrels.

We could have flown on a bombing mission over Japan which by that time in the war would be almost a milk run, but we vetoed that for two reasons. One, we would have missed roll call at the CH. The main reason was that if the B29 had to land on Iwo Jima, any unauthorized personnel on board were subject to a general court martial. It seems that too many people had been passengers on bombing missions.

To rejoin our Sixth Marine Division, which had gone to Guam after the battle of Okinawa, George and I and about thirty other Marines flew to Guam on two R4D airplanes, otherwise known as DC3s. Marines with last names beginning with A through M were on one airplane, N through Z on the other. So George and I were on separate planes.

When we landed on Guam, George told me that after he had boarded the airplane and strapped himself into one of the seats along the side, one of the pilots came back from the front of the plane. The pilot took off his sun glasses, announced that he was Lieutenant Tyrone Power and shook hands with each man.

The Atom bombs were dropped on Japan and the war ended while I was in a Navy Medical Casual Unit on Guam before rejoining G Company.

I rejoined G Company in time to accompany it to Tsingtao, China where I spent nine months. That time has been described in another of my narratives entitled CHUNGWA, which is how I heard the name of China being pronounced by Chinese.

On July 29, 1946, The USS BRECKINRIDGE sailed into San Diego harbor with me on board. The paint on the WELCOME HOME sign in San Diego harbor was peeling. On August 10, 1946 The Marine Corps discharged a corporal named James Samuel White. World War Two had been over for almost a year.

The Sixth Marine Division had three rifle regiments; The 4th Marines, the 22nd Marines and the 29th Marines. The division

also had an artillery regiment, the 15th Marines.

Each rifle regiment had three battalions. Each battalion had three companies. Each company had three 42-man rifle platoons, composed of three 13-man squads, a platoon leader, a platoon sergeant and a platoon guide (sergeant). Each squad had a squad leader and three fire teams, each with four men.

In addition, each of these units had ancillary units attached to them. I have already mentioned the mortar section and the machine gun section which were part of G Company.

Marine companies were large. G Company landed on Okinawa with 255 men. With replacements who joined the company after the landing, 451 men served in G Company on Okinawa while the fighting was at its worst. G Company had 61 Marines killed during the battle for Okinawa plus an unknown number (to me) of Corpsmen. 224 G Company Marines were awarded Purple Heart medals for being wounded in action. Many wounds were treated only by a corpsman, with no Purple Heart awarded.

Of the original members of G Company who landed on April 1, 1945, almost all had been killed or had been wounded at least once by the end of the battle. Two original members of the 3rd Platoon survived without being killed or wounded.

Of the approximately 1100 Marines in the 3rd Battalion, 29th Marines, which included G Company, there were 969 battle casualties. Of the 3,512 Marines who served in the 29th Marine regiment; 2,821 fell during the battle.

The 6th Marine Division lost 1,622 men killed in action and 6689 men wounded in action during the Okinawa battle.

Because of the high casualty rate, the fire team and even the squad hierarchy quickly broke down. Toward the end of the battle, the lowest unit structure in G Company was the platoon. And most platoons were little more than reinforced squads.

Rifle companies with severe attrition were not dismembered and the survivors sent to other units. Replacements and a constant trickle of returning casualties kept a company up to a minimum strength. Efforts were made so that a returning Marine rejoined the same company he had left when he was wounded. This retained the identity of the company and maintained its esprit de corps. Men who have shared hardship and who have survived danger together tend to form a bond, with each man more effective than a lone individual.

It was not Army policy to make sure that a soldier who had been wounded was always returned to the same unit. This, I believe, was a mistake.

One of my pet peeves is decorations for bravery. It has been said that men will risk their lives for a bit of colored cloth. Whoever said that was wrong, but in the Sixth Marine Division, not much colored cloth was given out. Very few Sixth Marine Division Marines received decorations for valorous actions on Okinawa. There were six Medals Of Honor, 27 Navy Crosses, 130 Silver Stars and 540 Bronze Star Medals awarded. From the highest award, the Medal of Honor, to the lowest, the Navy Letter of Commendation, about 800 decorations were awarded for a Division whose members numbered 24,000.

The possible reasons for this paucity of decorations were several. Okinawa was a long battle. The division had heavy casualties in its front line units. An act of valor was possibly forgotten by the end of the battle or witnesses to such acts became casualties and were either killed or wounded and evacuated. No system existed whose purpose was to seek out acts of valor and reward them.

Members of the Sixth Marine Division did receive more than their share of one decoration, and that was the Purple Heart Medal. The division had almost 7000 recipients of this medal which is awarded to any person wounded in action while serving against an enemy of the United States. The Purple Heart was elevated in 1985 to a higher status in the hierarchy of medals than some medals it once ranked behind.

