



9-1998

164th Infantry News: September 1998

164th Infantry Association

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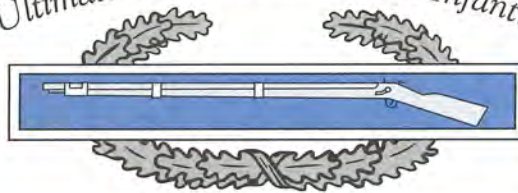
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The Ultimate Weapon the Combat Infantryman



THE 164TH INFANTRY NEWS

Vol. 38 · No. 6

September 1, 1998

Guadalcanal

(Excerpts taken from the book *Orchids In The Mud* : Edited by Robert C. Muehrcke)



Orchids In The Mud, the record of the 132nd Infantry Regiment, edited by Robert C. Mueherke.

GUADALCANAL AND THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

The Solomon Archipelago named after the King of Kings, lie in the Pacific Ocean between longitude 154 and 163 east, and between latitude 5 and 12 south. It is due east of Papua, New Guinea, northeast of Australia and northwest of the triangle formed by Fiji, New Caledonia, and the New Hebrides.

The Solomon Islands are a parallel chain of coral capped isles extending for 600 miles. Each row of islands is separated from the other by a wide, long passage named in World War II "The Slot." Geologically these islands are described as old coral deposits lying on an underwater mountain range, which was thrust above the surface by long past volcanic actions.

The Islands of Buka and Bougainville form the northwestern tip. The Solomon Islands extend southeast from Buka, 565 miles to the most southern end of the island, San Cristobal. Besides Bougainville there are six large islands, Choiseul, Santa Isabel, and Malaita which form the northeastern chain of the "slot." The New Georgia group, and Guadalcanal, are at the southern end of the southwestern chain. Florida, and the smaller islands, Tulagi, Gavutu and Tanambogo lie just north of Guadalcanal.

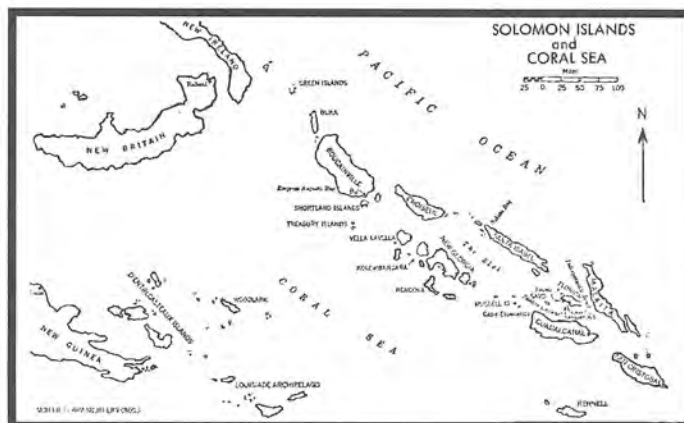
(continued on page 8)

OFF TO GUADALCANAL

August 8, 1942 - the 1st Marine Division landed on Guadalcanal, Solomon Island. In August and September the Japanese stepped up their efforts to remove the Marines. Reports of the Guadalcanal battle began coming into the news in New Caledonia along with a number of Marine casualties. A Marine Major Bailey was in New Caledonia recovering from wounds. Bailey gave several lectures to the 164th about fighting the Japanese. Bailey then returned to Guadalcanal and was KIA.

There was deep concern on the part of the Top Brass that the US might lose Guadalcanal. The worry of defeat reached the White House in Washington, DC. President Roosevelt instructed General George C. Marshall to send all possible aide to the Marines on Guadalcanal.

October 5, 1942 the 164th Infantry received orders to proceed to Numea, New Caledonia to board the Navy Cruise Ship the USS McClawley to proceed to Guadalcanal to re-enforce the 1st Marine Division. The USS McClawley set sail October 9, 1942 and arrived on October 13, 1942. The days following have been forever burned into the memories of the 164th Infantry. The source of the rest of this story credited to



LETTERS



To The Editor:

Dear Mr. Wagner,

My husband, Marvin E. Griffin, passed away February 3, 1998. He loved the 164th Infantry & Americal Division and the people he served with in WWII. I want the flag that I purchased to display in his niche in the crematorium.

Emma "Rusty" Griffin (wife)
3550 Dickson Drive
Santa Maria, CA 93445

Wally,

Check enclosed for registration plus \$10.00 for raffle tickets. See you in Bismarck.

Regards,
Al Wiest
4924 Carole Drive NE
Olympia, WA 98506

Dear Reunion Committee,

We will not be attending the 164th reunion in October due to too many health problems. Enclosed is \$10.00 for raffle tickets. Greetings to all.

William Pautzke
3rd Bn. Medics

Dear Sirs,

Please find enclosed a check in the amount of \$10.00 to cover the cost of subscribing to the 164th Infantry News.

My father, Edward C. Anens, was in D Company from Rugby, North Dakota. I am interested in obtaining information of those years he served in the military.

Recently I wrote to Bernie Wagner and he sent some information to me, one of which was the June 1, 1998 - "The 164th Infantry News." I mention this so you are aware of me having received the most recent publication.

Sincerely, Paulette (Anens) Wagner
820 4th Street #214
Havre, MT 5901-3767

I am enclosing the ticket stubs. Sorry I will not be able to attend the reunion.

I seem to be having leg problems so don't get around very well. Hope the reunion goes well.

Sincerely,
Anton Burchhard
407 3rd Street SW
Towner, ND 58788

Dear Bernie & All,

Hope your reunion goes great! The best to all of you.

We are okay was up in North Dakota and Minnesota in July and August for a month. Seen everyone, had our usual Railway Mail Clerk Reunion, the ranks are getting smaller, as with all units.

I had a 4-way bypass last December. Getting along real good. I can mass everything, but it seems to take a lot longer.

Take care, will be thinking of you.

Don Oster
Mesa, AZ

Reunion Committee,

Enclosed find a check for \$10.00 for a tickets for the 164th Raffle.

As you perhaps know, Joe passed away April 17th - but as his wife I want to keep in contact with the 164th Association.

Please advise me if there are dues to pay or what is needed - Joe was very proud of the 164th and all his buddies and friends. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Carmen Burgad
PO Box 297
Napoleon, ND 58561-0297

Dear Bernie,

Please find the obituary of Commander Harold Larson of Company "C."

Also find \$10.00 check for the raffle tickets. I have missed a couple of reunions but am hopeful of making this.

Clarence Blecha
4582 Belmont Rd
Grand Forks, ND 58201-7916

Sir,

Please reserve a 164th Regimental flag for me - I plan to come to the reunion in October and will pick it up.

Doris M. Stellm
Drayton, ND

Dear Editor,

I have moved so I'm sending you my old address and my new address. My new address is 3102 N I9th Street, Coeur D Alene, ID 83814-2361.

I'm still going at 82 Osteoarthritis of the spine and almost blind. I fought with Company E from Wiliston on Guadacanal. A BAR Gunner.

Hi to all my friends and commander.

As Ever,
Ray Huseby
Coeur D Alene, ID

P.S. I believe I sent a check for my dues and paper.

Dear Bernie,

Best wishes to you and all the wonderful 164th vets. that will gather for the 53rd reunion. If I should be so lucky as to win, please donate the prize to whatever cause you see most in need. Kindest regards.

P. S. Keep your knife sharp and the wood chips flying.
Bob Alin
867 oak Street
West Fargo, ND 58078

Enclosing a check of \$20.00 for the 3 raffle tickets and 5 chances on the door prizes. Not sure at this time if we will make it to the reunion. Have a good one!

Mary & Clayton Kingston
201 Westwood
Union, WA 98590-9714

Ben Kemp,

Send me 5 chances \$10.00 for the door prize. Please send me a bill for the two 164th Regimental flags. Sorry I won't be at the reunion this year.

Norma M. Kane
7570 Speedway Blvd
Box 447
Tuscon, AZ 85710-8819

Send me 5 chances on the door prize \$10.00, can't make the reunion this year. Have a good time. Mail me the 164th Regimental flag.

Wallace Starkenberg
2000 Snowden Circle
Long Beach, CA 90815-3343

Dear Bernie,

I regret to say that due to health reasons, I will not attend the reunion. However, find my check for raffle tickets. Have fun for me.

Sincerely,
Otto E. Heath
From "E" Co. & "A" Co.
2nd Bn. Supply Officer

Dear Wally,

I will not be able to attend. Please find enclosed checks for \$30.00, which I hope, will cover my dues for next year and raffle tickets.

Sincerely,
"Bernie" Minnehan
Company I
2129 Hemlock Ave.
Lewiston, ID 83501-6193

I am enclosing \$10.00 for subscription to your newsletter. I was in the service with Tank Company in Harvey, North Dakota. I have been meaning to join the state association for a long time, but always seem to forget. Please let me know how much dues are. Thank you.

John Cheller
317 Adames Circle
Harvey, ND 58341-1112

Dear Ben Kemp,

Please reserve a miniature 164th Regimental Flag for me. I hope to be at the reunion in October. Thank you.

Anton J. Stum
101 Clay Street
Vallejo, CA 94591-5503

Ben,

Send me a 164th flag when available. Also why not list all other items available relative to the 164th such as crests, books, writings, etc. and contacts, if not you. These items will go on when we are history. Thanks.

R. G. McLester
1283 Ledsure World
Mesa, AZ 82206-3006

Dear Ben,

Enclosed is my check for \$20.00 for a miniature 164th Regimental flag. I know the money is unnecessary, but here it is. Thank you. It will be an honor to place it in my den.

Sincerely,
Bill Amos
7400 Crestway #621
San Antonio, TX 78239



(Photo credit - Bill Johnson, Jamestown N.D.)

Motor crew of the 164th Infantry prepare to fire on the Numa, Numa Trail - Bougainville. Note living quarters on left. Any recognize crew members?

Dear Bernie Wagner,

I was pleased to receive notice of the reunion of the 164th Infantry Association, but will not be able to attend. Over the years I have had contact with only one person Dave Stewart, who now lives in Tucson, Arizona. Have a good time. Please give my very best to Ken Shaver.

Sincerely,
Carl Whitman

Dear Ben,

I am taking this opportunity to thank you for all the materials you sent me on the 164th. I appreciate it very much. It was very interesting to find out so much about the unit that I was proud to serve in overseas. I didn't really get to know everyone in our platoon or squad (60 - mm Mortar Squad) as I joined the unit the 19 May 1945 on Mindanao at the Del Monte-airstrips. After a month there we went to Cebu to join the rest of the regiment. Just as we had started our training, I was one of those that were wounded by a land mine that had exploded near our area on 3 July 1945. I recuperated at the 44 General Hospital on Leyte (White Berch). After the bomb, I got back to Cebu City and came with the rear echelon to Yokohama, Japan (September 23, 1945). So with a month to the 720th MP Bn. In Tokyo, here I served in occupation till September 4, 1946 and was discharged out in November 14, 1946. So you see, I didn't really get to know too many of the fellows, but was glad to have served with them. I am enclosing a check to cover the expenses of the materials you sent me. If you still have a miniature 164th Regimental Crescent I would like to purchase one. Also you can put me in for a miniature Regimental Flag \$20.00.

Sincerely,
Theodore A Steinberg

Dear Sirs,

I would like to make an address change. I received 164th Infantry News this past week and enjoyed reading it over and over again. I don't want to miss the next one; also I'm eagerly waiting for the reunion notice. Hope to see you then.

