

Iwo

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1945: Marine Corps Fights Its 'Most Savage' Battle Ever



Of all the storied battlefields on which the U.S. Marine Corps has fought in its long, proud and splendid history, none can compare with Iwo Jima. The Halls of Montezuma and the Shores of Tripoli and all of the other places they went in response to the call "Send in the Marines" were lesser engagements (but don't tell it to the Marines who were there).

As they moved across the Central and South Pacific, island by island, invasion by invasion, the Marines had learned to fight a determined enemy, increasingly protected by fortified positions and armed with a will to fight to annihilation.

Iwo Jima, eight square miles of heavily fortified volcanic rock and ash, was defended by about 21,000 Japanese veterans of China and Manchuria. There were on that small patch of land no less than 730 separate strong points, some at the southern tip of the island around Mount Suribachi and more in the high ground at the wide northern end of the island.

The price paid by the Marines V Amphibious Corps was heavy. More than 5,600 Marines lost their lives and 890 sailors died. Another 16,500 Marines were wounded, as were 1,900 sailors. Of the 21,000 Japanese defenders, 216 survived.

There were some who said the price was too high, but none of them were Marines. To a man, Marines who were at Iwo say a bond was forged that has lasted to this day.

The most graceless of Iwo's denigrators was William Randolph Hearst, who used his flagship newspaper, the San Francisco *Examiner*, to excoriate the Marines and say that Army Gen. Douglas MacArthur would have spent less blood and should be elevated to supreme commander in the Pacific.

More than 100 off-duty Marines in San Francisco staged their own invasion of the Hearst Building at Third and Market Streets and demanded an apology.

*Marines of E Company, 28th Marines, lower
the first flag raised over Mount Suribachi.*



Iwo Jima Was Mostly Infantrymen

A Few Marines Recall Bitter Fight with Japs

This is an infantry story. It's from a book written by Allen R. Matthews, newspaper reporter who happened to be a Marine private on 19 February 1945. His book, *The Assault*, is about Iwo Jima. It was published in 1947, while the memory was still fresh and before the story got contaminated by Great Issues or The Message.

But the infantry story – it's not much different from things that happened in other places or in other wars because the infantry is always there. It is said that the only way to really tell who wins a war is to check where the infantry is standing when the shooting stops.

Every Marine is an infantryman and Matthews was a Marine. Here's a story about him on the beach at Iwo Jima.

He was slogging through the soft but thick sand that tugged at his legs, trying to find faces he recognized so he'd know he was in the right place with his outfit, which was a squad. The squad, it should be noted, is the infantryman's world, and the platoon is his universe.

Matthews saw someone from his squad move out of a hole and run forward, so he ran to the man's hole and dove in. Soon he had company when two others jumped in with him. He recognized them as being from his company headquarters, the first sergeant and a gunnery sergeant. They were old hands and had been in several invasions which Matthews had not. But they were all very young – promotion came rapidly through "attrition."

"Where's your squad, Matthews?" asked the first sergeant.

"Right up there."

"Why aren't you with them?"

The explanation that he was in a hole just vacated by a member of his squad was plenty good, and then some tanks showed up. Tanks are a mixed blessing because despite their many virtues nothing draws fire like a tank.

"And the ground about us rocked and rolled and the air turned black and flamed and the sand cascaded down the

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Once at sea, the Marines were told their next stop would be Iwo Jima. Here, members of the 4th Marines Division are briefed on the task ahead.



On other ships of the landing force, Marines attended to more prosaic matters, such as doing laundry, cleaning rifles, shooting the breeze and getting a tan.



Hitting the beach at Iwo Jima, the Marines found sand like they had never seen. A mixture of volcanic ash and tiny particles of grit, it flowed around their feet, making running impossible, and would not support even tracked vehicles.



As a result, units found themselves pinned down at water's edge, bunched together under withering small arms and mortar fire. They had to move.



The 28th Marines begin moving off of Red Beach 1.

Worse than Saipan? Marine on the Beach Compares Invasions

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side of our crater..." Matthews wrote.

"God damn those tanks anyway," the gunnery sergeant said. "This is the hottest beach I ever saw."

"You mean it's worse than Saipan?" Matthews asked.