Another award was made to all Sixth Marine Division members. This was the Presidential Unit Citation which was awarded to the members of each unit attached to the division during the battle for Okinawa. Qualifications for this award to a unit correspond to those for the award of the Navy Cross to an individual.

Sailors and Marines who served in front line rifle companies on Okinawa are also eligible for a decoration awarded for time spent in direct contact with an enemy of the United States. This is the Combat Action Ribbon (CAR). It is analogous to the Army's Combat Infantryman's Badge (CIB). Along with the CIB usually a Bronze Star Medal is awarded. No such award is made together with the award of a CAR.

It might be said that I became a Marine out of fear. I was graduated from high school in June of 1943 at the age of 16. I had the good fortune to be able to enroll in a university for a year. By then, all of my friends and most of my male high school classmates had entered the armed services. No one had any idea how long the war would last in 1944. I thought that I

would ultimately have to be in the service and if I waited until I was drafted I would have to go into the Army. The Selective Service System (the draft) didn't take men until they were 18 and then most of them went into the Army. I didn't want to be in the Navy and I was too young to go into the Army.

That left the Marine Corps. The more I thought about that, the better it sounded. The Marine Corps looked favorably on rifle marksmanship. I was on a rifle team in high school and was already a pretty good shot with a rifle. I had hunted with my father and brother. I was healthy and a pretty good athlete.

Marines were volunteers. It could be argued that the average Marine was better trained, more highly motivated and probably more effective as a fighter than the average soldier. Marines took care of their wounded. If I went into the Marine Corps there was a good chance I would see some action and be in dangerous places, but that could also happen in the Army.

My logic went something like this: young men aren't generals or colonels, young men are privates. Privates frequently carry rifles and go to places where it is hairy. I was young and would probably carry a rifle. If I had to go someplace where it was dangerous, would I want to be surrounded by people who had been drafted, or would I rather be among Marines.

My dread of a particular weapon seemed to increase in direct proportion to its impersonality. I feared bullets, but not as much as mortar and artillery shells, especially air bursts. But, my all time candidate as an object of fear, loathing and dread was a land mine. I will always remember the man in my platoon who kicked something and lost a foot.

Fear during my entire stay on Okinawa was cyclic, both in incidence and degree. There was always an underlying apprehension. The last thought before sleep and the first thing remembered upon awakening, was -- I am here and it is a dangerous place to be. We all could laugh and tell jokes when there was not any immediate danger, but there was always a gnawing feeling of uneasiness.

Uneasiness frequently escalated to alarm when the danger level suddenly increased, such as when a shell would explode nearby or the snap of a sniper's bullet was heard.

I began this narrative by telling about my Great Grandfather. I'll end it with another of my relatives, a fine lady whom I loved very much. Louisa MaGill was my Maternal Grandmother.

I can remember hearing Grandmother MaGill, each time she made reference to someone having been in the first World War, saying something like --

"So and So" (relative, friend or acquaintance) "was in The War, but he never talks about it."

I've never known why she thought that "So and So" would not want to "talk about it", as if it were something too awful to discuss. Was it because she equated it with something unmentionable or disgraceful? I don't think so. I think her problem was that talking to her about war experiences would be like talking about traveling 60 miles per hour to someone who had never heard of an automobile.

Relating experiences concerning activities which are the primary reason for the existence of armed forces makes some people nervous, even people who were in the armed forces but who were never lucky (or unlucky) enough to serve in a unit that came into actual contact with an enemy. It is acceptable for them to discuss how bad living conditions and similar things were ... "when I was in the Army". But, for men, who were "fortunate" enough to actually come into contact with an armed enemy, and to survive that contact, to talk about those experiences is, strangely, sometimes not acceptable.

When men who have been in combat get together, perhaps at the reunion of some military unit, the most horrible occurrences can be heard being calmly discussed. Those same experiences might not be understood and could even be disbelieved by someone without the background necessary to be capable of comprehending them. As far as discussing combat experiences, why not? Wartime experiences are part of life, no different than any other part, but perhaps a little rarer than playing football or belonging to a fraternity while attending college. And those subjects are not taboo.

One of Louisa MaGill's heroes was President Harry Truman. There are those today who say that President Truman should not have ordered the use of atomic bombs against Japan. With the wisdom of hindsight those people say that Japan was already suing for peace. It came to light after the end of the war that there were, in fact, some groups in Japan who were wanting to surrender. But the people who held the power in Japan, who actually made decisions, were definitely not suing for peace. The Japanese military had the same philosophy of "fight to the death" in the last year of the war during the battles for Saipan, Tinian, Guam, Pelelieu, Iwo Jima and Okinawa; that they had held from the beginning. All during the battle for Okinawa, which was the final one, it was my personal observation that the Japanese still subscribed to that philosophy. Tactics used by the Japanese had changed as the war dragged on. They did little to oppose the landings on Okinawa. Instead, they fortified the interior of the island with mutually supporting defensive

positions in hills honeycombed with caves. Attacking troops paid a heavy price, in men killed and wounded, for any ground gained. The same tactics had been used earlier on the islands of Pelelieu and Iwo Jima.

