

ACTION ON GUADALCANAL (Part C)

- **DIARY OF GUADALCANAL (Nov 20, 1942 to Mar 29, 1943) by A. Davis Jr. of the 26th Signal Company.**

- **NARRATIVE OF OPERATIONS, AMERICAL DIVISION,
AT GUADALCANAL¹ By command of Brigadier General SEBREE
and written by the Major Adjutant General**

¹ *This is essentially a repeat of Major Stoddards narrative, without my interjections.*

DIARY OF GUADALCANAL

November 20th. Have word that we are going to leave for Guadalcanal soon. Colonel is going up to the company to talk to the fellows on the conditions that are existing up above. Of all the stories we hear it might turn out to be different, as we will get our chance to see this place that there has been so much talk of during the past few months.

Nov. 21st. Have just come back from the company where I was issued the new green outfit (two piece). As usual Pappy Follins gave me the biggest size. Got gloves as the mosquitos are pretty bad there and are the malaria carrying type.

Nov. 22nd. Well the time has come and all have been expecting to move out any minute. The fellows are all packed and have been getting the colonel's things together. We are to be on board ship by five o'clock (this being Sunday afternoon). I have my Peep and all equipment together so will have a little time to myself before it's time to go aboard. Quite a few of the French people are down to see us off (they know more about us and where we are going than we do ourselves). Have just got back from visiting Mama and Lulu (French people's house that we always held our parties in). They would let me leave until I had supper with them which is about seven o'clock every evening. As I was leaving they gave me a bottle of Australian beer. Each autographed the label for good luck. Seen Ray Bell and wished him luck. (He finished the beer).

Nov. 23rd. Have pulled out to the outer harbor during the night. We all expected to be out to sea by this time. The ship that we are on is the President Adams. One of the Dollar line boats. She has only been in the water a little over a year. The meals are A-1 and get a good helping every time. I was selected or should say picked for a detail to work in the butcher shop. I don't mind it as I will be sure of getting plenty to eat.

Nov. 24th. It seems as though they are going to load a few more ships before we leave and don't know when that will be. The job I have is bringing up the food for the following day's meals. It isn't too bad but won't like this after the ship sails as we are working down in the ice chests and holds. (three decks below).

Nov. 25th. Still in the harbor with no signs of leaving. Been playing a little cribbage and beat Leahy as usual. I invested a little in a poker game and have gone broke. Brought up quite a few turkeys for tomorrow's meals and all the fixings.

Nov. 26th. Same as yesterday with nothing doing. Meal didn't turn out so good as they didn't have quite enough turkey for all and had to cream it. Too much flour to suit me. Every thing else was fine and had three big pieces. Had some ice cream today which was a treat as we haven't had any good ice cream since we left Australia.

Nov. 27th. Lots of arguments about when we are leaving. Every one thinks they know the answer. Rumors are that there is a big naval fight going on up there and are waiting for it to finish before they leave.

Nov. 28th. I forgot to mention that we have hot showers on board and are allowed to

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use them all the time. It sure feels good to be able to get under a shower and turn on the hot water. This is the first time I have had a hot shower since we left the states. Also very good shaving with hot water. Boy we are living the life while we stay on this ship. It looks like they are fattening us up for the kill.

Nov. 29th. Still in the harbor with no signs of moving. Have received a few letters which helps to break up the same routine that takes place on board every day. Won't have much chance to answer letters as can't find any thing to write. Just one of my off days on writing.

Nov. 30th. This is one of the days that the fellows all like including myself. Today being pay day every one is in good spirits and quite a few crap and card games are going in full blast. Might as well invest, as don't know when we will have the chance to spend it.

Dec. 1st. Have invested in a poker game and as usual I lost. I am clean until we are paid again and don't know when that will be. Quite a few of the fellows are winning very heavily and will need an armor car to hold there dough.

Dec. 3rd. The word that is going around is that we will be leaving the first thing in the morning. Glad for that as every one is getting tired of ship life.

Dec. 4th. Are on the way at last and had my last look at New Caledonia. We all hope that we never have to come back here again. This is a four ship convoy with a couple of tin cans escorting us. Not much considering where we are going. According to the rumors that are going around these waters are about the worse that a ship can sail in.

Dec. 5th. Plenty of water and nothing else. Steve got sea sick (HIS second time) again and took quite a ribbing from the kids.

Dec. 6th. Have started a cribbage tournament and lost to Joe DiVitto. Didn't have much of an interest in the game today.

Dec. 7th. It is getting very dark out and can see land in the distance. They say that we are up at the far end of the canal and won't land until tomorrow morning.

Dec. 8th. It is now 3:30 in the morning and all are getting ready to land. We are still moving but very slowly. The island is only about six hundred yds away. Well, I have had my first look at this place and must say that it is hell by the looks of the coconut trees. There isn't a one that isn't marked up. The ride in the Higgin's boat was quite a scene to see with my Peep all loaded and waiting to land. All they have to do is drop the front of the boat and drive the Peep out. All is done very fast. From the time they started to load my Peep into the Higgin's boat and landed it takes about ten minutes. Am waiting orders from the Colonel as what I am going to do with his equipment.

