

THE WOUNDINGS OF A CARTRIDGE

(Phil File)"In July 1943, we were alerted to move out with less than twenty-four hours notice. Camp was struck and we trucked down the highway to the loading area. We passed under a banner stretched across the road, between two trees, with the legend painted on it, to the best of my memory: "The Infantry, King of the Highway, Queen of Battles. Down this road marched forty of her men who were shot, clubbed, and bayoneted as they lay wounded on hospital stretchers." Just the right note to set the tone for a new campaign.

"Reaching the beach, we were ferried to a low slung naval vessel which we were informed was an APD - a converted destroyer. There were no berthing spaces; it was every man for himself on the open deck.. Shortly after dark, we moved out and were soon cutting through the water at near flank speed. There was no rail at the decks edge and the lee deck was soon awash. Men who had opted for sleeping space there were forced to move to higher, drier space-crowding things considerably. There was a certain amount of grumbling from the first troops but everyone gradually settled down into an uneasy sleep.

"Before daylight (1 Aug.) we were in the New Georgia group and landed on the island of Sasavella. In the dark, without guides, we stumbled through the water, stepping into holes in the coral that must have been ten, or twelve feet deep. When daylight came we fanned out and made certain the islet was unoccupied. We were then ferried over to the island of New Georgia.

(Bill Weidle)"After our campaign on the Canal was over we went into a brief training period part of which consisted of coast watcher training plus further training, which had started in Hawaii, on enemy weapons. The coast watcher training was conducted under the direction of the Coast Watcher Unit, at Kokumbona, for different units plus the 3d Marines. After we had been trained in these skills we made a raid, by a New Zealand Corvette, T.O2, to Florida Island, which was cancelled en route. We then went to a part of the Canal where the enemy was

MGen Robert Beightler (*left*), commanding the 37th Infantry Division, confers with Col James Dalton (*center*), commanding the 161st Infantry Regiment, and Maj Francis Carberry (*extreme right*), commanding the 2nd Battalion, 161st Infantry. August 3, 1943.

(Official Signal Corps Photo)



already taken care of them. After a week of scouting and fishing with grenades, the corvette returned and picked us up. When we returned we extended the special training to the rest of the Regiment. I guess Wolfhounds could do anything.

"We were ordered to pack only combat gear and, boarding troop carrying destroyers, were rushed to the New Georgia mess. We were scheduled for landing at Sassevella, but were put on an unnamed island by mistake. At noon two C.T.s came for us and we crossed the channel to Sassevella under heavy enemy air attack. Fortunately, we incurred no casualties. On 2 Aug., we boarded another craft and headed for New Georgia - under a great air cover of Army and Navy planes."

The Tropic Lightning was scheduled for Bougainville; however, as on Guadalcanal, the High Command had underestimated the enemy's strength and determination; General Harmon alerted the 27th Infantry, for movement to New Georgia, and that the 25 Division be taken off the Bougainville schedule. Advance elements of the Wolfhounds and Division Hqs. landed on Sasavalle Island before daylight 1 Aug. 1943, and the Japs bombed and strafed the landing and unloading ops, but no casualties resulted. On 2 Aug., the Rgt. moved to New Georgia. The line, from the coast north was comprised of the 43 and 37 Div.s. Ten miles further north a provisional rgt. of the 1 Btn. 4 Marines and three btn.s of the 145 and 148 Inf. was located at Enogai Inlet. The Wolfhounds were moved to the right flank (north) of XIV Corps and were charged with its protection. Love Co. set up a series of outposts along Baxter Trail and on the east-west trail perpendicular to the Corps' right flank.

Col. Douglas Sugg commanded the 27th until a few days before the move, when he fell ill and was hospitalized, being replaced by L/Col. George Bush, until his return to duty 12 Aug. Patrols in force were immediately sent north to clear out the enemy and contact T/F Liversedge, the combined force at Enogai Inlet, where it had withdrawn after a costly attempt to storm Bairoko Harbor.

Battalion, with Anti-Tank Company attached, jumped off along the Bairoko Trail toward Mount Bao. The Third Battalion started up the Zieta Trail, leaving the Second Battalion in reserve. When the First Battalion had proceeded some 500 yards north of RJ-W, they encountered resistance in force. The Third Battalion ran into the same thing at Twin Hills.