"I think so. Don't you top?" the gunny asked the first sergeant, who said nothing so the gunnery sergeant continued. He explained that at Saipan Marines could move off the beach and find cover, "But here everything is beach and you just can't get off it, and there's damn little cover."

That's the infantry story. Everything was beach at Iwo Jima, and the gunny could have added that there was no place for the enemy to retreat to, that for the most part the enemy couldn't be seen because he was underground and the beach had a forbidding little mountain at one end and a lot of ravines at the other. And the Japs had prepared defensive positions everywhere. Three infantry guys talking shop.



The story of The Flag Raising is well known, as is that of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz saying "uncommon valor was a common virtue." Most readers know that when the flag went up on Mount Suribachi, Navy Secretary James V. Forrestal, who was coming ashore with Marine General Holland M. Smith, turned to the general and said "Holland, the raising of that flag ... means a Marine Corps for the next 500 years." General Smith said later that "Iwo Jima was the most savage and the most costly battle in the history of the Marine Corps."

All this and more is well known, and none of it says much about how Iwo Jima was wrested from a dug in, determined defender.

Iwo Jima had been "softened up" by incessant air raids for more than six months. Once the Army Air Force had bases in the Marianas, the island was bombed with increasing frequency to crater the runways of the its airfield from which Jap planes attacked American planes. After the Boeing B-29s arrived at

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Some didn't make it off the beach. This Marine is dead, but threatens the enemy yet with fixed bayonet.



Off the beach — on the “terrace” as it was called — the footing was better. This flame thrower man kicks up gravel as he dashes for a shell hole.

Six Months' Bombing Fails to Soften Island's Underground Defenses

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Saipan in October 1944, the Japanese began attacking airfields there, eventually destroying 11 Superfortresses and damaging six others. The attackers had been staged through Iwo Jima, so the bombing of that island was stepped up.

B-24s from the Marianas were assigned the job of neutralizing Iwo Jima and also of interfering as much as possible with enemy shipping, because it was sensed that the Japs were reinforcing the place and it was becoming apparent that the island would be needed to provide a landing spot for B-29s damaged in their raids over Japan proper.

The Japanese were indeed reinforcing — and fortifying — Iwo Jima. Until the Americans had taken the Marshall Islands in February 1944, Iwo had consisted of a single airstrip and a garrison of about 1,500 troops. After the fall of the Marianas, Tokyo correctly concluded that Iwo Jima would be the next American target. Command was given to Lieutenant General Tadamichi Kuribayashi, who reported directly to General Hideki Tojo in Japan.

Because the fall of the Marianas had freed up Jap resources, and what Kuribayashi found when he arrived in June 1944, those resources would be put to work at Iwo. The island was nearly barren, about 8 square miles of sand and rock. A 550-foot-high volcanic “mountain” stood at one end and was separated from a rocky plateau about 300 feet high at the other by a fairly level, sandy saddle of land. There was scarce greenery, save for fringes of green on Mount Suribachi and a small oak woods at the other end of the island. Residents, most of whom lived in the village of Motoyama, had planted small plots of sugar cane and bean vines. At the wide end of Iwo, opposite from Suribachi, sulphur bubbled to the surface from a second volcano. There was, in Motoyama, a small sugar refinery and a sulphur processing facility. The name, *Iwo Jima*, means Sulphur Island.

Kuribayashi set to work. He improved Motoyama airfield and added another airstrip, but he realized that the saddle of land would be untenable in the face of

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Jap Defenses Began At the Water's Edge

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bombardment and an invasion. It was his intent to give up the beaches and fight from networks of impregnable defenses dug into Suribachi and the rocky plateau. The Imperial Japanese Navy, however, would not give up the beaches, so a series of concrete pillboxes were built to provide fire against every inch of shoreline. There would also be naval coast defense guns of 120 and 155 millimeters (4.7 and 6.1 inches) enfilading the beaches. Behind this first line, would be more pillboxes, interconnected with underground tunnels.

Beneath the surface of Suribachi, an extensive labyrinth of tunnels connected firing points with living quarters for troops, workshops for repair of weapons, kitchens, storerooms and more, and at the top of the mountain, observation posts overlooking the entire island were connected to the rest by telephone. At the other end of the island, which was crisscrossed by ravines, it was more of the same, augmented by revetments for tanks. At this end of the island, the underground facilities were sometimes five levels deep. On the faces of the ravines there were concrete emplacements with embrasures for firing machine guns and rifles. There were man-made caves into the mouths of which the enemy could move artillery or mortars, fire a mission and withdraw.