Due to these tactics, rates of battle casualties for Marine front line units had risen sharply over what they had been at the start of the war

The best military intelligence at that time had estimated a million U.S. casualties and an even larger number of Japanese military and civilian casualties when the home islands were invaded. The only large Japanese civilian population encountered during the war had been on the island of Saipan. There, a large number of men, women and children had chosen suicide rather than surrender.

The fierceness of the fighting on Iwo Jima and on Okinawa, the "fight to the death" attitude of the Japanese and the success of the Kamikaze tactics were deciding factors in President Truman's decision to drop the two atom bombs on Japan.

Without the benefit of hindsight, using the best information he had available to him at the time, President Truman decided to use atomic bombs against Japan to save American lives. Ordering the use of atomic bombs probably saved many Japanese lives as well.

I am in agreement with my Grandmother MaGill’s liking of President Truman. I might not always have been happy with his politics, but President Truman’s decision to drop atomic bombs on Japan probably saved my life. That was a decision with which I totally agree and with which my children must agree. My Marine regiment, the 29th Marines, was due to be in the first assault wave to land on the Japanese island of Honshu at an early date in 1946. Had President Truman not made that decision, I knew the date of my death.

James S. White
Duncan, Oklahoma
October, 1995
Rev., August, 2010

S E M P E R F I D E L I S

APPENDIX

G/3/29 ROSTER: APRIL, MAY AND JUNE OF 1945

The information for this roster is from the April, May and June official USMC company rosters for G Company, 3rd Battalion, 29th Marines of the Sixth Marine Division. The company was on the island of Okinawa during those months.

Names are in alphabetic order and not by rank.

The rank shown is the lowest rank. There were promotions during and after the battle that are on the original company rosters but are not shown here.

The number immediately beside the rank is the month that the man joined G Company. If there is no number, he was an original member of the company when it landed on April 1st, 1945.

Those who joined the company in June are listed at the end of the roster, since most of them joined the company late in that month and only three of them were wounded and none killed.

The three digit number immediately beside the KIA and WIA is the month and date when the casualty occurred. For example, beside a man's name might be "WIA609", showing that he was wounded in action on June 9, 1945.

Where there is a question mark (?) instead of a date, the exact date when the man was wounded is unknown to me, but he is listed in the *History of the Sixth Marine Division* (the green book) as receiving the Purple Heart Medal. Where there is a date and a question mark (?), the actual date is uncertain but the most probable date is shown.

There were woundings where no Purple Heart was awarded for some reason (the man did receive treatment from a corpsman but not a medical officer or didn't spend the night somewhere, etc.) and those are not included. In addition, injuries and illnesses are not shown.

The information for DOW (died of wounds) is sketchy on the rosters, so in most cases they are shown as KIA.

--James S. White
October, 1995

ABBOTT, Paul P.		PFC4	WIA612
ADAMS, George A.		Cpl4	WIA514
ADAMS, Irvin L.		PFC4	WIA515
AKERS, Paul N.		PFC	WIA416
ALEXANDER, Howard J.	Pl	Sgt	WIA416

