

MH 5

MC 244

Augustus W. Esterfield

162nd Infantry Reg 3

Ammos & Pioneer Platoon - Norm Matthews rem. n.c.

Folder 1-8

would share his small hideout with us. we never started our return trip, until we had talked with the officer or someone in charge. often times they desired to send a man back with us, relay a message or make some other request.

On this particular incident, when the Jap fire settled down, I looked about, and my block men had pulled stakes, and were headed back. I had to run after them, get hold of a someone, and demand that he hold his men up, until we were cleared to leave by the Company Commander.

when we left the Battalion Perimeter, we were always given the password for the day. Usually a word containing one or more letters S. If we came in after dark, we usually began to shout the password, while still several ^{hundred} yards distant. But there were always it seemed some non-believers in the perimeter, who held us up with many more questions, kept looking down their rifle barrels at us, etc. Then occasionally some character would decide to fire a couple of shots over our heads for no good reason. I am sure you have experienced the same thing while on perimeter defense. Orders were always for that inside the perimeter not to fire at night. Yet invariably someone would violate this order and fire away toward the outer defense line.

Angus Waterfield Collection
folder 1/5

use for
Ben

Pursuant to General MacArthur's strategic plan, the 3d Australian Division and the Jungleers were assigned the mission of seizing and occupying Salamaua, the main Japanese outpost guarding Huon Peninsula, 25 miles to the north. The Australians would continue to advance along inland trails through the jungle. A task force from the 41st Division would land at Nassau Bay, establish a base, and join up with the Australians. Depending entirely upon air drop and carrier parties for

logistical support, the Australians had no easy time conducting sustained military operations against an enemy 6,000 or more strong. But once a base was established at Nassau Bay, it would be possible to transport supplies most of the way by water.

General Fuller, commanding the Jungleers, assigned the mission of landing at Nassau Bay to MacKechnie Force (named after its commander, Colonel Archibald R. MacKechnie, Inf.) which included the 1st Battalion of the 162d Infantry, elements of the 532d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment, and Company A, 116th Engineer Combat Battalion (less 1 platoon), commanded by Captain Milan M. Casper. The force would stage at Morobe (which the Jungleers had seized in April), located about 56 miles southeast of Salamaua.

Because of shallow, uncharted waters, the amphibious force would move in Engineer landing craft, which, being small, would not make easy targets for hostile aircraft. Loading on 30 boats furnished by the 2d Engineer Special Brigade, 2 captured barges, and 3 Navy PT boats as escorts, MacKechnie Force departed from Mageri Point (just north of Morobe) at dusk of June 29. A raging storm imperilled the flotilla, and visibility became so poor that one PT boat lost the convoy and another led the first wave of boats almost to Salamaua before turning back. Meanwhile an Australian platoon with signal lamps reached the landing beach. Having followed circuitous paths through swamp and jungle to evade the enemy, it had taken the Australians two

days to negotiate an air distance of only eight miles.

MacKechnie Force reached Nassau Bay about midnight, June 29-30. Save for the blinker lights, the shore was completely blacked out, and overpowering waves generated by the storm cast the small boats far up onto the beach. Only one of 21 which landed was able to get back to sea. The pounding surf soon flooded the rest with sand and water. The third wave of boats, bearing an infantry company and a platoon of combat engineers, was not landed lest these craft should also broach and leave the task force utterly stranded. This wave came in on July 2 after the storm had subsided.

While no one had perished, the 740 men at Nassau Bay were in an unenviable predicament. Their radios were out of order, and some of their weapons, ammunition, and rations were lost or damaged. Their boats were wrecked beyond repair. They expected the Japanese to attack at any time and realized that the Australians were too far back in the jungle to give any direct and immediate assistance.

Throughout the night the amphibian engineers performed extensive salvage operations while the divisional engineers opened tracks across the beach, over which they dragged supplies on a sled built from local timber. This being done, all engineer troops volunteered the next morning to help defend the beachhead.

Company C, 162d Infantry, patrolled south to the Tabali River without contacting the enemy. Company A of the same

regiment and the Australian platoon moved northward toward the Bitoi. Permitting forward elements to advance, the Japanese from concealed positions opened fire on their rear. It soon became evident that there were more Japanese than expected in this sector. When the Australians ran out of ammunition, the combat and amphibian engineers were sent in to bolster the defense.

Toward nightfall two infantry platoons were shifted to the north from the quiet southern flank, leaving only one to defend the Tabali River line. Shortly after this happened several hundred Japanese, who had been lying low, crossed the river and attacked in force. Greatly outnumbered, the infantry platoon fell back to prepared positions on the beachhead proper. Combat and amphibian engineers were rushed from the north end of the beach to meet the attack.

Although small in scope, the attack on the beachhead was vicious and sustained. Whenever possible the Americans fired from foxholes and trenches as the Japanese combined Banzai charges with deceptive tactics. A catskinmer and mechanic from the 116th Engineers doubled as a machine gun team with considerable success. Several Japanese reached the broached boats. Not all of the machine guns had been dismounted from these craft, and the enemy began to rake the American flank with fire from these weapons. The Jungleers dealt effectively with this menace and thereupon removed all guns and ammunition. At various times throughout the night the Japanese infiltrated

the lines but were dispatched in hand to hand fighting with trench knives, bayonets, and rifle butts. At daybreak the Japanese force withdrew into the jungle. In their baptism of fire the combat engineers suffered losses of 1 man killed and 2 wounded; the amphibs, 7 killed and 12 wounded. Colonel MacKechnie later congratulated the engineers for their courageous defense of the beachhead. He stated that all other reserves had been committed to repel simultaneous attacks from the north and that not a man could be spared to help defend their sector.

On July 2 the 3d wave of MacKechnie Force landed at Nassau Bay. With the beachhead secured, the combat engineers who had been serving as infantry turned their efforts to building a road across the beach to the south arm of the Bitoi. That day infantrymen moved up the Bitoi River valley to link up with the Australians in the Mubo area. As there was no road, the Jungleers had to carry equipment, rations, weapons, and ammunition over a footpath which led through swamps and jungle and which crossed and recrossed the river. By July 4 the force penetrated $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles inland to the junction of the Bitoi and Buyawim Rivers.

The Japanese offered stout resistance from Bitoi Ridge, a terrain feature to the north which from a height of 2,800 feet overlooks the Bitoi River, the Mubo-Komiatum-Salamaua track, and merges with Mt. Tambu on the north. So that artillery might be brought within range of Bitoi Ridge and other strongpoints, combat engineers and artillerymen built a pioneer road to the

river junction. They had little mechanical equipment and their work with beset by difficulties caused by rainy weather and rough terrain. The engineers erected timber bridges and laid corduroy corduroy through stretches of swamp. By July 7 construction had progressed sufficiently for Battery C, 218th Field Artillery Battalion, to move within range of Bitoi Ridge. The construction of this and similar roads were of great tactical importance and also saved time and effort in moving supplies forward. In the words of Colonel MacKechnie, "without the excellent work of the Engineers, this would have been a virtual impossibility."

The fighting and the terrain became progressively rougher, but within a week the Allies captured Green Hill, Lababia Ridge, Bitoi Ridge, and Mubo. To consolidate their hold on these positions, Company A, 116th Engineers, was assigned the task of moving 75mm howitzers to the summit of Green Hill. This involved a distance of eight miles and the crossing of Lababia Ridge. With the assistance of artillerymen, the engineers disassembled the guns in order to manhandle them across terrain which a places reached heights of 3,000 feet. Some loads could not be reduced below 267 pounds. These had to be hoisted by ropes over extremely unbroken ground.

The men who performed this operation had to travel as lightly as possible. Each man carried only a rifle, ^{a cartridge} ~~ammunition~~ belt, a canteen of water, and "C" rations. It was known that no

water would be available on Lababia Ridge, so a group of natives was detailed to bring up water in 5-gallon cans. By evening of the first day the engineers manhandled the guns to the top of the ridge and set up defensive positions. The weather was hot and muggy and the carriers did not arrive. As an expedient ~~the~~ jungle-wise engineers cut Loya vines from which they drained enough water to quench their thirst. Thus tided over, they moved the howitzers to the top of Green Hill and then returned to the beachhead to prepare for operations at Tambu Bay.

In mid-July Coane Force (another tactical organization of the 162d Infantry) established a forward beachhead for unloading supplies at Tambu Bay, which lies midway between Nassau Bay and Salamaua. Commanded by Brig. Gen. Ralph W. Coane, this force included the 2d and 3d Battalions of the 162d Infantry, Company A, 116th Engineers, and 2 companies of the 542d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment.

At Tambu Bay the Japanese offered tenacious resistance, particularly from Roosevelt Ridge which directly overlooked the beach. They had dug underground tunnels which connected mutually supporting emplacements and which provided shelter from artillery and mortars.

Company A, 116th Engineers, constructed an extensive network of roads and trails throughout the area, linking the beachhead with Mt. Tambu, to the southwest, and Dot Inlet, to the north. They carved more than a half mile of track up the sides of

Roosevelt Ridge. At places the terrain was so rough that until trails were cut it had taken six hours to move supplies barely a mile. Throughout this work the engineers were constantly harassed by small enemy infiltrations behind the front line positions. Ten men from the company volunteered to assist the infantry in destroying hostile fortifications on Roosevelt Ridge with demolitions. Each man carried a charge in his hand and another in his pack. A charge consisted of 8 pounds of TNT laced with primacord, to which was attached a cap and a grenade that served as a detonator. The whole thing would explode in and was a powerful inducement for fast footwork. just 5 seconds after the pin was pulled. Although exposure to machine gun and rifle fire compounded the danger of this business, the demolitionists succeeded in blowing up seven occupied positions.

Coane Force captured most of Roosevelt Ridge on August 14. Five days later Australian troops and the 1st Battalion, 162d Infantry, occupied Mt. Tambu. Continuing its support missions, Company A, 116th Engineers, built a landing strip from which cub aircraft could direct artillery fire on Salamaua. During the first week of September the Allies stepped up their drive as the Australian 7th and 9th Divisions made airborne and amphibious assaults near Nadzab and Lae. By that time the enemy's entire front had collapsed. On September 11 the Australians and the Jungleers forded the broad Francisco River and entered Salamaua unopposed. Seventy-three days of combat

had elapsed since the initial assault at Massau Bay. While awaiting their return to Australia for a well deserved rest, the 116th Engineers constructed a 550-foot bridge across the Francisco and put in roads and water points for troops in the Salamaua area.

MHS Hargis Western Field Collection
41 MC244 41st Div military
MP police

Mr. Lewis E. Clark
355 Durham Street
Eugene, Oregon 97404

24 April 1981

Dear Hargis,

PLN

I'll answer the questions listed by numbers.

I was a corporal on Biak, and then sergeant, just before leaving for the P. I., I became a Master Sergeant in the Oregon National Guard long after the war; 1st Sgt., then MSGT, the rank received prior to my first retirement. Then in 1973 I requested to be taken from the retirement list and rejoined the Guard from which I retired for the second time on 3 June 1977.

* The "old woman" Sgt Churchill and I brought down from the mountains was an American Missionary who had been safely hidden by the natives of Zambo for three years. We were ordered by Col. Sweeney to pass through the friendly forces front line and with a Philippine Scout proceed through the Japanese lines, and bring her to safety. The General's staff were fearful that as the Japanese retreated they would successfully capture her after a three-year chase. The trip was more scary than being seriously dangerous. We were selected because of our extensive combat infantryman training prior to 1942. The first thing she said after getting her down from the mountain was "Thank God, can I send a wire to my daughter in California?" She was dropped off at division headquarters and flown to Leyte and then home.--the next day.

Salamauan-Dobodura--Buna-Gona, Tambu Bay sort of went together. The first elements of MP's were operating between Dobodura-Ora Bay and being with front line troops we were subjected to air raids and infrequent ground fire. As all troops moved closer to Buna-Gona-Tambu Bay ground fire was more frequent; fortunately we came through unscathed. Artillery fire and HMG fire were bothersome but more up at the front. We alternated duty at the front lines--collecting POWS (very few) collecting Japanese material for identification, escorting convoys, etc, guarding check points.

BIAK
X
I went ashore in the first wave on a LCVP operated by the Coast Guard, and as stated in the Subject Letter from FW to the CG I was the senior MP Non-Com on board. After landing I helped organize the group of about 48 people into some sort of order, helping the man named Fred -----, and MP who's appendix burst--made a litter out of strong poles and extra jackets, kept strict radio silence, and traveled through swamp water and undergrowth for hours until we met the advanced scouts of 162--some of the men were trained under me while in the training cadre at Ft. Lewis. Major Wendall was so mad at first, but after he got the story all down why we were off the hook. In the Zambo landing I was one of 13 MP's that came ashore in the first wave. I was a volunteer that came in with the assault forces and beach party--advanced group.

BIAK
Martinsen was injured on Biak when his jeep hit a large land mine which flipped it over and landing on top of his lower back which was seriously damaged. He was immediately evacuated to a hospital ship and that was the last time I saw him until the '79 reunion in Sea-Tac, but I had written to him a number of times through the years. Now he is gone, but his lovely wife lives in Seattle with her family.

Hollandia was a cake walk compared to other operations like Attape and Wadke, Biak, Zambo,. When we landed there food was still on plates as the Japanese evacuated from the beach area almost the time we were landing. When Major Wendall and the other MP's returned from the small island near Hollandia they rowed the barge back--also used poles. Five of us hid under the tanks that first night. We had eight POWS that were in a big bomb crater and were eliminated by fire. I was wounded during the fire by having a piece of metal cut across the top of my left arm and shoulder, and in the left thigh. no big deal.

The 162 Recon brought in the Nippo officer--He was the only POW captured there--Mindora

5/12/7
While on Mindora we were getting ready for the Palawaan invasion as well as the Zambo affair. Back to Biak for a moment. I stole 4 cases of Japanese red wine which I buried in the wet sand and my buddy and I had a bottle every night along with warm bread we received from the nearby bakery for a bottle of sake. Mindora was a bore. We had air alerts or actual bombings almost daily the first month of so on Biak. Our Ack-Ack and fighter coverage kept them away most of the time. Still they would sneak in along the beach and strafe or drop bombs not very accurate. Our big worry were the caves and the hundreds of Japanese inside them that came out and harassed us. When ~~my~~ my old 3rd Bn of the 162 was ordered up the cliffs of Biak on a frontal attack only 11 men of L Company walked out without a wound. The MP's also tried to keep other troops from entering the caves that faced the beach, but still they tried and some were wounded or killed.

* The Balinese girls were probably diseased but they were off-limits--McArthur's personal ~~orders~~ orders. They damped behind a series of tent flies hooked together so that all personnel was kept out except American Nurses, a Doctor, and good handlers--none at night. We had a six-man patrol on duty at all times and escorted them down to the river where they took their daily bath--as they walked into the water their sarong gradually was slipped off and they swam and bathed and then as they started to get out of the water, they re-robed. They were very pretty, but badly treated and the last day we were there they boarded planes and were also taken back to Leyte.

I have a number of lists of the former MP's, but none are official--all told my tally amounts to about 67. While on all our operations in combat we escorted POW's back to division or army headquarters.--one in particular was a full Colonel in Japanese Air Intelligence that I escorted directly to McArthur's Headquarters and his Senior G-2. I gave him a bottle of that lovely red wine for a box of Dutch Master Cigars and how P. W. loved them when I got back to Biak. Another time I took two Sgts. back (very via Sh early in the Biak operation) to advanced G-2 headquarters located on Hollandia//I also flew from Hollandia to Sydney to pick up four AWOL people--one from 218, 1 from 116th Medical and 2 from 163.

It is too bad that the Army Censors kept my Diary that I kept from the time we were located in Rockhampton through Sananada to Lea, New Guinea, with the promise that I would get it back. I had a complete list of MP personnel, our daily work, POW list items about food, my work with the natives between Oro Bay and Dobodura, and many interesting stories about our "Gang". I also had one started in Mindoro through Jolo; Tawie Tawie (spelling) It was pilfered from my bag one night and that was the end of that. Without notes it is hard to go back so far in one's memory and try to re-build accounts of one's actions during that conflict.

When we landed in Zambo I was a sergeant and in getting ashore was a task in itself due to the action of the ocean and the mountain guns pounding away at us. These guns were located high up on the cliffs and ~~were~~ proved difficult to knock out. Once ashore Sgt. Tjader and I were directing our MP's as to their duties while we were helping the wounded, moving trucks that were left with engines running so that other vehicles could get up off the beach. We moved 11 in a row that were full of ammo. The beach party radio jeep received a direct hit killing all the staff of the commo group with this jeep. If blood or pieces of bodies were found in the trucks drivers refused to get back in them so Tjader and I were kept busy, plus trying to drag wounded behind some protective devices. This kept up for 13 hours. It was during this hectic time that I was wounded across my left calf, right ankle and right thigh, plus a slash across my lower left shoulder--back side. Oh! yes. On Hollandia when I went to remove my fatigue jacket, most of it fell away as burnt cloth and Cptl Flint told me that my back was blistered from the intense heat from the fire. The soot plus blood was all over my back and I wasn't even aware of it until he told me.

Like you I am in good health and have treasured all the Jungleer stories by you. If all goes as planned will be in San Jose. As ever,

John

Hargis Westerfield
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4425 W 78 APT 3
SCOTT SCALE
A2 85251 4(MP)
April 29 1981

Dear Hargis;

The following is a recall of what my experiences were after joining the 41st. Div. M.P.'s. All this took place more than 35 years ago so the recall isn't what it should be but I will do my best. I am elated that you did ask as the 41st. holds a special place in my heart.

I am not sure about dates but when I mention certain places, I know that you will be able to ~~xxxxxxx~~ relate the time.