A main line of defense was constructed across the saddle, consisting of dug-in positions for artillery, mortars, machine guns and infantry light weapons. These were interconnected by underground tunnels, some as deep as thirty feet underground, and they were connected with a second line of defense.

The six months of air bombardment did little to disturb these defenses and three days' shelling by the U.S. Navy did little but raise the dust. General Smith had asked for eight days, but there is no evidence that twice that would have made life any easier for the invading Marine infantry.

What the bombs and shells did do was create holes, many of them six feet deep and twelve feet across, and these were welcome refuges for the Marine

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How soft were the sands of Iwo Jima? Look at the footprints. And this Jeep is mired so deeply, its oil pan is buried in the sand.



Here a Marine moves forward on the somewhat surer footing afforded by the wretched vegetation growing a hundred yards inland.



Here a Marine, halfway up Mount Suribachi, provides covering fire for men moving forward ahead of him. When they hit the dirt, he'll move up.

Naval Bombardment Provided Marines With Pre-fab Foxholes

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infantrymen. "So we're moving up, trying to get a better position. I took a step and I hear 'ping.' 'Ping.' The sand is jumping. What the hell was that? 'Ping.' 'Hey, Schribert, they're shooting at ya!' Then you run like hell. And that's when I jumped in that big Navy shell hole...." Pfc Fred Schribert remembered for Lynn Kessler who gathered the stories of 45 Iwo veterans for his book *Never in Doubt*. More infantry stories.

The shelling failed to knock out a lot of the pillboxes that the Jap navy had built just inland from the beach and many were bypassed unseen by the Marines. It wasn't long before the Americans realized they were taking fire from the rear as well and from everywhere else on the small island.

Sergeant Grady Gallant was a squad leader in charge of a 37-mm gun and crew. He is the sergeant in his tale, which was included in *The United States Marine Corps in World War II*, compiled and edited by S. E. Smith.

The sergeant and his corporal were attempting to dig in after advancing a ways across the beach. Digging in is hard when you're lying down, pressed against the ground, and Iwo's sandy dirt didn't make it easier. Its granules were round, not jagged, and the stuff kept sliding back down. "This is a hell of a place," the sergeant said. "Just nothin'." They were looking for their outfit.

The corporal called his attention to some Marines who were pressed up against a bank. "Twelve guys," the corporal said. "They act like they're down against mortar fire, but I don't see none." He added "Must be hot up there." The sergeant suggested the Marines were "just catchin' their breath." The two shared a cigarette and the corporal asked "Why don't we get the dope from them? They ought to know where the line is." The sergeant agreed. The two finished the cigarette and took off, sprinting low across the beach and diving into the bank with the twelve others.

None of the twelve welcomed the newcomers – in fact, no one moved or spoke. "You know something?" the cor-

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Yes, it is the second flag, and much is made of that by some unhappy people. But it is also the most famous news photograph in history.



As the battle moved north to Iwo Jima's plateau, artillery was used to pound Jap positions. Here a forward observer attempts to reconcile his map to the terrain.

'These Guys is all Dead' 'The Hell they Are?'

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poral asked in a low, disturbed tone. "These guys is all dead."

"The hell they are?" The sergeant was incredulous. But the twelve Marines lay as they had positioned themselves, and their backs were stitched with the evidence of small-bore automatic fire. "The Japs let 'em pass," the sergeant said, "then shot the hell out of 'em." The corporal's voice was low and urgent. "An' you know what? They...."

"Yeah," the sergeant said. Yeah.... And the two sprinted back to their original spot, and they were exhausted by the round trip and still didn't know where the line was.



Corporal Richard Wheeler was in the 3rd platoon of E Company, 2nd Battalion, 28th Marines. He took 20 years to write his book, *The Bloody Battle for Suribachi*. It was E of the 28th that planted the flag, and then planted The Flag on Suribachi.