(He came up by plane Dec 2nd.) Had quite a treat right after I landed. There was a dead Jap right on the beach. He wasn't much to look at and by the looks of him, he ran into more trouble that he thought was waiting for him. They say that there is plenty more of them lying around. The Marines don't have time to bury any of them also the 164th (part of our division that has been up here with them for the past two months ~~was~~ and

have been making quite a name for them selves).

Dec. 9th. Nothing unusual happened today and done very little driving for the Colonel. Have put a temporary shelter for the night as we are suppose to move to a new one tomorrow.

Dec. 10th. It rain like cats and dogs last night every thing we owned got soaked. To top it off we had an air raid. Had to run down the company street with no clothes on as every thing I had was wet. Just carried the two blankets and was going to sleep in the back of a truck when he came over. He just flew around for about an hour and left. Every one was expecting him to drop his bombs as he usually does, but was probably looking for the ones that landed the day before..Mike Walsh almost broke my leg off trying to wake me up hollering air raid. No anti-air-craft batteries opened up on him as the ceil- was very low.

Dec. 17th. Had our first real test on air raids tonight. Had no slit trench to go into as we just moved into this area a couple of days ago and have been busy driving. He dropped about eight bombs. They make a heluva racket and one can hear them coming down before they hit. It funny as in the movies they make a whistling sound but not over here. It's just a big wish and if it's very loud one down know where it hit him. Was very calm during the raid but learned one lesson and that is to be in a slit trench during a raid. The anti-air-craft guns opened up on him and really threw up every thing they had but no luck. I will make sure that I dig my trench tomorrow. (Incidently this fellow's name is Washing-machine-Charlie on account of the noise his motor makes.) Once you hear it, it's very hard to forget.

Dec. 18th. I forgot to mention that every night just as it get dark the 155's open up on the Japs and the other end. (about 8 miles away) They sure make an awful racket. Every time that one goes off (a battery of four guns) they shake one almost out of his bunk. They keep it up all night long as that is the only time that the Japs move around.

Dec. 19th to 24th. 155's still at it and going days now. They say that there is going to be a big push on. The fellows in the front lines had their Christmas dinner today. I can imagine how that was eating dinner in a slit trench on the day before Christmas. Some mail has started to arrive which helps to brighten us up.

Dec. 25th. Christmas day. Mail has arrived and plenty of it. A lot of packages also came in. Got a present from Aunt Agnes which was a tie and hankerchief set. Quite a gift to receive in a place like this where we wear only shorts and a hat all day. It is very hot during the day that's all one can wear. At night you have to dress though as the mosquitos are very thick and bite like dogs. Dinner was very good. Had two dinners, one at the company and the other at the C.P. Don't know when we'll get another feed like that so made sure.

Dec. 26th. Same as usual with the artillery pounding away all the time. Rumor is that we were very successful on the push yesterday. Hope that they can keep it up as every now and then one of their patrols gets through and keeps every one on edge until they

are cleared up.

Dec. 27th. Washing-machine-charlie makes his usual trips. He come in right over our area every time. Anti-air-craft guns are lousey. They can't seem to hit him. They get him in the seach-lights all the time but no results. Quite a sight to see him in the lights with the shells bursting all around him and expecting him to drop any minute. I'LL be glad when that day comes as we may be able to get a good nights sleep. (we usually loose two and three hours every time he comes.

January 1st. New Years day with every thing quiet. Nothing of importance to write.

Jan. 2nd. Colonel is going up to the front soon to look things over.

Jan. 3rd. Was up to the front this morning. What a place. Hell must be better than this. went up by the road they call the "Skyway". It runs along the tops of the mountains and very dangerous if you go off. Japs use to shell this when ~~wash~~ vehicles came over it as they had a very good view. This road was later renamed "Wright road after a colonel that was killed defending it". The trees are all shell marked and bullet holes. Every thing is dead looking. Plenty of shell holes from our 155's. I can see the damage that they can do and am glad that I'm on the other end of the gun. (Japs have no artillery so are very lucky or else we would be ducking their shells back in our area). Saw quite a few of the wounded being brought out. Two 2nd Lieutenant brought out dead. They were just commissioned before we left New Caledonia. There has been a sniper up here (around the C.P.) all day and the patrol has been out trying to locate him. Every now and then you can hear the spat of his gun. (very sharp and low. They use 25 calibre). The fellows have been going around hollering for him to draw his fire but had no luck. They are to smart for that. There is quite a bit of firing going on (front being only 3/4 of a mile in). The jungle up here is very thick and once one steps in to it, it is very hard to find him especially wearing green clothes. Water and ammo are the only things that are being brought up. Every thing has to be brought up on their backs.

Some of the fellows haven't taken there shoes off for days and all have beards. Too bad that some have to go through all this and don't even get a good nights sleep. (The Japs are always on the go at night.) This sniper has been shooting all day at the C.P. One of the fellows was saying that he had already shot over three-hundred runs of ammo. They always carry quite a bit with them. Arrived back safely as it was getting dark.