ALLEN, Lansing A.	PFC4		
ALLEN, Roland R.	PFC4	WIA605	
ARGIRO, Dominic	PFC4	WIA516	
AUGUSTYNOWICZ, Francis S.	PFC	WIA518	
BAILEY, Malcom V.	PFC4		
BALLER, Thomas J.	PFC	WIA513	
BALLENGER, Clarence E. Jr.	Cpl	WIA?	
BALTZER, William R.	PFC	WIA610	
BANNON, James P. J.	PFC	WIA416 & 514	
BARNES, Clarence E.	Cpl	WIA416	
BARRY, Robert J. Jr.	PFC	WIA416	
BEACH, Arthur G.	PFC	WIA607	
BELISLE, Raymond H.	PFC		
BELLIS, Robert L.	Pvt		
BENEDETTO, John A.	PFC	DOW412	
BERRY, James E.	Pvt	KIA518	
BIGLEY, Richard E.	PFC5	KIA610	
BIRDWELL, Carl J.	PFC		
BISCHOFF, Herman C.	PFC4	WIA608	
BISHOP, John J.	Pvt	KIA516	
BLAKE, Leo J.	Pvt	KIA514	
@ BLANCHET, Thomas J.	CPT		
BLECKLEY, William E.	PFC	KIA416	
BLUMETTI, Frank, Jr.	PFC	WIA411	
BOGARDUS, Elwin J.	Sgt	KIA513	
BOND, Jerry M.	Sgt		
BOND, Mendle E.	Cpl		
BOOTH, Mahlon E.	PFC4	WIA605	
BORCENK, Frank N.	PFC	WIA ?	
BORGES, Arthur R.	PFC	WIA607	
BORMOLINI, Ariso J.	PFC4		
BOWER, Clyde R.	PFC4	WIA610	
BOWER, Donald B.	Pvt		
BOZEKAS, Angelo G.	PFC	WIA608	
BRADY, Howard J.	Cpl5		
BRESNAHAN, Leonard O.	PFC	WIA513	
BREYCHAK, Paul	Cpl5	WIA605	
BROWNING, Donald W.	PFC4		
BRINKMAN, Eugene H.	PFC	KIA529	
BRUNO, Vincent G.	PFC	KIA516	
BUCHTER, Robert L.	PFC	WIA514	
BUCKLEY, Ernest L. Jr.	PFC	KIA605	
BUCY, Clyde T.	PFC	WIA516	
BURLISON, Thomas N. Jr.	Cpl	WIA513	
CAMPANELLI, John J.	PFC	WIA ?	
CARLSON, Sigurd Jr.	PFC	WIA515 & 516	
CAUGHMAN, Henry A.	PFC		

CHAGNON, Raymond G.	Cpl	WIA516
CHAPMAN, Robert L.	Pvt5	
CHEW, Daniel G.	Cpl5	
CHIBAN, Anthony J.	Sgt	WIA605
CHICOINE, Pearl D.	Pvt	WIA514
CHRISTOPHER, Anthony "D" Jr.	PFC	WIA ?
GLASSER, Harold	As Ck	
CLIFFORD, Thane L.	PFC	
CODA, James F.	PFC5	
@ COLLINS, William H.	2LT5	
CONNER, Martin R.	PFC	
COSITORE, Vincent L.	PFC	
COSTA, Gilbert L.	PFC	KIA513
COX, Walter L.	Sgt	KIA514
COX, Mc Neal F.	Cpl	WIA412
COYNE, Richard J.	MTch Sgt	
CZARNECKI, Andrew S. Jr.	Cpl	
DAHLIN, Ernest W.	Cpl	
D'ALESSANDRO, Antonio D.	Cpl	WIA516 ?
DALRYMPLE, William T.	PFC	WIA ?
DALTON, John H.	PFC	WIA512
DAVIS, Eugene A	Sgt5	
DAVIS, Wallace E.	Pvt5	
DEBOARD, Amos	PFC	KIA610 WIA416
DECKER, Frederick	PFC	WIA608
DENNING, Junior	PFC	WIA411
DENSEL, Richard	Cpl	
DOLAN, Michael F. X.	Cpl	WIA516
DOLE, Robert S.	PFC5	
DOUGHERTY, Thomas J.	Pvt	WIA412
DRENNAN, Thomas A.	PFC	WIA512
DUMSHA, Albert C.	Sgt4	WIA ?
EARLY, William	Cpl	WIA416
ECK, Lee C.	Pvt	KIA516
ELLISON, James E.	PFC	WIA513
ENGLISH, Ben	Pvt	
ERWIN, James H.	PFC4	WIA514
ESTELL, Richard L.	Cpl	WIA512
EVANS, John J.	Pvt	WIA516
FARRELL, John H.	Pvt	
FEINBERG, Benjamin L.	Cpl5	WIA609
FENNO, Anthony L.	Cpl5	
FIELDS, Glenis C.	Pvt	KIA518 WIA416
FINAMORE, Peter W.	PFC	KIA416
FINN, Clarence C.	Pvt	
FISHER, Harry T. Jr.	Pvt	WIA416 & 513
FOWNES, William C.	Sgt4	