Company B tried to reduce the enemy strong point after a barrage by 37-mm. anti-tank guns and heavy machine guns, but the well-hidden enemy lines couldn't be penetrated. On the following day Company C attacked forward, but heavy fire from the entrenched Japanese reduced the effectiveness of the drive. On the Zieta Trail the Third Battalion made an attack on Twin Hills. Company K pushed toward the high ground to the right of the saddle between the two hills, while Company L was on the left. The initial assault was successful, and both companies gained their objective, although contact was not immediately made in the saddle.

Early on 6 August Companies L and I secured the saddle between Twin Hills and the Battalion was ready to move cross-country to Zieta. At 1600 Company L moved generally northwest up the Zieta Trail for approximately 600 yards unopposed where they established a trail block. The following day the remainder of the Battalion moved up to join Company L, disposing of several snipers enroute. In order to locate a route to Zieta and to maintain contact with the enemy, Companies I and L again moved out ahead of the Battalion, this time to a small banana grove almost 1,600 yards in advance of the remaining units. Still no opposition was met.

Meanwhile, the First Battalion was still held up by a Japanese strong point on the Bairoko Trail. After a visit by the Division Commander, it was decided to send Companies A and C around the enemy position to carry out the original mission, while the remaining elements were to contain the enemy within their own strong point. At 0700, 7 August, Company A, with Company C following started north toward Mount Bao.

At 1300 mortars and 75-mm. guns unloosed a barrage on the enemy in the by-passed strong point. A Company B platoon assaulted on the right flank, and the Japanese position was eliminated. Headquarters, B, D, and Anti-tank Companies then moved up the trail to join the leading companies bivouacing in an area recently abandoned by the enemy.

ineers battled "General Mud" from one end of New Georgia to the other. This picture was taken on the Zieta Trail.



A 25th Division MP directs traffic in a morass of mud "somewhere on New Georgia."

The Second Battalion, still in reserve, spent the night in the vicinity of Twin Hills.

First Battalion operations on the eighth of August consisted of patrol action, but in the Zieta Trail area the Second Battalion passed through the Third to take the lead in the drive northward. At about 1430 the leading scouts of Company G entered a deep ravine flanked on both sides by precipitous ridges paralleling the trail. At this point Company G came under intense enemy fire. Company F ascended the ridge to the left in an effort to skirt the Japanese flank. A patrol from Company G tried the other side. Both were stopped, and an all-around defense was set up for the night.

At 0930 next morning Company E and Company F launched a coordinated frontal attack. After advancing 150 yards Company E, on the right of the trail, ran into enemy fire as they were moving up the slope of a hill. On 10 August Company I and a platoon of Company K circled the enemy left flank in an endeavor to relieve pressure on Company E, but automatic fire and the denseness of the jungle growth retarded the attack, and the Japanese momentarily held the upper hand.

While Company E was pinned down in their attack of 9 August, Companies F, G, Headquarters, and H moved southwest, followed a compass course cross-country parallel to the Zieta Trail, and succeeded in by-passing the enemy. At 1430 Company F surprised the outer defenses of a Japanese strong point near the top of a ridge perpendicular to their front. The Battalion almost scored a break-through, but darkness intervened and a defensive position was taken up.

On the morning of the tenth the Second Battalion withdrew approximately 300 yards, and for the remainder of the day, the artillery adjusted and fired concentrations on the enemy positions. Then at 1730 on 11 August the Battalion again pushed forward in an attempt to envelope the right

flank of the resistance. After advancing about 300 yards, a grenade barrage followed by heavy rifle and machine gun fire halted the attack. The Japanese launched a counter-attack on Company F's right flank.