January 4th. Have gone back to the construction section as the colonel hasn't enough work for me. I am on the trouble-shooting team with Lou Fabbo, Bill Walsh, Jim Small and Bill Leahy. It is hard work and don't mind as we need something to occupy our minds during the day as the nights you can expect to be up for a couple of hours. Wash-board never forgets us.

Jan. 5th. Have been over the airport looking over some of the planes. There are some sweet looking ships but like the B-17 best. They keep them all busy and no one is wasting time here. Planes are always taking off and when there is a condition red (air-raid) this no place for one to be as this is the place that the Japs always make for.

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Jan. 6th. Nothing new just that we are putting in new lines to Koli point. It is quite a job to keep the line working as it is so long. (15 miles). Has been through a few of the areas where the Marines may there first landings. Some Jap landing boats and trucks are on the beach that have been put out of commission. A lot of our landing boats are along the beach with amphibious tanks that have been hit. By the looks of things it must of been quite a battle as the place is all holes and the trees are shrapnel scarred.

Jan. 7th. Charlie still makes his trips but of late he's been quiet. Just circles around and lets one go. He'll go out a few miles and make another approach. Just takes his time and before you know it you have been up two or three hours. They say that he comes in over the Lunga river. Our area is practically along side of it and always comes right over our heads every time. It seems as though there is one anti-air-craft-gun that can't reach him (one that the Marines left and they say that the barrels are like mirrors from being fired so much) and he takes a zero reading off it. He usually drops his Daisy-Cutters (Bombs that have a stick about a foot long and explode above the ground). Have yet too see them shoot one down.

Jan 8th. Have been down to the cemetery looking around. There are quite a few nice graves that the fellows from different outfits are taking care of. Our outfit has been making or should say Davie and Hoppie are making a placque for the fellows that gave their lives up for the island. It is made out of red-wood and very nice looking. Davie has made up the following poem that is going to be on it.

IN MEMORY

Here on this forsaken island	They lived and loved their country
They lay in God's abode,	Just the same as you and I,
The boys who gave what they loved most	And gave their lives in action
In order that we hold;	So our faith would never die;
The peace and freedom of our states	May they be remembered
Democracy that's true,	For that we're sure they shall,
So that we may live in peace again	Here lay the boys who fought so brave
beyond the ocean blue;	On the Isle of Guadalcanal.

By-A. Davie Jr.

Jan . 9th. Ran into McLuaghlin today. He's a Lieut. in the Medical Corp. Talked over old times and got a few aspirins as have been bothered from headaches lately. Nigger McGolderick is always down to see Mac (usually for Blue-heaven). His outfit is do to go back up to the front again. Mac's outfit making quite a name for themselves as they are doing most of the stretcher-bearing up here. Was talking to Joe Baldwin. He has just volunteered to be a stretcher-bearer as they are very shot on them.

Jan. 14th. Nothing new. Every thing is the same and only go down to the water front to see if there is any boats in as when there are we usually get some mail. Walter and Frank were up to the front today. This very rare for Walter to get out and move around as he likes to take things as easy as possible.

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Jan. 15th. Well things are looking up again as "Charlie has been in again. While watching the movie (have been having them out in the open on account of things being quiet) he followed some of our planes in and let go before any one knew the story. The airport was lit up and he was trying for that. (show was in the mess tent). Was sitting at the back of the movie and heard the noise but every one said that it was anti-air-craft guns or the guns at the front. Then all of a sudden you could hear the whish and no one had to be told to move. Quite a few got hurt in the rush for slit trenches. I ran for my tent to get my helmet and under neath my bunk was two fellows and another hiding near my clothes locker. I then ran for the trench and that was filled so ran for a drainage pit that we built around the tent and as usual that was filled. Then layed down on the ground. The guns were sure throwing every thing that they had. With the bombs and guns going off I thought the end was here. The ground was actually rocking and didn't bother to look up at the show. Every thing was clear for about an hour and then all hell broke loose. The Japs came back with quite a few planes this time. They say that they are dive-bombers. They had six in the lights all at once and the guns threw up every thing but the sink. They didn't break formation at all and kept right on towards Koli point. The call has just come in for the construction section to go out. Every time that they come over we have to go out and fix the lines. It seems like they done a lot of damage to the lines. We are all taking our guns and etc. as don't know how long we'll be gone. As we're riding down the road we can see the lights looking for them. (once you are out like this you can't tell if there is a raid on unless you call in) While going by the airport all the lights went on and knew that they were over head. Were driving with no lights at all so have to go slow, but in this case went like hell as we're to near the airport for comfort. It got so bad with the guns going off and the noise of the Peep that we pulled off the road to take shelter. Ran the Peep into a slit trench so left it there for the time being. I ran one way and Bill, Smallie, Walsh and Fabbo ran the other. After a short time Smallie came over to my side of the road and seeing me laying there thought that I was a Jap and got up hollering there's a Jap over here. The others came running with their guns all set. I ran back of Smallie and they thought that I was a Jap after him. I was running for my gun as during a raid you can't carry one on account of the ammo going off if the bomb is close. I was a dead pigeon until I spoke up and glad that they didn't have itchy fingers. Our anti-air-craft shrapnel is coming down so just sat talking for a while as things are dying down. The break in the line we're shooting trouble on is twelve miles long so will have some fun on our hands. We fixed the trouble and while doing so they were having another raid down below. (the airport is fifteen miles back) Every thing is quite calm now as it is getting near dawn. Not much sleep tonight as it's ~~mmmmmm~~ most five o'clock. Boy on the way back we must of run into every hole and slit trench there was. Lost a lot of time on account of that also the roads were bad as it has been raining yesterday and they have a clay that is like glue when it rains. Got back alright. Rumors are that they did quite a bit of damage.