Gordon St. Claire
101 3rd Avenue
Two Harbors, MN 55616

Dear Sir,

Please reserve me the pending copy of the 164th Regimental Flag. If you do not get enough people to order the minimum copies you have my permission to donate the \$20.00 check to our association. Keep up the good work and we appreciate it. The June copy is top notch in all aspects. Had I not had a stroke 16 months ago I might have gone to the 1997 Reunion. Now it's too late. Enclosed please find my personal check for \$20.00. My 1999 dues have been paid early.

PS - My wife and I have sent \$1,100.00 to the North Dakota Militia Foundation Inc. so far, more later. My wife, Olga and I, did the 45th Anniversary. Yours truly carried our North Dakota State Flag on our 50th Dedication. EDITOR'S NOTE: Hannel returned to Guadalcanal with 26 other members October 1992 - He carried the North Dakota State Flag.

Anton Hannel
Ltc USA (retired)
1001 Rosewood Avenue
San Carlos, CA 94070-3837

Dear Mr. Fenelon,

The "Tracy Clan" Arrived home safely at 2330 hours in June 14 enriched and enheartened by the day's events and greatly indebted to those who made it all possible. Thank you for your generosity kindness and thoughtfulness.

I would never have known about Tracy Chapel, dedicated to my uncle's memory and newly enhanced with beautiful and meaningful stained glass windows, if it weren't for you and the others of the 164th Infantry. I count it a special blessing to have been a guest at the rededication and the presentation of the Windows Ceremony.

The particular love and appreciation the 164th has for my uncle is truly edifying. His prayers and ministry were obviously at the center of your success on Guadalcanal.

Tracy Chapel is indeed a landmark for the Tracy family. Hopefully, succeeding generations will continue to visit it often to thank God for the men who choose to serve him and their country.

Please extend my heartfelt thanks to the others in the 164th for all they've done to honor my uncle and my family.

With gratitude and thanksgiving,
Winnie Tracy
938 S Highview Circle
Mendota Heights, MN 55118

EDITOR'S NOTE: Your generous contribution has been forwarded to the Father Tracy Chapel. Thank you.

Dear Jim,

The 164th Infantry, S-2 Journal and two other bound books have been received. I thought that you should know that they have been received. We have been away for two weeks visiting our daughter in Phoenix, Arizona, so I have not had time to do more than read several pages selected at random. Looks like they will be very helpful. Thank you a great deal. Hopefully, I will get to the October reunion this year and that I will meet you and the members of the memorial Committee again as I found all of you very interesting people. You are doing a super excellent job with the News. The banner is so much better, the paper quality is better, the type is better and the format is excellent. Congratulations.

Mark Durley, Jr.
360 2nd Street E
Sonoma, CA 95476-5711

Sorry I can't make the reunion. Enclosed is \$10.00 for 3 raffle tickets. My best wishes to the men of the 164th Infantry.

Charlie Ross
3720 Surgor Lane
Conyers, GA 30208

Dear Mr. President,

I was at one time a member of the 164th National Guard Band. Although, I studied to become an officer in that unit, I would up being a 1st Lt. in the Service company and later had malaria and was finally transferred from the unit, I am still suffering from other diseases acquired in the South Pacific.

Right now I am watching the Lawrence Welk show over one of our Louisiana stations. I have enclosed \$30.00 - \$10.00 for 3 raffle tickets and 10 chances for (\$20.00) for the door prize.

Hope you are doing well. I am receiving whatever treatment I need at Fort Polk, Louisiana. Bernie would you mind giving the enclosed check to the organization.

Thanks and God bless.
Walter Abbott
PO Box 446
Oberlin, LA 70655-0446

EDITOR'S NOTES: Abbott was the S-4 officer for the 1st Bn. 164th Infantry. Leroy Casey (Bismarck) was the S-4 Staff Sergeant. For years Abbott contributed humorous, original cartoons for publication in the 164th news. Walt we miss your cartoons, hope your health improves

.....

Dear Wally,

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$104.00 covering the following for the 164th Infantry Reunion: Registration fee of \$80.00 for my wife and myself, raffle tickets \$10.00 (stubs enclosed), \$4.00 for 2 chances at the door prize and 2 tickets (\$10.00) for the Tour Bus to the Capitol & Cemetery. We have made our reservations at the Radison Inn and are looking forward to another great reunion. Incidentally, the listing for the reunion has appeared several times in the Hartford Courant, our state-wide newspaper, and we shall ask them to repeat it in the hope that we may interest a few more people from this part of the country.

Emil I. Blomstrann
32 Foxon Place
New Britain, CT 06053

.....

Dear Bernie,

Always happy to write to you. Once again, congratulations on your becoming President of the 164th. You and your staff are doing a tremendous service in keeping in touch with all the vets of WWII. The past few issues of the 164th Infantry News have been a delight to read, especially updating the process with color to enhance each issue. Do wish we could attend the dedication of the Father Tracy Chapel on June 14, 1998 at Camp Grafton. However, please convey our best wishes to the Tracy Family and all those present, that our prayers will be offered up on the same day while attending Mass at our local church. Father Tracy will always be remembered for his concern for all the men of the 164th Infantry.

Peace and Love.
Je Suis Pret
Nick Cascio
38 Forte Avenue
Medford, NY 11763-4431

Dear Sirs,

When we were back in North Dakota in May & June, I happened to meet Joseph Horski of Grand Forks, North Dakota and he was reading the 164th Infantry News. So, he gave me the address and I would like to be included on your mailing list for the quarterly publication.

I was employed in North Dakota with Red Owl Stores from 1953 until I retired in 1990, living in Langdon, Grand Forks and Fargo, North Dakota.

I do have a membership in the Americal Division Veterans Association in Boston, Massachusetts, but would like more information on the 164th. I happened to join as a infantry replacement in the 3rd Battalion Co. "L" as a light-mortar infantry man on Mindanao in the Philippines in April or May of 1945 at Del Monte Field (airstrip). Where at the time they were mopping up operations until we left for Cebu to start our training for the invasion on Japan until the war ended.

While the unit was in Japan, they were ordered to go home. We were transferred to other occupation units (as we didn't have the points to go home yet). I was transferred to the 720th MP Company in Tokyo. We went home a year later under the draftee orders to be discharged after they had enough replacements from the Regular Army to take over.

But, I always felt a bond with the 164th as the unit I had served with and still am interested in it. Being from Minnesota and a neighbor to North Dakota, I felt very lucky to serve a unit so close to home.

I enclosed a check to cover my membership fee. (We retired in Arizona in 1990).

As ever,
Theodore "Ted" Steinberg
741 E Paseo Hermso
Prescott Valley, AZ 86314-5512

.....

Dear Ben,

I would like to reserve a miniature 164th regimental flag (with battle streamers). I will pick it up at the reunion in October. Thank you very much.

Art Pepple
PO Box 65
Fessenden, ND 58438-0065



(Photo credit - Jim Fenelon)

Trucks of 164th passing in review at Camp Grafton. in 1938 or 39.

Dear Jim,

Enclosed find a receipt for the items (3) mailed to "Sandy" Slater at the Chester Fritz Library as evidence that I actually did the mailing as per your instructions.

I found that the Journals contained a lot of the type of information I need so will soon be writing "Sandy" Slater for an up-date on what she has and asked that copies be made of specific items. For example: the Journal you sent covered September 1944, but I need the whole Bougainville experience. I already have all of the P.O.W. interrogations on Bougainville, so I will not need them.

If you want to know more about the 132nd Lieutenant who was captured by the Japanese on March 17, 1944, see Orchids in the Mud, Robert Mueherke, Editor J. S. Printing, Chicago, 1985 bottom of page 254 and top of page 255. The Lieutenant's name was 2nd Lt. Elmer S. Atkinson (Mueherke was on that patrol). Atkinson's name has been deleted from all "Official" documents.

As you know, I am scheduling the 164th (in October) with the hope that nothing will interfere.

Thank you for sending the 164th materials. Muchly appreciated.

Mark
360 2nd Street
East Sonoma, CA 95476-5711

EDITOR'S NOTE: Information source; page 253 and page 255 of Orchids in the Mud by Robert C. Mueherke. Mueherke served in the 132nd Infantry as a Sergeant in Guadalcanal and Bougainville. Mueherke was sent to OCS Fort Benning and returned to combat in the 383rd Infantry Regiment and was in the bloody battles of Okinawa. After WWII, Mueherke graduated from Medical school. I wonder if Harry Vadnie and Mueherke spent time at the Officer Club in Fort Benning?

132nd INFANTRY LT CAPTURED BY JAPANESE

In a combat action on Bougainville a replacement 2nd Lieutenant, named Elmer Atkinson, in his first combat action with the 132nd Infantry found leadership difficult to handle. Members of the patrol crawled to Lt. Atkinson's position (foxhole) and reported he appeared helpless, as if he were in a bad dream. The Lt. was worried about dying, but most of all, about being taken prisoner. The 132nd patrol was partially surrounded, ammunition running low and no immediate help forthcoming. Surrendering was discussed with the men. No one - not one person - considered surrender. Sergeants LeRoy Harville and William T. Ryan, Jr. took over leadership. The patrol made it to safety after a severe fire-fight.

Lieutenant Atkinson was last seen running into the water towards Magine Island. The Japanese were running into the water after an American. During a fierce life struggle the American was rifle butted and dragged to the beach and bayoneted. Approximately 25 to 30 Japanese took the man prisoner. Lieutenant Atkinson was reported missing.

Later captured Japanese documents indicated a recent replacement second Lieutenant from Company "F" was indeed taken prisoner on March 17, 1944 at 0800 hours. He was interrogated at the Japanese 38th Division Headquarters. The lieutenant responded by drawing detailed defense positions of Company "F" east of the Torokina River. He described the Torokina River's depth and width. His drawings

included defense barbed wire obstacles, the types of barbed wire, the height off the ground, the location of land mines and location of trip grenades. Translation of the documents related the location of all pillbox positions, the exact company strength in men and weapons, the location number of personnel in the company headquarters and in the cook's personnel area.

On March 26 1944, a patrol sent out by the Second Battalion returned with documents found on three Japanese they had killed. Interpretation of these documents revealed an impending attack to be made some time after March 24 against Companies "F" and "G". Continuous patrol action and heavy American artillery fire on reported enemy assemble areas definitely disrupted all enemy plans for the attack.

Employment of the Cannon Company was made on March 20; the company delivered harassing fire into the enemy occupied area to the Second Battalion's front.

In spite of receiving this information, the Japanese did not attack "F" Company's front, but concentrated on Hills 260, 500 and 501. Lt. Atkinson was never found or exchanged as a prisoner. After WWII, it was concluded that the lieutenant was executed, most likely Japanese style - decapitation, using a Samurai sword.

Dear Ben,

Just a note - I am interested in reserving the 164th Regimental Flag (with battle streamers). I was with 1st Battalion Company on Guadalcanal. Thanks to you for keeping the 164th alive.

Clarence Blecha
4582 Belmont Rd
Grand Forks, ND 58501-7916

Dear Ben,

What a great project - please reserve a 164th Regimental Flag with battle streamers for \$20.00. Had inquired some time ago about the 164th flag.

Mr. & Mrs. Joe Gleason
1037 1275th Avenue
Lincoln, IL 62656-5396



(Photo credit - Chuck Walker)

Dick Hamer and Chuck Gossett pictured here with a Jap Ack Ack Gun, Cape Esperance Area Kokumbuna - Guadalcanal.

Dear Sir,

I am an infantry officer in the Marine Corps Reserve, with a secondary occupational specialty in history. In the civilian world I am a military historian and writer. My publications include *Once A Legend*, a biography of MajGen Merritt 'Red Mike' Edson. It is a selection on the Commandant of the Marine Corps' Reading List and it received the 1994 Greene Award from the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation.