X I joined the 41st. while they were at Dobadura. I was interviewed by Major Wendell and two of the sergeants. If my recall is right, the sergeants were Weeks, Churchill and possibly Jack Schuldt. One of those names could be wrong but like I said, the recall is not to good now. I am just ~~587X~~ 5'7" tall and Major Wendell wanted to know how I had come out in the past in any fights that I might have had. I told him that I had a big nose but that it had never been broken. (By the way, I had transferred out of the 36th. M.P. Co.) After that interview, I was in. As far as Wars go, getting into the 41st. Div. was fantastic for me. Th M.P. Co. had a great bunch of guys and it ~~xxxxxx~~ was like a fraternity although very business like.

I made seven beach-heads with the 41st. M.P. Co. which were as follows. Aitape, Wakde, Salamau, Biak, Mindoro, Mindanao, Leyte and I believe there was one other but I just can't recall.

Soldiering with the 41st. guys was a pleasure. They were great. We made the landings and we did our jobs. The landings that I have included are just those that I was on. I know that there were many other M.P. cadres that went to many othere places also.

Our treatment of Jap prisoners was as I reacll very good. I do remember envying them when ever they were fed. We would get the regular grub and they would get rice and fish with gravy. Damn if my mouth didn't water. To this day, I like Japanese food.

I ~~can~~ remember seeing one prisoner being interpeted by Sgt. Churchill. This old boy got so scared of Church that he started biting the end of his ~~xxxxxxx~~ tongue off. I never did find out whether the tongue came off or not.

There are instances from every one of the landings, but do any of the boys remember how tough Aitape was when 5 P.M. came around and the Japs would infiltrate. Never failed. I saw fire fights that lit up the skies for hundreds of yards. They got around the M.A.S.H. units and also captured our quad fifties and turned them on us. At daylight, the perimeter was full of Nips right at the strung tin cans. I'll tell you, our infantry boys were something else.

At one of the fire fights, I can remember being in a fox-hole when one of our guys wanted to get my attention. He was in a foxhole next to mine. He threw a clump of dirt at me and I thought it was a grenade. I browned my pants and flew out of that hole and didn't know whether I wanted to shoot at the Nips or the guy that threw the dirt.

I feel that with all the incoming shells and the other stuff that goes with landings, I believe Aitape was the most nerve wracking. With the infiltration, air raids and our guys getting stuck in the stomach going to the chow line, by some Nip jumping out of a tree, I feel that was the jackpot. At Aitape, I left to go back to the rear lines. We flew some Jap prisoners back and to get back to the Company, I hitched a ride on a squadron of P.T. Boats.

I've got to mention Biak. That was the place. We had a Jap beer dump at that place. A chit was needed for any officer to take any Beer out. Naturally the M.P.'s were doing the guarding. I guess the statute of limitations is over by now so I can tell the story. Do you guys remember the beach at Biak. Just in back of us a few hundred yards were the Mts. and the Caves. Well, that's where most of the infantry were doing their thing. Hargis, I had those old infantry boys parading back to the beach like a bunch of cavalry getting beer to take back to their lines and buddies. You would have thought it was a Safari in Africa the way those guys were hiking back to their foxholes with cases of beer on their backs. You know, I've always been a little proud of that circumstance.

I was walking guard one middle of that night there when I saw a 10 pound can of spam lying in the road. I knew damn well that none of our guys would try to take "spam" so I knew there were a bunch of Japs around ~~xxx~~ that were hungry. Never did ~~xxx~~ spot any though. At Biak there, we had a big shell hole hole there that was ringed with wire that we used as a P.O.W. prison. I can remember one night guarding them. We were using Tommy guns at that time for guard duty. I started to get a little tired and shifted my sitting position. The Tommy gun came down hard on the dirt and the damn thing went off with a short burst of about 3 rounds. Brother, I had to dig the biggest damn ~~xxxxxxxx~~ latrine hole that those guys ever saw with the compliments of Major Wendell, bless him.

I can remember standing guard over hundreds of loaves of bread. They were loaded with boll weevils but still everybody wanted some. That was at Oro Bay if my memory serves me right. Orders were orders so guarding we had to do. There were hundreds of Aussie soldiers there who wanted the bread but I had to say no. We were getting ready to leave on those large L.S.T.'s and it looked like I had to go on the same L.S.T. as the Aussies were on. They saw me starting to come aboard and started yelling, "Come on Yank". I took off like a Flea on a dead dog and told Major Wendell about this. I told him that if I had to go on that ship I was going to be thrown overboard for sure. He relented and so I am able to write these experiences to you today.

Say Hargis, I didn't know there was booze found at Zambo. Could have used some. By the way, At Zambo, we were living in tents atop of the city Jail House. We could see the fire fights from miles away that our infantry boys were involved in. There was a small town called Tetuan a couple of miles from Zambo. One day me and another of the boys were walking and sightseeing and we saw some women making sandals out of Abaca, (Coconut Hemp). We liked them, (the Shoes) and we made a deal with the M. We bought up the used parachute silk and we became their partners. ~~ix~~

X We were selling so darn many ^{shoes} and I was depositing so much money in soldiers savings that one of our Lieutenants called me in and wanted to know whether I was selling shoes or booze.

I banked that money as I was waiting to go back to Australia on R and R so that I could get married.

X I met a terrific Aussie gal that I am still married too with a great Son and two Grandchildren. I married Joan Hamilton, from Longreach, Qsld.....

I guess that the memories I have of the association with the 41st. are some of the dearest to me.

I can even remember sharing some bagels with Major Wendell while we were in the Jungle.

Well, I am rambling on because as I write certain things come to mind.

I want you to excuse the errors in the typing. I am a salesman and not a stenographer. I am also sure that you will edit this so some of the ~~xxxx~~ events, I hope will be put in order, by you fellows.

Hargis, if at all possible, can you let me have Paul Wendells whereabouts. It would be nice to drop him a line. I am glad to know he is still around. I always look at taps in the Jungleer and it always saddens me to see our guys going by attrition.

I belong to the Southwest Chapter but I don't attend too many meetings as I travel for a living. I rep for a Calif. Co. and sell beads to the Craft Industry and to the trading posts and Reservations.

By the way, Dick Schumann who I believe was in signal is in Scottsdale also. ~~xxxxxxx~~ He does my income tax every year. We were talking about San Jose this year but its a bad time for me to go. That's when we do our xmas business. I will try though.

Well Hargis, I hope the info I gave you has helped. If there is anything else I can do for you, please ask. I will try my best. In the event that any of this goes in the Jungleer ~~xxx~~ and if my name is used, I would appreciate the information about my wife going in also. She is still with me but has been quite ill.

My best regards to all the guys.

~~xxxxxxx~~ Respectfully,

Don Robinson

4425 N. 78th. St. Apt. 131 B

Scottsdale, Az. 85251

Don Robinson

I can also remember while we were at Salamau. Bill Olds and I went for a hike one day. We walked for miles until we came to a River (Francisco). We took our clothes off and forded and still walked. In those days we were young and foolish with plenty of nerve. We came across Jap camps that still had food on the table and was still warm. We took the rifles and headed back to our camp. We made it o.k. but now that I think back, I wonder how many Japs were behind in the jungle watching us.

I would like to say that soldiering with the M.P. Platoon was great. They were all good soldiers and when we did our duty whether in town or the jungles, we did our duty properly.

Paul Wendell was one hell of a C.O.

After getting back to the states, I saw Paul Wendell at his home a ~~xxxxxxx~~ couple of times and if I remember correctly he was at my sister's house for dinner. After that we all drift apart I guess.

MHS
MC244
John W. Willis
162nd Airborne Regt Antelope & Reconnaissance Platoon
John W. Willis remembrance

John W Willis
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June 14, 1980

Dear Hargis

I will attempt to give you some of information that you asked me to send to you.

I was with I company 162 and joined the I & R at Morobe New Guinea. I did not see much of platoon as was sent up coast with two other I & R Men and a Australian to watch a beach in a area of native village to watch for a possible Japanese landing. We were recalled in a couple of weeks to go on a landing below Roosevelt ridge. The I & R were in a Japanese barge and we got lost in severe storm from rest of landing party who were in LCV & LCM and because of heavy surf and waves 10 feet high they were all demolished. Sgt Sullivan swam ashore to get orders and were told to wait for waves to go down before landing. 9 I & R men were posted on three islands in area ahead of time to guide landing party with lanterns and did not return to platoon for some time.

I went on a lot of patrols in Roosevelt ridge - Salamaua area not that I was extra brave but because I was one of few in platoon who did not come down with malaria. I went on a three day patrol with Lt Folsom, Cpl Cornie and native guide Tapiola. We found the supply trail from Salamaua to Roosevelt Ridge and after that was blocked, Salamaua was taken by our forces. This article was in Jungler and Lt. Folsom received a Legion of Merit for this patrol. I also went on a sea patrol in a landing craft with Col Roosevelt from the beach behind Roosevelt Ridge to Salamaua. As we went around the ridge we were fired at by Japanese on the beach we all hit the deck but the Colonel and I told him to get down or he would get hit. He told me I am a old man have lived a full life and I want to see what is going on.

* At the time of the Hollandia landing we begin having men going home on the point system. We were also offered a seven day furlough to Australia. No one would take furlough because they all wanted to go home. I took a seven day one to Melbourne. On way back I came down with Malaria was hospitalized at Brisbane and then sent to Malaria camp in Rockhampton and it was over three months before I returned to unit and fighting was practically over on Biak except for scattered small starving units.

A short time after I got to Biak, Sgt Sullivan was picked for rotation home. I was called in to Colonels tent and he said I have chosen for you to be the New I & R platoon Sgt. I told him I was not too interested and several men outranked me. He said I know you are a card player (I had won a \$1000 dollars in poker game the previous night) but the army never hired you to play cards and as of now you are running platoon with or without rank. He was a great believer in the unit and expanded it from 28 men and officer to 52 men. We had not received a replacement for Lt. Folsom at that time. I am sending you a copy of that 52 man roster.

X The line companys went into traing but the I & R ran patrols allmost every day trying to keep Japanese from getting food and water so they would surrender, I will relate on a few of these.

We went around one side of Biak in a amphibious truck 4 men and colored engineer for a driver. I Told him to anchor a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile off shore and we would be back in a couple of days. He said I will anchor and swim ashore and go with you I will not stay alone and he did real good on patrol and wanted to join outfit. We run into 4 Japs the first day and they were heating water called out for them to surrender but they reached for their weapons and had to shoot them. We returned to beach area the next day where there was a cement floored church and a under ground river came out of hill by church. We captured four Japanese in area and was a Major who had made his privates draw to see which one would be eaten and we found the soldier hanging in native hut. I questioned him and he said who are you to judge me have you ever been starving. He said I went to college in England before the war and I am as intelligent as any of you and you do not know what you will do if you are dying of starvation. I fed them and made them wash out the church which had been used as a bathroom by the Japanese.

There was a Lake inland in this area and later we led G Co. 162 to block off this area and as it was 4 hr walk for I & R patrol but almost 7 hours for company with their heavy weapons. About half way we hit a native hut area and we 4 I & R killed 4 japs before G company caught up with us. I got 11 wristwatches off one Jap a long time my dad wore for 10 years. The G company Capt. a new man said the next time you run into the enemy do not shoot but wait for us as I want to give my new men experience. Well a couple hours later my head scout told me some japs were heading our way down trail and called Capt. and his men up to front of column but his front scout got buck fever and Zito had to shoot the lead man then all of guns opened up and G company took care of situation. The captain wanted some of us to transfer to his company but I told him there was no chance as Ihme, Zito and Neerman were all experienced I & R men.

Another patrol was to a native garden We had 7 I & R, 2 army C18 Men who had been asking to go on patrol, and we were followed at a distance by bunch of natives who were not used as scouts they were not a good bunch of people. After we had taken a area they would pick up every thing we left behind canteens and cooking ware especially. On this patrol Zito and I got 7 sabers and lot of flags. We killed 7 japs and captured 7 who were mostly Korean laborers.

The airforce sent a colonel to our area to ask to recover the body of a ace pilot who had crashed in jungle when his fighter did not come out of dive. It was a 2 day patrol with no water available I took 12 men and 8 of them just over from states also a work detail to carry out body. I told new men that they would have to be very sparing with water as it was a long 7 mile trip through jungle and we had to cut our way. They said that could run 20 miles and just keep out of their way. Well they ran out of water the first day and we had to share ours to get them back to camp. They said you are walking fool I told them I had been down in this climate for 18 months and was use to it. We could not find the plane in heavy jungle till we got assistance from a airforce piper cub. The plane made a hole 15 deep in coral and the pilots body a hole three feet deep as his parachute did not have time to open. We had to kill 4 japs who had made a shelter out of parachute. Even though we poured formaldehyde over body the carriers could not stand the smell so decided to come back a week later as it does not take long in jungle. When we came back the bones were so brittle from the fall that all we were able to salvage was one thigh bone.

A couple of amusing things about the I & R on Biak

J There was no coffee for awhile on the Island and we had become acquainted with P T squadron when they were attached to 162

for rations and I even got to ride on one for a day. Corp Zito took a bunch of Jap rifles and rode back 300 miles with P T on one of their supply trips and traded for 200 pounds of coffee

and we had full colonels coming by at night to get a cup of

J coffee. One night Col. Roosevelt came in with a box of cigars and did not get out with many left. We also traded some rifles to liberty

* ship for sheets and the interpreter did Japanese writing and the draftsman the red sun and we were selling these to marines who were on ships in harbor for \$25 per flag it worked good until we got greedy

J and did not give ink time to dry.

When we left Biak we went to Island of Mindora in Philippines

- where we ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Where we trained on motorized recon with 40 div recon Company and alone. we had seven Jeeps, divided into groups of three. each group had their radio channel and plt. Sgt had 2 radios in his jeep and could talk with either group or regimental S 2.

each jeep had a mounted Bar and 50 cal. Machine gun. We went on one combat patrol on this island, it was reported that some Japanese had come down in Philippine ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ village and raped a girl and stole some food. We rode in jeeps as far as they would go to some mountains then took a foot patrol but found nothing.

As the time ~~approached~~ approached for the ~~XXXXX~~ Zamboanga landing I was picked for rotation home but was told before I could leave would half to go to Zamboanga and help unload LST that I would be assigned to. Our landing craft was closest to the beach to Japanese Artillery WE had 300 tons of aviation gas and 300 tons of 155 artillery shells. we no more got gas unloaded until incoming shells it hit and set it afire. and as we were unloading shells we got direct hits on ramp killing 162 men who were picked to go home. In fact the first shell there were 5 of us on ramp and I was only one that did not get hit. I got so disgusted because ensign would not move his craft out of artillery range we were only ones getting hit ~~that~~ when we were unloaded I caught a Jeep and rode up to 162 headquarters and spent day and night with I & R and next morning returned to ship and started home.

I am sending you some pictures to look at but want them returned when you get through looking at them.

X We have went to Quite a few reunions. Los Angeles, San Francisco Yellowstone, Detroit, and Portland. Now that I am retired and gas is high we can not afford to go as much as we did in past. I saw Neerman for first time in 30 years and the first thing he said was you know \$100 I owed you well the statue of limitations have run out you can kiss it good by I sure laughed at his joke. He had cancer of throat and I see where he passed away last year in jungler. We also visited with him in Portland. My original compaby I 162 has a reunion every 5 years in Bend Oregon and we plan to attend if possible labor day week end. In 1975 we had around 60 former I company attend the reunion.

I was Public works superintendent for City of Huntington Park California and retired in July 1976. I had 31 years with city. I had a secretary to write my letters. I dug out my sons old portable and you will have to excuse the mistakes as it has been years and my fingers ~~xxxxxx~~ just wont allways hit right keys so I misspelled some words. I sure dreaded writing this letter but my wife told me to get on the Ball.

Sincerely Yours

41st Buddy

John W. Willis (Casev)

FOR PHILIPINES I WILL X ORIGINAL
BEFORE LEAVING
I SPARE

I & R
Platoon Headquarters

NOT MANY OLD PATROL
MEN LEFT

X Sgt Willis, John W
X T/4 Sayka, Harry M
X T/5 Russell Raymond R
X T/5 Suchy, Franklin W
X PFC Tracy, Oliver R, Jr
X Pvt Ling, Harvey R Jr
X T/5 Porter, Loyd C
X T/5 Zeccardi, Carmine
X PFC Rittenhouse, Albert
PFC Bauer, Charles H
PFC Eason, Lawrence E
PFC Tompkins, Charles E
X

Pltn Sgt
Radio Operators
" "
" "
" "
" "
Draftsman
Topographer
Driver
"
"
"

1st Section

X Col Noorman, Arnold C.
PFC Berry, William H. Jr
Pvt Wallace, Robert E
PFC Prince, Benjamin A
PFC Schoenbeck, Herman G.
PFC Ortega, Frank F.
PFC Campbell, Charles A
PFC Odo, Anthony
PFC Sullivan, Eugene F
PFC Walters, Robert G

X Sgt Bedmarik, Adolph, Section Sgt
1st Sqd Ldr Sgt Addis, James A. 2nd Sqd Ldr
Asst " " Cpl Lopez, Miviano C Asst " "
S & O PFC England, William A S & O
" PFC Sanger, Earl H "
" PFC Zawrotny, Frank E "
" PFC Bell, J B "
" PFC Adkins, Everett "
" Pvt Thomas, Lawrence A "
" Pvt Brumfield, Exale "
" PFC " " "

2nd Section

Sgt Waterman, Glenn F
Col Duncan, Warren
PFC Lore, Robert O
PFC Bragg, Jess, Jr
PFC Crnkovic, Thomas C
PFC Mullin, Joseph H.
PFC Ware, Murray, W.
PFC Perdine, Julio H.
PFC Seagel, Harry G.

X Sgt Ihme, Gerald, F, Section Sgt
3rd Sqd Ldr Sgt Wicklin, Marvin 4th Sqd Ldr
Asst " " PFC Tippet, George P. Asst Sqd Ldr
S & O PFC Watson, George R. S & O
" PFC Wexler, Simon "
" PFC Wrenn, Edward D. "
" PFC Robinson, Walter A. "
" PFC Ward, Glenn L. "
" PFC Somerton, Malvern D. "
" PFC Hughes, Junior J. "
" Pvt Autry, Dayton "

MHS

MC 244

Hargis Westerfield Collection
162nd Infantry Regiment - Parai(?) conflict
unknown soldier

1-13

"Westralia"

January 27, 1980

Dr. Hargis Westerfield
414 W. 25th. Street
Kearney, Nebraskas 68847

Dear Hargis,

Received, and am answering your letter of January 1st. So glad I could furnish some usable information for your history.