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Jan. 16th. Charlie and his pals hit the hospital on there first time in. Quite a bit of damage from last nights showing. They say that there were thirty planes in the raid. Ten men were killed in the hospital including four officers. He landed about four daisy-cutters in one of the tents and the fellows didn't have a chance. Steve was in the same hospital and was in a tent about a hundred yards from where the bombs dropped. He heard Charlies drone and dove for a hole. In the tent he just left there were quite a few holes. It quite funny to hear him tell about it. All the fellows went down to see him when they heard it was the same hospital he was in, but laying in bed as usual when they cam in.

These Daisy-cutters are about the meanest thing invented yet as if you are near one when it lands it will make you look like a sieve. If you are below the ground you'll be alright as they only make a very small hole but cut every thing down within thirty feet.

Jan. 17th. Charlie was over again last night about eight p.m. and caught us by surprise. He seems to be getting in with out being spotted until he's right over our heads and then it's too late. Every one is on edge on account of it and the minute it gets dark some of the fellows just sit beside their dug outs until around ten o'clock as after that the Reds usually picks him up before he gets in. Landed one or two among the planes and lost two of the new P-38's that just arrived. Quite a loss as they are one of the best we have to fight the Zero's. Also one of the new 4Fu's that the Navy has just adapted for their new fighter.

Jan. 18th. 19th. No Charlie so have been getting a good nights sleep for a change. Rain has been terrible for the past two days. Every thing that's leather turns green from the dampness and unless wiped off will rot. Matches and etc. get damp.

Jan. 20th. Saw something funny today. One of the fellow that comes from down South has rigged up a still from odds and ends. Has made a batch from some of the Jap rice and came out quite potent. Has started another from coconut meat. Lt. Leaman ran into a six foot snake out side of his tent and killed it. They say it was poisonous but don't know. All the animal life that is on the island has move over to the other side on account of the gun fire etc. They say that there are plenty of monkies and talking parrots. All would like to get one. Won't be allowed to take them off the island as every thing here has some disease or other. Our men up at the front killed quite a few Japs (103) the other night and have been moving ahead every day.

Jan 21st. Admiral Nimitz, Halsey and a few small fry arrived today. Lt. Robert Montgomery is in the harbor on one of our destroyers. Gene Markey ex of Joan Bennett is here also. All wondering what the out come of this meeting will be.

Jan. 22nd. Had quite a night last night. The big fellows that arrived yesterday got a nice reception and now know what we go through every time that there is a raid. Wash-board brought along his brothers seeing where he done so good the last two times over. It was a great show and received the alert in plenty of time. The raid started about eight o'clock and was over at four ~~am~~ a.m. According to rumors that all the big fellows were in the General's dug out drinking beer during the show. (His dug out is suppose to be

made out of cement) Probably another rumor. One of the best rumors I heard so far is the one of Amelia Earheart being found in Bouganville by one of our fliers that had been shot down with a three year old baby. One of the planes was shot down over Koli point. Jan. 23rd. Another hectic night last night. Raid as usual and they dropped plenty. I thought for a moment that one was coming into the dug out it sounded so close. (one dropped about five hundred yards away from us. That was the nearest one to us yet.) This was another all night session and lasted into the wee hours of the morning. Have talked it over with Dwinell and McInnis (I am in their tent) that we build a dug out of our own (when there is a raid we are in one with about ten other fellows. Been having luck in it and don't want to change but with these all night raids it has changed our minds.) so that we'll be able to sleep in it if we have to.

Jan. 24th. Up again most of the night. Same as usual and they dropped quite a few each time they came over. Saratoga, Enterprise and her big sisters are suppose to be in the harbor. It looks like there is some thing in the wind. Rumors are that they are here to bomb and shell the Japs at the other end of the island. Maybe the Tokyo-Express is on the way down again.

Jan. 25th. Had a condition red this after noon when forty bogies (Japs) appeared off Savo island. Our planes had quite a time on their hands for a while but didn't let them get into the airport. Lost one P-40, but pilot was saved after he bailed out. Didn't hear what the Japs lost. You could see the P-38's and 40's soaring around a way up but couldn't recognize any dog fights. Was listening in on their frequency on the radio and heard the conversation between pilots. It was funny to hear them talking back and forth to watch out for this and that plane. These pilots are really hot that we have here and always on the ball. Results were six Zeros shot down and one P-40 one P-38.

Jan. 26th. Quiet night and really relished a good nights sleep for a change.