My present project is a new biography of LtGen Lewis B. 'Chesty' Puller. I have written 85% of the manuscript, but one of the remaining sections involves the battle in late October 1942 on Guadalcanal in which a battalion of the 164th fought alongside Puller's 1st Battalion, 7th Marines. I have collected all the official after-action reports and related documents on the battle, and I have a large number of interviews from Marines. With the exception of the relatively brief after-action report of the 164th on the battle, however, I do not have any primary material providing the Army's perspective on that engagement. (I do have a copy of the Army's official history of the Guadalcanal campaign.) Although, I will be focusing tightly on Puller in the biography, I want to ensure that I develop a balanced portrayal of events. If you have any resources, such as oral history interviews, diaries, or other material on the battle, I would very much like to gain access to them. Would it be possible for you to drop me a note indicating what type of sources, if any, are available?

Any assistance you can provide on this subject will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
LtCol Jon T. Hoffman, USMCR
12 Dorset Place
Durham, NC 27713-9459

EDITOR'S NOTE: A MARINE NEEDS HELP! Any information you may wish to provide mail to above address.

Purple Heart celebrates 216th Birthday

August 7th marks inception of country's oldest military decoration honoring combat-wounded veterans.

The Purple Heart, the nation's oldest military decoration, turns 216 years old on Aug. 7. The award honors combat-wounded veterans who have given of their blood for this country and its ideals of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The Purple Heart was brought into existence by George Washington on Aug. 7, 1782 by his general order. The general order reads in part: "For any singular meritorious action the author is permitted to wear on his facing over his left breast the figure of a heart in purple cloth or silk."

The first three medals were awarded during the Revolutionary War. At the time the award was called the Badge of Military Merit. In February 1932 by general order number three, the Purple Heart was revived by the President of the United States in honor and respect to George Washington on his birthday.

The award has had many changes throughout the years. It is the only medal which is earned and not awarded. It is earned by being wounded by an enemy during a hostile action toward the United States or an ally.

-Taken from the VFW Gopher Oversea'r-Minnesota

Flag Timeline ↗

The Building Of A Nation

- 1777 Congress adopts the following: Resolved: that the flag of the United States be 13 stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be 13 stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation. (Stars represent Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Georgia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, South Carolina, New Hampshire, Virginia, New York, North Carolina and Rhode Island.)
- 1795 Two more stars and stripes are added for Vermont and Kentucky.
- 1818 20 stars (adding Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana, Indiana and Mississippi) and stripes revert to 13 (where they remain hereafter).
- 1819 Flag with 21 stars (Illinois).
- 1820 Flag with 23 stars (Alabama and Maine).
- 1822 Flag with 24 stars (Missouri).
- 1836 Flag with 25 stars (Arkansas).
- 1837 Flag with 26 stars (Michigan).
- 1845 Flag with 27 stars (Florida). War is declared on Mexico.
- 1846 Flag with 28 stars (Texas).
- 1847 Flag with 29 stars (Iowa).
- 1848 Flag with 30 stars (Wisconsin). We venture into the Northwest Territory.
- 1851 Flag with 31 stars (California).
- 1858 Flag with 32 stars (Minnesota).
- 1859 Flag with 33 stars (Oregon).
- 1861 Flag with 34 stars (Kansas). Soldiers march into the Civil War.
- 1863 Flag with 35 stars (West Virginia).
- 1865 Flag with 36 stars (Nevada).
- 1867 Flag with 37 stars (Nebraska).
- 1877 Flag with 38 stars (Colorado).
- 1890 We jump to 43 stars as the Western U.S. grows with North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Washington and Idaho.
- 1891 Flag with 44 stars (Wyoming).
- 1896 Flag with 45 stars (Utah).
- 1908 Flag with 46 stars (Oklahoma).
- 1912 Flag with 48 stars (New Mexico and Arizona). This flag flew during two World Wars and the Korean War.
- 1959 Flag with 49 stars (Alaska).
- 1960 Flag with 50 stars (Hawaii). The United States of America is complete and nobly symbolized today by this American Flag.



(Photo credit - Bill Johnson, Jamestown, N.D.)

A fruit bat or flying fox of the Solomon Islands. 5 ft from wingtip to wingtip.

“Rochester” and the General Make an Inspection



When Gen. George C. Marshall came to visit the 34th division one of the units at which he stopped was Company E at the 164th Infantry. Present to “help” the general make the inspection was “Rochester,” the company mascot. In the picture (left to right) are Col. Earle R. Sarles, commander of the 164th; Capt. Charles D. Harding, commander of Company E.

E; Col. Frayne Baker, 34th chief of staff; Corp. Gail K Landis, Privates First Class William D. Brokaw, Howard A. Amsterberg, Lloyd T. Carson and Robert M. Price. At front center is General Marshall—and “Rochester,” while in the rear row are Privates First Class Michael Busch (right), and Robert D. Masters. Gail Landis returned to Guadalcanal along with 26 other members of the 164th in Oct. 1992 for the 50th anniversary of the 164th Landing on Guadalcanal Oct. 13, 1942

34th Praised By Marshall

Gen. George C. Marshall, after his recent visit to Camp Claiborne, declared he was “very much pleased” by the progress of the 34th Division since its arrival in camp.

(continued from pg1)

Savo Island is north of Cape Esperance, the northwestern tip of Guadalcanal. There are also subsidiary groups of islands: Treasury Island, Duff Group, Ndeni; Lord Howe, Reef Groups, Santa Cruz Islands, Taumako, Tikopia, Twol, Tinakula and Basukaro. The total land area of the Solomon Islands is 11,500 square miles. The enclosed sea area is approximately 250,000 square miles.

More than 90 percent of the population of the Solomon Islands are Melanesians. The remainder are a racial microcosm of the Southern Pacific area. On several outer islands live Polynesians. After World War II small numbers of Fijians and East Indians settled in Honiara, the present day capital city of Guadalcanal. Honiara means “Where the wind blows.”

The British mandated islands of Guadalcanal, New Britain, New Ireland and New Guinea have it all over the other islands in the Solomons.

The British system introduced “civilization” with great respect for the islanders. The Germans and Australians were unjust and at times brutal to the natives such as the Bougainvillese. Michener pointed this out well in his novel “Return to Paradise.”

General Marshall inspected each of the 10 regiments and the Special Troops of the division, calling on one or more units in each. During many of these visits he spoke with enlisted men and junior officers as well as high-ranking officers.

The general's questions dealt with length of service and educational background and he seemed pleased by the appearance of the men and their answers, most of which were given promptly and in a suitable tone of voice.

General Marshall was accompanied on his tour of inspection by Maj. Gen. E. L. Daley, new commander of the 5th Army Corps; Maj. Gen. E. A. Walsh, 34th Division commander; Col. Orlando Ward, executive assistant to General Marshall, and Col. Frayne Baker, 34th chief of staff.

The general and his party remained in camp for over three hours, visiting mess halls, tents regimental headquarters, school buildings and recreation buildings, in addition to company and detachment areas.

Not only was General Marshall apparently pleased by everything he saw, but Colonel Ward, his assistant, was heard to remark that “it’s a grand outfit” as he was leaving camp after the inspection.

Both appeared particularly pleased by the results of the work the men of the division have put in on the camp area itself—by the duck boards and by the ditch digging and the grading which has been done by the various units since they arrived shortly after March 1.

On the British island, Guadalcanal, not one white man was ever betrayed to the Japanese by the natives. The loyalty of the Guadalcanalese was unbelievable. The Bougainvillese killed missionaries, betrayed coastwatchers, and sold to the Japanese Army American pilots rescued from the seas.

THE GUADALCANALESE

The Guadalcanalese gladly worked as scouts, guides, ammunition bearers, and soldiers. Sgt. Maj. Sir Jacob Vouza was a prime example of one with fierce loyalty and extraordinary bravery as our ally. In August 1942 Vouza served as a scout for the First Marines on Guadalcanal. A Marine gave him an American flag which he cherished all his life.

During Col. Kiyono Ichiki's preparations to attack the marines on 21 August 1942 at the Tenaru (Ilu) River Delta, Vouza was captured by the Japanese near Koli Point. While searching him the American flag was found. He refused to answer how he obtained the flag. Vouza was tied to a tree. The Japanese pummeled him with rifle butts, bayoneted him several times and cut his neck with a Samurai sword.

(continued on page 10)

The White House Washington

TO MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY
EXPEDITIONARY FORCES:

You are a soldier of the United States Army.

You have embarked for distant places where the war is being fought.

*Upon the outcome depends the freedom of your lives: the freedom
of the lives of those you love - your fellow - citizens - your people.*

*Never were the enemies of freedom more tyrannical, more arrogant,
more brutal.*

*Yours is a God-fearing, proud, courageous people, which,
throughout its history, has put its freedom under God before all
other purposes.*

*We who stay at home have our duties to perform - duties owed in
many parts to you. You will be supported by the whole force and
power of this Nation. The victory you win will be a victory of all the
people - common to them all.*

*You bear with you the hope, the confidence, the gratitude and the
prayers of your family, your fellow - citizens, and your President -*

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Editors note: On March 18, 1942 the 164th Infantry Regiment
boarded the S.S. President Coolidge in San Francisco for a cruise
to the South Pacific, Melbourne, Australia and World War II.

Each member of the 164th received a copy of the above letter along
with the other troops. I wonder if the same letter was given to all
troops when the troops started sailing off to World War II in such
large numbers?

PATTON PAPERS

A collection relating to U.S. Army General George S. Patton's (1885-1945) World War I career has been acquired by the University of North Dakota's Chester Fritz Library. The collection includes diaries, letters, reports, maps, photographs, general orders, and related printed ephemera from the Great War. This collection, appraised at \$1,400,000, was preserved and brought together by Sereno Elmer Brett (1891-1952), who was Patton's second in command in World War I.

George Patton, one of the most colorful and controversial military men in U.S. history, was detailed to the U.S. Tank Corps during World War I by General Pershing. Patton consequently made tank warfare his specialty and eventually commanded the famed U.S. 2nd Armored Division and 1st Armored Corps during World War II.

Sereno Brett led the first American tank attack in World War I in the St. Mihiel Offensive of 1918. Brett has been regarded as a pioneer and expert in the field of tank operations and wrote many articles on tanks and anti-tank warfare that were widely used in various military schools in this country and abroad.

This extraordinary collection represents the genesis of the American tank corps, the part played by George Patton in World War I, and the achievements and activities of Sereno Brett, the acknowledged authority on tank and armored warfare.

Maps XIV Corps Hostyn Terrain

S-2 Journal

164th Infantry

MAP

Book 12

Bougainville

Date 10 October 1944

Page 3

File 7

Time In

12:30

From Captain Wichman: prisoner captured yesterday (entry #5 Oct. 9) was, picked up at 157.2 - 2170. Also some documents from bodies of Japanese Captain Walker whom had previously killed.

The prisoner was a Sergeant Major from the 12th Co. 3rd BM 45th Infantry. He is a deserter and the reason for his desertion was because his subordinates would not obey him, so he shot one. He was tried by court martial and given 5 years hard labor on bread and water. This led to his desertion. His clothes were fair; he had no shoes; physically he was in good shoes. In file 9 at 1330 hours additional information on the (Jap) prisoner. His unit was in Bn. Reserve mission to guard Hanemo. When he saw he was going to be captured, he threw away his saber and pulled one star from his insignia. Received by McCormick.

Editors Note: This information came from S-2 journals - 164th WWII. It would be interesting to learn what happened to the Japanese Sergeant Major. Based on personal experience and reports from other 164th troops that no Sergeant Major used such terminal methods to get troops to obey. Generally, a 164th Regimental Sergeant Major wielded a firm but benign stroke of the pen and a lot of clout.