Concerning the Japanese tank and infantry attack on the 3rd Bn. 162 at Parai. I wish I could give you some real first-hand information, but Mine Pn's position and the way the battle developed make that impossible. I was dug in down on the beach corridor and the Jap attack came down a coral bench a 100 yards or so north of my position. The bench was rather a low one-20ft or so, but all I could see was an occasional silhouette of a Jap on the skyline. I was concentrating more to my front (west) because it was from that direction that I expected a Jap charge.....but it didn't.

After the Jap tanks were knocked out, or turned back, I could hear Jap officers shouting orders, and soon after that the fighting on the bench started. The first charge came with fixed-bayonets, but 3rd Bn's rifle companies were dug in and well defended; they put withering fire on the enemy, inflicting heavy losses. The attack soon slowed down to sniping and squad charges. It seemed to be strictly an infantry-rifle-bayonet action. I don't think they were armed with m.g's or mortars. Obviously, when their attack was planned they were depending heavily on their tanks, so didn't bring along any cumbersome equipment. It didn't appear to be a real determined effort on their part after the loss of their tanks, and when they were unable to break 3rd Bn's defences they withdrew.

It was by no means a "to the last man" effort such as became associated with a lot of the later encounters. I think this can best be explained when one considers that this was only the third day of the Biak operation, and they had already been successful in repeling us from the Mokmer Drome area. I have always felt quite sure that the Jap commanders had high hopes of driving us back into the sea, so were unwilling-at that stage of the game- to sacrifice too many men in this first skirmishing. This, of course is my own personal conclusion-not based on fact or figures- but I hope it is fairly accurate.

My response to the Japanese report stating that their tanks had us all running-in-retreat is: "Bunk!!!!!!". If there had been any running or retreat from enemy tanks that morning, I would have seen them. It just didn't happen.

Although I wasn't near any more of the Jap tank encounters, I have talked to other 162nd men who were. In one instance I was told of two Jap tanks being roped with B.A.R's and M.I's. At no time did I ever hear of Jap tanks throwing our men into wild panic. The only action that I can think of that might be described as a running retreat was the 3rd Bn's withdrawal from the Mokmer Drome area. That was an escape from an indefensible position. Although seemingly disorganized, we could, and would, have fought Nip ground forces, if there had been any put into action against us.

The Yank fighting philosophy -as you well know- was quite different to that of the Japanese. No Yank was ever thrilled by the idea of dying for his country-(preferring to live for it) although we all knew it could happen at any time. Dying is all too often the result of fighting for ones country, but should never be the goal. Again, my own feelings- but shared - I am sure by all Yanks , as well as soldiers of other enlightened nations.

My memories of Hollandia are rather sparse. I can't recall any A.T.162 contact with enemy ground forces, in that area of combat. I know we moved around a lot to hold vital positions, but no fighting. We must have been used to secure ground taken by other units. Hollandia was our first offensive on returning to New Guinea after our rest and regrouping in Australia following Salamaua campaign. I can remember what a thrill it was to see troop ships, battle wagons, cruisers, destroyers, etc., spread out across the sea, as far as the eye could see. And then again, when the Navy laid down their bombardment, and wave after wave of B17 and B24 bombers laid their eggs on the beach. It seemed impossible that the very land itself could withstand such an assault, let alone the soldiers of the enemy. We had never seen anything like it before; one could actually see the concussion waves (similar to heat waves) rising from the ground. All our previous beach-head landings had been a matter of leap-frogging up the beaches in a dozen or so Higgins boats and L.C.M's.

We landed at White Beach 1 and marched straight to Pancake Hill, where we were held in reserve. Just at dusk a single Jap bomber (Washing Machine Charlie) flew over White Beach- which was covered with the total supplies needed for our campaign-dropping his load right in the middle of it. Almost immediately, flames were leaping 100ft into the air, from the burning gasoline dump. The flames soon spread to ammunitions and other supplies.....we were, perhaps, a mile from the closest part of the beach, but even at that safe distance it was a fearful sight..artillery and mortar shells were bursting. Flares and rockets were shooting hundreds of feet into the air. Some of the spent rockets and flares fell on Pancake Hill, but none of them exploded. The end result of this was the loss of almost all of our supplies for the campaign, food, ammunition, and clothing. Since the expedition was dispatched with more than adequate supplies, there was no machinery set up to get more supplies to us. Fortunately for us the Hollandia campaign wasn't all that difficult, so the heavy loss of supplies wasn't as serious as it might have been under tougher conditions.

We were on half rations most of the time and we utilized all the Jap clothing that we could obtain, (we did have a little problem with the fit though). I wore a pair of Nip pajamas for several weeks during that period. They proved to be far more comfortable, and more suitable for tropical wear than my G.I. fatigues. I could wash them out knowing that they would be dry again in a few minutes.

After the hostilities were all over A.T. Co. bivouaced on the beach just south of the town of Hollandia. Three or four of my buddies and I decided to try to break the monotony of our "C" rations diet with some fresh fish.(Dewey Keys, and Blaine Kessler, were with me, but I can't seem to remember the others.) We secured an old row-boat, and a dozen grenades and headed for a little island about a mile off the beach, determined to get some good food for the company kitchen. We placed our grenades into several very nice schools of fish and after much swimming and diving to retrieve the stunned fish, we had a couple of hundred pounds to take back to camp, and decided it was time to head for the shore.

As we approached the beach we knew something was wrong; there were men on the beach waving shirts , and yelling at us to come in. We did-as fast as we could. It turned out that while we were fishing, A.T. Co. had received orders to move to a new location. Our tent mates had most of our things packed and had already struck our tent, so we were able to load onto some of the last trucks, (minus our boat-load of fish) and leave

with the rest of the company for our new location.

X We had no sooner reached our destination when I was told to report to the tent of Lt. Harbaugh, (our company commander) and to bring my fishing buddies with me. I was S/Sgt. at the time and the only ranked man in the group of fishermen. We received a gentlemen-like dressing down, and after placing the other three men on K.P., beginning the next day, he dismissed them. After they left the tent, he looked at me and said, "Steve, I don't know what to do with you." I told him that I didn't know what type of punishment he had in his mind, but unless he forbade it, I was going to go on K.P. the others, which I did. Nothing further was said about the incident, except that later on in the campaign he told me he often wished we had been able to utilize the fish we had brought back that day.

PARANG Our introduction to the Mindanao was at Perang, May 4th. Our duty that day was mopping up as the 24 Div. had made the initial assault, and had scattered the enemy. We set up base camps and patrolled the Cotabato area. The Japs there were broken up into small groups and were always on the move. Although we had several brief skirmishes, I can recall no A.T. Co. casualties.

DILAP I went out on patrol with Lt. Katz and we were ambushed by about 40-50 Japs near Dilap. I was up ahead with the scouts and the officers (there was one other Lt., I can't remember who for sure, possibly Lt. Bean) were with the main body of troops further back. Anyway, I took it upon myself to call for men from the rear to provide fire power, so the lead scouts could withdraw. We fought our way out of that, withdrawing under heavy mortar fire (probably knee mortars), killing some of them. We were armed with only M. 1's and carbines, and suffered no casualties in our ranks. We went back the next day equipped for a fire fight, but the enemy had moved on.

X Near the end of May 1st Bn., with A.T. Co attached were in a truck convoy, headed north over the Sayre Highway. Maramag was our destination. We hadn't covered many miles before the road became a quagmire. We unloaded, cut brush, chained the trucks together, for added traction, and when one became hopelessly mired, used cats to pull them out. Progress became impossible, so we set up a base camp with defensive perimeters right there. We were situated in a shallow basin type position. A.T. Co., perimeter was near a river, but I don't recall it's name, although from the Journal extracts you sent to me- it must have been the Pitogo or the Maasin. I know of no contacts with the enemy on that excursion, although it was thought large groups were escaping through that area.

There was talk of destroying all our equipment and walking out of there, but the monsoon rains subsided and the mud firmed up sufficiently so that we could back track and get all our vehicles and equipment out after all.

We ended up in the Davao area. After a couple of uneventful weeks we went back to Zamboanga; we were there when the Japanese surrender was announced. From there, we old-timers were sent Stateside for discharge, and the newer members went on up to Japan.

Margis, I enjoyed your remarks about your trip up to New Guinea, aboard the old "west-ralia", really relating to the poker players. I too, have seen them playing, often in the most ridiculous circumstances. Again, I hope you will be able to glean some information of use to you and your work. Lette and I both send regards-she does all my typing.

best wishes,

Steve

MHS Hanger Warden field etc. 21/53
About Murphy-24 March 1945- It was just after noon meal that K Co. started to advance. I was second scout that day, with 212 men in a rifle co., 210 men behind me. Moving along, slowly and using care, just all at once I saw the first scout's rifle out of the corner of my eye come to his shoulder. Testerman (Hillbillie) as we called him. Both armed with M-Is. He fired twice and I fired once before hitting the ground. Several grenades were thrown. Murphy had the BAR. We were right on top of a Jap mch. gun nest with 5 Japs which we killed, all of them. Just after that with 3 men in a hole bedded down for the night, 2 sleeping, 1 sitting guard with M-I. It was raining and so dark you couldn't hardly see your hand in front of your face, while on guard I heard a thud noise. 3 Jap grenades came in the hole. I threw them out, 2 out of 3 went off just after letting go of them.

The next morning just outside of our hole was a 6' 6" Jap Imperial Marine (dead) armed with a spear. I did a lot of firing with the BAR. I had 10 magazines (200 rounds) and two assistants each had 4 magazines and usually I carried a bandoe (250 rounds) on top of that. Most of the time I fired in the day time only but this one night we had a Banji attack. I fired so much that the next morning I had to have a new barrel from ordinance. We didn't have any casualties but don't remember when it was, but some time while still at Zamboanga.

16 March 1945, K Co. had tried to go up Mt. Copisan. We were part way up when James L. Cram was killed. After that we retreated for the night. The next morning we made it to the top without any trouble. While there I remember we could see at least one other outfit in the distance. (A Co.)

18 March 1945- Stonecypher was killed during the night, while sitting guard in his hole. He was hit with a rifle slug in the neck. 25 March 1945- Brown-I remember seeing him after he was dead but can't recall any details outside of when we were advancing he was killed.

June or July-You don't show it: Capt. Robert C. Watson, 1st sgt. Wyatt B. Watts.

Like I say, the jeep driver with the Capt in front seat, Sgt. in rear hit a landmine killing both the Capt. and Sgt, and the driver wasn't hurt. The Capt. was replaced with a 1st Lt. James Luftkin from either L or M Co. as CO. Check with your writers of L & M Co. and see if they can remember any details.

Something else, I still have the original order Hdo. 162 Inf. APO 41-effective 16 March 1945

I Award of the Combat Infantry Badge

II Award of the Good Conduct Medal

III Award of the Oak Leaf Cluster

751 men awarded CIB with 56 men from K Co. Including myself. Award of the Oak Leaf Cluster 12 March 1945.

One of your company rosters should show a Manuel G. Gordea wounded in action. This list doesn't tell which company, but lists his mother's address; 3203 E. Washington St. Stockton, Calif.

Offhand I don't know anybody that could help you. I have thought about it, checked records and newspaper clippings for several days and I hope I have helped you with this information and will be available if you need more information.

Had a nice memorial day services. Went to Dr. office for check up Tuesday. Continued arthritis medicine for another year (Motrin 600-3 a day). Am trying to go through local service officer and VA in Cincinnati for tests in the near future for Atomic radiation.

As ever,

Bob

t region of North America
m 1534 until the Treaty of
lower east of the Mississippi
right, New France extended
orth Atlantic coast west to
n and south to the mouth
ne Gulf of Mexico. See the
ADA.

LOGUE OF NEBULAE AND NGC), one of the two major
nebulae, galaxies, and clusters
al compilation of 7,840 objects.
Danish astronomer Johann
s in this system are referred
and a serial number, such as
Crab Nebula. Many more
o the NGC system in two
e Index Catalogue (IC). The
nical Union (IAU) is the
s the official designation

system was initially compiled
omer Charles Messier by
Objects in this system are
s initial and a serial number
e Crab Nebula.

ceanic island group in the
as 11 main islands in two
Kolombangara, New Geo
gunu, Nggatokae, Ranong
nggo, Rendova, Tetepare

gō, a town in Nova Scotia
ounty, on the East River
Pictou Harbour (an inlet
ait) and approximately 110
east of Halifax by rail. There
e deposits in the vicinity

by Scottish immigrants, New
rated in 1875. Important
ufacturing, pulp mills, and
air works. Population: 9,905

royalty of, grā-nā'dā, an area
the Spanish empire in the
ing New Granada (Colom
dor, and Panama, it was cr
territories of the Viceroyalty
distant from Lima for effe
The seat of the new viceroy

was poverty-ridden through
Agriculture was mainly at
significant wealth could
old and other mining. Pol
control was in the hands
clares rather than the native

pendent development at
ewhat greater in New G
oring territories. Geograph
d economic growth guar
al autonomy in the wide
se governing councils beca
gans. Some 60 cities and tow
first serious uprising again
e unsuccessful Comunero
10 the viceroyalty ceased
us jurisdictions began to
ence.



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At a ceremony in the Central Highlands of eastern New Guinea, the men wear elaborate feathered headdresses.

NEW GUINEA, gin'ē, an island in the southwest Pacific Ocean between the equator and Australia. Shaped like a huge bird, it stretches about 1,500 miles (2,400 km) from northwest to southeast and has a maximum width of more than 450 miles (720 km). Its area of about 306,000 square miles (792,500 sq km) makes it the world's second-largest island, after Greenland. Surrounding bays and gulfs merge into the Ceram Sea on the west, the Bismarck and Solomon seas on the east, and the Coral and Arafura seas on the south.

Portuguese navigators were the first Europeans to discover the island, during the early 16th century. The Spanish explorer Yñigo Ortiz de Retes named it New Guinea in 1545 after the Guinea coast of West Africa. In 1828 the Netherlands added the western half of the island to the Dutch East Indies. In 1884, Britain annexed the southeastern portion and Germany assumed control of the northeast.

British New Guinea was transferred to Australian administration in 1906 and renamed Papua. At the end of World War I former German New Guinea became a League of Nations mandate under Australia. After World War II, although the League mandate became a United Nations trusteeship, the entire eastern half of the island was administered by Australia as Papua-New Guinea until it achieved independence as the nation of Papua New Guinea in 1975.

Dutch New Guinea, or West Irian, was placed under Indonesian control in 1963, and following an affirmative vote by West Irianese councils in 1969 it was proclaimed an Indonesian province. The name was changed to Irian Jaya in 1973.

Relief, Drainage, and Climate. The outstanding feature of New Guinea's relief is a highland backbone that extends from the Doberai (formerly Vogelkop, or "Bird's Head") Peninsula in the

west through a series of parallel ranges that narrow to the eastern tail-end of the island. Rugged terrain, interrupted in places by upland basins, plateaus, and lakes, dominates the island interior. The principal range in Irian Jaya is the Maoke, which has peaks rising above 15,000 feet (4,572 meters). Puncak Jaya, formerly Mt. Carstensz, has an elevation of 16,503 feet (5,030 meters) and a permanent snowcap. In Papua New Guinea the cordillera reaches from the broad complex of the Central Highlands to the Owen Stanley Range. The highest peaks exceed 14,000 feet (4,267 meters). A belt of recently active volcanoes that lies parallel to the northeast coast continues through the adjacent island of New Britain.

The most extensive lowlands are floodplains and deltas of major rivers and, in southern Irian Jaya, one of the world's largest swampy regions. Numerous offshore coral reefs and islands are scattered along the coastal approaches.

The drainage patterns of New Guinea reflect the continental character of the island. Runoff from frequent heavy rains has dissected the highlands while feeding several major rivers and many smaller streams. The principal rivers of the northern watershed are the Mamberamo in Irian Jaya and the Sepik and Ramu in Papua New Guinea. On the southern watershed the Pulau, Mapi, Digul, and Bian meander across the vast swamps of Irian Jaya, while the Fly, Kikori, and Purari flow into the Gulf of Papua.

Lying almost entirely within 10 degrees of the equator, New Guinea has a tropical rain-forest climate that is modified by elevation in the mountainous interior and by seasonal changes in the direction of winds. The prevailing flow of air is from the southeast from May to October when the southeast trades are strongest, but that



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Villagers complete the thatched roof of a house built on piles in the interior of eastern New Guinea.

season is generally the drier one because the trades move parallel to the coasts. From December to early April a northwest monsoon influences the weather, bringing heavier rainfall to most of the island. Port Moresby on the Gulf of Papua has less than 50 inches (1,250 mm) a year with minimums in July and August, but Kikori, across the gulf to the northwest in the direct path of the trades, receives more than 200 inches (5,000 mm) with maximums during the trade-wind season. Annual rainfall in Irian Jaya averages 100 inches (2,500 mm) at most stations and is more evenly distributed through the year. Rainfall also varies from year to year, apparently in harmony with fluctuations of monsoon intensity between Asia and Australia.

Except in the drier coastal areas from Port Moresby eastward, rainfall occurs on 100 or more days a year, most of it coming with thunderstorms. Tropical cyclones rarely visit New Guinea, their usual paths being farther to the south, but marginal effects occasionally reach the coasts. Precipitation is in the form of snow at the highest elevations in the interior, where clouds obscure the mountains most of the year.

The greatest differences in temperature result from elevation. Nights are cold in the highlands throughout the year. In the lowlands mean monthly temperatures vary little from an annual average of about 80°F (27°C). Sea breezes ameliorate oppressive daytime heat along the coasts.