FRANKE, William A. Pvt WIA605
GADBOIS, John E. Pvt
GALBREATH, Chester L. PFC
GIBSON, Raymond D. PFC
GILBERT, Franklin J. Cpl DOW527 WIA513 & 516
GLASSER, Harold As Ck
GONZALES, Raymundo, M. Pvt
@ GOOSENS, Walter E 2LT WIA ?
GRAHAM, Newell I. (QM)(Mech) Sgt5
GRANGER, Sherlock N. PFC5 WIA605
GRAYLING, Robert N. Pvt
@ GREEN, James N. 2LT DOW417
GREGO, Richard F. Cpl WIA516
GRIMES, Robert N. Pvt5
GRUBB, John B. PFC KIA514
GRUNEWALD, Robert J. H. PFC5
GUIN, James M. Sgt KIA516
GUTBIER, Paul Cpl WIA514
HALSTEAD, John J. As Ck5 WIA613
@ HAMILTON, Arthur C. 1LT5 WIA610
HAMMER, Nathan PFC
HAMPSON, John R. PFC
HARRIS, Allen S. PFC WIA ?
HENLEY, Raymond D. Cpl WIA515
HENNICK, Frank Cpl WIA605
HENSEL, Richard F. Cpl WIA518
HETRICK, Calvin V. Pvt5 WIA609
HOFFMAN, Keith E. Cpl KIA516
HOLMES, John W. Pvt5
@ HONTZ, Robert W. 1LT5
HOUSE, Ronald Pvt
HOWELL, Harold E. Pvt4 WIA ?
HUTTON, Freddie G. Pvt WIA411
INCE, Tommy F. PFC WIA ?
INMAN, Francis L. Cpl
IRISH, James N. PFC KIA518
ISBELL, Arthur "O" "V" PFC5 WIA605
Johns, Earl C. Jr. Pvt5
JOHNSON, Charles E. PFC WIA ?
JONES, Hager PFC
JUSKIEWICZ, John J. As Ck5
KANE, John T. Cpl WIA416
@ KEATING, John J. 1LT5
KELLER, Edgar H. G. Pl Sgt4 KIA516
KENELY, Ramon D. Jr. Cpl
@ KENNERLY, Taylor R. 1LT WIA513
KILDOW, Donald F. Pvt5

KING, Donald V.	Pvt	WIA529
KING, Walter G.	FM 1C	
KNICKERBOCKER, Dale H.	Pvt5	KIA605
LAFFERTY, Robert C.	Pvt5	WIA519
LANE, Arnold J.	PFC	KIA516
LANGLEY, Richard J.	PFC	
LARGEY, Edward B.	Pvt	WIA416 & 519
LEGERDA, Michael	PFC	WIA416
LESSARD, Noland O.	Cpl5	KIA610
LISTON, Robert K.	Pvt5	
LOEB, Roger S.	PFC	WIA516
LOLLAR, Kenneth M.	Pvt4	WIA513
LOMBARDOZ, Carmen P.	PFC	WIA529 & 609
LONG, William H.	Cpl	WIA ?
LOWE, Warren E.	Pvt5	WIA609
LOWE, William T.	Cpl	
LUNDGREN, William C.	Pvt	
LYNCH, James W.	Pvt5	KIA610
MACK, Melvin C.	Cpl	
MAHONEY, Donald R.	Pvt5	WIA605
MAIGARRIE, Edward J.	FM 1C	
@ MANLEY, Norbert C.	1LT5	WIA606
MARINO, Jack Jr.	Pvt5	
MARKHAM, Donald M.	PFC	WIA416
MAROON, Loyce	Pvt5	
MC ALLIN, Robert G.	PFC	KIA514
MC CABE, Roy E.	Pvt	
MC CARTHY, Timothy F.	Pvt5	WIA610
MC CLESKEY, James N.	Pvt	WIA ?
MC DONALD, John H. Jr,	Pvt4	WIA516
MC EWEN, Robert L.	PFC	
MC FADDEN, James J.	PFC	WIA514
MC GUIGAN, James A.	PFC	WIA516
MC GUIRE, James P.	Pvt	WIA416 & 529
MC INTOSH, George	Pvt	WIA512
MC NAMARA, Michael W.	CPL5	WIA605
@ MC NULTY, Edward P.	2LT5	WIA605
MEEKIN, Donald H. Jr.	PFC	KIA513
MELNICZEK, Nicholas	PFC	KIA605
MERRIAM, John G.	Cpl5	WIA607
MERRYMAN, Joseph B. Jr.	Pvt5	WIA609
MESOLELLA, Vincent J.	PFC	
MESSINA, Thomas A.	Fd Ck	
MESOTTE, Richard F.	Pvt5	
METCALF, Ulus E.	As Ck	KIA610
MIKUSAUKAS, Victor A.	PFC	WIA416
MILLER, Bill E.	Pvt5	KIA607