The 1st Battalion had landed ahead of Wheeler's outfit and now he and the rest of the 2nd were pushing in the direction of Suribachi to occupy ground taken by the 1st. The beach may have been crossed, but it had not been secured. Rapid bursts of machine gun fire sent Wheeler and another Marine sprawling into a shallow depression, but it was too shallow so they dashed to a small shell hole and crouched in its protection. From another hole they heard their platoon leader, Lt. Greely Wells call out. "I'm gonna leave my pack and gas mask here, and you had better do the same. We'll come back for the stuff later, but right now we've got to be able to move." One thing Wells didn't leave was his map case. It held an American flag – the small one.

Relieved of twenty or thirty pounds, the Marines were able to move faster in the treacherous Iwo sand.

"All right, let's go," Wells called. The men held their breath as they stood, but the machine gun was silent. Wheeler's platoon moved forward toward some scrubwood that lay between them and the base of Suribachi, but came upon a sandy mound with a black aperture. If it remained silent, Wheeler said, it would

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Marine riflemen flushing out Jap defenders from the caves and tunnels at the north end of the island. When rifle fire didn't work, hand grenades often did.



A light .30 machine gun and crew. There is a lot of firepower here, with a Browning automatic rifle (BAR), at least one M-1 and several carbines.



And speaking of firepower, these Marines have built a mountain of brass firing their water-cooled .30 cal. machine gun.



Waiting for Three-A? It was the job of a tank crew to make repairs and this tank has already backed off a tread broken by a mine. Now for the heavy lifting. The boards on the side of the tank are protection against magnetic "sticky" bombs.



The 60 mm. mortar was the rifle company's artillery. The little bombs it hurled were only two and a third inches across, but you could lob them at the enemy as fast as you could drop them down the barrel.

'The Black Aperture Began to Spit Fire'

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be presumed to have been reduced. It hadn't been.

"Then the black aperture began to spurt fire," Wheeler wrote, "and machine gun bullets once more whipped among us. We lunged for cover.... Again all of us somehow escaped being hit." He said those, including himself, who were seeing their first combat suddenly knew what being pinned down by a machine gun meant. It looked as though taking care of the pillbox would be up to Wheeler's platoon, maybe his squad. Then heavier fire attracted his attention to its target, a column of Sherman tanks. The machine gun emplacement was reduced by 75 mm fire.

The 2nd Battalion pushed on to relieve the 1st and shortly reached the scrubwood, where it found to its pleasure an extensive network of trenches and antitank ditches, taken from the enemy. There were a lot of wounded Marines awaiting evacuation, but very few dead Japs anywhere – the enemy pulled its dead back into its holes. Wheeler said this was disconcerting, because it gave the impression that the losses were pretty one-sided.

Wheeler's outfit had been lucky since moving off the beach. Only two Marines had been injured on the beach and none had been hit since. Now, as they moved into their new position, they wondered if their luck would hold. As they hunkered down for the night, the men of E of the 28th "knew" there would be a Jap counterattack. Under a sky eerily illuminated by Navy star shells, with pickets posted and one man in every hole on watch, they waited, but there wasn't a counterattack. A password based on American cars was used – a Marine might shout "Ford" and the correct response would be the name of any other American car.

The Japs came, but one at a time, and came creeping down the trench. BAR man Ed Kurelik heard a noise and called "Studebaker." The response was in Japanese, followed by an explosion among Wheeler's squad. Kurelik was hit in the thigh and foot, probably causing a fracture, and another man was lightly scratched. Kurelik was pissed. "I hollered 'Studebaker' and then that Jap

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Marine artillery played a big role in getting the Japs out of their caves, or sealing them inside. But the guns had to be manhandled across the island because vehicles were unable to tow them.



Aid stations were where you found them, within range of enemy small arms and mortar fire. Here, at a station near the beach, wounded await evacuation.

Modest Flame Thrower Operator Had Little To Say About Himself

t'rew a hand grenade," he complained to a corpsman. The implication was, the Jap hadn't fought fair – he should have called back "Mitsubishi."



Like a lot of Marines Kessler talked to for his book *Never in Doubt*, Cpl. Charles W. Lindberg didn't have a lot to say about himself. He was a flame thrower operator in E Company of the 28th Marines, the same outfit as Wheeler, who wrote *The Bloody Battle for Suribachi*. He had been an auto transporter driver delivering new cars from Detroit to Spokane, and when the Japs attacked Pearl Harbor he was in the Washington city. There would be no new cars to transport, so on 8 January 1942 Lindberg signed up for a four-year hitch as a United States Marine.