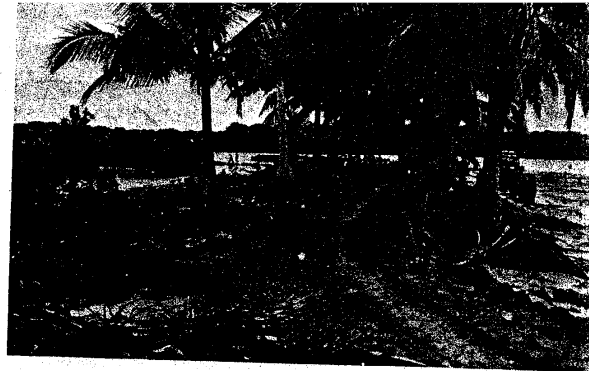
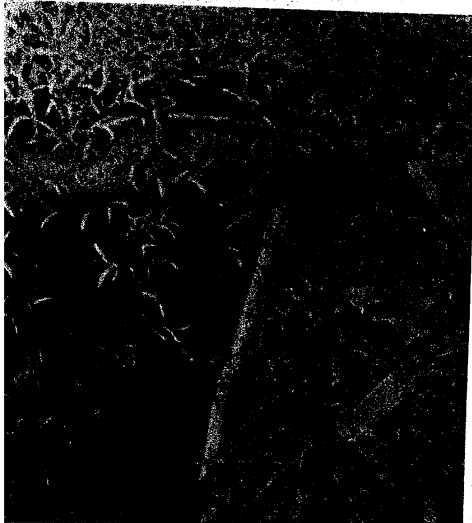
The enemy attack was repulsed, and throughout the day the Battalion made repeated pushes against the well-defended Japanese lines. Casualties were inflicted on both sides, but no advance was made. The Battalion dug in for the night scarcely a dozen yards from the enemy lines. At 0400 Japanese threw stones at opposing front line troops.

During the same day, in the Third Battalion's sector, Companies E, I, and part of K attacked toward Zieta Trail. The aggressive move drove the Japanese back, but initial successes were not followed through as the Battalion waited for tanks to join the attack. By the time the tanks had maneuvered into position, the initiative had been lost, so the companies dug in on the ground gained in the first rush.

While the Second and Third Battalions were fighting their way along the Zieta Trail, a patrol of the First Battalion had contacted the Fourth Marine Raiders, and at 1730 of 9 August, the Battalion was attached to the 161st Infantry for the move on Bairoko Harbor. The First Battalion remained with the 161st throughout the remainder of the campaign, sending out scores of patrols in an effort to locate the fleeing Japanese. On 24 August the Battalion arrived at Bairoko Inlet to find the enemy evacuated. They then joined in the coordinated defense established by the Marine-Army merger along the New Georgia shores.

In the interim the Zieta affair continued to be a stiff fight. Just before dawn on 12 August the Second Battalion withdrew 600 yards, while Companies I and K of the Third Battalion pulled back to the vicinity of their Battalion bivouac. This was the signal for an artillery barrage which

Japanese bomb shelter located in Zieta Village.



Railroad tracks running along a narrow peninsula leading from Piru Plantation to the sea.

covered the entire area held by the enemy. Company E, meanwhile, had rejoined the Second Battalion.

In order to take full advantage of the effects of the artillery fire, a coordinated attack by the two battalions was ordered. At noon the Third Battalion attacked parallel to and on either side of the Zieta Trail. The Second Battalion pushed their offensive along the high ground to the left of the trail, maintaining contact with the Third Battalion.

Upon reaching the area of previous enemy resistance, it was found that the Japanese had withdrawn; immediate pursuit was begun by the Third Battalion. Later in the afternoon they again encountered resistance along the trail. In the meantime the Second Battalion had assembled in the vicinity of the Zieta River and were placed in reserve.

While the Third Battalion carried the fight forward, the Second Battalion area was by no means void of action. In order to protect the flank and rear of the Third Battalion, a platoon from Company H placed a block across the trail to the north and west of the resistance encountered westward to the sea. This trail was evidently an important enemy supply and evacuation route as on the first night the platoon killed all members of a seven-man carrying party.

On 14 August another platoon from the same Company relieved the initial unit on the trail block. Shortly after midnight a party of Japanese, estimated at 200, established a bivouac a short distance from the H Company platoon. At dawn on August 15th the enemy force broke camp and moved down the trail directly into the block. Taken by complete surprise, the leading Japanese were methodically destroyed by machine gun fire.

After the initial setback, the enemy launched vigorous attacks and completely encircled the platoon. Five and a half hours of continuous fighting ensued until the surrounded platoon was left with but two hand grenades and a few rounds of ammunition. Communications had been cut, so, not being aware that reinforcements were coming, the platoon fought its way through the enemy ring and returned to the Battalion. At the cost of two men killed and seven wounded, the platoon had killed 60 Japanese by actual count, and wounded many others.

In the Third Battalion's advance of 12 August, they were preceded by two tanks. After 200 yards the first tank became hopelessly stuck in the New Georgia mud.

8-11

3

4

new
Georgia





Mail call is a big event for tired, homesick infantrymen.