(Photo credit - Ray Patton, A Company.)

Guadalcanal. One hand grenade did this.

(continued from page 8)

The Japanese left Vouza for dead. He gnawed through his bonds; with the help of Guadalcanalese friends he half staggered, half crawled three miles to the coast watchers. They helped him back to the Second Battalion 1st Marines. Before sinking into unconsciousness, from blood loss and cardiovascular collapse, he managed to give a vital report on the enemy strength and approximate time of the Tenaru (Ilu) River Delta attack. This information helped the marines defeat Col. Ichiki's regiment at the Tenaru (Ilu) River Delta.

The Marines awarded Vouza the Silver Star, the Purple Heart, and later the Legion of Merit. The British presented Vouza with the George Medal, the highest award ever given a civilian. In July 1972 Queen Elizabeth knighted Jacob Vouza.

Sir Jacob lived his life out in a hut near Honiara. His Marine American flag flew on a pole next to his hut. The British were embarrassed by the lack of the Union Jack. Sir Jacob flew the flag as a symbol of independence which may have led to the final British liquidation of their Colonial Empire in the Solomons. During the post World War II years, numerous American veteran organizations visited Sir Jacob and paid their respects to this unusual and very noble man. Sir Jacob died in April, 1984.

THE ISLAND GUADALCANAL

Paramecium shaped, 90 miles long and 25 miles wide, Guadalcanal (Wady-al-canal) a volcanic island, is located approximately 1,000 miles northwest of New Caledonia and approximately 600 miles or 10 degrees below the equator. Guadalcanal, or as on previous maps, Guadalcanal, is at the southern extremities of the British Solomon Islands. From a distance Guadalcanal appears to be like other Solomon Islands. They are beautiful green islands set in a blue sea and framed by high white clouds.

Geologically these islands are described as old coral deposits on an underwater mountain range which had been thrust above the surface by terrific volcanic action, thus forming the rugged mountainous country slashed by precipitous ravines and gullies, abounding in natural caves.

MENDANA THE EXPLORER

In 1565 Alvaro de Mendana, a navigator and a nephew of the Spanish governor of Peru, sailed two ships west from Callao, Peru to seek the southern continent, but mainly in search of gold and of infidels. On 7 February 1566 the expedition sighted a large and mountainous island. It was named Santa Isabel del Estrello—of the star—after his wife Isabel, and because Venus was visible in that day's morning sky.

(continued on page 11)

164th INFANTRY DOCUMENTS

Ben Kemp carefully packed four cartons of 164th Infantry WWII documents at Fraine Barracks in Bismarck with cursory assistance by Jim Fenelon and a quick overview by Ralph Gaugler. Gaugler provided technical assistance and advice in loading the packed documents for shipping.

The 164th Infantry WWII documents consisted primarily of S-2 journals (S-2 Intelligence Section) in which are recorded the daily activities of the 164th in all actions. A quick look at some of the S-2 journals was very interesting and will provide future historians with valuable information.

The 164th material was shipped to the Carlton Eliot Simensen Military Heritage Center in the Chester Fritz Library, University of North Dakota. The library will catalogue and preserve the documents for future historians or anyone searching for information about the 164th Infantry.

The library would welcome any letters, pictures or diaries that you or your parents or any other relatives may have saved from WWII. These types of documents will be part of the history of the 164th and a rich source of information for historians.

In reviewing the S-2 journals no evidence, record, notes or information could be found relating to the Koli Point operation planned and directed by West Pointers Sebree and Bryant E. Moore. Documentation of the Koli operation appears to be lost or maybe the information is in the National archives in Washington D. C. This source will be checked out next time that I visit my grandson.

Many of the books written by Marine Corps historians consider the Koli Point operation a successful one, as many Japanese were terminated along with valuable supplies and equipment destroyed, plus plans for a serious enemy attempt to establish a new attack to capture Henderson Field was frustrated.

In the Koli point operation Colonel Moore ordered Army & Marine troops to move forward at night. This action caused 164th troops to fire two machine guns and wounded approximately 18 men of the 164th in a patrol advancing in the dark. The troops firing the machine guns had been told that only enemy troops would be moving in the black night. B. Company of the 8th Marines in support of the 164th declined to move forward under the night order from Colonel Moore, they waited until daylight. Any thoughts on this situation would be most welcomed.

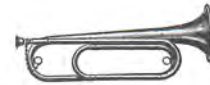
Many of you will recall that Barney Ross was a corpsman with B. Company 8th marines and regaled us with stories of his pugilistic exploits in his professional boxing career. Ross explained in detail how he stopped Billy Petrolle "The Fargo Express". Ross seemed to assume a fighting stance and became very alert when the bell rang when a Higgins boat (landing craft) dropped the ramps. Just an old ring horse.

"I never hated a man so much that I would give his jewelry back and I am a very good housekeeper. Every time I get a divorce, I keep the house."

Zsa Zsa Gabor (After several divorces)



Last Roll Call



*I thank you for the love you each have shown, but now it's time I traveled on alone.
So grieve a while for me, if grieve you must, then let your grief be comforted by trust.
It's only a while that we must part, so bless the memories within your heart.
I won't be far away, for life goes on. So if you need me, call and I will hear.*

Author Unknown

**Richard G. Stout:**

Dillon, Montana - October 23, 1997

Harold L. Larson:

Grand Forks, North Dakota - June 7, 1998

•(Bronze Star)

Marvin E. Griffin (LM):

Santa Maria, California - February 3, 1998

Ingvald Mygland:

Great Falls, Montana - April 1, 1998

(continued from page 10)

On Santa Isabel, Mendana built a base camp in which they started to explore nearby islands. After they explored one they named "Florida," the small expedition sailed south to the larger island they named Guadalcanal, after the home village of Pedro de Ortego Valencia, the troop commander.

After life-threatening and adverse dealings with the Guadalcanalese, the expedition sailed on. A month later the two ships returned and anchored in a mooring sheltered by land. Their priest planted the cross on a little peninsular appendage and named it Point Cruz. This arrow shaped peninsula was less than a mile west of the Matanikau River and four miles east of the village Kokumbona. Mendana returned again in June, 1569. He described the archipelago in extravagant language and called it the Solomon Isles to suggest gold. In a third voyage he landed on the northwest coast of Santa Cruz, and died there a month later in October, 1595.

GUADALCANAL CLOSE UP

To Americans the words "tropical island" brings forth ideas of romance; visions of dazzling beaches, of shining

Loren Hardgrave:

French Village, MO 63036

Ralph M. Hastings:

Rolling Meadows, Illinois - July 9, 1998

Andrew J. (Andy) Burchard:

Devils Lake, North Dakota - June 9, 1997

•"Andy" joined the Service Company in 1941 and transferred to the U.S. Air Force in 1949. He remained in the Air Force, retiring in 1959 as a Staff Sergeant. In the 1950's "Andy" had a tour of duty with the Air Force in Europe.

OBITUARIES

An obituary is generally the last public notice of an individual's existence on earth. Therefore it should be prepared carefully covering all the facts. Among the more important facts is the military service of the deceased such as the identification of the military unit Regiment, Company Unit, Division and the dates of service. The Military Heritage Center, University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, North Dakota is starting a collection of WWII personnel for historical research. Copies of past obituaries are acceptable. Please send to Military Heritage Center, Chester Fritz Library - University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota 58202-7144.

coral, shaded by majestic palms and the perfume of clean ocean breezes. Such enchanted tropical isles may exist, but Guadalcanal in 1942 was not one of them. From close up, Guadalcanal was eerie, deeply offensive, and gave "one's soul" the feelings of frightful natural violence. Eons of tropical climate with scorching sun and torrential rains had nurtured the land into a lush dense jungle. Once on shore the island was pure hell.

The climate was wet and extremely hot. The average temperature was in the high 80's. From November to March during the monsoon or rainy season, the island was literally drenched with rain.

Prior to World War II there were no good maps of Guadalcanal. Aerial photographs were inadequate especially for the central mountains which formed a backbone of forested jagged peaks and quiescent volcanos. These were covered with tropical rain forests which reached up to 8,000 feet above sea level and covered the length and breadth of the land except for the northeast plains. The rugged mountainous country was scarred by precipitous gullies and ravines.

(continued on page 17)

New Life Members



Robert D. (Bob) Baker, Devils Lake, North Dakota - July 9, 1998

- Bob joined the 164th Infantry in the 1930's as a member of the Howitzer Company and continued in the Service Company in World War II.

New Members

J.E. Avila, Long Beach, California - July 23, 1998

Ervin J. Barta, Bismarck, North Dakota - June 19, 1998

Carl E. Doversberger, Portland, Oregon - June 29, 1998

John C. Keller, Harvey, North Dakota - June 17, 1998

Theodore A. Steinberg, Prescott, Arizona - June 23, 1998

Arthur C. Hess, St. Louis, Missouri - August 23, 1998

Earl O. Holly, Bismarck, North Dakota - August 18, 1998

Genevieve Severson, Grand Forks, North Dakota - July 9, 1998

- "Gen" is the widow of Kenneth "Swede", Swenson. "Swede" served in the M Company World War II.

Gerald Waldhauser, South St. Paul, Minnesota, August 10, 1998

Paulette R. Wagner, Havre, Montana, August 7, 1998

Mark Lief Eriksson, Sauk Center, Minnesota - June 10, 1998

- Mark is an affiliate life member and the grandson of Jim Fenelon.

Raynold D. Nelson, Carson, North Dakota - August 8, 1998

Carl Whitman, Chilmark, Massachusetts, August 20, 1998

- Whitman was in the Service Company and stationed in Walla Walla, Washington. In WallaWalla there was a hotel named Marcus Whitman so naturally Carl became "Marcus" Whitman. Welcome aboard "Marcus".

Mrs. Howard (Jean) Van Tassel, August 29, 1998

- Jean's husband, Howard, served in I Company. Howard is the author of *The Fighting 164*. He wrote the poem on Guadalcanal, while in a foxhole, and sent it home to his mother. The 164th poem and Howard's picture is in a place of honor in the chapel at the Veterans' Cemetery, Mandan, North Dakota. The 164th Poem and 164th roster of KIA's will be placed in the Military Heritage Center at the University of North Dakota.

John O. Creamer, Longview, Texas, April 15, 1998

VETERAN'S CEMETERY

Memorial Day 1998 was a beautiful day to pay our respects to the people resting in the Veteran's Cemetery. The Air Guard fly over was an impressive part of the program, along with the Color Guard Units from the American Legion and VFW Posts from Bismarck and Fort Yates areas.

This year visitors were rewarded with a new feature, the Avenue of Flags. Fifty flagpoles, representing all fifty states were put in place; each draped with a U.S. Flag at half-mast. The Avenue of Flags has really added a very fine touch of respect to the Veteran's Cemetery. It will enhance the ceremonies held at the cemetery.

It was interesting to observe the number of Vietnam Veterans, in their easily identified garb, came to the 164th Infantry Memorial and pay their silent respect to the WWII veterans. Maybe the Vietnam Veterans should place a monument of their own next to the three monuments already by the chapel.

The digging of the holes and setting the poles was hard work. Led by Bill Frahm (Col. Retired) NDANG; Ben Kemp (CW 4, Retired) NDANG and Howard Unterseher (Sergeant Major, Retired) NDANG. These volunteers demonstrated a variety of skills in operating several types of heavy mechanized equipment, plus their backs, in setting the poles in place.

When questioned if they were qualified and held any licenses to operate such equipment, Bill Frahm responded



Avenue of Flags, Veteran's Cemetery on Memorial Day 1998.