He remembered crossing the beach to the base of Suribachi as "very rough," but said there was no resistance going up the mountain. He was one of the men who raised the first flag and told of hearing the troops below start to cheer and ships' whistles sounding off-shore. "It was a great patriotic feeling," he said, "this chill that runs through you." But it hadn't been that easy.

Secretary of the Navy John L. Sullivan, in his citation for Lindberg's Silver Star, painted a picture of a more active Marine:

"Repeatedly exposing himself to hostile grenades and machine gun fire in order that he might reach and neutralize enemy pillboxes at the base of Mount Suribachi, Corporal Lindberg courageously approached within ten of fifteen yards of the emplacements before discharging his weapon, thereby assuring the annihilation of the enemy...."

And about the lack of resistance on the mountain, Sullivan had this to offer: "As a member of the first combat patrol to scale Mount Suribachi, he courageously carried his flame thrower up the steep slopes and assisted in destroying the occupants of the many caves found in the rim of the volcano, some of which contained as many as seventy Japanese." The secretary noted that Lindberg was wounded as "he fearlessly exposed him-

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'I Served with the Finest And Feel Proud Every Day I Can Say That'

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self to accurate enemy fire," something the Marine called his "million dollar wound."

What Lindberg does remember is "My feeling of being a Marine is I served with the finest, and I feel proud every day that I can tell somebody that."



Then there was Tony Stein, Cpl. Anthony Stein of Dayton, Ohio, 24 years old, a tool and die machinist in civilian life. Tony had been a Golden Gloves boxer, set pins in a bowling alley and pulled a stint working a shovel for the Civilian Conservation Corps before becoming a machinist.

Tony had been at Guadalcanal, Bougainville, Vella Lavella. He had gone home in July 1944, married his sweetheart, and headed back to the South Pacific after a three-day honeymoon. Now, Stein was in the Fifth Marine Division -- A Company, 1st Battalion, 28th Marines. Bits and parts of his story pop up in a lot of books about Iwo, including Richard F. Newcomb's 1965 book with the simple title *Iwo Jima*.

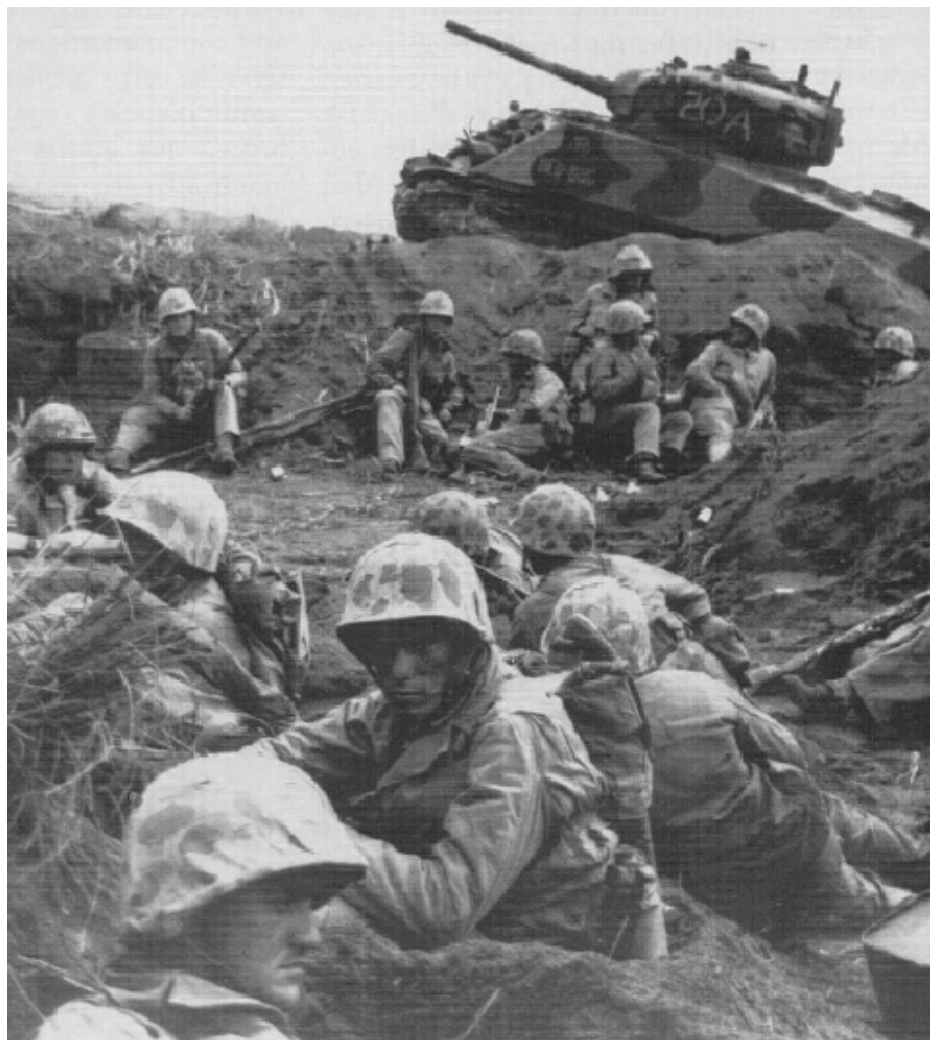
On one of the islands where Tony had soldiered, he had come across a downed U.S. Navy fighter plane. From one of its wings, he had taken a light weight .30 cal. air-cooled machine gun, which he took apart and put in his pack. When afforded the time, he fiddled with it, and turned it into a hand carried, belt fed, personal weapon he called his "stinger." It had quite a sting, and it burned up ammo fast.