Continuing down the shelf, he reached a point within 50 yards of the Japanese position and from there radioed firing data to the battalion's 81mm mortars. But though the mortar rounds fell near enough to shower him and the nearby men of Easy and Fox with dirt, rock chips and fragments, the enemy's guns continued to fire and our infantry remained pinned down, the water gone, the vitality draining out of their innards.

All night long Davis, the battalion executive officer, stayed in his exposed position looking for a way out of the dilemma. He knew as long as the deadlock existed the Japanese would be furiously hurling reinforcements into the jungle front.

In the morning, six volunteers from Easy Company worked their way to within 25 yards of the enemy but were driven off by two of their number killed. Davis then returned from his vantage



A weapons platoon of the 3rd Battalion, eyes peeled for Japs, advances warily along the Zieta Trail in the steaming jungle of New Georgia.

First Btn. Ops

Message Center operates near Munda, New Georgia.



The 1 Btn., with the AT Co. attached, jumped off along the Bairoko Trail toward Mt. Bao. Baker Co. tried to reduce an enemy strongpoint - following a barrage of 37 AT fire and heavy machine gun fire, but could neither penetrate or reduce the well hidden enemy strong point. On 5 Aug., C Co. was committed but couldn't make any contribution.

(File)"I was sent to patrol a trail we landed astride of. About 800 yards from the beach we came upon the bodies of a patrol that had been ambushed by the Nips. I don't recall how many were there, about a half dozen. What did impress me was the fact that, although these G.I.s had been dead only about two days, their rifles were already rusty and inoperable. Each rifle had fired the first round and then jammed. I emphasized this on my men for keeping their weapons clean."

The Regimental plan was, 1 Btn., commanded by L/Col Joe Ryneska, with the A.T. Co. attached, to proceed north along the Bairoko Trail to Mt. Bao and then on to the North Coast. Second and Third Btn.s, commanded by L/Col. Ben Evans Jr. and Mjr. Charles Davis, would follow the Zieta Trail then proceed to Sunday Inlet to deny the enemy use of Diamond Narrows. These plans were greatly influenced by CICSOPAC maps which proved inaccurate and misleading.

The landing was on Laiana Beach and moved off to the Parachute Drop

Lion Blue 3 Btn..

On the morning of 7 Aug., Lightning Forward sent out a Fijian patrol to recon the area around Zieta. They returned at 1000, 9 Aug. and reported that many Jap trails were crossed showing much travel to the NE. An enemy transport patrol of 20 men was seen headin south-easterly, apparently for Zieta, carrying large boxes of supplies. A few pillboxxes were encountered on the Zieta Trail and approximately one company of Japs were digging in along a river north of Zieta. Further, on 7 Aug., the banana plantation observed from Love Company's bivouac may be Zieta. No opposition, other than sniper fire was encountered and seven enemy have been killed.

By 21 Aug., a Rgtl. Recon patrol was led by Lt. Koontz and succeeded in blazing a trail from about a point 3000 yds. north and slightly west of Zieta to the high ground on the east edge of Piru Plantation and nearly opposite Cutters Point. Lion White is following this trail. Schultz' Btn. has two pltns. at the wharf on Lulu Channel to the west of Zieta.

8159 * On the night of 20/21 Aug. five enemy barges left Bairoko Harbor at 0115. They were engaged by PT's with unknown results. The PT's were subjected to heavy fire from shore batteries on Arundel and Vila.

area (A SOUTH-NORTH LINE EAST OF BIRILO HILL). THE SQUADS MOVED
out and the 1 Btn. encountered resistance in force 500 yards north of
RJ-W (road junction W).

(Joe Koontz) "I do recall the wiping out of an AT Platoon crew - including Lt. Clark, Platoon leader, who had been moved up to support the
1 Btn. on Hill W. I was there five minutes before the crew arrived - tugging and pushing their gun thru the foliage. I was standing on the trail looking toward the Jap strongpoint when instinct told me to get down just as the AT gun was pushed past me to be moved into position, when a long burst of machine gun fire, which would have gone thru me to the crew, flattened them. They were wiped out to a man."