MILLER, George W.		Cpl	DOW410
MILLER, Ross M.		Pvt5	WIA ?
MILLIAN, Elmer		PFC	
MITCHELL, Loren L.		Sgt	KIA605 WIA518
MODIE, Robert P.		Cpl	
@ MONNET, Charles G. Jr.		2LT4	
MOODY, Moses H.		PFC	WIA605
MOORE, Daniel D. Jr.		Cpl	WIA416
MORSE, Raymond E.		PFC	WIA607
MULHERN, Patrick J.		PFC	WIA530
MUNGER, Herman H.		PFC	WIA516
MUNIER, George C.		Sgt	KIA513
@ MYLOD, Philip J.		CPT	WIA ? (After transfer)
NEUMAN, Harry A.		Cpl	WIA412
NEWMAN, Ellis		PFC	WIA514
NICHOLS, Thomas H.		Pvt5	WIA609
NOLFI, Adam F.		Cpl4	
NYE, William A.		Pvt4	
NYLANDER, Richard W.		Cpl	WIA416
OEHRING, Franky L.		Pvt5	
OLSHAVSKY, Andy		Pvt5	WIA608
OSTROW, Frank J.		PFC	WIA411
OSTROWSKI, Leonard		Pvt5	
OURS, Steward V.		PFC	KIA516
OWEN, Carl J.		PFC5	WIA609
@ OWEN, Thomas B.		2LT	WIA516
PAGE, William G. Jr.		PFC	
PALERMO, Anthony		PFC	KIA518
PALERMO, Charles F.		PFC	KIA416
PANICARO, George J.		PFC	WIA604
PASTWA, Norbert J.		Pvt4	WIA ?
PAUL, Wesley E.		Pvt5	KIA610
PLOCHARCZYK, Walter V.		As Ck	WIA609
POLOMSKI, James A.		Cpl	KIA512
POLOTNICK, Harry		Cpl	WIA ?
PRAY, Charles A.		Pvt	WIA606
PROKOS, Christ		PFC	
PUGH, John R.		Pvt4	
PULESKY, Joseph		PFC5	KIA606
QUATTRONE, John	Gy	Sgt	WIA609
RAMEY, William R.		PFC	WIA513
RACANA, Anthony G.		PFC	
RAIRDEN, Ronald E.		PFC5	
REDDOCH, James H.	1st	Sgt	WIA515
REDPATH, Robert T.		PFC	WIA ?
REEVES, James L.		Pvt5	
REEVES, William B. Jr.		PFC	

REID, Ralph H.	Pvt5	WIA ?
RENOSKY, Michael J.	Pvt5	
REYNAERT, Jules F.	Pvt5	
REYNOLDS, George H.	Pvt5	KIA601
RICKARD, Ronald G.	Pvt5	WIA ?
RIECK, Arthur E. Jr.	Cpl5	WIA613
RIEKEMA, George "G".	Pvt	
RIEGER, John W. N.	Pvt5	
RIEGER, Louis J. Jr.	Pvt5	
ROBERSON, Joseph P.	Cpl	WIA610
ROBERTS, Robert L.	Pvt5	
ROBERTS, William F. Jr.	Cpl	WIA ?
ROE, Arlin F.	Pvt5	KIA608
ROEBUCK, Joseph C.	PFC	
ROGERS, James B.	PFC	WIA516
ROGERS, Paul H.	PFC	WIA516
ROWE, Johnie G.	PFC	KIA518
RUDSTEN, Leon S.	PFC	KIA518
RUSSELL, Robert L. Jr.	PFC	WIA516
@ RUTH, Sherman B.	1LT	DOW517
RYALS, Jessie H.	PFC	WIA606
RZEMENEWSKI, Chester	Cpl	WIA412
SALE, Hoyt W.	Cpl5	WIA605
SAMMON, Sterling M.	Cpl	WIA ?
SANTANIELLO, Aniello G.	PFC	
SAUNDERS, James M. (QM) (Mech)	Cpl5	
SAXE, Edwin E.	PFC	KIA513
SCHAIRER, Robert A.	Pvt5	
SCHONBERGER, Jacob	PFC6	
SCIMONE, Joseph	PFC	
SCISM, William F.	Pvt5	
SCOTT, James A.	Pvt	WIA529
SCRUTON, Harold A.	PFC	WIA518
SEEVERS, Harold A.	Pvt5	WIA606
SELTZER, Edward J.	Pvt	
SHAY, Robert F,	PFC	
SHEEHAN, John J.	PFC	WIA ?
@ SHEETZ, Lowell J.	2LT5	KIA606
SHELLEY, Richard D.	Pvt	KIA416
SHENDELL, Harry N.	PFC	WIA607
SHERMAN, Herbert L. Jr.	Cpl	WIA514
SHOEMAKER, John O.	PFC	KIA516
SIKORSKI, Edward J.	PFC	WIA606
SIMMONS, Arthur C.	Pvt	KIA416
SINCLAIR, Theodore L.	Cpl	WIA ?
SISSON, William A.	PFC4	
SKANDIER, Skandier J.	Pvt	WIA512