When the 28th hit Green Beach at Iwo Jima, the landing spot closest to Mount Suribachi, the 1st Battalion was to drive straight across the island with the 2nd Battalion following part way and then turning toward the volcano. It wasn't long before A Company's commander, Captain Aaron G. Wilkins was the only company commander left in his battalion. When A Company moved out, Tony Stein was in the lead, and he headed right for a Jap pillbox. With his stinger, he suppressed the Jap fire and a demolitions team consisting of Sergeant

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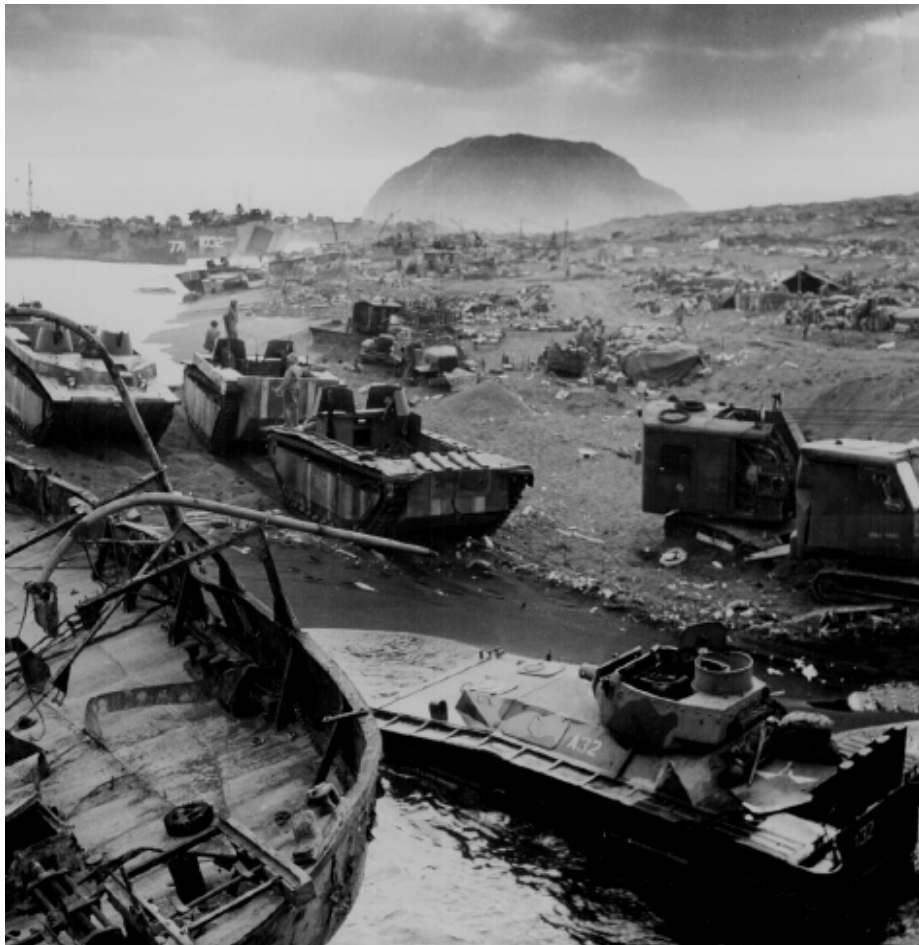
A BAR man takes aim, with a rifleman behind him. Because of its accuracy and firepower, the Browning automatic rifle was a favorite with the troops, but it weighed 23 pounds to the M-1's 10 pounds.