Item Co. had been assigned establishment of a road block north of RJ-W and were pinned down by an enemy machine gun force of company size. First Btn. moved out at 0830, 4 Aug., with an AT Co., up along the Bairoko Trail, toward Mt. Bao. The 3 Btn. started up the Zieta Trail with the 2 Btn. in reserve. After making contact with I Co., Baker Co. was designated assault company on the enemy emplacement; however, penetration of the enemy position failed and the Btn. moved into a cordon defense position at 1400; 37 mm AT and heavy machine gun fire had been used during this assault, but this had not helped either. The next day Charlie Co. enveloped the enemy's left flank and, tho they could not penetrate the Jap position, they did make contact with Able Co. B Co. went on defense preparatory to a night of arty fire to the north.

(File)"Our next move was up the trail behind Munda Airfield. We were disappointed to learn that to someone else would go the glory of capturing Munda. We had a New Zealander with us leading a patrol of Fiji Scouts who had a fearsome reputation as skilled woodsmen. It was a bit of an annoyance to them when I would show up in their midst without an invitation, and without detection. They were scouting ahead of us and at a place on the trail, marked "Point W (RJ-W) on the map, they encountered enemy positions which they reported as light. After three days of bitter fighting we took the position to find it consisted

HEADQUARTERS 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION
Forward Echelon

1584
12 August 1943

C O N F I D E N T I A L

G-2 Report

From: 1200 11 Aug 43

To: 1200 12 Aug 43

No. 7

Map: CICSOPAC Photo Map (Group of 4)

1. Enemy situation at end of period:

- a. 11 Aug 43, SCHULTZ's Combat Patrol, leading his Bn. by 600 yards, met Nip defensive positions astride trail with 400 to 500 yard front facing North. (Sheet G - 81.3 - 46.5). Patrol drew no fire but saw Nips in position and spent time in finding the flanks. Patrol will hold position they are now at and prevent any Japs from getting out to the NW.
- b. Two Tanks are ready to advance on ZIETA Trail resistance following this morning's Artillery barrage. LION Blue reports 15 Nips killed, and 1 light MG captured, plus maps and documents.
- c. A patrol sent out by the 43rd Div. around LULU CHANNEL, SWAGI CHANNEL, DIAMOND NARROW, and BAANGA ISLAND, ran across 6 Japs at BAANGA ISLAND.
- d. PT boats off KOLUMBANGARA sunk two (2) 100 foot barges.

2. Enemy Activities:

- a. Continued resistance along ZIETA Trail.
- b. OP at BAIROKO sighted 2, possibly 4 Nip barges at 2250 moving out of BAIROKO HARBOR in the direction of ARUNDEL ISLAND. Lost sight of barges at 2305.
- c. 9 Aug 43, a photographic plane covering NEW GEORGIA reported lights and flashes at reef SW of FERGUSON PASSAGE at 0750. At 0815 there was activity in BAIROKO HARBOR with patrol boats going in and out.

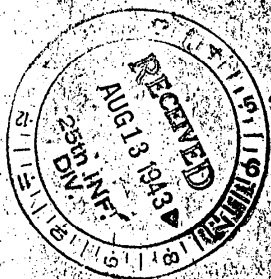
3. Patrol Reports:

- a. Lt Koontz patrol contacted SCHULTZ 11 Aug 43 and is proceeding on to PIRU Plantation area.

4. Enemy Capabilities:

1. Continued resistance covering trails.
2. Rear Guard defense activity covering withdrawal northward and westward.
3. Resistance at ZIETA.
4. Organized resistance at BAIROKO.
5. Withdrawal and Evacuation at BAIROKO.

John A. Burden
JOHN A. BURDEN,
MAJOR, A. U. S.
Acting G-2



5-2 e-5

of over fifty well camouflaged positions. I took the optical sight off a Nambu in a position where the gunner had made 12 mud dolls and set them on the edge of his hole. That was how many men we had lost in front of that position. He had a tunnel field of fire, which was not visible to a standing person and, when you stepped in front of the fire lane, he would shoot the legs out from under you. I found the position accidentally while crawling forward. I poked my head into the fire lane and saw the gun before he saw me. I got myself out of that fire lane p.d.q.