Vegetation and Wildlife. Most of New Guinea is covered by tropical forest containing species that are related to those of Asia and Australia. As in other tropical lands that reach to high elevations, there is a vertical zonation of floral types. Mangrove swamps, pandanus, coconuts, nipa, and sago palms grow on or near many parts of the coast. Dense rain forest with many kinds of hardwoods and climbing vines occupies a zone

up to about 3,000 feet (900 meters). Indigenous pines, beeches, and oaks prevail in a belt between the rain forest and the lower margin of a mossy forest at about 5,000 feet (1,500 meters). The mossy forest, consisting mainly of beeches with dangling strands of moss and coats of lichen, extends to the upper limit of trees at 10,500 feet (3,200 meters). Above the tree line are alpine forms, including tree ferns and stunted conifers, that continue upward among interspersed grasses to the small areas of permanent snow on the highest peaks.

The practice of shifting (slash-and-burn) agriculture has reduced forest cover along intermediate slopes and in some highland basins. Areas of kunai (spear grass) and "tik-tik" (wild sugarcane) have expanded into former forested lands that were burned or cleared for agriculture. On drier parts of the island or where rainfall is concentrated in the monsoon season there is usually a savannalike vegetation with scattered trees and coarse grasses.

The wildlife of New Guinea is closely akin to that of Australia. The many types of marsupials include wallabies, tree kangaroos, bandicoots, phalangers, and pouched mice. The echidna, or spiny anteater, is an egg-laying monotreme related to the echidnas and the platypus of Australia. There are also fruit bats, known as flying foxes, and rats. The dugong (manatee) and dolphins are marine mammals that frequent coastal waters.

Birds are by far the most abundant species of wildlife on land. Among more than 600 that have been classified are the flightless cassowary, birds of paradise, parrots, bower birds, and pigeons. Reptiles include pythons, many poisonous snakes, the giant monitor and other lizards, and tortoises. Crocodiles are found in lowland streams and many estuaries. Frogs of many kinds make up the majority of amphibians. Fish species numbering about 1,400 in the rivers and coastal waters include commercially valuable tuna and barramundi.

New Guinea is noted for its abundant variety of colorful butterflies and moths. The island also has malarial mosquitoes and ticks that carry typhus.

Natural Resources. The tropical soils of New Guinea are subject to leaching by heavy rains and are easily eroded when exposed by forest removal and cultivation. They nevertheless have been agriculturally productive for thousands of years. The best soils are found along river floodplains and in the highland basins, although productivity declines after a few years unless plots are shifted or fertilizer is applied. The swampy lowlands, especially in southern Irian Jaya, have a limited potential because of drainage problems, and they usually have few native inhabitants except where sago palms are available for food. Terracing, shifting cultivation, and even occasional irrigation were moderately successful adjustments to soil deficiencies in the past, but deforestation, weed invasions (mainly grasses), and leaching have led to native population pressures on the land.

Only a small fraction of New Guinea is potentially arable land. The preferred areas are along the narrow coastal plains and in valleys at intermediate levels, where improved husbandry could expand commercial plantation agriculture.

The mountain forests of New Guinea's interior contain valuable softwoods such as kauri, hoop pines, and podocarps that are suitable for timber.

Most, however, are difficult to harvest, making logging expensive. The best forest are scattered among the mountains, and copal (a resin used for varnishes and products of the rain forest) is found in some areas.

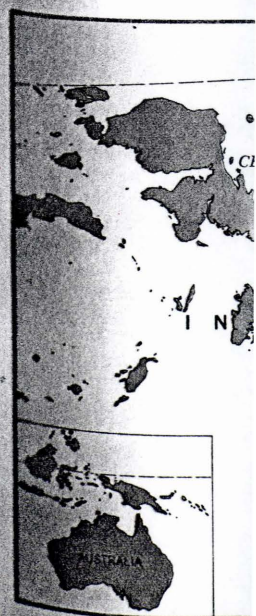
Abundant fish and shellfish in the coastal waters are important to the natives. In addition to pearl shell, sponges, and sea shells (de-mer) are marine resources of some value.

The mineral resources of New Guinea have been well explored, and the character of the rugged terrain and the occurrence of metallic minerals have been mined in the Markham River in the north and the known deposits of copper and minor metals. A large deposit of Ok Tedi in the Star Mountains in New Guinea. Nickel and cobalt are found in the far western Irian Jaya.

Oil exploration, mainly in the offshore production on the Dore and Dore Jaya after the mid-20th century, has been found in both the lowland basins of Papua New Guinea and rivers offer prospects for development of hydroelectric power.

The People. More than 10 million New Guinea's people live in the interior, where, because of the rugged terrain, natives are often dispersed in small groups and plateaus. Only a few natives inhabit the lowland coastal areas, and numbers have migrated to the coastal towns for employment. The swampy lands and broad river valleys are inhabited. Europeans, Indonesian, and foreign expatriates are concentrated in the trade, and administrative centers or at mining settlements.

Three demographic groups are the majority of the native population. The majority in the southeast are dark-skinned Melanesians.



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Most, however, are difficult to reach, making log-
ging expensive. The best hardwoods of the rain
forest are scattered among other species. Rattan
and copal (a resin used in varnishes) are minor
products of the rain forest.

Abundant fish and shellfish of the rivers and
coastal waters are important sources of food for
the natives. In addition to offshore fisheries,
pearl shell, sponges, and sea cucumbers (bêche-
de-mer) are marine resources of commercial
value.

The mineral resources of the island have not
been well explored, although the geological
character of the rugged highlands suggests the
occurrence of metallic ores. Rich goldfields
have been mined in the upper tributaries of the
Markham River in the northeast. There are
known deposits of copper, silver, manganese,
and minor metals. A leading copper center is at
Ok Tedi in the Star Mountains of western Papua
New Guinea. Nickel occurs on Gag Island off
far western Irian Jaya.

Oil exploration, mainly near the coasts, led to
production on the Doberai Peninsula of Irian
Jaya after the mid-20th century. Natural gas has
been found in both the Sepik and Fly-Kikori
basins of Papua New Guinea. The island's lakes
and rivers offer prospects for a substantial devel-
opment of hydroelectric power resources.

The People. More than two thirds of New
Guinea's people live in Papua New Guinea. In-
digenous population patterns are densest in the
interior, where, because of the terrain, settle-
ments are often dispersed among upland valleys
and plateaus. Only a small proportion of the
natives inhabit the lowlands, although increasing
numbers have migrated to coastal villages and
towns for employment. With few exceptions the
swampy lands and broad river deltas are unin-
habited. Europeans, Indonesians, and other for-
eign expatriates are concentrated at plantation,
trade, and administrative centers along the coasts
or at mining settlements in the interior.

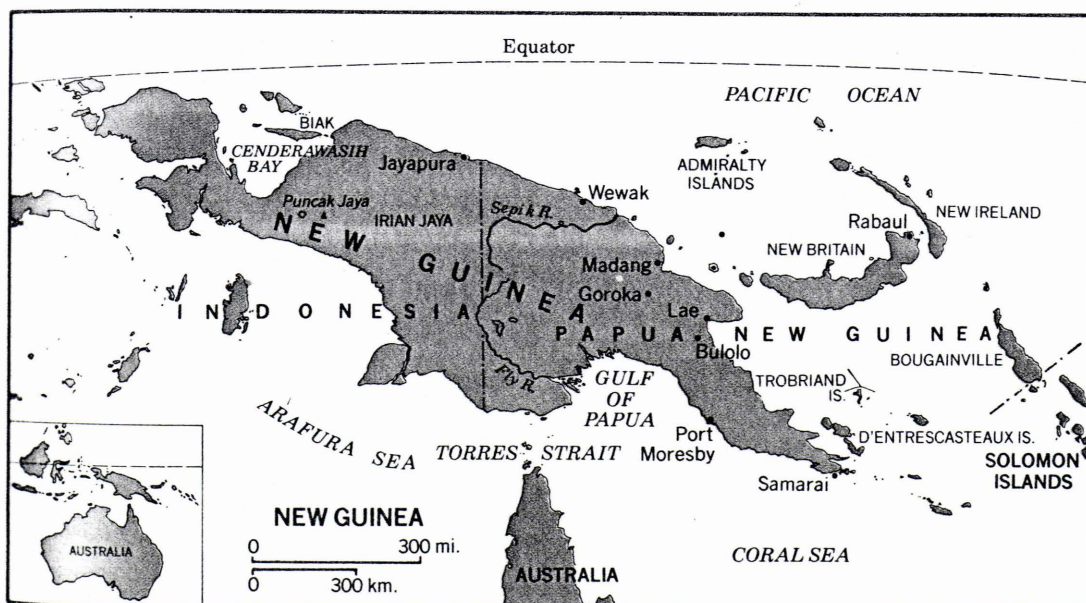
Three demographic groups make up the ma-
jority of the native population. The Papuans of
the southeast are dark skinned, woolly haired,

and of medium stature. Negritoid people of
small stature inhabit the central and western in-
terior. Tall, frizzy haired Melanesians live
mainly on the coasts and outlying islands. In
spite of these differences, New Guinea is com-
monly regarded as a part of the Melanesian cul-
ture region.

The linguistic diversity of New Guinea's peo-
ple is probably greater than that of any area of
comparable size in the world. Isolated groups of
natives often speak a language not understood by
others in a nearby valley. The more than 700
spoken languages in Papua New Guinea and 250
in Irian Jaya fall into two main categories. Mel-
anesian dialects prevail on the coasts and off-
shore islands, whereas most other languages are
broadly classified as Papuan. The official lan-
guage of government in Papua New Guinea is
English, although a Pidgin English is widely
used for communication among ethnic groups
and in commerce. In Irian Jaya the principal lin-
gua franca is Malay, but the government encour-
ages the use of Indonesian as a universal language.

Because the native peoples have been isolat-
ed from outside social and technological influ-
ences, until recently they retained many of the
elements of a Stone Age culture. The main tra-
ditional economy is subsistence agriculture.
Shifting cultivation, involving rotation of fields
rather than crops, is common in the interior up-
lands, where steel axes and hoes have gradually
replaced digging sticks and stone tools for tend-
ing garden plots. Vegetables and starchy roots
are the principal crops; some villagers raise pigs
and poultry. On coastal lowlands coconuts and
sago starch are food sources. Fish and shellfish
supplement the diets of coast dwellers, whereas
birds and small animals are hunted in the up-
lands. A limited trade by natives is based on
such items as seashells, bird feathers, wood carv-
ings, food, and copra made by drying coconut
meat. Government policies and the introduction
of modern technology continue to bring about
inevitable cultural changes.

HOWARD J. CRITCHFIELD
Western Washington University



COMPANY C
Station: Bozeman

	Inducted	Losses	Net
Officers	4	0	4
Enlisted Men	101	12	89

Name	Serial Number	Home Town
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CAPTAIN

1. Henderson, Maurice E.0-242833.....Bozeman

FIRST SERGEANT

1. Hicks, Walter V.20,929,162.....Bozeman

SERGEANTS

1. Criswell, Raymond L.*20,929,163.....Bozeman
 2. Daems, Otto L.20,929,164.....Bozeman
 3. Dixon, Donald P.20,929,165.....Bozeman
 4. Funk, Alfred C.*20,929,166.....Bozeman
 5. Hill, Paul20,929,167.....Bozeman
 6. Lowe, Edwin E.*20,929,168.....Bozeman
 7. McQuary, Richard M.20,929,169.....Bozeman
 8. Ross, Harry D.20,929,170.....Bozeman

CORPORALS

1. Dixon, Robert A.20,929,171.....Bozeman
 2. Drum, John J.20,929,172.....Miles City
 3. Gray, Frank M. Jr.20,929,173.....Bozeman
 4. Poynter, Harold E.20,929,174.....Bozeman
 5. Story, Nelson IV20,929,175.....Bozeman
 6. Whitney, Lyle G.20,929,176.....Bozeman
 7. Woodland, Frank J.20,929,177.....Bozeman
 8. Yost, James A.*20,929,178.....Belgrade

FIRST CLASS PRIVATES

1. Carter, Kenneth L.20,929,179.....Butte
 2. Danzer, Wallace H.20,929,184.....Denton
 3. Dent, Junior S.20,929,180.....Bozeman
 4. Dye, Robert F.20,929,181.....Bozeman
 5. Gunter, Jack C.20,929,182.....Bozeman
 6. Grooters, Bert*20,929,183.....Bozeman
 7. Johnson, William H.20,929,185.....Bozeman
 8. Kindig, Lewis W.*20,929,186.....Gallatin Gateway
 9. Lewis, Frank D.20,929,187.....Bozeman
 10. Lewis, Jack B.20,929,188.....Bozeman
 11. Peplinski, John P.20,929,189.....Beech, N. D.
 12. Sunderland, Marvin E.20,929,190.....Bozeman
 13. Treat, Virgil20,929,191.....Bozeman
 14. Yadon, Kenneth L.20,929,192.....Bozeman
 15. Yost, Harold W.20,929,193.....Bozeman

COMPANY C—(Continued)

PRIVATES

1.	Altman, Merlin J.	20,929,234.....	Bozeman
2.	Ballard, Fred L.	20,929,194.....	Bozeman
3.	Barnes, Glen L.	20,929,195.....	Bozeman
4.	Barnes, William D.	20,929,196.....	Craig
5.	Brown, Everett W.	20,929,197.....	Bozeman
6.	Burrell, Lester W.	20,929,198.....	Logan
7.	Callantine, William T.	20,929,224.....	Three Forks
8.	Cattrell, Charles P.	20,929,199.....	Bozeman
9.	Chamberlain, Maurice G.	20,929,200.....	Stockton, Kansas
10.	Cles, Leslie P.	20,929,201.....	Powell, Wyoming
11.	Cloninger, Wilson F.	20,929,202.....	Gallatin Gateway
12.	Cloyd, Jasper L.	20,929,203.....	Belgrade
13.	Corkins, Jack P.	20,929,204.....	Bozeman
14.	Davison, Donald N.	20,929,205.....	Bozeman
15.	Davison, Stanley C.	20,929,206.....	Highwood
16.	Duncan, Floyd L.	20,929,207.....	Belgrade
17.	Freeman, Alfred F.	20,929,208.....	Bozeman
18.	Haglund, Phillip G.	20,929,209.....	Watkins
19.	Hamilton, Melvin A.	20,929,210.....	Belgrade
20.	Hanson, Gale D.	20,929,211.....	Bozeman
21.	Jenkins, Josephus	20,929,212.....	Bozeman
22.	Johnson, Albert E.*	20,929,213.....	Conrad
23.	Johnson, Robert E.	20,929,214.....	Bozeman
24.	Jones, Earl C.	20,929,215.....	Bozeman
25.	Keyes, Robert A.	20,929,216.....	Bozeman
26.	Krein, Frederick	20,929,217.....	Jamestown, N. D.
27.	Kuhn, John L.	20,929,218.....	Watkins
28.	Kundert, Frank T.	20,929,219.....	Bozeman
29.	Lawrence, Ivan O.	20,929,220.....	Bozeman
30.	Lillegard, Glenn A.	20,929,221.....	Stanford
31.	Lindgren, Carl R.	20,929,222.....	Bozeman
32.	Logan, Lee F.	20,929,223.....	Bozeman
33.	Lowe, Gerald R.	20,929,267.....	Bozeman
34.	Markuson, Marvin A.*	20,929,225.....	Thompson Falls
35.	Martin, Omer L.	20,929,226.....	Bozeman
36.	McGaugh, Mayo C.	20,929,227.....	Manhattan
37.	McHenry, Melvin C.	20,929,228.....	Lone Pine
38.	Meagher, Gordon F.	20,929,229.....	Bozeman
39.	Mikalson, Robert L.*	20,929,230.....	Eureka
40.	Mikelson, Roy G.	20,929,231.....	Eureka
41.	Miller, Clarence A.	20,929,232.....	Menard
42.	Mohl, John L.	20,929,233.....	Bozeman
43.	Mosher, Joseph	20,929,236.....	Twin Bridges
44.	Neft, Robert F.	20,929,237.....	Clasoil
45.	Nevin, John W.	20,929,238.....	Bozeman
46.	Nelson, Emil L.	20,929,239.....	Watkins
47.	Nelson, Harvey H.*	20,929,240.....	Bozeman

COMPANY C—(Continued)

48.	Nichols, Herbert E.	20,929,241	Bozeman
49.	Pattison, William J.	20,929,244	Bozeman
50.	Ping, Marion L.	20,929,242	Bozeman
51.	Richardson, William H.	20,929,245	Bozeman
52.	Ringer, Paul T.	20,929,246	Ringling
53.	Robbins, Kimball K.	20,929,247	Denton
54.	Rogney, Roger W.	20,929,248	Bozeman
55.	Russell, Rowland E. M.	20,929,249	Manhattan
56.	Rutledge, Loranzo D.	20,929,235	Bozeman
57.	Sandsness, Paul M.	20,929,250	Bozeman
58.	Sandsness, Lloyd L.	20,929,243	Bozeman
59.	Scanlan, William H.	20,929,251	Three Forks
60.	Sponsler, Ivor W.*	20,929,252	Bozeman
61.	Spring, Wilbur P.*	20,929,253	Belgrade
62.	Swanson, Leslie	20,929,266	Bozeman
63.	Tooley, Creath A.	20,929,254	Miles City
64.	Townsend, Lloyd A.	20,929,255	Bozeman
65.	Weyand, William M.	20,929,256	Bozeman
66.	Wheat, Charles L.	20,929,257	Bozeman
67.	Wilcox, Joe C.	20,929,258	Stevensville
68.	Wilson, James F.	20,929,259	Saco
69.	Zimmerman, Walter M.	20,929,260	Manhattan

*LOSSES

1. Criswell, Raymond L. 20,929,163..... Bozeman
Hon. Disch 9-19-40 Physical Disability
2. Funk, Alfred C. 20,929,166..... Bozeman
Hon. Disch 9-19-40 Physical Disability
3. Lowe, Edwin E. 20,929,168..... Bozeman
Hon. Disch 9-19-40 Physical Disability
4. Yost, James A. 20,929,178..... Belgrade
Hon. Disch. 10-25-40 Dependency
5. Grooters, Bert 20,929,183..... Bozeman
Hon. Disch 9-19-40 Physical Disability
6. Kindig, Lewis W. 20,929,186..... Gallatin Gateway
Hon. Disch 9-19-40 Physical Disability
7. Johnson, Albert E. 20,929,213..... Conrad
Hon. Disch 9-19-40 Physical Disability
8. Markuson, Marvin A. 20,929,225..... Thompson Falls
Hon. Disch 9-19-40 Physical Disability
9. Mikalson, Robert L. 20,929,230..... Eureka
Hon. Disch 9-19-40 Physical Disability

2
Dec. 27 - arrived at Ft. Moresby aboard the Dutch ship "KRAMER"
Several ships were laying on their sides in the harbor. Entrucked
and rode about 10 miles to our bivouac area. Passed "7 Mile"
airdrome and many wrecked fortresses & fighters on way to bivouac
area. Set up pyramidal tents and cots and dug slit trenches.
Occupied slit trenches that nite (with 2 inches of mud in bottom), as we
underwent our first air raid. Twice during the night we had
to crawl into our holes. **HAVENKRATA** new record for getting
out of bed and into his slit trench. The first alert he got into
the trench without any clothes. The second time he took his
clothes to the slit trench and put them on there.