Vietnam Veterans and bikes along the Avenue of Flags waiting for the ceremonies.



Photo Credits: Don "Cat" Robinson

that they had a roofer's license and it covered everything.

Providing assistance to Frahm, Kemp and Unterseher were units from the Junior R.O.T.C. Cadets located out of Grand Forks and Fargo, North Dakota. A number of young volunteers from the Prairie Learning Center, Raleigh, North Dakota spent hours in assisting the flag-pole detail.

Thanks to all the people involved in creating the Avenue of Flags in the Veteran's Cemetery in Mandan, North Dakota.

WALLA WALLA WEDDING

Paul Bossoletti enlisted in "F" Company 164th Infantry in the late 30's. Paul was interested in electronics, ham radio and Morse code. He learned to operate a ham radio and received a license with call letters W9GZD.

Prior to the 164th being called up February 10, 1941, Paul was attending the School of Science at Wapeton, North Dakota to enhance his knowledge in electricity with the goal of becoming an electrical engineer.

While home on vacation, he met a young lady named Sylvia visiting her girlfriend in Carrington. Apparently, Cupid's arrow struck Paul and a romance blossomed. Many letters crossed in the mail, as long distance phone calls were too expensive in the 1939's and 1940's.

February 10, 1941, the 164th received orders to entrain for Camp Claiborne and join the 34th Infantry Division for one year of training. Bossoletti decided that with his license as a ham radio operator and knowledge of the Morse code he would seek and later received a transfer to Regimental Headquarters Company and was placed in the radio and communication section,

The long distance romance via letters was still in progress and continued through the 1941 maneuvers. December 7, 1941 the Japanese made a number of changes in many lives. The 164th traveled to San Francisco and then to various locations in the western states. Regimental Headquarters was located in the National Guard Armory, Walla Walla, Washington. Paul was now a corporal on duty in the radio and communication section.

Apparently Paul stepped up his romantic intentions and proposed marriage to the lovely Sylvia. Sylvia agreed, but was only seventeen years of age and a different religious faith than Paul.

Paul convinced Sylvia to let him design her wedding dress and by mutual agreement the wedding attire was to be the same color and style as a class A military uniform. The matching material was obtained along with the wide brown military belt (Garrison or G.I. belt) and military style buttons. Really the wedding attire looked like a WAC Class A Uniform. Sylvia had her mother do most of the cutting, sewing, and fittings. Sylvia's mother had no knowledge about the pending wedding plans. Sylvia told her mother that she and Paul just want matching outfits.

Once the outfit was completed, Sylvia boarded the train in Grand Forks, North Dakota for the long ride to marry Corporal Bossolettii in Walla Walla, Washington.

Chaplain Tracy, provided the pre-marital Catholic conversion for Sylvia and Paul, and thus resolving the religious problem. Father Tracy arranged the marriage ceremony with a local priest and it was performed in St. Patrick's Cathedral



Army Guard on duty at Armory Regimental Headquarters in Walla Walla, Washington. The soldier on sentry duty certainly was not from a rifle company.

Paul and Sylvia in matching uniforms on their wedding day, February 19, 1942. At a glance one would think Sylvia was in the WAC's, but at this stage of WWII, WAC's had not yet become a part of the Military Forces.

The Bossoletti's at East Garrison, Ford Ord, California saying their goodbyes just before the 164th boarded trains headed for San Francisco for departure overseas.



in Walla Walla with Cornelius "Corny" Thompson as best man and Theresa Martuelli as the maid of honor.

Paul rejoined Sylvia in the late 1943 after receiving a medical discharge from the service. The romance and marriage lasted through World War II, the GI Bill, an Electrical Engineering Degree from the University of North Dakota in 1949, four children, eight grandchildren and three great grandchildren and the great flood of 1997 with the loss of their home in Grand Forks.

Bossoletti must have been one great salesman to convince Sylvia to let him design her wedding attire and to change her religion. Of course, she was young at 18, beautiful and was charmed by a real smooth operator (Ham).

*"No rights are automatic or forever safe; intelligence should never slumber. Freedom may be lost while we sleep in its defense."
"Human rights began at home."*

Plato

DEDICATION

After morning church services a buffet breakfast was served in the Governor's Camp Grafton Headquarters. Members of the Tracy clan were introduced to the military personnel and the 164th Veterans in attendance.

The official dedication of the Chapel started at 1:00 PM with the 188th Army Band and Choir providing the musical background.

The ten windows were designed by Gary Baune and created by Jon Norman of the Lightbenders Glass Studio, Fargo. They depict North Dakota themes, with a martial flavor: buffalo, sunflowers, the 7th Calgary, the Peace Gardens, the Veteran's Cemetery and Native Americans.

Tracy Chapel is named for Chaplain (Major) Thomas J. Tracy, who served with the 164th Infantry Regiment, North Dakota Army National Guard, on Guadalcanal and the Northern Solomon Islands during World War II. He repeatedly disregarded his own safety and traversed difficult terrain under enemy fire to minister the sacraments, give guidance and encouragement to personnel in foxholes and dugouts. For his bravery and valor, he was awarded the Bronze Star with "V" and earned the title of "the Foxhole Padre." He also served in the Korean War.

Several children of Father Tracy's brother John attended the dedication service: Jim and Marianne Tracy, John and Patsy Tracy, Betty Tracy Regan, Patrick Tracy and Winifred Tracy. Also present were World War II veterans from the 164th Infantry Regiment, current members of the 164th Engineer Group, 164th Engineer Battalion and other North Dakota Army National Guard units, Major General Keith Bjerke, North

Dakota's Adjutant General, and members of the Ringsak family. (Senator Alton Ringsak played a major role in raising funds for the chapel.)

Alton Ringsak was an attorney from Grafton, North Dakota. During WWII Ringsak rose to the rank of full Colonel in command of an Infantry Regiment. While engaged in active combat Ringsak suffered several major wounds which plagued him for the rest of his life.

The military records on file at the Chester Fritz Library University of North Dakota indicate that Ringsak was the most highly decorated soldier from North Dakota in WWII. Ringsak's medals, dress uniform and his helmet penetrated with shrapnel is on permanent display in the Military Heritage Center.

Captain (Retired) Earl "Red" Cherrey, of Fairview, Montana, was a corporal in the 164th Infantry Regiment in World War II. He first met Father Tracy at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana, where the unit trained for a year in 1941. They lived in canvas tents, with wooden side-walls and concrete floors, and scrounged scrap wood to make boardwalks through the mud. Cherrey remembers Father Tracy thus: "On Guadalcanal the only time you'd see him was on the front lines. Sometimes he'd give a service for all faiths Catholic, Protestant and Jewish. That's probably where he got the title of 'Foxhole Padre'."

In visiting with Tracy relatives about Father Tracy, Pat Tracy

mentioned that Father Tracy had a minor hearing problem. This caused many of the 164th Veteran's present to declare if we had only known about this problem we could have slipped some big sins by him or mumbled a few good ones.

World War II 164th Veterans present were "Tony" Beer (Lt. Col. Retired), Harry R. Vадnia, Don Robinson, Ray Conlon, Earl "Red" Cherrey (Capt. Retired) and Jim Fenelon.

The 164th Infantry Regiment after training in Louisiana, sleeping in straw pens in the Cow Palace (San Francisco) guarding the Golden Gate Bridge and coastal guns in Fort Cronkite (North end of Golden Gate Bridge); settling a nasty shipyard strike at Hunters Point the 164th was suddenly shipped to Hermonston, Oregon and Geiger Field, Spokane, Washington to guard a large ammunition depot, a heavy Army Air Corps Base in Spokane. Additional duties included guarding railroad tunnels, dams and bridges from any enemy action. The Regiment was spread out along the railroad line clear to the North Dakota line to protect the railroad systems. Father Tracy, driver and jeep (along with other Chaplains) would appear at various isolated locations set up a portable altar and carry on the appropriate religious services. This duty was during winter months and no heaters were a part of the nomenclature of a jeep or weapons carrier.

Jim Tracy, a nephew, remembers his uncle's later years. "He was a chaplain at a hospital run by sisters of mercy we used to go there and visit him. The Nuns were from Ireland - they all came to his funeral in St. Paul. Chaplain Tracy died relatively young at 49.

EDITOR'S NOTE: There are many stories of other Chaplains representing other religions and if would be a lift to the history of the 164th if names, pictures could be forwarded to the Editor. Contributing to this article, Sgt Ann Knudson NDARNG.



The Field Altar, believed to have been used by Father Tracy in WWII, is on the left as one enters the Chapel. On the wall above the portable altar is the list of donors, picture of the altar and Memorial Mass being conducted in 1943 at Guadalcanal and Father Tracy at his desk. The portable altar was set up on the hood of a jeep as the men gathered for services.



From Left to Right: Harry R. Vadnie - Sgt/Lt -Bismarck, ND, Anton "Tony" Beer Lt. Col. -Mandan, ND, Jim Fenelon-Marshalltown, IA, Ray Conlon - Minto, ND and Earl "Red" Cherrey -Fairfax, MT.



From Left to Right: Earl "Red" Cherrey, Don Robinson - Bismarck, ND, Anton "Tony" Beer- Mandan, ND, Ray Conlon - Minto, ND, Jim Fenelon - Marshalltown, IA and Patrick Tracy - St. Paul, MN. Pat served in the Americal Division during the Vietnam conflict.



The Tracy Family, before praying, attending mass in the Tracy Chapel.



Father Donahue - Chaplain -NDARNG, Fargo, ND and Earl "Red" Cherrey in front of the Tracy Chapel.



From Left to Right: Earl "Red" Cherrey, John Tracy, Tony Beer, Don Robinson (the tall one), Ray Conlon, Patrick Tracy and Timothy Tracy. Picture taken in North Dakota Governors Headquarters, Camp Grafton, North Dakota.



Farewell dinner for Colonel Earl R. Searles - Regimental Commander 164th Infantry Regiment (Rifle) September 1942 in New Caledonia-Free French Island-South Pacific. Also seated is Captain O'Brien and Harold Zrueler, medic from state of Washington-Hubert F. Flannery, Capt. Medical Corps. Inf., Bottineau, ND - Cecil Fergusson, major, Inf. Dental Corps., Kuhn, ND - Haynes, Major, Medical Corps., Lisbon, ND. 164th Inf. Medical Officer, served the Mexican border in 1916, Mercedes, TX and returned to ND in Feb., 1917.

When money is plenty this is a man's world. When money is scarce it is a woman's world. When all else seems to have failed, the woman's instinct comes in. She gets a job. That is a reason why, in spite of all that happens, we continue to have a world.

Ladies Home Journal

164th INFANTRY 53rd REUNION

OCTOBER 9 / 10 / 11 RADISSON INN / BISMARCK, ND

Under the guidance of President "Bernie" Wagner, the committee held two meetings and final plans are in place with a few minor details to be tied down. The committee members are handling their assigned duties with dispatch.

Committee members are: George "Woody" Gagnon, Wallie Heisler - Sec./Treas.; Frank Weisgerber, Newl McClure -

Registration; Don "Cat" Robinson - catered meals, keg beer, Wine and cheese; George "Woody" Gagnon - memorial services; Vernon F. Fletch special guests; Frank R. Eide - entertainment; Ben Kemp - Color Guard and bus services for tour of State Capitol and Veterans Cemetery in Mandan; Jim Fenelon - Publicity..



George "Woody" Gagnon and Ewald "Wally" Heisler - Sec./Treas.