"When we brought up one of the 37mm AT guns and started blasting the Nip positions at near point blank range they left post haste. We moved up the trail after them. The map showed it as a road to Bairoka Harbor; but, it was just a trail to be travelled single file. Our logistic support was again the cannibal brigade and each day we moved up the trail added two days to our resupply time. The trail wound over hills and up and down canyon sides, occasionally crossing ravines on two long trees laid side by side. These trees were six to ten inches in diameter on the thick end and could be as much as seventy five feet long. They might have been adequate for the smaller Japs, but were a hazard to G.I.s, - and the native carriers wouldn't use them. A week on the trail brought us to a Marine outpost, called Kelly's Bar, manned by survivors of the Liversedge Task Force. The 4th Marine Raider Btn. commanded by Col. Liversedge, had made an assault on Bairoka Harbor only to lose ninety per cent of their strength in thirty minutes. When we met them, the first question was, "What Army outfit is this?" When told we were the Wolfhounds the Gunnery Sergeant's comment was, "God, are we glad to see you!" Evidently our reputation was preceeding us. It didn't take the Marines fifteen minutes to vanish into the jungle headed toward Enogai."

On 6 Aug., Hq., B, D, and the AT Co.s were ordered to contain the enemy strongpoint and A and C Co.s were ordered to bypass the position

157A

C O N F I D E N T I A L

came over MUNDA and strafed to East. At 0655, another plane (possibly same one) came in from the West and dropped one bomb just East of MUNDA FIELD. Report of damages and/or casualties was negative.

3. Miscellaneous:

Japanese Unit Identifications:

- a. The following 6th Division Code No's have been identified on documents found in bivouacs on ZIETA and BAIROKO Trails.

AKIRA	9017
MOISIVIA	9018 (13th Regt.)
"	9019
"	9024
"	9025
"	9026
"	9027

The nature of Units, other than 9018, is not known but it shows that a considerable part of the 6th Division is in the northern part of NEW GEORGIA.

- b. PW interrogation stated that each time U.S. Forces retired from a position they left enough ammunition behind to supply Jap forces with sufficient ammunition to operate captured U.S. weapons.

4. Enemy Capabilities:

1. Continued resistance covering trails.
2. Rear Guard defense activity covering withdrawal northward or westward.
3. Concentration in BAIROKO area for further defensive action.

John Burden
BURDEN
Major
Acting G-2

C O N F I D E N T I A L

On 6 Aug., Hqs, m B, and D Co.s were ordered to contain the enemy strongpoint while A, C, and the AT Co.. were to skirt the position and proceed north along the Bairoko Trail. Some slight sniping was encountered and three Japs were killed. About 2000 yds. from the starting point a large bivouac area was located on top of a hill - this was beleived to be Mt. Bao. The enemy had evaced the position some days ago and a large quantity of U.S. arms and ammo was found.. One trail was found leading to the southwest and another was found leading to the north - they were both in good condition.

Also, on 7 Aug., 1800 hours, 1/27 and the AT Co. started digging in at the Jap bivouac site.

Charley Co. moved out to reconnoiter the EW trail, the next day, toward Mt.. Tirokambia, while a second patrol (A Co.) moved north up the Bairoko Trail 3000yds. Company C located another trail leading in a southerly direction.

The native patrol, led by Lt. Koontz, on 7 Aug., went 700 yds. north and came upon a wooden foot bridge surrounded by about 58 enemy huts.. Continuing further north the patrol came to a fork in the trail with one branch going WN and the other NE.. Both trails were reconnoitered 400 yds., but which trail continued to Bairoko could not be determined. The patrol returned by 1500 hours.

The Jap bivouac area, found 7 Aug., was designated RJR (Road Junction "R"). The patrol from C Co. discovered the trail to the southwest, from the RJR-Mt.. Mt. Tirokambia trail, eventually intersected the Zieta Trail - where elements of Lion Blue (3 Btn..) were contacted.

The patrol of 8 Aug., AM, led by Capt. Emory and Lt. Koontz, proceeded north of RJR for 7000 yds.. (trail distance) and, upon return, reported : (a) From Mt. Bao to the first bridge, a distance of 850 yds. was found a rec ently evacked

enemy bivouac area of 58 huts.(b) From Mt Bao to the 2d bridge,
a distance of 3100 yds., was found another trail leading NW. (c)..
From Mt. Bao to the 3d bridge, a distance of 5150 yds., was another
old bivouac of 5 huts.