Dec. 28 - Started getting issued some much needed clothing and
equipment. Another air raid. Lots of rumors flying -

Dec. 29 - **SEEGE** and the boys worked unloading boats and gaffed
a case of Priest Cocktail and other fruit - quite a relief after the
ships mess and the type "C" ration we were issued after hitting Moresby.
I came down with a sort of a flu and was sick for two days.
Had a hike in A.M. and lots of the boys fell out - heat was terrible.

Dec 30 - Got final issue of clothing and equipment. Were informed
that we would leave in the morning. Stowed our "A" bags -
CAPT VAN DYKE gave company a talk. Told us that this would probably
be the last time we were all together and what a fine company
we had - made us all feel good. Met **Walter Buckland** at Moresby. He
was with us through the whole campaign. (**MEDICS**)
Had a hike in A.M. and lots of the boys fell out - heat was terrible.

Dec. 31 - Entrucked at 4:30 A.M. and rode to airport. **BOBBY DICK**, myself
and about 2/3 of the 3rd Platoon were put into a Douglas transport (DC3)
and over the "Owen Stanley" we went. There wasn't a single gun on
the plane but our own weapons. Don't know what we'd have
done if we had been attacked. Could only see 3 parachutes in the
plane - I couldn't decide (in case a plane got after us) whether to
grab a parachute and drift lazily down or to give the chutes to
3 of the men (like a Sgt should) and take the faster way down -
after a 40 min. ride we landed on a muddy strip and was told
that Dobodura was about 2 miles "that" way. We took off. We
expected to find quite a village - natives, etc., but all it was, was
a few palm trees in a clearing and a few H.I. 3 laying around.
at Dobodura we joined part of "C" Co and Major **HAWK** (The Bird) led us
up the trail. The pace was too fast in the terrific heat and some
of the boys fell out - fell down - and every which way - We
arrived at "Ango" and set to work making up our beds - with
limbs, leaves, vines, etc. Mine was very artistic -
(next Page)

3 Dec 31 (Cont'd) we spent new years eve listening to the Aussie artillery pound away at the Jap positions. Sounded more like the 4th of July - Rained most of the night.

Jan 1-43 - Left our bivouac area about 4:00 AM and took off up the trail. Trail was muddy and slippery. Part of it was built by Engineers out of poles. Very hard to walk on. Finally - about the time everyone was ready to drop we came to the Sirua River and waded across it. Water almost to our arm pits and about 200 yds across. About noon, near Soputa, we stopped for dinner. I had hardly finished my Veg. Beef Stew and crackers when they called for all Squad Leaders. I, being one, was told that the Squad Leaders and part of the officers were going to the front and observe -

We rode about 2 miles by jeep and stopped at "Guinea Glen", where some Aussies were having tea - we also had tea. We were told here that we would have to leave the road and continue on up the trail to the right. Realizing that it was going to be a long and fast walk, I flew to my pack and started throwing away some of my surplus equipment (Mosquito Bar, blanket, gun oil, etc.) In my excitement I threw away about half of my ammunition! (When we left Johnny Mott was having a medic bandage up his foot and he got left behind & never got up where we were until next day). We started off at a fast clip (Christ knows how far) we came to a place called Moore's Outpost (Part of our 2nd Platoon later occupied this position) At Moore's we were given Aussie helmets (So the Jap snipers wouldn't know we were Americans, or fresh troops) we proceeded on up to "Kano" Perimeter (later named Fisk) - on the way we passed within 30 yds of a Jap machine gun nest (we were told about it later) At Kano the Aussies explained the situation - we were completely surrounded by Japs except for the trail we came upon. (we sort of looked at each other and managed a wretched grin) At dusk we could see smoke from Jap fires (cooking) about 50 yds from us. The Aussies were very unconcerned about it but they were used to it. They knew that the Japs were on the defensive and not on the offensive. we weren't too sure about that and spent a restless night.

Jan 2 - Australians explained the situation to us the best they could & tried to pass on to us some helpful suggestions. Most of the information they gave us was incorrect, especially about the Japs not having many machine guns. They had all they needed, most of them American guns - Lt. Fisk went out with some Aussies in the early morning and killed his first Jap. also the companies first Jap.

Jan 3-5 The rest of the Company came up, led by LT. RHODES. ④
I took my squad (Cloninger, Seeger, Rummel, Hornkrot, SIEMIENKIEWICZ, Robles, Sarnowski, SWIEC, Randolph, Barber and Burrell) across to James Perimeter along with the rest of the 3rd Platoon, the 4th Platoon, Part of the 2nd Platoon and a section of Co "D" (a perimeter is a position set up to give all around protection, with the men in slit trenches, facing out, forming a circle. A Perimeter is generally not over 50 yds across.) Kano and James perimeters (later named Fisk and McJee) were connected by a trench, hip deep with mud, with Fisk on one side and McJee on the other side of the Soputa-Sanawanda trail. We had the men get in the slit trenches with the Aussies and here they heard the shocking news that after nearly 2 yrs in the army (almost 3 for me) that at last they were face to face with the enemy - actual enemy and not Japs as used on maneuvers - Some of the boys were somewhat chagrined - some tickled to death. We were a sorry looking bunch when the Aussies finally all left, leaving us holding the well known sack.

We had to stand a 24 hr guard or watch. It was organized so that the men worked in groups of 3, all around the perimeter, with one man out of every 3 on guard. One man out of 3 would stand 1 hr and then wake up the next man, and then sleep for 2 hrs until time for his next guard, if that was possible.

We were given 3 or 4 grenades per man each night in addition to our rifles. If you heard a branch break on the outside of the perimeter, just pull the pin and toss the grenade. That first night would have made the 4th of July in Chicago sound like a ladies-aid meeting. I'll bet the Japs thought that the whole U.S. Army was attacking. The boys were sort of trigger happy -

We arranged it so that after dark no one was to leave his slit trench - no matter how urgent. Anyone outside of a slit trench was to be shot as a Jap. (you can imagine some of the gruesome happenings as a result of this). Our steel helmets were ^{often} used to other uses than protecting our heads. Later, due to a shortage of cooking utensils we even used our helmets to cook stew in (Anytime an Aussie cooked anything, instead of cooking, he "boiled up").

Every morning we sent out a ration and ammunition carrying party, taking about 60 men out of our perimeter which left the perimeter very short handed in case of a Jap attack. The same trail was used to get our rations as we came up on. The trail was knee deep with mud and water and overhanging vines made going very slow. Jap snipers and a few mentioned M.G. nest made the trip very nerve wracking.

We also put out 2 men out of each squad on outpost during the daylight hours. This was the toughest job of all, lying motionless all day.

Jan 6 - Don Dixon, Hughie Holmes and Art Kassing went on reconnaissance patrol and ran into Jap M. G. nest. Holmes was killed (body was never recovered) and Don Dixon shot thru the leg and foot. Dixon was very broken up about it. (5)

about this time we uncovered some Jap Cordite, explosive used in their A. A. guns. We used it to cook with. You've heard the expression "now we're cooking with gas". We coined a new one - "Cooking with dynamite."

Jan 7 - A Jap patrol came up to edge of perimeter and shot **RICHTER** thru the head as he was sitting with his back to the outside of the perimeter. He died instantly. **KUNDERT** was wounded thru the back. This could have been avoided had the men been on the alert as they were supposed to be.

we were sending out a few recon patrols -

LT. MCGEE and **Sgt JENKINS** were making life unbearable by their constant yelling and cursing at the men, trying to keep them in their holes. The men figured that it was their own life they were risking if they got up. They knew that McGee and Jenkins were sure as hell taking care of their lives, if staying in a hole could do it. Rained all night. **MALLIZZO** was wounded while carrying **KUNDERT** out. (Mallizzo died on Jan 28, in Australia)

Jan 8 - Slit trenches all full of water in morning. Everyone wet and miserable. **B. DIXON**, **YADON** and myself took out a 60 man ration and ammunition party. While we were still at Bn we heard that "C" Co was attacking. We started back and the man in front of me got shot thru leg. Before we got organized the rest of the party ahead of us went on ahead. **CAIN**, the medic, fixed up the wounded man's leg and we carried him back to Bn medic. With only Dixon and myself left out of the ration party we decided it was impossible to go on up the trail. During the fracas I fell down in the knee deep mud and jammed my Tommy Gun into the mud clear to the breach. We went back to "F" Co and I cleaned my gun out the best I could and then headed back with a platoon of F Co who were sent up to carry out the "C" Co casualties. We arrived about the time the battle was over and heard the results. An Aussie Artillery shell had fell short during the barrage preceding the "C" Co attack on a strong Jap perimeter, and landed in the middle of "F" Co's perimeter, killing **RALEY** and **JONES** outright and wounding **Ferris**, **Callentine**, **Harrison**, **McJannet** and **Sherman** (Sherman died in Hosp. on Jan. 11). The attack then started. ~~Again~~ the artillery and the attack were not coordinated right and what was supposed to be a rolling barrage landed among our foremost men, killing **MCLEMORE** and **MECK** and wounding **STEVENS** and **GILLASPY** (arm amputated later).

MHS
SC 1854
Star Division diary
(more or less copied)

Jan 8 (Cont'd) — During the attack which followed, Lt Fisk was killed. (Standing up, throwing hand grenades) and Wilson, Wheat, Martin, Cornish, Strand and Roy Smith were wounded. The Jap position was impossible to take from the direction in which the attack started due to a large moat in front of the Jap positions, and "C" Co fell back to Moore's outpost, where we met them. Colonel Lindstrom then ordered another attack in the same identical direction. Captain Van Duyn refused to lead his men into certain death and made it stick. The Colonel lost considerable face, at least with us. "C" Co thanked Christ that they had a man like Van Duyn for Co. commander. ~~we heard later that Lt Mc Gee & Jenkins had been way back behind their Platoon (2nd) during the attack. Sgt Wilson (grenades) acting as runner (as Wilson was wounded) came charging through the bushes and called them to the yellow. Under Wilson's goading Mc Gee & Jenkins went on up with Wilson. Wilson was then shot thru the arm. Wilson went back to the C.P. under his own power leaving Mc Gee and Jenkins near the Japs. No one knows what happened then but Mc Gee & Jenkins came back without their guns. (I think to this day they threw them away and ran). Later, Mc Gee said to Seeger, "How did I loose contact with my Platoon? When they shot my gun out of my hands?" Several days later, after the same Jap perimeter had been taken by A, B & C Co's from a different direction, Mc Gee's and Jenkins' guns were brought in without a scratch on them.~~ During the attack Mohl and four of his men narrowly missed being mowed down by a Jap M.G. They went ahead and ran into an American perimeter which they mistook for a Jap perimeter. They shot into it several times and the wild S/Sgt attached to "C" Co, threw in a hand grenade, blowing a mosquito bar sky high. They then realized it was an American position and went on in, apologizing for their mistake. Luckily no one was hurt. It was part of the 2nd Bn. The company's morale had sunk from zero to sub-zero.

Jan. 9-12 — usual ration parties. Grub is unbearable. Mc Gee & Jenkins rationing crackers & milk (powdered) and corned beef. Cokes had to ask Jenkins permission before giving a man a cup of tea — Everyone hating Mc Gee and Jenkins whole heartedly. Rained almost steady. Slit trenches and whole area under water, but men had to lay in it. Dry cigarettes and matches scarce. Only points of high ground above water. Received our first mail and set in slit trench clear to arm pits to read it (7 letters) made me feel better. Everyones morale went up — one man even smiled.

7 Jan. 12 cont'd - Mc Gee sent me out on patrol, on orders from the Captain. Took **BURRELL** and **NOWLIN** with me. Went out on 320° azimuth and observed Jap trail for two hrs. No activity by Japs. Went back and Mc Gee told me to report to Capt. Reported to Capt. & told him what we had done. Capt. dressed me down for doing the wrong thing. We were supposed to follow down the Jap trail and observe on Jap perimeter. Mc Gee was at fault, having given me the wrong dope, but I took the bawling out without saying anything. The Capt then said that I would have to go back out, as the Col. had to have accurate information on Jap positions, pending an attack. He said that I could either go out that afternoon or wait until before day light in the morning. I chose to go out next morning (I was lucky to have a choice).

Just before dusk the 3rd platoon was called out to ambush a 30 man Jap patrol. We went out and laid for them but it got dark and we did not see hide nor hair of them.

Jan. 13 - Got up at 0400 hrs, woke **NOWLIN** and a man from Reg. intelligence who was to accompany Nowlin and I on the patrol and ate some Hash and Herring (cold) and took off at 320° again. (I had told **RANDOLPH** the night before that I was going out thru his position on patrol about 0430, knowing that he was to be on guard in his area at that time. He was asleep. I didn't take time to chew his tail for being asleep as time was precious but woke him up, rather roughly. I cursed him out next day for it) We made our way thru the thick jungle, crossing the Jap trail and going on about 200 yds before turning to the right (I had decided it better to circle around behind the Jap perimeter than to follow down the trail) we proceeded on 4 different azimuths of 340°, 355°, 10° and finally 140° to bring us around in a half circle behind the Japs. About this time we were getting set to do a little observing, (it was daylight by this time), a lone Jap came wandering out toward us. We went down where we were. We didn't have time to take good cover. He had a knife and was digging around in the tree roots (we had noticed Japs digging roots before. we decided that they must be using them for food) He circled around opposite Nowlin then opposite Bonk (the man from Regt), hacking away all the while. Finally he circled up right in front of me. I was lying on my right side with my Tommy gun covering him. When he was about 4 feet of me he stopped and peered into the brush and I looked him right in the eye! He was wearing glasses about 1/4 inches thick and had a long black beard. His clothing was very filthy, and he smelled rather rank (we could always tell when a Jap was near our perimeter by their smell. They have a very distinct smell - all of their own. It finally got so that we could smell them all the time, we were in such close contact with them).

8 Jan 13 (Cont'd) - I jumped up, covering him with my ^{Tommy} gun. He fell back, raising his hands, looking kinda dazed. I was sorta (8) dazed myself, not knowing what to do with him, as we were too close to the Jap perimeter to fire, giving away our position. I motioned with my left hand for him to come toward me. (I had finally decided to try to Cold Cock him with a left hook, drag him back in the brush and dispose of him by silent means). He started forward with his hands raised. At this point, Bonk, who was lying in the undergrowth, got buck fever and jumped up and pointed his M1 at the Jap. Bonk's face was a party grey, his eyes were sticking out of his head an inch and his M1 was shaking like a leaf. The Jap must have thought he was done for. He jumped back, screaming, "no, no," and fell flat on his back. He then jumped up and scrambled thru the brush toward his position, falling several times. I stopped Bonk from firing on him. Bonk then turned and crashed thru the brush like a wild man in the opposite direction the Jap had taken. Nowlin and I finally got him stopped and we held a fast consultation on what course we should take. We knew we had to get out of there fast. We could either go due N.W. and hit Yona, go due W. and hit the 2nd Bn or try to find our way back thru the Japs. We were completely lost (we lost our azimuth when Bonk bolted). We decided on the latter course. We circled back around to the right, trying to retrace our steps but it was impossible. We were soon in the middle of a knee deep swamp, with vines and undergrowth making progress next to impossible (one kind of vine, in particular, would hook to your clothes and rip them off of you unless you stopped and took the barbs out the same way they went in). The mosquitoes were around us in swarms. We wandered around from about 0900 hrs to about 1230 hrs dodging Jap huts and dugouts which were scattered thru the swamp. The snipers were picking away at us but we kept pretty well under cover. About 1230 we came to a partial clearing. Skirting it we saw several Jap tents and Japs sitting around. We then came to a bunch of Jap trails, all running parallel (toward Sanananda Pt.) with communication wires on them. We had crossed three of these when we heard Japs talking around us. We took cover

9 Jan. 13 (cont'd) — Finally the crew was fairly good. We had 9

no more got better than a 30 man pop point, well armed -
Paras within 5 ft. of us. We thought our time had come -
hard on and I said that on our backs from 1300 hrs until
2030 hrs (after dark) without moving. (We all tried during the
course of the afternoon) we thought his command moving
about would surely give us away. All we could do was
lay there and pray that no pop would come digging around
after us. We heard them talking and laughing and walking
all around us, all afternoon long. About 1400 hrs our own
artillery opened up on the pop position we were in and on
banks of steep about the size of my fist turned itself in
the ground about 3 inches from machine side. We didn't
have any idea where we were, in respect to the location
of our own perimeter. We tried to determine the direction
of our perimeter by our motion, but they were silent.
Finally we heard Johnny hotel's machine gun go off
several times (I had a sharp, really identical crack). It was
sure a welcome sound. We shot an aim at it and
figured that it laid at 180° or magnetic south. About
dark we saw a pop sniper come out of a tree about 30
feet from us. He must have been looking to the first when
we came in or had have seen us, at 2030 hrs it was
fairly dark so we decided to have a go at getting the all
out of them. (Bank had kept wanting to make a book for it
all thru the afternoon but we talked him out of it, knowing
that unless he was out of all of us, I, being the ranking
man present could have asked him to stay, but at 2030
like that, rank doesn't mean much). At 2030 we went
out, as quietly as possible (Bank seemed like a bird in
a china closet) and headed south, following along the bank
of a stream. We could hear pop talking to the right
and left of us and they must have been up to raise a little
hell with the Americans. Anyway we got there, and out
into the clearing where our perimeter was located. We
finally made out what we thought was our perimeter
by a light over tree. Our next problem was to get
in without getting our little shot off by our own men.