From Left to Right: Mary Wagner, "Bernie" Wagner - President, Frank Weisgerber



From Left to Right: Donna Kjonaas, Ione Towne - Chairperson, Lorraine M. Kemp, Ben Kemp and Vernon Fetch.

Jim Fenelon - Editor, Don "Cat" Robinson - Food & beverage



George "Woody" Gagnon, "Wally" Heisler, Neyl McClure.



Don Robinson crunching numbers for the food and beverage costs.



Donna Kjonaas, Ione Towne, Lorraine Kemp, Vernon Fetch and Neyl McClure.

LADIES LUNCHEON

As chairperson of the Ladies Luncheon, Ione Towne and the committee have planned a fine program with Sue Kambeitz and Michelle singing, along with some interesting dance acts and patamine.

Ms. Towne stated that a number of surprise gifts will be awarded, must be present to win a prize. The luncheon will finish in time for the bus tour to the Capitol building and the Veteran's Cemetery.

If anyone is interested in bringing a guest please contact Ms. Towne for tickets at the registration desk. Thank you.



Photo credit-W.H. Johnson, Jamestown, ND.

This is UPS New Caledonia style. Thio, New Caledonis 1942.

Company Pictures

The bids from photographers to take company pictures at the 53rd Annual Reunion and have the picture available Sunday a.m. ranged from \$15 - \$30 plus a guaranteed member; so no professional photos.

Bring your own camera and time will be made available after the banquet. The unit designation signs will be available

The orders for the 164th Regimental Flag with battle streamers have reached and exceeded the goal. The letters requesting flags carry some very strong sentiments indicating that this memento will have a place of honor in ones home. The 164th flag project is a one time project and will not be repeated, so if you want a flag better take prompt action.

If you are paying your 1999 dues with your registration fee, please indicate this to eliminate any confusion. 1999 dues notices will be mailed in January 1999. Paying now will save on postage.

Thank you,
B.K. Secretary/Treasurer

Door Prize

\$2.00 per chances

WWII Jeep on a walnut plaque

US Flag

164th Flag

ND State Flag & US Army Flag

Combat Infantry badge

164th Crest

Americal Division

47th Division Crest

***** Prizes to be awarded at 53rd Reunion in Bismarck *****



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On the south and west coast the mountains sloped sharply to the coast and into the sea. However, on the north and east side the main terrain gave way to foothills which in turn flattened out to a comparatively level coastal plain. These wide plains were eight miles wide in places. They were cut by numerous serpentine rivers. Some rivers were long and swift but could be forded here and there. Others were slow, deep and had steep muddy banks.

THE COPRA PLANTATIONS

The coastal plain was ideal for growing coconuts and Lever Brothers Company developed plantations. The palms were planted in neat rows 20 feet in both directions. The copra was shipped by Burns-Philip South Seas Company Ltd., all over the world. After the war the United

States paid seven million dollars retribution to Lever Brothers for the damage done to their plantations. The Japanese paid none.

Our airmen emphasized the beauty of these plantations. "In coming in for a landing the coconut groves were the most beautiful sight in the world and even rivalled the approach to the Hawaiian islands."

In the past the British resident commissioner at Tulagi administered each protectorate island. He reported to the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific in Fiji who reported to the British Colonial Office in London.

THE GUADALCANAL JUNGLE

Where the plantations ended, the plains and foothills were blanketed with dense jungle to the water's edge. In these areas the jungle was so thick it was like twilight. The dark humid jungles were sinister in appearance and consisted of a solid wall of jungle vegetation. This growth extended to more than a hundred feet high. There were banyan trees, high palms, vines, elephant ear plants, ferns, and banana trees all tangled and matted together into a fantastic web.

Interspersed in the jungle were patches of open ground consisting of coarse, tangled, razor-sharp Kunai grass growing to seven or eight feet tall, as well as lagoons, swamps and pools of stagnant water.

The broad deep swamps were inadequately drained by sluggish rivers where giant crocodiles lived. There was an evil stench of rotting vegetation which contained a variety of insects of unusual size. The swamps were breeding places for large numbers of anopheles mosquitos, bearers of malaria, dengue, and a dozen other illnesses.

There were thousands of different varieties of insects, praying mantises, ants (especially red ants), spiders, and other sinister insects. Usually the red ants ate the flesh down to the bone of Japanese and American dead. Fungi grew in the dampness. They produced severe and debilitating skin reactions known as "jungle rot." Guadalcanal was also infested with swarms of rats; these lived on coconuts and other foods; at times they fed on the war dead.

THE GUADALCANAL WEATHER

The junction of the highlands with the lowlands produced a region which meteorologists termed "convergenogs." Here different air masses constantly flowed together from opposite directions. The line of their meeting was called the "intertropical front." It was marked by almost continuously present low rain clouds, interspersed with towering cumulus clouds that extended up to 40,000 feet or more.

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ANOTHER FIRST FOR THE MARINES

Based on a story by James P. Sterba staff reporter for the Wall Street Journal 24 March 1997 reported on how the .50 Caliber Machine Gun became a "Fun" gun.

The story states that a 24 year old Marine sharp shooter named Carlos Norman Hathcock II chalked up the farthest recorded kill in the history of sniping — 2,500 yards (1.42 miles) - in February 1967, he fired a Browning M2 .50-caliber machine gun. It was a 128-pound behemoth normally used to blast light armored vehicles, shoot down airplanes, strafe ships, and terrify opposing ground forces.

Sgt. Hathcock's amazing shot not only made history. It helped plant an idea that thanks to the ingenuity of America's firearms hobbyists and tinkering gun makers - is now a reality: the .50-caliber civilian sporting rifle.

The cost of a .50 caliber rifle vary from \$3,500 to \$6,500. Precision isn't easy. At 1,000 yards, bullets arc perhaps 20 feet up and then down to the target. A four mile-an-hour cross wind can push a round 20 inches awry. Changes in humidity or sunlight can mess up trajectory. Nevertheless, two years ago Craig Taylor, of Vancouver, Wash., put five shots within 3.2395 inches of each other- the best-ever results of a .50 caliber competition. He owns two rifles, named Alawishus and Floyd. "We're still in the infancy of how accurate these things can get," he says.

While the .50-caliber machine gun has been around since 1917, its metamorphosis into a rifle was slow. Mr. Hathcock's sniper record in Vietnam inspired a few homemade rifles. Then came the 1979 American Embassy takeover in Iran. Marine guards wanted something to blow open embassy safes without necessarily destroying classified papers. Around the same time, Ronnie Barrett, a commercial photographer, went to his home workshop to build the first .50-caliber semiautomatic, the Barrett 82A1. An emergency shipment was ordered from Barrett Firearms by the U. S. Marines after the 1983 bombing of their barracks in Beirut, Lebanon,

Though the military versions have since seen action in the Gulf War, and are popular with police SWAT teams, the civilian .50 caliber—the Branch Dividian discovery notwithstanding - appears to have remained steadfastly recreational. Even enthusiasts believe its accuracy beyond 1,000 yards is exaggerated. Rock McMilfan, who makes some

of the most accurate .50s on the market, says: "If you offered me a million bucks to stand 1,500 yards out and let you take one shot at me with the .50 of your choice, I'd probably take it."



Barrett 82A1

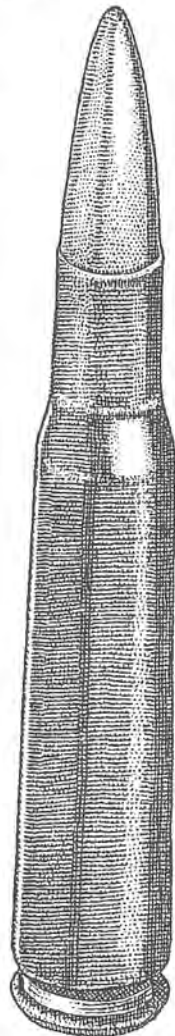
Old Old Guard 164th Top Guns - 1940

Spoke with Jim Fenelon last night and the gist of it was: who was on the last rifle team sent to the National Matches in Camp Perry, in 1940.

In those days North Dakota sent two teams, a National Guard team and a team composed of civilians. Upon arrival we were issued a brand new match rifle and one of the new M1's

We were there for three weeks, shooting each day except for three days of rigorous training. All of us were trying to make the President's 100. (The best 100 rifle shots in the U.S.A. I missed it by one point, as did probably a couple of hundred others! It was a great disappointment for the medals were supposed to be of pure gold.

I was just a green farm kid at the time and was impressed by the leadership of Captain Jeffrey and Art Timboe. We all got along well except for one incident. McLaughlin came home drunk from Toledo in the middle of the night and woke us up by tipping over our cots. As our canvas cots had crossed legs, (where we stored our rifles) damage was done on the cement floor and zero's had to be reset. The next morning was a Sunday, and after reading the Sunday papers we took revenge. Mac was passed out on his cot so we tied him securely with our rifle slings. Next we piled the crumpled newspapers in the center of the tent floor, (it was concrete) lit them, after pulling the tent sides down securely to darken the tent. Outside, we began kicking on the board sides, yelling fire! fire! fire! McLaughlin woke up to see four foot flames. Needless to say he did some screaming. (thank the Lord he had a strong heart!) After that episode we had no further problems. (from him!)



If anyone that serviced a .50 Caliber MG in WWII doubts the size of this illustration, measure it.



Am enclosing this picture of the team and members as follows: Top row, left to right: Art Timboe, Meline, Shuler, Walker, Bride, Amundson, Shirley, Jeffrey. Kneeling: Eidum, Smith, Poe, Jarr, Krum, McLaughlin. Charles Walker.

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Local thunderstorms occurred almost daily. They produced torrential

showers which left behind a thick gray-black mud. These muddy surfaces dried quickly in the heat and a fine dust came up, especially on the airfields and on the roads.

When the moon was full one could read the large newspaper print and distinguish colors. The full moon was most helpful for fighting at night.

The Guadalcanal Melanesians were once head hunters and cannibals. They were not known for their beauty. They possessed a primitive civilization which had changed during European colonization. During World War II the Melanesians were helpful allies to the Americans. The number of Japanese killed by them will never be known but was considerable.

Guadalcanal was the next to the last island in the southern end of the two chains of the Solomon Islands which border the "Slot." Tulagi, a small island off the southern coast of Florida Island was the seat of the previous British Solomon Islands government. It had the best natural harbor for naval vessels in the Solomons.

The maps available in 1942 were very inaccurate. For example, Mount Austen was placed farther inland than where it was by 1,000 yards. In addition, the Ilu River was incorrectly named the Tenaru River.

On 17 July 1942 two Marine officers flew a B-17 of the 21st Squadron, 11th Bombardment Group from Port Moresby. They made a reconnaissance flight over Guadalcanal and Tulagi, and brought back a "strip" map of the Guadalcanal coast, between Koli Point and the Matanikau River. On returning to their base they had a running fight with Zeros based at Tulagi.

JAPANESE PRELUDE TO BATTLE

In the early spring of 1942 the Japanese fleet was at peak strength, having added to it the world's two mightiest battleships—the Yamato and her sister ship the Musashi. Both had a displacement of 64,000 tons. Each of these giants had nine 18-inch guns.

On 29 April 1942 the Japanese Fifth Carrier Division and Fifth Cruiser Division reached Truk. Admiral Inouye had already begun the Port Moresby operation and the southern Solomon Island invasion. He moved his headquarters from Truk to Rabaul.

On 3 May 1942 a Japanese naval force occupied Tulagi and their Port Moresby and New Caledonia invasion force set "sail." By then the American navy intelligence had broken the Japanese code. In addition, the brilliant method of Lt. Commander Joseph Rochefort, using bi-directional ship plotting made it possible to detect movements of the Japanese fleet.