Communications on Bairoko Trail.



following and, at 0700 hours and 500 yards north, they passed through an abandoned strong enemy defensive position. Still further north a battalion sized bivouac, recently evacuated, was entered and scouting patrols were sent on all trails for security purposes. At 1120, a patrol from the Regimental I & R Platoon, led by Lt. Joe Koontz, proceeded up the north trail and found two Japs. One was killed and the other fled into the jungle. Later in the afternoon the rest of the Battalion caught the lead companies after destroying the Jap strong point with the aid of engineers. The next day elements of the 161 Rgt., which had been assigned to maintain and protect the MSR, made contact with the Wolfhounds and no enemy were encountered. On the morning of 9 Aug., Baker Co. reached a river thought to be the Bairoko and a halt was ordered while the Battalion C.O. took a six man patrol 4500 yards north making contact with Col. Liversedge's Marine Raiders. Much information and maps, on the local terrain, were obtained from the Marines and the patrol returned by 1400. At 1730, the 1 Btn., was attached to the 161 Rgt. Two days later, at 1700, after a six mile advance, the Battalion reached the Marine bivouac, known as "Kelly's Bar", and was attached to Col. Liversedge's command.

(File)"We moved onto a terrain feature that became known to us as Starvation Ridge. Our rations were one can of heavy and one can of light C Rations per platoon per day. I had a spoon and we ate our meal by dumping the can of meat and beans or whatever into a helmet, breaking crackers into it with half a canteen of water and then we would each eat a spoonful of food in turn until it was all gone. We tried to get re-supply by air but because of the dense jungle the planes couldn't find us and a lot of our supplies fell into Jap territory. One drop did hit our hill and all the ammo came crashing down through the trees. The one parachute of foodstuffs, being lighter, hung up in the top of the trees. We tried to shoot it down but the harness being on the top side we didn't have any luck there. The tree was a great mahogany,

six feet in diameter without a limb for forty-five feet. The wire section's climbing spurs were too short to get a purchase in the soft bark. The nearest tree to the ration tree had a heavy vine growing up it and I decided to climb the vines and walk across on one of the lower limbs to the ration tree. I didn't know how brittle that jungle "growth was and halfway across the limb broke and dropped me with a great crash. When I came to I was fighting the medics who were trying to get me on a litter. I was told that when I fell, Captain West asked what that crash was and, when told that File fell out of the ration tree, he asked, "Did he get the rations?" So much for concern! Later, a man from Dog Company, much smaller than me, managed to climb the route that I had attempted. He cut the risers, but when he did so, the container swung pinning him to the tree and smashing his jaw. Despite his injury he was able to finish cutting the container loose and climbed down unassisted. Talk about grit! The rations were just enough to allow us to displace forward to "The Gap", which was just that. It was a low saddle the trail crossed on a ridge before dropping down to the final approach to Bairoka Harbor. There we were stalemated again. There was a Nip position on the trail about 300 yards beyond the Gap and we would patrol up there and worry them every day. One day I was sitting in my hole watching down the hillside (H 4 ?) while Roland Watts was asleep in the adjacent hole. A lizard, about three feet long, came waddling up the hill and seeing me watching him, veered off and climbed the parapet to Watt's hole. He peered down at the sleeping Watts and then looked at me. He looked down at Watts again and then back at me. I'll swear the beast actually grinned. Then he dived in the hole right on top of Watts. Roland let out a shriek and came straight up like an explosion. I thought I would die laughing, I was rolling in the bottom of my hole, and Watts never did forgive me. I think he always felt I put the lizard up to it."

(File)"One day (8-23 ?), the Battalion C.O., Col. Ryneska, had an NCO meeting on a little hill (H 4 ?) overlooking the trail, after

'discussing the situation, the Old Man pointed back up the trail we had struggled up and said, "Men, if we go that way we know that it will be two weeks before we get anything to eat." Then he pointed toward Bairoka Harbor and said, "If we go that way, we will have food tomorrow or all be dead!" He then outlined the plan of attack.

The rifle companies moved out the following morning with fixed bayonets. There was a low ground fog furnishing additional cover. By noon Bairoka Harbor was secure (8-24) and landing craft were coming in with food and engineer equipment. One of the Nip warehouses was filled with rice. Another was filled with bicycles, actually several hundred. I don't know what the Nips planned to use them for unless it was in New Caledonia and New Zealand. The muddy trails of the Solomons were no place for them. There was a motorcycle and sidecar too and some of the men thought they would take it to Enogai because the engineers had started bulldozing a road across the peninsula. After about fifty yards of trying to push it through the hub deep mud they abandoned it."