SKIPPER, Harold E.		Pvt		
SLINEY, Ronald F.		Cpl	WIA606	
SMITH, Courtland B.		PFC		
SMITH, Harvey H.		Pvt5	WIA517 & 607 & 610	
SMITH, Norman G.		PFC5	WIA609	
SMITH, Richard A.		PFC		
SMITH, Troy C.		Pvt		
SMOLINSKI, Raymond S.		Pvt5	KIA607	
SMOOT, James N. Jr.		Pvt5		
SNYDER, Arthur E.	Gy	Sgt	WIA516	
SNYDER, Donald W.		Pvt	WIA515	
SOBBOTA, Eugene		Cpl5	KIA607	
SOJA, Edward J.		Pvt4		
SOLTYSIK, Edward M.		PFC		
SPOON, Ernest R.		Pvt		
SQUIRES, William A.		Cpl	WIA416	
STANERSKY, Edward J.		Pvt5		
STEELE, Raymond L.		Pvt		
STEPPO, Carmen F.		Sgt4	WIA516	
STETSON, Kenneth A.		Pvt	WIA514	
STEWARD, Robert E.		PFC	WIA516	
STOUKE, Walter W.		PFC	WIA606 & 607	
STRANSKY, William A.		PFC	WIA516	
STRICKLAND, Dennis W.		Pvt	WIA605	
STRIFFLER, William A.		Pvt4		
SULLIVAN, Thomas F.	Pl	Sgt	WIA416	
SWIERAT, Albert F.		Cpl	WIA516	
TAYLOR, Franklin E.		Pvt	WIA514	
THIEMAN, Ray G.		Pvt	KIA516	
THIGPEN, Melbourne		PFC4	WIA514	
THROWER, Walter H.		FM 1C		
TIERNEY, Charles		Pvt4	WIA514	
TOLDA, Charles		PFC	WIA515	
@ TOMASELLO, William P.		CPT5	WIA609	
TONER, William J, Jr.		PFC		
TONEY, Claude W.		PFC	WIA514	
TORTU, Dominick F.		PFC	WIA513	
TRACY, Theodore		Pvt5		
TRUMBO, Donald J.		PFC	KIA610	
TUCKER, Ralph E.		Pvt5		
TURNER, Albert E.		Pvt		
TURNER, Eric W. Jr.		Cpl	WIA514	
TURNER, Ernest W.		As Ck	WIA416	
URSPRUNG, Carl J.		Sgt4	WIA605	
VAN GELDEREN, Warren L.		PFC		
VARELLA, Ramon M.		Cpl	WIA ? (After transfer)	
VARGO, Charles		Cpl	WIA416	

VERNAY, John S. Jr.	Cpl	
VINCHOFSKY, Anthony N. JR.	PFC	WIA416
VIOLETTE, Jack	Cpl	KIA518
VOGEL, Frank D.	Pvt	KIA514
VONDERKALL, Joseph N.	As Ck5	
WAGNER, John A.	Pvt	WIA515
WALL, William H.	PFC	KIA514
WALLIS, Orthello L.	Cpl	WIA515
WARD, Francis J.	PFC	
WARREN, Arthur E. Jr.	Cpl5	
WATSON, Victor A.	Pvt	
WEIDMAN, William B.	Cpl	
WELLS, John W.	Pvt5	
WELLS, Richard M. Jr.	Pvt5	
WENTZ, Leonard I.	CH Ck5	
WEST, Francis W.	Pvt	
WEST, Henry A.	Pvt5	WIA615
WHEATLEY, John F. Jr.	Pvt5	
WHITAKER, Henry M.	Pvt5	WIA605
WHITE, Henry "W".	Pvt4	WIA514
WHITE, James S.	Pvt4	WIA609
WHITE, John F.	Sgt	WIA416
WHITE, Robert R.	Pvt4	
WHITE, Robert S.	Pvt4	WIA609
WHITE, William W.	Pvt4	WIA514
WHITESIDE, Augustus F.	PFC	
WICKLUND, Marwon A.	Pvt5	
WIDOCK, Albert H.	PFC	WIA514
WILHELM, James F.	Cpl	WIA416
WILKERSON, Hugh R.	Pvt4	
WILLIAMS, William V.	Pvt5	
WILLIAMS, Willie F.	Pvt5	WIA610
WILSON, Charles E.	PFC	WIA ?
WILSON, George N.	Pl Sgt4	WIA514
WILSON, Ivan J.	Pvt5	
WILSON, Thomas J.	PFC	WIA512
WILSON, Wilbur L.	Pvt5	KIA608
WIMMER, Roy S.	PFC	WIA518
WINGATE, Joseph L. Jr.	PFC	KIA403
WINEMILLER, Kenneth R.	Pvt5	
WINTER, Melvin M.	Pvt4	
WISE, John	Pvt	WIA515
WISE, Leon J.	Sgt4	WIA513
WITTE, Maxwell G.	Pvt	
WITTEKIND, Ray H.	Pvt4	WIA516
WOODWARD, Francis E.	PFC	KIA514
WOOLSEY, John J.	Pvt	WIA514