Jan. 27th. Charlie was over about three a. m. Have aquired the habit of sleeping with my coveralls on as he's usually over head before you can get dressed. When you don't have all your clothes on the mosquito loves that. It is always best to wear all your clothes during a raid.

Jan. 28th. Plenty of action this morning as the Japs tried and succeeded in getting over the airport. They were in before we knew it. About five bombers with an escort dropped bombs and straffed the field setting two planes afire and wounded three men. No bombs were dropped on the field. Too nervous I guess. They also went after some of the ships in the harbor but had no luck in hitting them.

Jan. 29th. Was awakened about four-thirty as the condition was red (Air raid). A Jap bomber was over the field bombing and straffing. He had us worried for a while as didn't know how many there was and was also getting lightsome out. He came right through the back of our area straffing (no tents around). He was letting go with all tracers. In the mean time a P-38 was out on patrol and was just coming in but had to land so they sent up another one. He was out in the harbor (Jap) straffing the ships when out of no

where the P-38 came up under neath him and let him have one burst. He fell in flames off Savo island. This fellow must of knew that it would mean a funeral for him to come over at that time. Most of our planes are leaving about then for patrols. This all took place inside of fifteen minutes and he was in the ocean for good. While this fellow was down this end of the island another one was up over the front lines strafing and bombing. Our anti-air-craft guns got him so that made it a very nice day for our side. They have been bothering the front every time that they come over during the day. You could hear the yelling all over the island when word was passed that he was shot down. Every time that one of our planes shoots a Jap down, he's allowed to do a victory roll over the field. It's quite a scene to see these planes come in and perform, especially the P-38's as there are fast. When one goes by all is that one hears is a whistling sound.

Jan. 30th. Had an alert on but no planes appeared. (About five-thirty A.M.) It seems that they are after our task force off Cape Esperance. They are dive bombers. Not much is known about what happened up there. Four volunteers were asked from the company to lay wire at the front for the 182nd infantry. These fellows left a couple of days ago. It seems that two of the fellows were off by them selves laying wire when a Jap came at them with a sabre. It didn't take them long as they had tommy guns with them. They got quite a few souvenirs including the sabre with is a prize one. Money and pictures of his family etc. It seems that every time some one gets a Jap that he always is carrying American money. They got this in the Phillippines. They also have Dutch invasion money. According to rumors that one of their planes that had been shot down, that the pilot had over two thousand dollars.

Jan. 31st. Two raids yesterday. No planes appeared down this end but were up above. They got to our task force off Esperance hitting the cruiser Chicago. She got through the first attack alright and as they were towing her into port they attacked again. The ship that was towing her also had to be sunk. Eight Jap bombers with an escort got over the field before any alarm was given. They strafed and bombed with not much damage. Few got wounded from the strafing. They do better on their night bombing than day time. While this was going on I was on an island with no clothes as I had to swim across to find trouble on the line. I left my clothes in the peep with Fabbo while I went across. It seems like he thinks that the trouble is on the other end and leaves. I thought that he would be back soon (took him over an hour) and was in swimming when a fellow yelled over that the condition was red. Nice place to be when there is a raid on, on an island naked. By the time Lou got back the all clear had sounded. They went after a destroyer out by Savo island and hit her pretty bad. She sank in no time at all. We got about four of the planes. One Zero and three bombers. Haven't seen a Zero in the air as yet.

Feb. 1st. Quiet last night. Word is around that the Tokyo Express is on it's way down. This means that the island will be on the alert until they either get it with dive bombers or PT boats. These PT boats or always out at night and some times the fellows and

myself including mistake the sound of their motors for Charlie.

Feb. 2nd. The planes have started their regular runs to locate the Express. All types are going out. Counted forty three torpedo planes taking off. While all our planes are out it seems that Wash-board always comes over. He usually tries to keep this end of the island busy so that they won't have much trouble landing their troops and supplies at Esperance. Well Charlie came over like I said. The first time in he let go with all he had. They shook the ground quite a bit and thought that for a moment that the dug out would cave in. (Ours is almost completed). Up most of the night.

Feb. 3rd. Had a humdinger of a raid last night. It started about ten-thirty and lasted until early in the morning. Charlie and his pals were over and raise hell all night. They also were over Tulagi. Seen the guns flashes and by the looks of them they were having there hands full at Tulagi and Florida. (all Navy over there) It seemed like one plane would stay around for an hour and another one would come in to bother us. Also took their time in letting their bombs go. Anti air craft guns were going all night. Am still waiting to see one get shot down. They claim that there were thirty planes in all in the raid. Some flares were dropped over our area and the last time I looked out one was coming down over the company street. I expected to be bombed in to kingdom come, but he just flew around. Even the destroyers out in the harbor were firing in the barrage.

Feb. 4th. Another raid last night. By the looks of things they are making up their minds to get the Tokyo Express in this time. (all the other times they only succeeded in getting a small amount of what they brought with them ashore) All night session again. Charlie and his brothers had another good night for them selves. There is talk of night fighters being brought up here to combat this fellow. He has been coming over and has never been bothered by our planes. He's usually up about twenty eight thousand feet. That's very high for good anti-air-craft shooting at night. There were dive bombers with him this time. Every time you'd hear the whine of his motor it was time to hug the ground as that a sign he's diving in to let one go.