A platoon of Marines, momentarily out of the line, takes a break under guard of a tank. A mixed blessing, tanks drew fire.



A flame thrower operator finds time to light his pipe (with a match). The mortality among these Marine arsonists was very high, as the Japs tried desperately to keep them away from their emplacements.



Nobody said to police up the battlefield. Isn't that why the Army's coming?

Bareheaded, Barefooted, Stein Dashes to Beach With Wounded Marines

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Merritt M. Savage and Corporal Frederick J. Talbert blew up the emplacement. That worked so well, they did it all morning

In the first hour of the advance, Stein personally slew at least 20 Japs, then he ran out of ammo. We have seen how hard it was to run or even walk in the sandy volcanic ash of Iwo, so Stein took off his shoes. Then he took off his helmet. He grabbed a wounded Marine and hustled him off to the beach, grabbed as many ammo boxes as he could carry and ran back to his outfit. He made that round trip eight times that day, each time getting a wounded man to safety. His stinger was shot out of his hands twice, but at the end of the day he was still shooting Japs with it. As his mother Rose often said, "He's a tough one, that Tony." On Wednesday evening, D + 2, Tony got hit in the shoulder by shrapnel and was told to hustle himself to the beach for evacuation. He was back in the line by Saturday.

On 1 March, D + 10, the 28th was at the other end of the island, on the western side of the fat part. The 1st and 2nd Battalions had taken Hill 362A and were faced with an 80-foot cliff leading into a ravine full of Jap riflemen in tunnels and caves. The only way to the other side was to go around on the shoulders, which were certain to be covered by every sort of fire the Japs had, and crawling with snipers. A Company's Captain Wilkins called for volunteers and Tony Stein responded.

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About the Photographs That Appear on these Pages

The photographs that accompany these vignettes from the invasion of Iwo Jima were taken from many sources, but all so far as we know are official Marine Corps photos and are either in the Department of Defense collection or the Marine Corps Historical collection.

The photograph of the boarded up tank is from the collection of Col. William P. McCahill. Identical photos found in different places occasionally credit different sources.

Sand Crabs Spawn Fear Of Creeping Japanese Feeling for Warm Bodies

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Wilkins led a 20 man patrol onto the shoulder to clear out the snipers. Only seven Marines returned, and neither Wilkins nor Stein was among them. And the Japs still held the ridges. The fight raged on all day, and when night fell, the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 28th still had hill 362A, and no more.

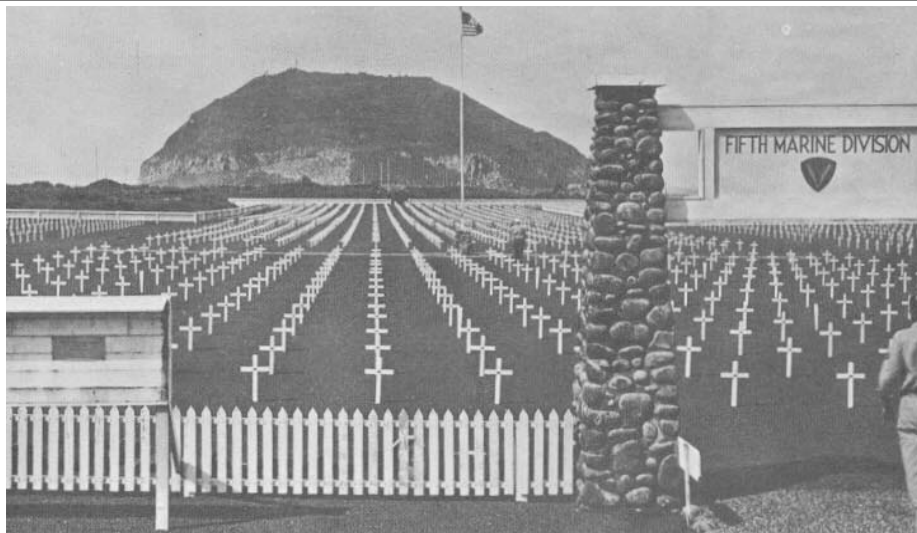
Tony Stein was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his conspicuous gallantry on D-Day. D + 10 made it posthumous.



