

DECLASSIFIED
 Authority NND 735017
 By MG/NARA Date 7/18/09

HEADQUARTERS 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION
 Forward Echelon

9 October 1943

SUBJECT : G-3 Report on Combat Operations of the 25th Infantry Division
 on New Georgia, B. S. I.

TO : The Adjutant General, War Department, Washington, D. C.

NOTE: This report does not include the action of the 161st Infantry Combat Team during the period July 20 to August 5 inclusive, when it was attached to the 37th Infantry Division, nor the action of the 27th Infantry Combat Team (less 8th FA Bn) during the period September 10 - 23 inclusive, when it was attached to the 43d Infantry Division. The 35th Infantry Combat Team remained on Guadalcanal until August 15 when it formed a part of the landing force on Vella Lavella Island under command of Commander Task Force 31.

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After being alerted on 30 July 1943, the 25th Infantry Division Headquarters forward echelon and the 27th Infantry Combat Team (less 8th FA Bn) departed Guadalcanal on 31 July and arrived at Sasavalle Island in the New Georgia Group on the morning of 1 August. These elements moved to New Georgia Island on 2 August with the mission of defending the Corps north flank.

After the capture of the Munda Airstrip, the 25th Infantry Division was given the mission of clearing the New Georgia mainland north of the airfield. This mission entailed an advance of ten miles through the jungle, location and destruction of all enemy resistance, and making a junction with a force at Enogai consisting of: 1st Marine Raider Battalion, 4th Marine Raider Battalion, 3d Battalion 145th Infantry, and 3d Battalion 148th Infantry. This combination of units became known as the Liversedge Force.

Intelligence reports indicated that there were two native trails which ran north from Munda - one to Bairoko and the other to Zieta. In addition, native and Marine patrols reported a cross trail which led from Mt. Bao to a point north of Zieta. Learning that there was a Japanese garrison at Zieta, the Division Commander decided to hit it from two directions. Only the 27th Infantry was available for combat, so one battalion was moved north along the Bairoko Trail on 2 August, with the mission of moving to Mt. Bao and then returning west toward Zieta; the other two battalions began moving north along the Zieta Trail on 3 August, with the mission of advancing north on Zieta. After an enemy strong point was reduced on the Bairoko Trail, the advance to the north along this route proceeded unopposed. However, the Japanese fought a strong delaying action on the Zieta Trail all the way to Zieta.

CLASSIFICATION CHANGED TO:

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REAUTHORITY OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

W. Charles A. Dore
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On 6 August the 161st Infantry Combat Team reverted to the control of the 25th Infantry Division and was committed 8 August on the Bairoko Trail with the mission of following the battalion of the 27th Infantry on that trail to Mt. Bao. From that point the 161st Infantry was ordered to proceed north, clear the area between Sunday Inlet and Bairoko Harbor, and make contact with the Liversedge Force.

By 9 August, the advance on the Bairoko Trail had been carried to the Bairoko River and contact established with the Liversedge Force, the control of which passed to the Commanding General, 25th Infantry Division. It was given the mission of clearing the area east of Bairoko Harbor.

At this time it was established that a good portion of the information obtained at the beginning of the campaign was false. Mt. Tirokambia was not 1,000 yards northwest of Zieta, but rather approximately three miles east-northeast thereof. Further, Mt. Bao was one mile east of Mt. Tirokambia and there was no trail directly from Mt. Bao to Zieta. Therefore, the Division Commander decided it was no longer feasible to attack Zieta with a column from the east, and the battalion of the 27th Infantry on the Bairoko Trail was attached to the 161st Infantry.

The 3d Battalion 148th Infantry had been moved to Mt. Tirokambia and thence to Zieta Hill by the Liversedge Force. This battalion was attached to the 27th Infantry and given the mission of preventing the withdrawal of the Japanese from Zieta to the north and northwest. While the main body of the 27th Infantry moved north along the trail to Zieta, a force was sent around the west flank to block the trail between Zieta and Japanese held Piru Plantation. On the morning of 15 August the 27th Infantry supported by four tanks from the 11th Marine Defense Battalion captured Zieta and killed approximately 75 Japanese at the trail block west of Zieta. Pursuit of the remaining enemy was initiated and several stragglers killed.

At this time the 27th Infantry was given the mission of clearing the area between Sunday Inlet and Piru Plantation. Patrols were dispatched on 16 August to find a suitable route through the swamp to Piru Plantation. After exhaustive reconnaissance failed to disclose a high ground route, the 27th Infantry (-) attacked across one and one-half miles of swamp and secured the plantation area on 23 August, thus denying the use of Hathorn Sound to the enemy.

The 161st Infantry moved north from Mt. Tirokambia toward Bairoko Harbor and occupied the west bank of the harbor on 24 August without opposition. The 1st Battalion 27th Infantry which was attached to the Liversedge Force on 10 August, and the 3d Battalion 145th Infantry moved on Bairoko Harbor from the east and southeast and occupied the east bank of the harbor on 25 August without opposition.

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The Japanese had evacuated to Arundel and Kolombangara Islands, and all organized resistance on New Georgia Island was terminated on 25 August 1943.

C.B. Smith
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3 Inclosures: ~~#1~~ - CICSOPAC Photomap, NEW GEORGIA, 1/20,000.
~~#2~~ - G-3 Journals, July 31 - August 25 inclusive.
~~#3~~ - Field Order and Operations Memoranda pertaining to the campaign.

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