Feb. 5th. Japs were over all night again. There seems to be a lot in the wind as this time it seems like they mean business. Repaired a lot of lines that were blown out. Seen what a daisy-cutter can do. Over by the field where we were repairing a line that had been hit there was a field of grass about two feet high. There was a complete circle cut down from one that had landed there. It looked like some one cut it with a mow-in machine. Little damage was done with some personal being hit.

Feb. 6th. Quiet night last night. Am going up the front with the kids to try and get some souvenirs as the Japs have given up a lot of ground and all the kids that have been up there are coming back with some good souvenirs. Ordnance man got two light machine guns a six bayonets. Radios and equipment is all over the place.

Feb. 7th. No raid last night. Something is in the wind as they stopped all of a sudden. Scuttlebutt (Marine rumor) is that the Japs got in with the Express and no one gave

them any trouble. It seems as though the Army said to the Navy that there would take care of them when they landed. Before anyone knew it the Japs were on their way out. The PT boats went after them (Too dark for the planes to find them) and sank one and damaged two destroyers. We lost two PT boats and another one damaged. It was quiet for a while and then all hell broke loose when they found out what had happen. L55's were firing with no let up. Too late to do any damage as they were all off shore in their collapsable boats.

Feb. 8th. Quiet all day and night. Colonel was up the front on business and brought back two Japs that had been captured by our infantry. He brought them back to the C.P. to be questioned by G-2. (According to Frank Velhage) He looked very funny driving in with them. One in the back and the other in the front. They were both too tired and hungry to do any thing. (All they had been eating were coconuts and fish when ever it was possible to get them.) One was a 1st. Lieutenant and Frank had to bring him to the hospital he was so bad. All their supplies that are thrown over board during a landing are in a fifty five gallon drum and usually consist of fish haeds and rice. The planes usually straffed them the next day so that very few reach shore.

Feb. 9th. Great news today. Our forces have met (we landed a force on the other side of the island to drive the Japs towards the beach some time ago) and have been bringing in prisoners all day. (105) This is the largest amount of prisoners that have been captured to date. The stockade is getting filled and are adding on another partition to take care of the rest that is expected to be brought in. Gen. Patch has sent out congratulations to all the troops for the successful conclusion of the battle of Guadalcanal. Maybe now we'll have some good nights that there isn't many more left on the island. (Only a few that are being rounded up. The rumors are that the Tokyo Express took off most of their troops the other night.

Feb. 10th. Have been up the front with the kids. What a hell hole. I don't see how those Japs lasted as long as they did. Plenty of dead around. There is an awful odor around. Every time that the ^{odor} ~~man~~ gets strong you'll know that there's a dead one lying around. A lot of dead ones are floating on the top of the waves. There are all bleached white and bloated twice their size. Lot on the beach that the planes straffed. Seen some of the guns that the Japs had captured from the British in Java and Singapore. All were left in good condition. Lots of those small collapsable boats. They are very light. Jim Small started to take some pictures and found out that his film wasn't any good. Ammo all over the place. Some of their big field pieces are here in very good condition. At one time they (before we came) use too fire two salvos a night and move the gun. It wasn't much use to them to fire it any more than that as it would be found out if they tried to lay down a barrage. Seen what our big bombs could do also the shells from our Navy. Every thing here is dead including the trees. They are all cut half way down from bombs and shells. Didn't care too look for souvenirs as there was word passed that there is a lot of booby traps around. Seen the places that they lived in. Some of them just

crawl into holes big enough for them with no room at all to move around. Some dig fox holes a foot wide, straight into the ground. This fox hole is circle shaped and gives very good protection against shelling and bombing. Some just died in them.

Feb. 10th. Condition red but bogies didn't bother to come in. Nothing of interest to write about. We are using our dug out for a club house. Have card games and cribbage tournament. Play for cigarettes. Lost for a while but made it up by winning from Steve.

Feb. 11th. There was some talk some time ago about the Japs being off the island by Lincoln's birthday. No one paid much attention to it but was talking about how it came true. No one knows where the rumor started from.

Feb. 12th. Have installed electric lights in the dugout as we are using it every night. Quite a gathering down there as all come to pass the night away. Have a hard time writing letters with so many there so wait until after all go to bed which is around 9 o'clock. Every one goes to bed early if possible as you don't know when and how long you will be up if Charlie comes over.

Feb. 13th. Walter and Col. Cameron were up to Cape Esperance. Took Peep up by Higgin's boat and spent the day looking for sights to put radar stations, 155 guns etc. Seen Mission that the Japs were using for a C.P. Left in ruins from shelling and bombing. Heavy odor from dead Japs around. A tough battle was fought here ~~mmmm~~ and imagine that there are plenty of dead one in the bush. A lot of the natives here speak English as the missions are all Catholic.