Pharmacist's Mate Second Class Stanley E. Drabowski had applied to the Hospital Corps right out of boot camp, because he thought he was interested in medicine. After training, he was assigned to a naval hospital where he was "always gowned, masked and rubber-gloved," treating tuberculosis and other diseases. He decided medicine was not for him and asked his chief if he could do something about it. The chief was happy to comply, and Drabowski found himself assigned to the Fleet Marine Force as a corpsman. When he went overseas, his medical detachment was assigned to the 1st Battalion of the 28th Marines, and he landed at Green Beach on Iwo with that unit.

Drabowski was no longer gowned, masked and rubber-gloved. He was wearing Marine dungarees, was burdened with medical kits suspended from a shoulder yoke and he carried a carbine and a .45. Armed corpsmen? Drabowski explained the lesson learned at Guadalcanal, where corpsmen had red crosses in white circles painted on their helmets and wore red crosses on white brassards on their arms. Those red crosses were targets for the Japanese.

Drabowski described his aid station on Iwo's beach. "We chose the deepest shell hole we could find and started taking care of the severely wounded as they were brought in." That was it. The battalion aid station was within crawling distance of the front line and stretcher bearers were under constant fire. But as the Marines move forward, the medics move right with them.



"On the third of March (D + 12) I was administering a unit of serum albumen to a very severely wounded Marine in a shellhole, where we had some semblance of safety. I was about six inches above ground with my hand holding the bottle, which is a bit smaller than a Coke can. I caught a piece of hot shrapnel which shattered the bottle and almost took the tip of my finger off. The shock of all that flipped me over while at the same time I lost my helmet and another chunk of shrapnel grazed my scalp." Neither wound put him out of commission "And I just continued my duties." Later, he was showered with a blast from a phosphorous round and hit on the knee.

"I did have the latter wound attended by a surgeon back on the beach," Drabowski admits, but "These were my only encounters with wounds." His own wounds, that is.



Many Marines interviewed long after their ordeal on Iwo Jima were loath to remember the horrible details, but they all seemed to remember moments of humor, and it seems to be that the American fighting man is the only one blessed with that ability.

Among the scariest things at night were sand crabs. Sand crabs would move unseen through a foxhole at night and the Marine occupants would feel them. A rumor soon spread that Japs would sneak into the Marines' positions and actually feel around for warm bodies before wasting grenades.

One Marine tells of trying to sleep when he saw a hand appear over the edge of his hole. It had to be a Japanese hand, so he went "Psst!" to get the attention of the man on watch, but his mouth

was so dry he couldn't go "Psst!" loud enough. The hand moved a little to the right and then to the left and drove the Marine nuts. So he rolled on his back, put his M-1 to his shoulder and shot the hand. He splattered sand crab all over the sentry and another Marine and caught hell for it.

One night, a Marine was bitten by a sand crab. He grabbed it and threw it out of his foxhole, but it went into another hole with Marines in it, landing with an audible "plop." "GRENADE!" came the cry from the hole and three Marines bailed out and flattened themselves against the sand. When there was no explosion, one of the three bravely went back into the foxhole to feel for the grenade and throw it back against the Japs. He found the sand crab.

"Who the hell threw this in our hole," he shouted. "I'll shoot the son of a bitch." He might have at the moment, but a little later the Marine who was bit by the sand crab heard soft laughter from the other foxhole. **M:H**

How to Get in Touch

Mission: History has been asked to provide an address for reader communications. E-mail may be sent to this address:

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Submissions are not encouraged because of constraints on the time available for editing. If such are sent, they should be sent as e-mail attachments in Microsoft Word 6.0 or as type-written copy, double-spaced, accompanied by a 3½-inch diskette containing the submission in Microsoft Word 6.0 for Windows.

Quite welcome are suggestions of events for coverage. Please offer suggestions two months ahead of the anniversary of an event.