The MSR now became the three mile distance from Enogai Inlet by the cannibal brigade. Through 27 Aug the Battalion spent its time patrolling the entire area, encountering and eliminating a few of the enemy, and, on 25 Aug, the Btn. C.O. and Col. Liversedge went to the mouth of Bairoko Harbor to contact the 145 Inf. On 27 Aug, the Wolfhounds were ordered to move to Enogai Inlet to relieve the Marines. The Battalion then went into a defensive position.

(File)"The camp site at Enogai had been the 4 Marine Raider Btn., TF Liversedge, bivouac and it was a disgrace to the American Forces. It was filthy. The flies were so bad they would crawl in your mouth while you were eating. We had enough netting for the kitchen and the latrine. We would get our chow in the kitchen and go into the latrine to eat it. We cleaned steadily and never did get it cleaned enough to pass. An additional task was recovery of the Marine dead at the

"Bairoka Perimeter. They had been lying there about a month and the Nips had stripped the bodies of all id. All they could do was state that such a body must be so and so because that was the last place he was seen alive. It was a grisly, odorous task and without the Father Scannell's presence I think the men would have revolted.

Because of my familiarity with demolitions I was detailed Battalion fisherman. The lagoons teemed with mullet and other edible fish so we had all we could eat. One day a blast brought a moray eel to the surface. He was six feet long and as thick as a man's thigh. He was wriggling around on top of the water, stunned, and one of the men struck a blow at him with an aluminum boat paddle. The eel demonstrated the power of his jaws by biting a chunk out of the paddle the size of a man's hand. It was at this time that I made my first acquaintance with prima-cord. We wanted an OP to monitor activity on Kolumbangora. There was a natural platform in a large tree near the shore - except one large limb was an obstruction to view. Told to remove the limb, I soon realized what a formidable task it would be. It was a foot in diameter and, not only difficult with the pioneer tools available to us, a great danger to splitting and throwing a GI to the ground below. The gyreenes had left a lot of varied explosives behind, including rolls of prima-cord and I had had it described to me but had never before seen nor used it. It looked like safety fuse, but in larger diameter. I secured a half dozen blocks of TNT to the limb by lashing it with prima-cord and then letting the trailing end hang to the ground. I made a jury rig with grenade detonators and then checked to see that the area was clear (my buddies usually gave me a wide berth when I was playing with explosives because I was so sick and sore with my tree injuries they weren't sure I might not end it all), then pulled the pin on the detonator and swung it away from me. I stood, dreamily contemplating the prima-cord, waiting for the twist and tell tail smoke of safety fuse lighting off. Suddenly it dawned on me what I was about to witness and I pivoted, making a leap for an old Jap dugout, but the

Officers assort mail at Regimental Headquarters.



A weapons platoon of the 3rd Battalion, eyes peeled for Japs, advances warily along the Zieta Trail in the steaming jungle of New Georgia.

HEADQUARTERS 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION
Forward Echelon

C O N F I D E N T I A L

7 August 1943

G-2 Report

From: 1200 6 Aug 43

To : 1200 7 Aug 43

No. 2

Map : CICSOPAC Photo Map (Group of 4).

1. Enemy situation at end of period:

a. Lt. ^{Koate} conducted native patrol along Bairoko trail north of 1st Bn. position. Proceeded approximately 1000 yds and found signs of recent travel of considerable amount. One Jap sighted in vicinity of native huts. Took off in a northerly direction while being observed. Patrol returned about 1430.

b. "A", "C", and AT Co's of 27th skirted strong point and proceeded along Bairoko trail in northerly direction. Encountered slight sniping and killed 3 Japs. About two thousand yds from point of starting a large bivouac area on top of a hill was located. Japs had evacuated some days previously, leaving a considerable number of U.S. arms and much ammunition. From the bivouac area there was an 8 foot trail leading off in a south westerly direction. There was also a 3 foot trail, coral coated, leading in a northerly direction. There was evidence to widen this trail to 8 feet. No evidence of much traffic on either trail, but both trails in good condition and could stand considerable travel without showing much effect. It is believed that this hill may be Mt. Bao.

c. No evidence of activity in strongpoint on Bairoko trail which is still surrounded.

2. Enemy activity:

a. Slight delaying action along both Bairoko and Zieta trails.

3. Miscellaneous:

Japanese Unit Identifications:

1. Bairoko trail, Bao Hill bivouac area.

NUMA 2925 P 229th Inf. Regt.

Matsumichi Tai 1st. Co.

AKIRA 2018 1st 3th Inf. Regt.

Mon 1st 2nd, Probably a Co.