Feb. 14th. Every thing is quieted down. Planes have started to bomb Bouganville etc. They say that they are going to bomb twenty four hours a day. By the looks of the plane that we see coming in at noon time. (they go out while we're asleep and come in around eleven o'clock. Another bunch leaves at noon and comes in around 8 o'clock. This is the ones that Charlie usually follows in).

Feb. 20th. Plane crashed in front of Signal office tent killing pilot and injuring gunner seriously. Hallman and another fellow from signal company cut pilot and gunner out before plane went on fire. No credit was given them. Afterwards was called into G-2 for questioning about pilot's pistol that was stolen.

Feb 21st. Planes were over Tulagi last night but didn't bother us. Little damage and four men were killed. Thought that we were in for it after escaping it for so long.

Feb. 22nd. Raid again last night. Well, things are looking up. Two nights in a row. They only circled the Canal and went to Tulagi. Anti-air-craft guns were in action and as usual no luck. They are trying hard to knock Tulagi out by the looks of it. Raid lasted about three hours. New dug out is very nice laying there while raid is on. Can't sleep though. Always have guests.

Feb. 23rd. Heard that they have done quite a bit of damage over at Tulagi. Hit Naval installations and a destroyer. One of the fellows from the pigeon detachment that goes over with birds every other day was saying that over there at night they can tell when we're having a raid. They can see the seach lights etc. They always sat on the beach

until nine o'clock every night waiting for Charlie to come over. They could see the whole show very clear. It's just the opposite now as they have been getting it regular for the last week. New scuttle-butt that's going around is that we're soon to be relieved by the 37th division. They are now stationed in Fiji. We are suppose to change places with them, but every one is hoping that we'll go to N. Zealand or Australia. We were planning on the states but knowing that the 37th is on it's way it will be Fiji.

Feb. 24th. Nothing of interest. Rumors are flying fast of moving any day.

Feb. 27th. Have been having the shows in the open seeing as where every thing is quiet. Ever since that night that we all got caught in the mess tent at the show every one has been leery of seeing shows at night. While attending the show our planes were com- in (Full moon and was very lightsome out) and after all had landed you could hear this droning sound. (Once that you hear his motor you'll never forget the noise it makes) There was no alarm given so all just sat there watching the movie and all of a sudden the anti-air-craft guns let go. It was a mad house as every one started to run and all dove for the first thing that looked like a hole. This is the first time that we really had a chance to christen the dugout. As usuall it was full when I got there. It's funny as no matter where there maybe a hole you will always find it or make one in a hurry. It's lucky that it was a full moon, as he may of seen the light of the movie machine and dive-bombed us. Radar sent out condition red after he dropped his load and had gone. Radar has been off lately as this isn't the first time that he's been in over our heads before they knew he was up there. Incidentally todays my birthday. Not a bad way to celebrate it. Hope that there isn't any more like this.

Feb. 28th. Have started to pack to move. Sections were notified of the men that will go on the first echlon. Haven't been picked so will have to wait for the second echlon. Every one is in good spirits to know that we'll soon be off this place for good. We are being replaced gradually by another signal outfit. Some of the 25th division is taking over some of our communications. It will be a big help as with half of the company gone we'll not be able to do the work that we have done in the past.

March. 1st. Well, the 1st echlon has left this morning. Seems funny with half of the company gone as this is the first time we've been split up since we left the states.

Mar. 2nd. We are suppose to foollow in two weeks. Talk is of what Fiji has in store for us. Couple of fellows were in trying to pick up some mattresses that the fellows have to leave. They had just come from there and were telling us of the things that are there and what one can buy. Plenty of ice cream and milk shakes according to him and shows. Sounds good.

Mar. 3rd. Have vounteered to go into the kitchen to cook as they are pushed for help. Don't mind it as I'll be able to eat what I want.

Mar. 4th. Have baked a cake for the company and it came out swell. Put fudge frosting on it and the fellows like it very much.

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Mar. 5th. Have made some fudge. One of the cooks here makes a fudge but it comes out very soft. Showed him how, but didn't have any success with his next batch. Made pies with Johnny Fee. Every thing is coming out swell. Trying to give them variety etc.

Mar. 6th. Bogies appeared off Savo but didn't come in. Heard the pilots talking back and forth. Seen a formation of bombers that were way out over the water with P-38's chasing them. Seems like they didn't want to come in. Have been up to see Buckets Jewett about some receipe's as he's been putting out good meals. (They eat about the best of any outfit on the island). Got one for mayonaise that I'll try tomorrow.

Mar. 7th. Mayonaise came out fine. Mixed it with spam, onions and pickles. Also will make it with salmon as Lent is coming and won't be getting the meat. Rations have been lousy lately. Had to go down and ask for three cases of apples (when no one was looking) to make apple pie. Sugar has given out on the island so they say and have been cut down on that also.

Mar. 8th. Make what we call a Tojo special for the dugout every night. Have quite a crowd down there and have coffee etc. with pie or cake. Have an electric fan that came off an amphibian tank in the dugout. Makes it more comfortable and helps to circulate the air around as when every one is smoking it gets very hot and you start to sweat all over.

Mar. 9th. Have been going over the airport every night after supper. Big doings going on. Counted forty four torpedo planes that took off just before dark that were on their way to Bouganville to lay mines. They have been going up regular.