10 Jan 13 (cont'd) we didn't know the pass word for that night as we had been out all day. we got down low and I hollered out "yates" (we figured he'd be on guard at that time) he answered us, "who's there?" I answered, "Black Bart & Patrol!" He passed around the information that we were coming in and we went in - fast. I was never so glad in my life to see some one I knew. Howlin and I bolted a can of herring and smoked our first cigarette in 26 hours. Everyone had given up on ever getting back, hours before. I think they were about as glad to see us as we were to see them. I called the Captain up on the phone and told him we were in. He thanked god, right there on the phone, that we were back and told me I could report in the morning. Mc Gee never even turned over in his hole when Jenkins told him we were in (I was even glad to see Jenkins' black, ugly face and almost felt a brotherly love for him).

I have often heard some of my fellow soldiers remark that they prayed, when the lead got to flying fast or when they were in a tight spot. I don't believe that I'm an atheist (sp) but I never once thought of god during that trying afternoon. I guess I was too busy trying to figure what I was going to do in case the Japs discovered us.

Jan. 14 - Rested most of the day. A lone Jap came wandering out of the trees onto the S-S road and came down toward our perimeter. we thought he was coming in to surrender (An aussie whiraway had dropped a bunch of leaflets and american propaganda into the Jap positions the day before, telling the Japs that they could not win, etc. They also dropped papers to the Japs that they could present to us as a surrender pass) This Jap came up quite close and then decided to go back. I changed his plans with a slug through his back and chest. Mc Gee and I had words concerning my marksmanship. (Mc Gee was looking at the Jap thru field glasses and the Jap wasn't over 50 yds away).

about 2100 hrs that evening the Captain called me on the phone and told me that as much as he hated to use me again, I'd have to take a 15 man patrol out next morning, about 0400 and make a reconnaissance of the area to the left and rear of the Jap trail as the Company might have to move out in there and set up a perimeter in that position.

Every thing was arranged that night as to who was to go and eating before we left. Each man was issued a can of Corned Willie.

Jan 14 (cont'd) During the night some time I was out of my hole perched on a piece of high ground (most of the area was under water) apparently was still asleep, while perching there, something hit with a splash in a water hole about 6 ft from me. Thinking it to be a hand grenade, I went down flat, with my trousers hanging around my knees. Nothing went off so I crawled back to my hole. It must have been some sort of time later I did hardly wake up when some thing terrible happened. I decided right then and there that I needed a bath and that my clothes needed washing. So I got out and took a bath in a water hole, washed my coveralls, put them back on and retired, hoping for the best, and laid there all night wishing that the guy who invented coveralls had died a horrible death.

Jan 13 - Got up at 0400 hrs, bolted our Corned Willie and took off on an azimuth of 310° with 15 men, including myself. (Had a hard time getting Wilcox up) Went out to a point about 200 yds past the Jap trail. Designated an assembly point and sent out 4 three man patrols - Yalom, Staples and Perry on an azimuth of 350° , Wilcox, Twisley and Locke at 340° , Sanderson, D. Smith and Strong at 330° and Carter, Missouri and Ware at 320° . Seeger, Rummel and myself took up positions to observe and wait for the patrols to come back. The four patrols went out about 250 yds and returned. No Japs were seen. We then assembled and headed back. On the way back we got too far to the left (the men in the rear kept insisting we were going to far to the right) we got down among the Japs again, seen a couple of dead Japs and finally came face to face with two of them, near a Jap outpost. They went down. We decided not to fire and took off to the edge of the clearing. Men in the rear kept yelling to hurry up, that there were Japs behind us. We crawled the full length of the clearing (about 150 yds) and finally arrived at our perimeter at 1100 hrs. (We had to be in by 1200 hrs as an attack was supposed to start then). Our perimeter was nearly deserted as 60 men were on ration party and part of the second Platoon were assisting A Co in an attack. Staub and Tague were killed and URNIKIS and BASKIN wounded during that attack. That afternoon we heard that "I" Co was supposed to relieve us. They relieved us all right but we pushed out a hundred yds at 310° and dug in and set up a new perimeter. My squad got a lucky break that mite as one section of D Co got mixed up and dug in, in the wrong place, right in front of my squad and they had to stand our guard that night.

12. Jan 15 (cont'd) - Mr. Lee went out with fever earlier in
the day. Dr. Brown later reported that he had been there
throwing his quinine on several occasions. I guess he
figured that the fever was an easier way out than the
other way.

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13 Jan. 16 - The whole company was roused out about 0600 hrs and the Squad leaders called up. We were to attack along the Jap trail and into the strong Jap positions I had recommended to my former patrol. "C" Co was to be the spearhead of the Bn attack. I was the man of the hour as I knew the area in which the Japs were. I went into conference with Van Buren and Capt. Showman - the Bn. executive officer. We were issued one days ration - a bar of chocolate and a can of condensed willie per man. The barrage started at 0850, (artillery, mortars and machine guns). It was the heaviest barrage I have ever heard and proved to be the most effective. We attacked down the trail at 0900 hrs with my squad in the lead, with Seeger and Rummel out as scouts. The rest of the 3rd followed, then the 2nd, then the 1st, with the weapons bringing up the rear as usual. At the first bit of resistance the company was to fan out to the left and form a skirmish line. The barrage had been so effective that the Japs had evacuated their foremost position and fallen back into a stronger one. Craters six ft deep were blown in the ground by the artillery. Seeger, Rummel and I came onto a Jap lying on the ground, obviously dead. Rummel remarked that he had never seen a dead man with his eyes closed. The Jap was playing possum. Apparently he had been too sick to fall back with the rest of the Japs. His pants had been blown off by the barrage. I didn't think we should fire so I called to Jenkins that he was alive. I guess Jenkins just passed it up. Anyhow Mohl gave him a burst with his Tommy gun and the Captain shot him thru the head. We proceeded on and came to the same swamp I had been lost in. The Bn Commander then came up and decided to establish a Bn perimeter and hold there for the day. "C" Co was sent out to establish a perimeter and protect the Bn's North flank. We headed NW for about 1/2 mile. The Capt. then decided to go out on patrol to find a good location for a perimeter, taking me and Seeger, Rummel, Robles, Sarnowski and Swiec. We couldn't find a good area and kept going and finally got lost. We stumbled across a strange trail with U. S. Communication wires on it. We couldn't figure it out. We thought the Japs might be using our wire. We took cover and Seeger went up the trail to the right to try to find out what the score was. About 5 minutes after he left a bunch of Japs came out on the trail to the left. We opened up on them and got two. The rest of them took off and we went up the trail to the right and took cover to await Seeger's return. In the meantime we cut the wire, so when someone came to repair them we could tell whose wires they were. Seeger came back with information that they were 2nd Bn's wires. The 2nd Bn was coming in on the left of us. So we repaired the wire and took off -

14 Jan 16 - (Cont'd) we walked for hours and finally found our Bn perimeter (our anti-tank guns were firing at Jap pill boxes). The Company came back down to the Bn. perimeter for the night. I was never so tired out in my life. I couldn't go another (14) step. Dye was wounded in knee by Jap sniper.

Jan. 17 - Jenkins went out with fever. The Company strength was down to about 115. We hit New Guinea with 179 enlisted men and 6 officers. Fever had taken a heavy toll, along with the dead and the wounded. Jenkins was moving around faster when he went out, than I had ever seen a sick man move. Siemienkiewicz, Sarnowski and Barbor out of my squad and about 8 more from the rest of the company went out that day with fever. wounded Aussies were coming thru from up around Sananda Pt. where they were having a go at the Japs. The 3rd Platoon was out defending a tall tree which was used for observation.

Jan. 18 - Seeger and I came down with fever. I had a temperature of 104. More men going out with fever. Seeger and I decided to try and stick it out as long as we could.

Kuhn was made 1st Sgt., Mohl S/Sgt, in charge of 3rd Platoon, Meagher S/Sgt, in charge of 1st Platoon, Corkins S/Sgt. (working in Nelson's job as Communication Sgt), B. Dixon S/Sgt in charge of 2nd Platoon. Yates was made Sgt in charge of Mohl's squad. Seeger and Burrell made Cpls. Seeger went to Yates' Squad. 3rd Platoon was sent out to reinforce "K" Co but came back before dark.

I spent an awful night with fever. Rained most of night.

Jan. 19 - Seeger's and my temperature remained around 104°, but we hung on. Company moved back down trail about 250 yds and took up new position. Seeger and I barely made it.

Barraque started about 1700 hrs and Co "C" attacked just before dusk amidst rain and mud. Seeger and I and several more were too sick to go. Wounded soon started coming in. Robles, Nowlin, Perry, Tolson, Bob Dixon, Tylick, Hauenkratz, Mall Gunter, Busse and Pragnowski were wounded. Freitas and Don Smith were killed. Most of the wounded had to lay in the mud all night. Tolson and Dixon were in bad shape. Dixon was shot in the back. (Later reported that bullet that hit Dixon hit his ammunition belt and shattered and that they took 6 or 8 pieces of it out of him through the process of several operations) The heat from our kitchen gas burner was the only thing that saved Dixon's life that night. Gunter thought he was badly hit & did a lot of moaning around. I would manage to crawl over now and then to see who was coming in next. I had chills during the night. Rummel and Mohl went wild and took 6 Jap pill boxes, using hand grenades. Guns wouldn't function.

15 Jan 20 - attack continued. wounded were Hance, Whitney (both died on way to hospital) Levy (reported to have shot 22 Japs that morning and was wounded 4 times), Slosser and M. Nelson. Most of the Japs were mopped up by this time.

In the afternoon Seeger and I and 7 more men went out and carried Freitas and Smith bodies in and turned them over to the Chaplain. Later I took a detail out to count the number of Japs dead. (Seeger and I were weaker than cats) 200 Jap bodies were counted. A few escaped and ^{were} killed off by numerous patrols. Seeger got his Jap pistol and I got my Jap boots that day. All the boys were after souvenirs. We were probing around a Jap hospital tent looking for bodies and anything else we could find when the Chief came running up to me and informed me that there was a live Jap in the tent. Cloninger and Burrell were going thru a Jap pack and someone yelled that there was a live Jap. They barely glanced up and said "is there?" and moved over about 4 ft and kept on digging for souvenirs. Seeger pumped a few slugs thru the Jap. The Jap was already wounded. The Japs body hadnt stopped twitching before Seeger reached in and grabbed his pistol off of him, fearing that someone would beat him to it. The Jap had a hand grenade lying by him with the pin barely hanging in it. Cloninger slipped the pin back in - very cautiously.

Hanenkrat promoted to cpl.

DUTRA, acting cpl. chewed Schneekloth's tail something terrible for trying to shuff a detail off onto St. Mary. I really got a kick out of that.

Mohl went out with fever, leaving me in charge of platoon. He came back several days later. The platoon strength was now about 15, all told out of an original 40.

I was made S/SGT. St. Rhodes evacuated with fever.

Jan. 21 - Chaplain conducted services for the dead and held regular services. I believe every man in the company attended church. They had all become firm "believers".

3rd Platoon and part of the fourth went out on outpost perimeter near the road. The Japs still had scattered positions across the road. The 2nd and 3rd Bns mopped that area up during 21st and 22nd. Several stray Japs were shot at by our guards. The whole Bn, minus "C" co pulled out to Huggins, about mile down road. "C" co stayed behind to mop up area. We got all the good deals, first in and last out.

Jan 22 - wrote some letters home (first opportunity I had). Thought the folks might be worried as the Chief had written from Moresby telling his folks that we were in New Guinea. Still out in outpost Perimeter

16 Jan. 23-25 - General mopping up and patrol work -
Grub was still as bad as ever. Cooks doing a damn
good job, especially CHUMBLEY, who was sick with fever part
of the time. My shoes gave away so I took to wearing my gap boots. Wore them about a week and then decided to
save them for souvenirs. They came in very handy in
the water and mud except when the water calmed over the
tops of them. Chief transferred to the 3rd Platoon.

Jan. 26 - Hiked down to Huggins and joined the rest of
the Bn. Most of the men, including myself as played out and
sick we could hardly make it. After that memorial hike a
new gait was introduced, the "New Huggins Shuffle". Someone
said that when they got back to the States they were going
to invent a new dance called the "Jungle Jump". Capt. Van Hugen
evacuated with fever. Everyone hates to see him go.

Jan 27 - Feb 1 - Position our Co. was put into had no trees and the
heat was unbearable, making the fever worse than ever.
Grub worse than ever. Lots of men going to hospital. Co strength
around 75, including officers. Lt Saturn now Co. Commander.
Rest of Bn. moved to Soputa leaving "C" Co. behind again. Co "C" moved
across road to huts which the 12th Portable had evacuated. Much
cooler in huts. Fever hit me again and I had it bad for about
a week in a row. Had it off and on until about Feb. 10.
About this time my kidneys went bad on me and I had to get
up about 4 times a night. I averaged getting up 4 times a night
from Jan 28 to March 1, and now, as I'm writing this (March 11)
I only have to get up twice a night.

Going on patrol to evacuated former positions to keep the
stray Japs from occupying them. Stray Japs killed occasionally.
"Niger" Sanford caught one with pants down and shot him.
Munoz wounded one near the ammo dump one night and the next
morning they followed the Japs trail and found him with his head
blown off. Seeing that he was bad hit he had taken his own life.
Several such cases were reported.

Feb. 2 - Rummel took a casual morning stroll and came marching
a Jap back he had captured. Jap claimed he was a Korean. He said
he didn't fight, that the Japs had brought Koreans with them
to do the work. (Building roads and positions) (Most of the Japs talked
some English, some were educated at university of Southern California.
Quite a few women's clothes were found through the Soputa-Samuda
area. Aussie claimed that the Japs had their women with them.
I found a garment resembling a brassiere.) The prisoner was taken
to the Reg. Stocade where the rest of the Jap prisoners were kept.

Feb 2 (Contd) went back to old positions and buried dead Japs.
Most gruesome work I ever done. Some were sorta ripe (my appetite went bad)
Feb. 3-4 Still at Huggins and still patrolling. A Correspondent
from "Yank" Magazine stopped at our area and took stories (17)
of Mohls and Rummels heroic hand grenade episode and the
story of my patrols. I was sicker than a dog that day and
the correspondent didn't get much satisfaction from me.
In fact I didn't even give him my name. I guess CARTER
did though. Air Corps men came through trying to trade canned
fruit for souvenirs. Some of our boys got hostile, so they got out of there.

Feb. 5 — Hiked from Huggins to Soputa (about 4 miles), another
grueling hike. When we got to Soputa we took a bath in
the Girau river, the first good bath since leaving Australia
(Dec 22). Also got a job of mail including knas packages —
The Boys sure went for that. American cake, candy etc. A wolf
would have slunk off in shame after watching some of them
attack that fruit cake.

Feb. 6 — Grub improved somewhat — found out that most of the
promotion did not go through. Company had been filling non-com
vacancies as non-coms were evacuated. Order came down that
a non-com had to be evacuated to Australia before his position
could be filled. I was still a Buck Sgh.

We built up huts to sleep in, off the ground, out of the
water with an elevated Pup tent over the top. Had to cut
brush out and fix up our area. The 3rd Platoon's area was
the pride of the company. Had to start saluting officers again.
(no saluting was done during action. No one called an officer or non-com
by their rank — we call Capt. Van Duyn, "Jack" or "Van", etc.)

Feb 18 — Kuhn evacuated with yellow jaundice (later went to Australia) (14)
Mohl was made acting 1st Sgt, Meagher in Charge of 1st Platoon, Mikelson
in Charge of 2nd Platoon, one in Charge of 3rd Platoon and went with
in Charge of weapons. Yates held his Sergeantcy, Seeger, Rummel and Burrell
held their Corporal ships. 3rd Platoon now down to 12 men. Company
strength hovered around 70. Men going back and forth to hospital.

Received information that I had seen awarded the Silver Star
March 3-8 — Large Jap fleet sunk off coast of N.G. by our air force. We
were sure glad they didn't get to land.

March 11 — Jap bombers and fighters got thru and raised hell at Morobe
and Rabodura and also with our air strips at Poppendite. (Some body
in the air corps must have slipped up.)

Chief made Corporal — also Danger.
Lots of rumors about leaving New Guinea, going to Osa Bay, etc.
The whole 41st Division is now in New Guinea.