WORONOWICZ, Carl L.	Pvt5	
WORTMAN, Gerald D.	Pvt	
WRIGHT, Barney V.	Cpl	WIA516
WRIGHT, Junior	PFC	WIA514
WRIGHT, Norman A.	PFC	WIA416
WRIGHT, Robert A.	Pvt5	WIA608
WRIGHT, Victor L.	Pvt5	WIA609
YANDELL, John W.	PFC	
YANDURA, Edward J.	Pvt5	WIA610
YASINSKAS, Paul F.	Pvt5	
YOUNG, Francis J.	PFC5	
YOUNG, Howard U.	Pvt	WIA514
YOUST, Frank J. Jr.	Cpl	WIA609
YUCHNIUK, Max Jr.	PFC	WIA ?
ZAPCHENK, Thomas	Pvt5	WIA609
ZEAMER, Woodrow A.	Pvt	
ZEGERS, Woodrow J.	Pvt5	WIA606
ZELESNIK, Richard G.	Pvt4	WIA514
ZERBY, Joseph J.	Pvt	WIA515
@ ZEMLICKA, Perry, U.	2LT4	WIA513
ZIOMEK, Mitchell A.	Cpl	WIA411
ZOLKIEWICZ, Vincent R.	Pvt5	WIA605

MARINES WHO JOINED G-3-29 AFTER JUNE 10, 1945

BARRIER, Charles F.		PFC6	
FERRERO, John T.		PFC6	
FIERO, Robert V.		PFC6	
GARNON, Nevin K.		Pvt6	
GILFORD, Charles E.		PFC6	
GOLDEN, Elmer		Pvt6	
GOLDSTEIN, Harry R.		Pvt6	
GRIFFON, John R.		Pvt6	
GRUVER, Millard J.		PFC6	
HART, James E.		PFC6	WIA ?
HOLLINGSWORTH, Ansel D.		Pvt6	
HUINGS, Forrest R.		Pvt6	
HUTTER, Joseph		PFC6	
KATKEVITCH, Walter P.		Cpl6	
KERR, Otto Jr.		Cpl6	
KOCHANEK, Peter J.		Cpl6	
LORAUGH, Charles J.		Pvt6	
MADISON, David E.		Cpl6	
MARTIN, Harry "C". Jr.	Pl	Sgt6	
MARTINO, Saverio J.		Pfc6	
@ MC DEVITT, Robert J.		2LT6	
RICHARDS, Gordon C.	(QM)(Mech)	Cpl6	
ROSA, Thomas F.		Sgt6	
SMITH, Malvern R.		PVT6	
SOUTHARD, Joseph T.		Pvt6	
SPENCE, Maynard S.		Pvt6	
STAGGERS, Robert W.		Pvt6	
STAPLETON, John R.		Pvt6	
STEVENS, John B.	St	Sgt6	
STIDHAM, James M.		Pvt6	
STIGLICH, John E.		Pvt6	
STIMSON, Mark A.		Pvt6	
STOLTE, Robert E.		Pvt6	
STRATTON, John A.		Pvt6	
STRAZZA, Rocco P.		Pvt6	WIA623
STROHACKER, Gerald J.		Pvt6	
STULL, Howard W. Jr.		PFC6	
SULLIVAN, Terrence F.		PFC6	
SWEET, Frank P. Jr.		Pvt6	
TACTIKOS, William		PFC6	
TAFLTO, Louis		Pvt6	
TELISKY, John L.		Cpl6	
THIBODEAU, CLARANCE,J.		Pvt6	
TIGHE, Harry		Pvt6	
TIGUE, Donald J.		Pvt6	

TOMLINSON, Russell W.	PFC6	
TRENTECOSTE, Jack J.	Pvt6	
TUDER, Richard M.	Pvt6	
TUFTS, John W. Jr.	PFC6	
TUMBLESTON, Francis M.	Fd Ck6	
TURNER William N.	Pvt6	
ULRICH, Charles H.	Pvt6	
UPCHURCH, William T.	Pvt6	
VANN, Jarrell S.	PFC6	
VAN DOREN, Judson L.	Pvt6	
VAN RASSEN, Frank R.	Pvt6	
VAN RIPER, Kenneth H.	Pvt6	
VINCENEG, Valentine M.	Pvt6	
VOLPONE, Donald J.	Pvt6	
VON DORN, John E. Jr.	Pvt6	
VON VILLE, Phillip E.	Pvt6	
WAGNER, Eugene A.	Pvt6	
WALKER, Delbert V.	Pvt6	
WALKER, Harold T.	Pvt6	
WALSH, James E.	Pvt6	
WARF, William S.	Pvt6	WIA621
WARREN, Augustus E.	Pvt6	
WARREN, Harry R. Jr.	Pvt6	
WATTS, Cameron E.	Cpl6	
WOODS, Henry B.	Cpl6	