BREAKING THE JAPANESE CODE

A superb team of American cryptanalysts made up of scholars in such disciplines as mathematics and linguistics, found out that the Japanese used a most sophisticated cipher machine nicknamed "purple" by the Americans.

In March 1941 they finally broke the Japanese code. In spite of breaking the Japanese naval code the Pearl Harbor attack was not detected by the Americans.

Commander Joseph Rochefort, Chief of the Combat Intelligence Office and Commander Lawrence F. Safford, Chief of Security Intelligence of Naval Communication worked together in Washington. They were long time associates and friends. These men, with Lt. Commander Joseph Finnegan, a translator of Japanese and Jasper Holmes, Professor of Mathematics (University of Hawaii) were able to plot the Japanese fleet location to within 300 miles.

THE USE OF TWO DIRECTIONAL PLOTTING

By 1 March 1942 Lt. Commander Rochefort of the U.S. Navy was able to plot almost every Japanese ship within three or four hundred miles of their exact location in the Pacific Ocean. With this information in the hands of Admiral Nimitz, the Admiral was able to anticipate Japanese navy ship accumulations and monitor all Japanese naval activities.

The select group of code breakers used a group of highly skilled radio operators. They were chief petty officers and enlisted men with the unusual ability to analyze communication circuits. These men sorted out, and made interpretations of a multitude of Japanese radio call signals. They were able to recognize individual Japanese radio operators by their transmission habits; such as slow, rapid or medium. They were able to associate the transmitters habits with the sending touch of light, heavy or in-between. Thus, they had the "sending finger prints" of each Japanese radio operator. Using two-directional plotting of the Japanese radio signals the Americans were able to "pin-point" the Japanese ships at all times. Thus the cryptologist prepared Adm. Nimitz with daily information leading to the Coral Sea battle.

In late May 1942 Adm. Nimitz was supplied a tremendous amount of data to prepare him for the most significant U.S.A. sea battle fought at Midway. Although, from 3-6 June 1942 the Americans destroyed four Japanese carriers with 253 planes and 3,500 men; the Guadalcanal battle was still a "shoestring" battle.

Admiral Nimitz was prepared and ready to fight the Coral (Solomon) Sea battle; later, the Midway battle and the six great Japanese-American naval battles off the Guadalcanal coast. The United States Navy continued to

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utilize the Japanese code until the code was changed in April 1943 due to the unfortunate leak by one of our generals. A leak so significant that Adm. King wanted the general court-martialed and retired from the service.

Later, Adm. King again incorrectly blamed a prominent person; this time a reporter from the Chicago Tribune. It was embarrassing to be informed that your own navy pilots discussed the planned death of Adm. Yamamoto during inter-plane communication flying in the Solomons. More embarrassing to Adm. King because our British allies had to inform him of these facts. "A hard bullet to bite."

THE JAPANESE MOVE INTO TULAGI

The Japanese set up a naval seaplane base at Tulagi with its deep and excellent harbor. They had an anti-aircraft battery, and a company of communication personnel to operate a high-powered radio station. Later, 12 Kawanishi water pontoon planes and 12 float Zero fighters arrived.

When the Japanese seized Tulagi, 300 miles south of Bougainville, their action indicated that they were preparing for an advance down the Solomon Archipelago to invade the three groups of southern islands; New Caledonia, the Fiji Islands, and the Samoa Islands. If consummated this would have severed the communication and supply lines between the United States, Australia, and New Zealand. Plans to disrupt this supply line to Australia and New Zealand had always been part of the Japanese High Command's overall army and navy plan, which of course was compromised by breaking their code.

The Japanese believed their own desire to defend their conquered territories was so strong that the Americans would refuse to pay the high price in "blood and bullion" to retake them. The Japanese greatly underestimated the Americans. The battle for Guadalcanal was the first of many to prove the Japanese wrong.

THE JAPANESE INVADE TULAGI

According to plan, on 28 April 1942 Rabaul based Japanese navy planes assaulted Tulagi, Gavutu and Tanambogo. Exactly 28 four-engined Kawanishi flying boats were used. The next day two Tulagi based Australian Catalinas were hit.

After several days of Japanese air raids, on 2 May 1942, the prearranged Australian war signal STAIKE AND AIGGS (steak and eggs) was sent by radio. This signaled the departure of the Australians from Tulagi except for those in the coastwatching service. The coastwatchers were, and continued to be, the eyes, ears, and radar of the U.S. and Allied navies.

When a Japanese landing invasion of Tulagi was imminent the few remaining Australian and British

individuals on the island such as government officers, civilians, and a small body of Australian soldiers and R.A.A.F. personnel were evacuated.

The Japanese Imperial Staff's plan was to seize Port Moresby in New Guinea, as soon as possible, in order to improve their stronghold. On 3 May 1942 Rear Adm. Goto slid down the "Slot" and occupied Tulagi. Capturing it safeguarded the Port Moresby flanks. Commander Minoru Yanno was in command. Adm. Goto landed the Japanese 3rd Kure Special Navy Landing Force (SNLF). More than 500 army troops, the Okohama Air Group and 1,000 civilian conscript laborers were landed from the mine layer Okinoshima in Tulagi, unopposed. In addition, the Japanese 20th Air Force became based at Tulagi. Capt. Masao Tsunomura was in command of the 13th Naval Construction Force (similar to American "Seabees").

The Japanese also occupied the Islands of Gavutu with a company, commanded by Lt. Maroyama. Tulagi was occupied by a company commanded by Lt. Yoshimoto and for a short time the Japanese enjoyed a peaceful life. The same day 3 May 1942, Vice Admiral Inouye's Task Force sailed from Raboul for Port Moresby. The stage was set for the battle of the Coral Sea.

The next day on 4 May 1942 Rear Adm. Jack Fletcher sent the USS Yorktown's carrier task force to bomb Tulagi. They caught the Japanese by surprise and sank a destroyer, two transports, and two mine sweepers.

THE CORAL SEA BATTLE

Maj. Gen. Jonathan M. Wainwright of the Corregidor command had surrendered on 8 May 1942 and the Philippine Islands capitulated on 9 June 1942. The battle of the Coral Sea, or more correctly the Solomon Sea, took place on 6-7 May 1942, five months after Pearl Harbor. It was the first unplanned naval battle ever fought between two carrier fleets 235 miles apart. The Americans fighting at Corregidor "tied-up" more than 200,000 Japanese soldiers, marines and naval personnel. This was a tremendous contribution to the Pacific war effort.

Thanks to navy intelligence they predicted and plotted the Japanese New Guinea invasion fleet out from Rabaul. It was met by the United States Navy and turned back, resulting in the first Japanese withdrawal ever. Above all, the Coral Sea battle was the first United States Navy encounter with the Japanese since Pearl Harbor. Tactically it was a Japanese victory. However, strategically and psychologically, the battle was an American victory.

In more detail, on 6 May 1942 the first naval air battle between U.S. and Japanese aircraft carriers occurred. It was the first wartime major sea engagement between the American and Japanese fleets; it occurred far out of sight or radar contact from each other. The Japanese force, protected by three aircraft carriers, not only threatened the Allied Air Base at Port Moresby on the southeastern tip of New Guinea, but it was a serious threat to New

Caledonia as well. Success of the invasion would give the Japanese air superiority in the Coral Sea and a threat to cut the lifeline "down under." The American Task Force 17 and 16 included the carriers Lexington, Yorktown, and Hornet. The Enterprise was rushing to join the developing battle.

On 6 May 1942 the specific Coral Sea battle started when both fleets launched their fighters, dive bombers and torpedo bomber aircraft. Some 70 Japanese planes passed 83 American planes in the dense high tropical clouds without seeing each other. At 1100 hours each flight of aircraft swarmed down like hornets on their adversary's unprotected ships. For 45 minutes the aircraft engaged each other's floating armada. The battle broke off with a box score favoring the Japanese. The Yorktown and Lexington were hit, and later, the Lexington was sunk. Nevertheless the overall Coral Sea battle was forever a decisive check of the Japanese southward expansion into New Guinea and New Caledonia. Both their Port Moresby and New Caledonia invasions were permanently halted by the stiff resistance from the American navy.

Regular flights of American B-17 Flying Fortress bombers from Port Darwin produced only slight damage to the Tulagi air and sea base, but created a great deal of harassment. From Tulagi the Japanese sent patrols to Savo and Florida islands to barter for food (pigs, chickens, and game). Each day the Kawanishi planes left Tulagi at dawn to search out the Solomon Sea.

JAPANESE MOVE TO GUADALCANAL

During the height of the Midway battle on 4 June 1942, four weeks after occupying Tulagi, the Japanese crossed the Sealark Channel to Lunga Point, Guadalcanal. Their patrols searched Lunga Point, the Tenaru River area, Koli Point, and the Lever Brothers and Masuara coconut plantations. The Japanese machine-gunned grazing cattle, dressed the carcasses and transported the meat to Tulagi. At first, the Japanese used Guadalcanal as a base to secure native labor and fresh meat.

Moreover, in July 1942 approximately 400 Japanese engineers, using Korean laborers, started to build an airstrip. From this base the Japanese could strike at American convoys to Australia. Thus, a crystal clear intent was made to continue their advance down the Solomon archipelago. The Japanese engineers also built docks, light bridges, machine shops, radio stations, electrical power plants and hangars.

In late July the Japanese invaders noticed an unusual happening. The natives started to avoid the Japanese soldiers. By 10 August 1942 the Japanese would have completed their 3,600 foot airfield. This would be three days after the marines planned invasion of Guadalcanal.

Major Kenneth Weir, an air force officer assigned to

marine Maj. Gen. Alexander A. Vandegrift, suggested the name for the Guadalcanal airfield to honor Maj. Lofton B. Henderson, one of many marine pilots killed in the Midway battle. The Japanese runway was thus named Henderson Field. In the next six months the Japanese attacked the runways so many times that the runway was called "bull's eye."

The Japanese progress in building the airfield was reported daily by Australian coastwatchers to the Allied Pacific Command. This was done mainly through the efforts of Capt. Martin Clemens of the Solomon Islands' Constabulary Force. He had recruited 60 natives, scouts, and members of the local constabulary. One such scout was retired constable Sgt. Maj. Jacob Vouza; later to be awarded the American Silver Star and the Australian George Medal.

Capt. Clemens was a three-year veteran of the Solomon Islands campaign and his radio force was to prove a valuable addition to our activities in the Guadalcanal battle.

AMERICAN PRELUDE TO BATTLE

As early as 18 February 1942 Adm. Ernest J. King, Commander in Chief of the United States fleet, brought to the attention of Gen. George C. Marshall the dire need to secure and maintain communication lines from the States to Australia. He believed this could best be done by occupying New Caledonia and several islands in the South and Southwest Pacific. On 29 January 1942 United States Army troops occupied the Fiji Islands. On 12 March 1942 troops of Task Force 6814 arrived in New Caledonia to secure the island.

On 2 March 1942 Adm. King discussed his offensive and Pacific strategy. He summarized it in ten words: "Hold Hawaii, support Australia, and drive northwestward from the New Hebrides." Adm. King met in Washington, D.C. with Vice-Adm. Robert L. Ghormley. Adm. King had selected Adm. Ghormley as commander of the newly created South Pacific Force and area. On 18 October 1942 the command transferred to Adm. William Halsey. This extensive Pacific area was separated from the vast Pacific Ocean area assigned to Adm. Chester W. Nimitz. In detail, Adm. Ghormley's, and later Adm. Halsey's area included New Zealand, New Caledonia, New Hebrides, the southern Solomon group, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Phoenix, Society and their surrounding islands.