March 13 — Finished writing up back history of campaign. Will now keep
it as it progresses —

18. March 16 - Left Soputa for Oro Bay. Entrucked and rode thru Bobodura and down to a boat landing on (18) River. Bought coconuts from the natives using cigarettes as a medium of exchange. Got on the river boats (30 men per boat) and cruised smoothly down the river. The boats had powerful out board motors on them and we made good time. It was the most beautiful ride I have ever taken. Thick vines and jungle growth overhanging the stream, beautiful birds flapping around and crocodiles or 'gators lazing about. The ride took about an hour and one half. We got off the boats at the beach and again entrucked (Negro Quartermaster drivers with six wheelers) and rode along the beach to Oro Bay. The whole beach, for the full six miles we rode, was studded with palm trees. It would be a wonderful place for a resort in peace time. Oro Bay was a jumbled mess of ships and barges, ferrying cargo to shore, trucks and other vehicles flying around and masses of men unloading ships. We went thru Oro Bay and started climbing the ridge of hills behind the bay, the foothills of the Owen-Standley. We rode for about 4 miles, circling up the ridges and finally detrucked and walked about 2 miles, mostly up hill. It was sure a tough walk, with full packs. Our Bn. area was down in a valley, on a side hill completely covered by trees. Here we met our casualties who had gone to Moresby with malaria. They came to Oro Bay from Moresby, by boat, around Milne Bay. Sgt Jenkins was among the casualties. ~~most of the men treated him rather cool.~~

Our first work was to build floors for our pyramidal tents using logs. It was quite a job as we had to clear brush and fall logs on sidehills, but when the platforms and floors had been laid and the tents erected, it sure made a good home. It was the best area "C" Co ever had. We (3rd Platoon) built one house right across the creek which ran down the valley (commonly referred to as the Skunk Hollow Residence). I would have given my 4 months pay for a camera.

14 March 20 - Jenkins went to Soputa to see Capt. Benson about transferring into his outfit as he was informed he was going to become a Private in "C" Co. I don't know exactly what came of his visit with Benson but he finally decided to stay with C Co. He was assigned to my Platoon and became a member of Cpl Seeger's squad. I got along with him O.K., even though I didn't exactly admire the man.

March 21-27 - The Japs kept up a steady bombing of Oro Bay, sinking a ship and burning gasoline and oil every now and then. We finally got our three 3rd Platoon tents up and moved into. My promotion to Staff Sgt finally went thru. Perkins was transferred from the 2nd Platoon to the Third, where he became my platoon guide.

We were issued a set of sun tans and we started standing retreat formations again. Every thing was getting back toward Harrison life. It was a good sign that we might get out of New Guinea some day. Harrison life in the jungle was rather disgusting. The men were pretty well fed up with it before it started.

The food had improved a lot and our kitchen force rustled around and gaffled enough stuff so that we had pie and cake occasionally.

Boy, it was sure great to get up in the morning and take a bath in the creek, cold but refreshing. The large rocks in the stream bed created pools deep enough to completely submerge in. We used the rocks to wash our clothes on.

March 28 - The Japs gave Oro Bay its worst bombing in its history, sinking three ships, blowing up gas dumps and blowing hell out the piers that the engineers had built out to accomodate large ships. Lots of valuable cargo was lost on the sunk ships, among it, a bunch of engines for torpedos boats which the Navy had been waiting for for three months. The bombing kept us up most of the night. The boys were getting bomb happy again.

The next day everyone was trying to salvage stuff off of the ships (which hadn't quite gone down yet).

20 March 28 (cont'd) - Some of the boys salvaged some liquor and proceeded to get intoxicated. one guy had 2 chickens 20 and hobbled in his tent which he got off of one boat. He was fattening them up for the kill. The natives sure did like the looks of those chickens. They'd look at them and grin and try to trade the guy out of them. one guy told the natives that the chickens were American Eagles.

When the boats went down, the Japanese crew came ashore carrying bottles of beer and whiskey, drunker than hell. It was rumoured around that there was a whole pile of cases of beer in the holds of the sunken ships. Some of the boys were thinking of getting some diving suits up from Australia to salvage it. of course I wasn't interested. Lt. Sablstrom took command of C Co. Lt. Rhodes came back from Moresby & became co. Cpl. Lt. Stryker took over the 1st Platoon.

March 30 - Chumblay and I went on a hunting expedition to Oro Bay - when we left Soputa I had given my Jap boots and Aussie shirt to Chumblay to carry with the kitchen supplies. During the course of the trip from Soputa to our mountain home, the trailer carrying the kitchen supplies got lost, my boots and shirt (which I prized next to my life) along with it. The loss almost unbalanced my mental system. I was in a frenzy. We didn't find the trailer but we ran into a canteen, where we bought some cookies and candy, also some rations for pie. we had quite a time hooking rides. The trip was very interesting as we looked over the boats and piers that the Japs had blown up. one ship was sitting close to shore in the harbor with just the smoke stack and rigging above water. The engineers and cannon company guys were so bomb happy that they spent so much time looking in the air for Jap Dive bombers that they didn't get much done.

The report came in that our air force had shot down 2 Dive bombers, 11 Zeros and four or five possibly damaged bombers and seven or eight probably damaged Zeros during the Jap bombing of March 28th.

Robbins, D. Smith and J. DEACON arrived from Moresby and Wilcox came back from the 1st Evacuation Hospital.

March 31 - a hot rumor just came in that we were leaving the 15th of April for Australia.

21 April 1-1943 - started standing retreat today. Everyone cried and moaned about it. They'll have us shining our shoes next. at retreat, Muhl made an announcement that a Jap landing party had landed down at the beach and we were to move out immediately to contact them. He went on, covering the uniform and equipment we were to take. About that time Jim Ray came from the orderly room, screaming, "Hold on!" He handed Muhl a legal looking paper and Muhl said, "April Fool." Everyone looked dumbfounded and awfully relieved.

April 3 - working, unloading boats at Oro Bay. Unloaded Dutch steamer, "van Spilbergen". The boys gaffled lots of edibles. Had an air alert but the Japs never came.

April 5 - Joe E. Brown arrived in our area and put on a show - what a Pan. Went to Docks again. Unloaded Dutch ship "Jenson". Another air raid alert. Japs never got here.

April 9 - Shadrack arrived back from R.S.O. where he had been working since Jan 1. Shad is now Squad Leader of the 3rd Squad, 3rd Platoon.

April 10 - unloaded Dutch ship "Maatsuycker", the same ship that we rode on from Sydney to Melbourne, thru the Tasmanian Straits, on our way to Australia. It brought back old memories of sea sickness to some of the boys. one year ago today we landed in Melbourne aboard the "Maatsuycker".

April 11 - Big Jap air raid. Japs made two direct hits on a big Chinese freighter laying in the harbor, but it has not sunk yet. Our ack-ack knocked down 2 Jap dive bombers and a small sub-chaser, a corvette, knocked down two Jap planes. The official report of the raid hasn't come in yet. The "Green Hornet" a small U.S. freighter was also damaged during the raid.

April 12 - worked at Docks. Had air alert about noon but the Japs were intercepted before they got here.

22 April 13-24 - on dock detail almost every day. The boys are getting rather mutinous and having lots of arguments with the officers in charge of the docks. (22)

were informed thru channels that we were to go back to Australia soon. Lots of rumors floating around.
April 25 - Put in my application for Officer Candidate School.
April 26 at last, the pay off - we started standing Reveille. Dooms came back from Australia.

Someone mysteriously goofed off a few bursts with a Tommy Gun. The C.O. rather pointedly hinted that some one in the 3rd Platoon and in my tent was responsible. Of course I didn't know anything about it. Sgt Perkins was seen cleaning his Tommy Gun that afternoon.

April 27 - The boys in the bottom tent (Skunk Hollow Residence) didn't wake up in time to stand Reveille. The C.O. chewed on my butt, unsuccessfully. Four months in New Guinea today.

April 28 - 1st Sgt Huber, Gatten, Hinrichsen and H. Smith came back to the Company from Port Moresby. Huber is now Platoon Sgt of weapons platoon.

May 3 - Chief went to Hospital with malaria & yellow jaundice. We are now thru with details at the docks and we go into a training schedule today, including hikes. The boys are about ready to blow their tops.

Several reports have come in that the 32nd Division * (now back in Australia from New Guinea) are really blowing their tops. The General gave them a speech and they threw rocks at him. Officers can't do a thing with them. An M.P. told us that 1000 men of the 32nd were A.W.O.L. in Australia.

If things don't change soon they're liable to have the same trouble with this outfit when we get back to civilization. The main topics of conversation are now women and drink instead of food.

22 May 4 - 10 more basic training including night marches and Problems. (23)

May 11 - WAMSLEY came back from Australia.

May 12 - Pay day at last - received 4 months pay.

May 13 - HAVENKRAT came back from Australia.

May 14 - Big Jap air raid on Oro Bay. Really saw a good dog fight. Several Jap bombers went down in flames. Official report was - 16 Jap planes shot down and 5 American planes shot down, but we didn't lose a single pilot. One Jap pilot jumped out when his plane caught on fire. Either he didn't have a parachute or it wouldn't open for he landed awful hard in the bay. Several Jap pilots were rescued from their planes after hitting the water. I was interviewed for officers candidate school.

May 16 - Saw picture show, "The family next door" with Hugh Herbert.

May 17 - Sgt Daems was assigned to 3rd platoon as a squad leader. The whole 3rd Platoon shined their shoes for retreat. The rest of the Co, especially Sandy, sure blew their tops. Even the officers frowned, but you can't stop a man from shining his shoes, even in the army. Had air raid during night.

May 18 - Got picture from Dmmogene today. The Captain inspected our area and found numerous cans, old clothes and trash. Gave me quite a lecture. Worked in afternoon burning brush & cleaning area.

The chief is still in the hospital. He sent up 50 pounds by Carter today for me to send home for him. Mobil and 16 men from the Co went on S.D. unloading boats at Oro Bay. Saiz, Siemembienies, Sivies & Jegel went from 3rd Platoon.

24 May 22 - Nelson arrived back from Australia with lurid accounts of his sexual life in Brisbane.

Chief came back from Hospital again.

(24)

May 27 - Started practicing for Silver Star Ceremony, parading included.

May 30 - Had picture show "East Side of Heaven" after a herculean struggle. First it rained & we had to take cover. Then we had an air raid and we had to disperse. Then the rains came again & we took cover. The pay off came when the shelter half construction over the projector collapsed, knocking the projector down. The show ended - far into the night.

Had Memorial Day Service & dedicated our out door chapel. The Roll of the dead was read.

→ June 2 - Was awarded the Silver Star today. Also Nelson & a few more from the Bn. Battalion formation. We posed with the General (individually) and the Cameras clicked. The General had his picture taken with me. (I consented after a heated argument) at last the folks back in the States get a break (of the films get there.) The Regimental band arrived a few days ago to play for the ceremony and will be here, playing, for ten days.

June 4 - Wild rumour of a move. Some of the boys even had us back in the States. The C.O. finally told us we were moving to Sanananda pt. to take up a beach defence position - the rest of the Bn. going to Hullerton Pt. I feel like wrecking our new tents. Just completed our new floors and shoe, mess gear & magazine racks and have to move out & leave it. The place was getting to feel like home. It was by far the nicest, healthiest camp site we have ever had, bar none.

Rumour of a trade of cooks within the Bn. Chumblay rather worried. Says he will take a break & stay in C.Co.

June 8 - Moved from Oro Bay to Sanananda Pt. & took up defensive positions. 3rd Platoon is in reserve, but are doing more than the other Platoons. Five men of the 3rd are on an Observation Post on the point (Choninger, Chief, Jenkins, Zaluski & Wamsley). The rest of the Platoon to patrol Sanananda Track and Crickson Trail and all sorts of details. (25)

June 9 - Lt. Brown assigned as 3rd Platoon Leader. Pretty good guy.

June 10 - Lt. Satren, Dutra & I got lost trying to find Crickson Trail. Wandered around in the swamps & mosquitoes for 3 hrs. If I hadn't had a compass we never would have got out.

June 12 - Jap air raid during evening. Searchlights had the planes spotted and the ack ack was bunting all around them but we didn't bring any down.

We are swimming and playing on the beach about 6 hrs a day. I got a touch of jungle ear. Perkins built a boat.

June 15 - Pay Day - drew pay for April & May. I drew 41 \$

June 16 - Col. Lindstrom inspected Co. area today and chewed on Capt. Dahlstrom's butt for several hrs.

Hot Rumor that a bunch of Aussies are in Moresby, getting ready to relieve us.

am impatiently waiting to be called to O.C.S.

June 23 - Left for O.C.S. went by jeep as far as 2nd Bn. at Soputa - sure hated to leave the boys.

June 24 - went from Soputa to Dobodura air strip by jeep and flew from there to Moresby, landed about 1100 hrs. stayed all night with F.A. (14 1/6).

June 25 - went to airport but no planes out today - sort of a dry run. Stayed all night with F.A. again.

June 26 - F flew from Moresby at 1005. landed in Townsville at 1400 hrs. left Townsville at 1430 hrs. landed in Brisbane at 1800 hrs (6:00 o'clock).

an even six months in New Guinea.

Epilogue - June 28 - Passed out after storing away 3/4 qt. of Aussie whiskey. In Toowoomba, Qld. Bigtime had by all. (OVER)

Oddities of New Guinea Campaign

It was never figured out why the Japs didn't use mortar fire on us during the fighting. Lots of Jap mortars and plenty of ammunition was taken by the Americans when the Japs were finally cleaned up.

One Aussie plane, a "Whiraway" operated over ours and the Jap positions all through the campaign. It swooped so low that no one could figure out why it never got shot down. It acted as a spotter for the Aussie artillery. It was reported that the old "Whiraway" shot down a Zero on one occasion.

I can't, or no one else, will ever figure out how we held up and kept fighting when we got hardly any food, hardly any sleep, plowing thru the mud and water carrying heavy loads on native parties, sleeping in water and mud, keeping on constant alert for the Japs and the many other harrowing factors for almost a month steady.

The capacity of the men when the fighting was over was startling. One morning, I should say forenoon, **CLONINGER** stored away 15 hot cakes (we had hot cakes several times) the **CHIEF** ran Cloninger a close second. Wild **BILL RUMMEL** ate a large supper one night and then topped it off with an Aussie mess kit full of Peanut Butter and Crackers. The capacity of an Aussie mess kit is approximately $3\frac{1}{4}$ gallons.

Some of the biggest men in the company were evacuated with fever soon after the fighting started, while the little puny guys held up all the way through. **SORLIE** was a walking skeleton when he went in and in fairly good shape when the fighting ended.

On the way to Moresby, on the boat we played Bridge constantly. Most of my partners got weeded out during the campaign. First **SHERMAN** was killed, then **TAGUE** was killed. **D. DIXON** and **FRANKENFIELD** were sent out wounded and sick - Sherman and Frankfield were expert players.

Third Platoon never lost a man killed during the whole campaign, although we were in just as much action as any Platoon. The first platoon lost 6, 2nd Platoon 6, Weapons Platoon 2 and Hq. Platoon lost 1 man killed during campaign.

The Chief (smallest man in Co.) carrying a B.A.R., one of heaviest weapons in Co.

During my patrols I heard something whistling "The Last time I saw Paris". I figured it was Jap signals but later found out that it was a bird. It sounded just like some one whistling the tune.

MHS
MC 244

Harris Westerfield Collection
947th Field Artillery Battalion: Biak Island
Folder 1-7

out we returned to our gun position after most of the infantry had passed through, Tom and I were then reassigned.

After a short time Battery A was told to cover Battery C, until they were established in a new position back on the beach. Battery A would then pack up and follow. The Battalion spent that night in our new position. At the end of our first day on Biak Island, right back where we started.

William Lenzner, Btry. A, 947th F.A. Bn.

BIAK ISLAND, SCHOUTEN CHAIN- May 28, 1944- On this island there is about two inches of top soil, then coral. Two officers were digging a foxhole. Progress was slow and by late afternoon, by piling the loosened coral, they managed to get below ground level, by laying on their backs. About 9:00 PM, one said "I've got to go to the bathroom, or word to that effect". The other said "roll out of the foxhole". The first replied, "no, with all this wild firing, it would be my luck to get hit". After awhile there was tinkling sound. "what are you doing?" "I am using my helmet."

Anonymous

into the interior of the island, and to locate an Jap airstrip that had been surveyed, but never finished. Our destination was to join up with the 162nd and 186th Infantry. of the 41st Division.

That afternoon, after having found the camouflaged road and the airstrip, we met up with Col. Newman and a patrol from the 186th Infantry. It was now time to dig in for the night. We were scratching into the coral ground for foxholes, when we were suddenly ambushed. The whole area was being sprayed with machinegun fire and small mortars. Col. Newman ordered every- (a brave man)
one to stay low and disperse. At the same time he ordered men from his patrol to search in different directions for the enemy.

Both Oldham and I were crawling on our hands and knees away from what we thought was the line of fire. A burst of machinegun fire intended for us, just passed between my head and Oldham's rear end. I thought surely he had it, and he turned around expecting that I had been shot, but we both lucked out. In a short time the men returned and reported they had found the Japs and my recollection was they killed X eleven of them.

Our position was now intolerable and Col. Newman radioed the 186th Infantry saying "we were going to join up with them that same evening and that it would be after dark". We received an answer that their perimeter was already posted and that they would be alerted for us. In order to get a fix on their position, they were asked to send up a flare, and we were instructed to watch for it. We were lucky for we saw the

first one. The Colonel took a compass reading and we headed out through the jungle.

Single file through mud, water and darkness, each man staying close enough to the man in front of him, to enable him to see the small radium button pinned on his back. We were each given one by the infantry. We finally arrived close to the infantry's perimeter and were challenged by them. After the exchange of the password of the day, they were satisfied we were the Americans they were expecting. we were passed through and were escorted to the spot where they had dug in for the night. Now all we had to do was to dig our foxholes- again in coral.

The next morning Oldham radioed to our headquarters on the beach, at which time he was told the Allies were storming the beaches of Normandy, France, what a day to remember. Q JUNE P P

About this time we were watching a flight of B-25's and we could see they were anti aircraft fire from the Jap navy, which was trying to land troops. The bombers circled and on making a new approach, the bomb bay opened and they dropped their bombs. We could not see the ships or water, from the sound we could tell the bombs were finding their targets.

Our position was on the ridge above Mokmer airdrome and the plan was to descend on it at the same time our troops landed on the beach, just across the main strip. Just before we started down we were strafed by a P-38 who must have thought we were Japs. .

He made two passes at us, and I heard an order for all to shoot back on the next pass, for which I thank God never came. On the way down one of our men was killed.