Adm. Ghormley had previously distinguished himself as an accomplished diplomat. He was suave. He was gentle, patient, and tactful. These qualities helped him deal with the New Zealand government and the volatile and recalcitrant Free and Vichy French in New Caledonia. His diplomatic assets became a credit to him and the navy.

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THE BATTLE

Guadalcanal will remain in military history forever as a bloody struggle on land, a vicious air battle, and a series of the most deadly naval action of modern times. The Americans remember it as a "shoestring battle." It lasted exactly six months and ended as rapidly as it started. Neither the Japanese Imperial Command, or the American Chiefs of Staff would have chosen this unheard of, so-called, "Devil's Island" for a battlefield. The continuous ground battle, the strategical air battle, and the six naval battles around Guadalcanal resulted in the death of more than 35,000 men. The rusting ship hull's in "iron bottom bay", created a grave yard for more than 70 large naval ships including two fleet carriers, two battle ships, three heavy cruisers, three light cruisers, six submarines, twenty-six destroyers, and numerous cargo and transport ships. Aircraft loss to Allies and Japanese exceeded 2,000. The Japanese lost 2,362 crew members alone.

Eight months after Pearl Harbor, the battle of Guadalcanal signaled the Japanese ultimate defeat yet to come. In Adm. Tanaka's ("Tokyo Express" fame) words: "The price of victory was expensive to the Allies. There was no question that Japan's doom was sealed at Guadalcanal." Adm. Kurita of the Imperial Japanese Navy believed "Guadalcanal was the battle that swung the war against Japan."

A NIGHTMARE

For the marines, and the army infantry who fought there, the battle was a nightmare of almost constant bombardment from land, sea, and air. It was a sheer hell. It was a vivid continuous, never relenting fight. It was fought in a disease ridden, insect infected jungle, surrounded by shark infested waters.

For the men who fought this battle, there was a deep, deep sense of pride. A strange and strong bond developed between the warriors, especially in the deeds and super human efforts of those who fought this battle. The Americans found the Japanese fought according to no code the Americans understood. The Japanese were talented, skilled, and tricky; they were extremely effective soldiers to dread.

A LONG AND BLOODY ROAD

To the Americans the road to conquest of the Japanese Empire would be long and bloody, most of all expensive in lives. The victory at Guadalcanal, for the Americans, meant removal of the menace to the extremely long communication lines from the United States to both Australia and New Zealand. The American forces based in Guadalcanal now were at the flank of the Palau-Truk-

Marshall Island line, the main front door of the Japanese Empire.

The military importance of the Guadalcanal Campaign could not be judged by cold statistics of men killed or maimed or ships sunk, aircrafts down or prisoners taken. It was the future, ultimate effect of the Guadalcanal battle as portion of a much larger sequential series of battles leading to the ultimate Japanese defeat.

THE INTENSITY OF BATTLE

Today, every Guadalcanal Campaign veteran, American or Japanese alike, can close their eyes and imagine the intense battle. One hears the clash of arms, machine gun fire, mortar and grenade explosions on the beaches and in the jungles. They hear the thunder of exploding bombs.

They hear the vibrations and whine of war planes and exploding flashes of anti-aircraft bursts. In their foxholes, high in the hills, they had a front row seat to the offshore naval battles. They felt the exploding vibrations from naval guns and witnessed the flashes of the battleship guns.

During the six months of the Guadalcanal battle, there occurred six large surface naval battles that were fought, and more than 70 combat ships sunk, almost four times the combat ships sunk at Pearl Harbor. These six strategical naval battles were Savo Island, Eastern Solomons Cape Esperance, Santa Cruz, Guadalcanal, and Tassafaronga.

The Japanese aircraft losses were staggering. Their naval Air Force lost upward of 1,800 planes and 2,362 first class pilots and crewmen. The words of Maj. Gen. Kawaguchi stated: "The Japanese Army was not the only service buried in a grave yard on Guadalcanal." The surrounding waters especially Sealark, Nigera, and Lengo Channels contain the graves of more than 70 ships, and men estimated at 35,000, including the five Sullivan brothers killed aboard the USS Juneau on 14 November 1942. (After this tragedy the Armed Forces did not allow brothers to serve on the same ship or in the same theatre of operations.)

The bitter battle fought by Americans and Japanese brought forth to the Japanese High Command the unpleasantness of defeat, and to shatter their dreams of a timeless empire that now started to self-destruct. The Japanese received some consolation in that they removed 14,000 men from Cape Esperance during February 1943. Initially, those men were removed unknown to the Americans and survived to fight the Americans in Bougainville and, later in the Philippine Islands.

SUPPORTING THE COMMITMENT

President Franklin D. Roosevelt was extremely anxious about the likely loss of Guadalcanal. He wrote

an urgent message to Adm. William D. Leahy, Adm. Ernest J. King, Gen. George C. Marshall and Gen. Henry H. Arnold. The President wanted them "to make sure that every possible weapon gets in that area to hold Guadalcanal, and having held it in this crisis, that munitions and planes and crews be on the way to take advantage of our success."

On 6 October 1942 Gen. Millard F. Harmon expressed his firm personal conviction that the Japanese were capable of retaking Guadalcanal and would do so in the very near future. To prevent this, American air, ground, and naval forces had to be greatly increased. Gen. Harmon knew the Americans needed reinforcement and needed them now. Thus a Japanese offensive would be extremely costly to the enemy should they attempt one.

Because of this urgent need Gen. Harmon proposed to Adm. Robert L. Ghormley the immediate shipping to Guadalcanal of one army regimental combat team, the 164th Infantry of the Americal Division. Thank God! Adm. Ghormley agreed; otherwise the marines may have been pushed off Guadalcanal. The Imperial Japanese Command also had their plans to reinforce Guadalcanal. In spite of the Midway losses the Japanese made available more aircraft and a larger fleet, to insure victory at Guadalcanal and this victory almost occurred. The American fighting men were at their lowest ebb but they would not quit - never !!!

On 13 October 1942 the 164th Infantry arrived at Lunga Point to reinforce the "worn-down" 3rd Marines. The regiment had been commanded for less than a month by the recently appointed Col. Bryant E. Moore, a United States Military Academy Graduate.

This very same day was selected by the Japanese for their assault. The 164th Infantry received their baptism of fire by 37 Japanese bombers. The enemy planes attacked Henderson Field, Red Beach, and Edsons Ridge. In addition the Japanese artillery welcomed the 164th Infantry with a continuous artillery barrage using 105-mm howitzers. Finally, the Japanese battleships Haruna and Kongo bombarded Henderson Field for 80 minutes; more than 918 rounds exploded on and adjacent to Henderson Field.

Gen. Alexander A. Vandegrift immediately ordered the 164th Infantry into the defense perimeter around Henderson Field. Prior to midnight, a Japanese cruiser plane lit up the American perimeter as a target for a shelling from two Japanese battleships, several heavy cruisers and numerous destroyers. It appeared the Japanese ruled the seas around Guadalcanal. They fired on Henderson Field and the adjacent fighter strips for more than an hour. Various size shells were used, up to 14 inch. This first day ashore for the 164th Infantry was a most trying experience. It was a time when the Japanese had everything going for them, and it was the darkest point in American naval history. The regiment suffered severe casualties from the bombardment.

On 15 October 1942 in plain slant of the Americans at Lunga Point, five Japanese transports and 11 escorting Japanese warships were seen ten miles away at Tassafaronga unloading troops, weapons, supplies and ammunition. Unfortunately for the Americans, the Guadalcanal (Cactus) Air Force was without fuel. This would never happen again. On 18 October 1942 Adm. "Bull" Halsey replaced Adm. Ghormley. The entire Pacific War battle took on a new look.

On the night of 23 October 1942 the Japanese 2d Division, commanded by Lt. Gen. Massao Maruyama, started a fierce three-day attack to penetrate the American lines around Henderson Field. Fortunately for the Americans the enemy's "piece-meal" attack was poorly coordinated and executed. The Japanese attacked with tanks at the Matanikau River. All the tanks were destroyed by the marines, and in addition, the marines killed 2,000 Japanese.

On 25 and 26 October 1942 the Japanese 29th Infantry Regiment again attacked at a point east of Edsons' Ridge. The marines defended the right perimeter sector and the 164th Infantry occupied the left flank. The Army Infantry had the automatic Garand M-1 Rifle. The marines had the old bolt loading Springfield 1903 rifle. The Japanese for the first time encountered American army troops all using semi-automatic weapons.

The Americans allowed the Japanese to penetrate our lines and then mowed them down with machine guns and automatic rifles. The intense fire power was evident to the Japanese. On 26th October the Japanese 16th Infantry Regiment attacked with support of Col. Oka's unit of the 124th Infantry Regiment. After losing more than 2,000 men Gen. Maruyama broke off the assault.

On the morning of 26 October a strong Japanese fleet engaged Adm. William F. Halsey's fleet in the Battle of the Santa Cruz Island. Carrier planes on both sides engaged each other's surface fleet by long range. The Americans lost the carrier Hornet. The only remaining American carrier in the area was the big "E" (Enterprise). Unfortunately, it was badly damaged and since 24 August 1942 was undergoing repairs in Noumea.

The Japanese' greatest losses were their well trained, first rate pilots and their superior aircraft. The American carrier based planes were now forced to use Henderson Field. This provided an unexpectedly large number of American aircraft for use against the Japanese on and around Guadalcanal and their presence was directly related to the Guadalcanal victory; it gave the land troops the needed air superiority.

On 12 November 1942 the First and Second Battalions of the 182d Infantry landed on Guadalcanal. Simultaneously, the Japanese attempted to reinforce their troops. Four days before, the Japanese landed the 225th Infantry Regiment of the 38th Division in the Kokumbona area.

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The night of 12 November 1942 a strong Japanese battleship force attempted to neutralize Henderson Field and the fighter strips.

They met a force of five American cruisers and eight destroyers under the command of Rear Adm. Daniel J. Callaghan. The American losses were severe. Many cruisers were sunk or hit. This American defeat was kept from the American people until after the war. It was our navy's most severe defeat. During this naval battle on 12-15 November five Sullivan brothers of Waterloo, Iowa, perished when the USS Juneau was sunk.

On 14 November both the Japanese and American navies were reinforced. This was the Japanese greatest and last effort to retake Guadalcanal. To meet the Japanese threat, the Americans added two battleships and an additional destroyer escort.

THE WAR SITUATION ELSEWHERE

While the Americal Division fought on Guadalcanal, in Europe the siege of Leningrad was broken by the Russian Red Army offensive. In the Pacific Theater, the Allied ground forces under Gen. Douglas MacArthur destroyed two strong Japanese positions in Sanananda, New Guinea. In North Africa, the British Libyan Army was within 100 miles of Tripoli. Meanwhile in the United States a special House of Representatives Committee was formed to investigate rationing and related problems.

THE SITUATION ON GUADALCANAL

In October 1942 the Japanese combined forces came extremely close to permanently destroying American air strength on Guadalcanal and defeating the ground marine and army troops. The combined Chiefs of Staff and President Franklin D. Roosevelt started to belittle the "BEAT GERMANY FIRST POLICY." They diverted vital and necessary war munitions, weapons, and equipment to the Pacific. In addition they revised the "Top Brass" commanders performance. On 18 October 1942 Adm. Robert L. Ghormley was replaced by Adm. William F. Halsey, Jr., an aggressive commander with an audacious spirit to impregnate his entire command. He did provide the judgement and leadership to eventually defeat the Japanese, not only at Guadalcanal, but later throughout the Pacific.

Watch for: **Stop-The Jap November Counter Offensive**, in the next issue.



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