X We setup an OP along side of the strip which was built up about a foot with coral. Soon we began to draw fire from the very ridge we had just left. They were firing 40 mm gun directly at us and much of it glanced off the strip immediately to our front. Between bursts of their fire we could spot smoke rising from the jungle on the ridge and then it would be our turn to direct artillery fire on them. Every now and then the Japs would come out of their caves and start shooting again. This would include mountain artillery and mortars. X I remember well when Oldham said we had just been bracketed and the next rounds would be on top of us. The rounds never came, and having spotted more smoke on the ridge we directed more fire on them. During all this fire and counterfire, we were told we were firing Division Artillery which included almost every piece on the island.

After about six days and nights the ridge looked almost bare and the infantry was directed through that area. Several days later we met up with some of the men who went through and they told us there were dead Japs all over and hardly a tree standing.

After all this shooting there was still sporadic fire from the ridge. When our party was relieved we had to leave by a landing barge and help carry on wounded infantrymen who were on stretchers. This ,

. was early morning at high tide, the Japs started shooting at us. Their rounds landed all around , no hits.

We arrived at our gun position after breakfast, but our Mess Sergeant J.O. Bennett had lots of hot cakes and coffee waiting, which proved that A Battery had just about the best cooks in the army.

For myself I know I will never forget that experience and I am sure that goes for Lieut. Runkle, Sergeant Oldham and Patterson.

William Lenzner, Btry. A, 947th F.A. Bn.

This happened on Biak Island- Our S-4, an Irishman from New York, in his usual industrious manner, was down at the Bosnek Jetty. looking for some extras for the Battalion. Pausing in his work to watch the Air Corps unload, he was accosted by an Air Corps Colonel: "Where is the air field"?, to which our friend replied, "Down the coast road in the Jap lines". "Thank you", said the Colonel, "what did you say?"

Our S-4 was down at the Quartermaster dump the next day when he was asked by a Quartermaster Lieutenant why some of his shells went Whe-Whe-Whe. Well, replied the Captain, we are required to shoot in the caves above you and they are at right angle to the guns, so when you hear our shells going X Whee-Whee, the 947th is throwing a curve.

MHS Hargis Westerfield Research Collection
MC 244 DIARY Arthur Marnick
1/1 Sananda Battle New Zealand
Jan. 9 - 1943 campaign

Definitely on our way.
Left Moseby came in one
helluva hurry. Trucked to
airstrip. Split up into
groups of 20; moved to
Douglas Transport, and be-
fore you could blink
your eyes we were
crossing Owen Stanley.
41 minutes later we landed
at Oshadua airstrip. Loaded
our rifles, hitched up our
packs, took off down
track toward Laputa and
Sanananda, and said
"Boys, this is it!" Walked
9 miles, walking 20 min.
and resting 10, and camped
for the night. I slung a
hammock; rained; slept

many a wink!
Jan. 10 - 1943
Moved on up to Laputa
and established a Bn.
perimeter. Before you
could say 'hoo', an I
Co. taking quinine shot
his pat. Accidentally,
thru the night arm. Too
many guys are jittery
and nervous; bothered
me! Set up camp,
dug shit trenches, and
hit it once, 'cause all
hell busted loose when
a BAR opened up. More
nerves; no Japs.

Jan. 11 - 1943

Improved position
and moved into a
native built hut. Now
rain - damnit!!

needs
reading

Feb. 14 '43 detail:

"Right on - ocean & mosquitoes & sand flies are terrific
(March 1 - "I'm weak from loss of blood") [from mosquitoes]

Feb. 28 - eating pan-pans (like can't sleep)

March 1 '43 - tried 1 rations (jungle rations): cereal, cocoa, potted meat,
milk (skim), lemonade powder, peanuts, candy, gum,
canned vegs & cookies. "... a gd deal for a change!"

March '43: heat rash: "medics paint us all over w/ iodine & benzaine.
Gfers some relief @ night."

March 12 '43: "Have a novel description for WAR: 'Months & months of
boredom punctuated by moments of intense fight!'"

Can hear the fixing up
towards Sanamanda.
 Aussie 25 pounders blast-
ing, rifle fire, and
what not! Our 1st. and
2nd. Rns. are up there
giving those Japs some
hell! Casualties coming
back by Blitz Buggy.
We're due to move up
shortly.

Jan. 12 - 1943

The order to move
up! Four Aussie tanks
have just preceded us.
Mud and swamp and
jungle! Lord, is it tough
going! Our point tank
✓ all over track instead of
slithering off on exci-
cling movement. Jap
and Aussie lead scream-
ing around us. Backed

up and got on right
trail. Everyone landed
two grenades. Pistolmen
turned in 45's for
rifles. Big rumour the
Japs pick up a pistol
carrier as an officer -
Bang! Bang! no officer!
Back edge of Huggins
perimeter about 18:00
hrs. and we relieve B
Co. in perimeter. Moved
in on the double. Jap
snipers having field day
firing at us. No casualties.
Our first dose of jungle
warfare and it is far
from pleasant, believe
me!

Jan. 13 - 1943

A sleepless night as
you can imagine. It

ain't fun sleeping in
 a hole in the ground -
 in six inches of water!
 About 60 grenades thrown
 by our boys during the
 night. Jap casualties ?;
 none. 15:00 hours
 and the snipers have
 opened a barrage. Ten
 minutes later my MG
 section brought one in
 the head, diving into
 a slit trench. Cassidy,
 killed in action. Damn
 their dirty hides!! etc.
 war, etc, and the
 boys are fully aware of
 it.

Jan. 14 - 1945

Quiet to an extent, in
 the morning. Have a
 sand-bagged box hole to
 sleep in now. Much

better! Co. C.O. ordered to
 attack Jap perimeter,
 14:00 hours. H. Wall
 and 3rd. platoon go out
 to do job. Assault mine
 laid from line to Co. C.P.
 They're spreading out to
 attack pill box from 3
 sides. Only one squad,
 H. Wall, do the work.
 Machine guns and snipers
 open up. Zurenski, O'Leary
 and Chlachill killed. Means,
 Milleran wounded. 4 men,
 5/sgt. Downing, Wafford, Vira
 minutes, Chilick missing
 in action. And we
 didn't even come close
 to taking Jap position!
 Infantry unsupported
 just can't do it! Estimated
 10 Japs killed by our

lads out there. Small
consultation for being
what we did. "fuck 'em!
'em! fuck 'em! Hurry,
hurry, hurry!" said
Major Hawk (R.D. Lt.
Col, from his phone in
six foot dug out. I ask
what happened! Next
day, Hawk relieved, I
hope!! Hawk! how
elaborately concealed the
Jap. shipers are. A.I.
in camouflage!

Jan. 15 - 1943

Jim ordered with
my mortars to be in
position near Fish posi-
tioner at 08:50 hours.
All set! At 09:00 hours
our heavy MG's, our light
MG's, our 50 Cal. MG's,
our 81 mortars (15 of

on our side. Our 4
men missing in action,
turned up. S/Sgt. Hanning
wounded twice, at least
okay. A relief for us,
yes indeed! 4 Japs
for Hanning. carried
wounded in on gape
behind us. Lost 38 men
X of a platoon of 40. All
4 tanks knocked out.
Still proving infantry,
even supported by tanks,
can't take these Jap
pill boxes!!

Jan. 16 - 1943

Now a cleaning up job
to do. Today we got
thru the Jap perimeter
our Co. took yesterday
and salvage all equip-
ment, burn all killed.
Most of the Jap line,

have found are fairly thin and in poor physical condition. There but here had plenty of rice and more than just plenty of ammunition.

Many documents and maps found. Sgt. Van Borg, Pvt. Black Dog, and Pfc. Pangle and 2 Went sniper hunting. Got one! A Mr.

Weller, war correspondent of Chicago Daily News, interviewed our boys for hours. Night got a line. "Look for it! I'll be waiting for you."

Come in and ..."

What in hell's the matter with me ... ?

Jan. 17 - 1943

More cleaning up to

10

do, both in our own perimeter (Huggins) and the hips. Some of the boys picked up a few souvenirs: swords, pistols, flags, Jap invasion money, and what not! How I'd like to do a little personal cleaning up. Sleet, etc, waded like mud, and fought in the same suit of fatigues since Jan. 1.

Doubt if I'll ever get my felt clean again!

More of the lads being evacuated. Dysentery, X leaver, diarrhoea, etc.

Captain Armstrong, 1st. to Bn. staff - G-3. Lt.

Peterson now commanding. Old Merrick moved up to Co. C. Officer.

MERRICK

"

Jan. 18 - 1943

More pushing up to
do. Our Co. is in Regt.
reserve, along with a
few other units, namely,
all Regt. 81 mortars.
Other Cos. are taking
and attacking Jap perimeters.
Mortars in action con-
tinuously. Pete Murphy
back to Australia - first.
Those stinking yellow
bellies killed my pal,
Will Fisk, and cut out
his heart, liver, and
right arm - TO EAT!! They
will pay and pay for
that!! Major Kelly, an
X Bn. Ex. Co., struck his
puss out where he
shouldn't have. Result:
a sniper shot 3 fingers

off his ~~left~~ hand! Be-
sides losing 3 fingers
he got 'clawed' to a
fare thee-well by Col.
X Bn.

Jan. 19 - 1943

Little doing today.

Our regiment is clean-
ing up in fine shape.
I Co. held up, tho' I
just above Fisk peri-
meter. K and A Cos.
stormed thru one and
killed a Jap colonel.
Slow but sure we're
going up Sanamunda
track. But what a
nightmare!!

Jan. 20 - 1943

An attack was scheduled
for us but it fell thru
for some reason. I Co.
attacked again. Result:

St. Olsen, a new man from the 162, was killed by MG fire. They're up against something else!

1st Lt. Wade goes in with a combat patrol.

Report: Three men and St. Wade reported killed. A tough blow for everyone to take. Six hours later Wade crawls out of the gap perimeter, evidently revived by rain. A nasty wound right thru the head. Guts and luck pulled him thru.

Jan. 21 - 1943

We're still sitting around Hugins and the Regt. C.P. cleaning up and widening the track.

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The Aussies have cleared everything behind us so the track is open. Ammunition and rations and evacuation of wounded by 'Jeeps' now. I Co. attacks again. Artillery and mortar fire supporting them. An 81 mm. shell drops chest into X F Co. C.P. Captain Dwyer (I used to play basketball against him in Hi. School) and 1st Lt. Boland (from my home town and member of 1935 football team) were killed instantly. Three more wounded including Lt. 'Butch' Leibach, my pal from Montana, (limb and blown the leg). And all on account of these low, sneaky Japs!

all our Co. officers go
on reconnaissance. We
attack with I Co. to
morrow! Shot at by Japs.
X crisscross in secun, but
not one hit.

Jan. 22 - 1943

Move up thru mud
and swamps and mangroves
to position. Night attack
order. We jump off at
10:30 leave following
barage. I Co. on the
right; L Co. on the left. Our
formation: 3rd Pl. on the
right, 2nd Pl. on the left,
Co. Hqs, then 1st Pl. in
support. Three man patrols
follow each squad preceding
assault platoons. Machine
under Bn. control to the
rear - lay barage. Our

MG's put a 10 minute
concentrated fire thru
trees to get crisscross. All
hell breaks loose at 10:20
house, artillery, mortars,
MG's, machine firing.
Artillery doesn't spread in -
Zone clear up 10 minutes.
We creep up on barage.
X One Sgt. from I Co. killed.
Last mortar shell drops
and we go! Fire from
all directions. Lost contact
with 2 leading platoons
temporarily. As I move
swamps from one tree to
another. Evidently I'm the
only one who's alive.
He fires one shot into
Co. Hqs. - a miss. 3 fast
rounds I pour into him.
One for my buddies!!
In 41 minutes its all

ever. Not one casualty
in our Co! Lady Luck a-
gain! Estimated 36 Japs
killed. We retraced our
steps, tearing down all
pill boxes. They're built,
those things! More
policing up and hunting
to do. K Co. sitting & I
cross the track killed
32 out of 33 Nips we
ran out. 31 were officers.
G Co. up the track killed
about 50 more who had
slipped out. Plenty of booty
and loot! We set up
a Co. perimeter just on
the edge of the line we'd
taken! Stink! Good,
how it did smell!! Only
2 grenades tossed during
the night. A Jap sniper

poured in a few rounds
about 03:00 hours but
hit nothing. We returned
fire so he quit. off
to sleep again. //

Jan. 23-1943

Did a bit of cleaning
up again and I took
my first bath. Perhaps
a few dead Japs in
the stream but it
was glorious bathing.
All the sweat and grime
of so many days! The
flier is hitting us. More
bays out today! We're
to move to Nova. to-
morrow and relieve the
Russies there. Good
hunting, they say. It
will be a pleasure to
leave this place - believe
me. Did I mention it?

X Lt. Lawstrom of K Co.

was killed when 3 Japs
held up their hands to
surrender. He stood up
to him, threw in and
a Jap M6 cut loose.
Now how do you like
their snake ticks?

Jan. 24-1943

Before I tell about our
Bn. moving out, let me
enlighten you how Higgins
perimeter got its name.
The 32nd Div. was the
first to move in there.
A P.C.O. of that Div. by
the name of Higgins would
be there with his Co.
and they were wiped out
except for one man, the
supply bat. Thus Higgins
first perimeter got its

absolutely the worst
I've ever anywhere.
We've oiled the swamps
but it does little good.
Mail call and 5 letters
from Jimmie, 2 from
Mam and pop. This is a
glorious feeling, tis.
Rations improving steadily.
Lots of tobacco.
X Sent more men via
the fence route. Pro-
moted more also. Day
ended with me crawling
out of my mosquito bag
X with loaded .45. While
the 'shooters' waited to
a face-the-mull, I lay
in wait for a supposed
gap. A swamp animal,
no doubt. Was I a
sucker or wasn't I?

but not critical. Now
we've got another little
debt to settle. Had 2
prisoners here at the
X time but they were
ordered to be eliminated,
which was done!! Not
exactly my idea of
warfare but orders
is orders. I think
Prisoners of War should
be treated as such.
But then,

Feb. 22 - 1943

Another new day
but not very bright
'cause Wooten was a
good friend of every-
body's. Sent a patrol to
look out those other
X gaps but no sign of
them. Mosquitoes are

7 Feb. 23-1943

More sad news this morning. Hughes died in the hospital. According to the doc, he just gave up! What an expensive grenade that one was. Never get a repeat like that in a million years! Still no sign of those remaining Japs. Company strength about 90 now. Left Australia with 182. Shot one Jap up in delta between flocks of Kumusi. Ranged in less than 81 meters and light and heavy machine guns. Had fresh fish today! What a tricky fish! A novel way of catching

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them. Find a school, toss a grenade, stun fish, wade out and pick them up.

7 Feb. 24-1943

Japs supposedly cleared but John Blum-Hong locality so the natives who had moved north to escape them are returning! 3,000 of them coming down with boats, canoes, dogs, and families. Did you ever see one man carrying all the family possessions, humping one child and carrying another? Well, I did! We've had 23 native boys working for us here and

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find myself 'boss' man.
 Built huts, bridges,
 tables, etc. They know
 little English; I know
 less native tongue.
 But I can pantomime
 good! Learned a few
 words such as 'Fuo'
 (one man come); 'Fuwu';
 (every body come); 'Ta-
 ada' (white boss man -
 me!); 'Bijari' (native
 boss man); 'Katua' (na-
 tive P.I.B. sergeant);
 'Kai' (quail). My
 motto: "No work no
 kai - kai." Worked okay,
 too! Two native women
 came up and asked me
 for their husbands. No
 argument; I gave them
 up!

Feb. 25-1943

Natives still coming
 down from Katua, and
 villages north, by the
 hundreds. What a picture
 I could paint - with a
 camera. Yelling, jabbering,
 and gibbering. One af-
 fter while our medica
 try to body patch up
 some of the losses. I
 many of them afflicted
 with. No go - too many
 of them! My native band
 want to leave and join
 their families on their
 tack south. Tomorrow
 they go! Still running
 our regular patrols
 out with an occasional
 Jap being patted. Lots
 of crocodiles in this

Komusi River so when
our boys go bathing
they stick pretty close to
shore. Shakes and
hundreds about too,
but fewer.

Feb. 28, 1943

Last day of the
shortest month. Very
little has been doing.
Company strength now
- 83. Since substituting
to atabrine, the fever
has toned down some-
what. Lost our first
officer via fever - H.
✓ W. Lee. The 1st. Evac. Hospital
at Oro Bay is rapidly
filling up, 2 beds. I
saw fellows have died
from malignant fever -
one who had been

Everyone is sure aching
to leave New Guinea
and go home. I head
the list, but I'm afraid
our job here isn't finished
yet. Most of the boys
dream of steaks and
fried pies but I'll
take the lolly pop and
dream of mom and pop
and my gun.

March 3, 1943

Have a few factual
figures to present today.
As two Regt. boys
came up today to
change the Class A
Warrant Allotment to
Class B. I cancelled
mine temporarily to
keep my pay record
straightened out. Our

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Regt. strength is now
about 900 hundred; 109
killed in action; 4 missing
in action; a little over
400 have been shipped
back to Australia (14
officers). 1st. Bn. has a
total of 160 men; 2nd,
about 400; 3rd, about
400. We couldn't do
much in our present
condition. Planes, planes,
and more planes have
been flying over going
north. Purchased a con-
voy leading toward
New Guinea.

March 4, 1943

Explaining the air
force. Of yesterday.
Heavy, medium, and light
bombers; torpedo planes,

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and lighters bombed,
strafed, and sunk 23
Jap ships (13 transports,
10 warships). Over 15,000
Japanese killed or drowned.
A major victory, I'd say.
More headed toward Ilo.
Good work, you sky birds!
Silver stars (D.S.M.) have
been awarded men of
our regiment. Many
really earned them but
many didn't and in the
eyes of this company,
Calzared should investi-
gate. It's a farce, really!

March 7, 1943

First Bn., 162, has
been by-passing us
regularly. They're headed
for Mindanao Bay and
will establish strong-