Mar. 10th. Raid last night. He dropped a few bombs and left. Raid lasted three hours. While we were getting hit they were also over Tulagi. The last raid was the same. They try to hit the two places at once.

Mar. 11th. Have been bothered lately with ear trouble that is caused by going into the water too much. Had it lanced this morning. Between the ear and raids keeping me awake during the night I had to take time off for a few hours to catch up on my sleep. Nothing new doing. Planes have been going out quite steadily the last two nights. They say that they have quite a few ships trapped in one of the harbors up above and keep sending the torpedo planes up laying mines every night.

Mar. 12th. The second echelon is suppose to be getting ready to move but have received no word as yet. The 15th is suppose to be the day that we are to get on board ship.

Mar. 13th. Was down to see Leo Baldwin with Jonny Fee. He's staying here for a while to form a cadre to go back to the states. Is taking his chance on that instead of going with us.

Mar. 14th. to 19th. Nothing doing towards leaving. Think that they have ~~forgot~~ forgotten us. Heard that the 1st echelon arrived in Fiji o k.

Mar. 20th. We are to leave the 24th. Everyone getting ready to move and there are plenty of smiles and what's going to take place when they reach Fiji. Charlie was over for a short time but left to go over to Tulagi. Gave them quite a time as the

raid lasted three hours. There was more than one plane in the raid as one would be over our area while the others were over at Tulagi. They were really throwing up the ack ack over there, as the sky was all lit up from the gun flashes. (Could of been bomb hits) Was in bed by eleven o'clock and all clear for the rest of the night.

Mar. 21st. Charlie was back again. Came right in over our heads this time and left for a half hour or more. Ack ack was very heavy. After not hearing it for so long it scares one every time the guns go off. This time he didn't keep on going towards Tulagi as he came right back dropping his daisy-cutters. Also a few large ones. One landed on the fighter strip causing no damage to the planes...Have gotten a new supply of chinos and shoes etc. Micky Finn in the Q.M. was the connection. Takes good care of the fellows from Signal Company.

Mar. 22nd. Our dear friend Charlie was back again. Every time that he's been coming lately he's been bringing more of his pals. There were around for some time and also were over at Tulagi most of the time. Dropped a few large ones and left but another one would come in to take his place. One of the planes went along the shore dropping his bombs. Thought for sure that as he came closer (we're about four hundred yds from the shore) that the next one was coming in the area. Each time that he'd drop one McInnis would say this one is coming in for sure. Had us scared for a while.

Mar. 23rd. Same thing as usual. Charlie is back. Glad that were leaving tomorrow. Ack ack opened up on him before he came in so as to make it harder for him to release his bombs. Tonight he must of been to church as the first string of bombs he let go hit on the airport and a nearby ammo dump. Didn't know at first that he hit anything as every thing was quiet for a few minutes and someone notice a red glare in the sky towards Koli point. Then the fire works started to begin going off. First it was small ammo with big flashes following then all of a sudden there were big explosions. You could hear the sound of the bullets exploding in the fire. It died down for a while and Charlie came back. He went right for the fire and let go with another load of bombs. This time he was dead center and couldn'd help but hit around the area that was burning. Ack ack really let go at him as he was in kind of low compared to his usual height that he stays. Notice a red flash in the sky while ack ack was firing and heard that they finally shot one down. (This action was taking place about a mile away and all came out of their dug-outs to watch the fun) There have been rumors of them shooting so many down but no one has ever witnessed it until tonight. Some of the fellows went over to see what damage he caused. According to them we lost four B-24's, two B-17's and two torpedo planes along with seven pilots that got killed trying to save their planes. The big explosions that we heard were the 1000 pounder's and 2000 pounder's exploding in the planes that were burning. Every thing was quiet the rest of the night and stayed up until one o'clock watching the fires and ammo exploding. Did quite a bit of damage to the bomber runway as the "SeaBees" were out the rest of the night fixing the field. After the all clear was sounded one of the fellows notice a pile of ammo (37mm) near our dug-out. The 182nd

is moving into our area when we leave. They have half of their equipment down here now and had put the ammo beside our dug out without anyone know of it. Best to keep as far away as possible as the concussion can set it off very easily. We aren't allowed to carry any of it with us during a raid, as there have been a few instances where fellows carrying it have been hurt by their own ammo exploding in their belts. Had out Tojo special (apricot pie) tonight with tea. All were in the dug out for the last night shooting the bull etc. Had Baron Prendible and Sandy Taylor along with Red O'Gorman over with us and didn't leave until early in the morning. Pity the fellows that get this dug out as it is an awful mess. Cards and books all over the place also Johnny Fee (He's been living in here for the past two weeks. Too many visits from Charlie, but didn't get much sleep as all the fellows would keep him awake asking foolish questions getting his goat) moved on board ship this afternoon so helped by leaving a lot of trash.

Mar. 24th. Up for early chow (4o'clock) and had to be ready to be on board by day break. Got down on the beach by six o'clock and had to wait for the ship to come from Tulagi.

(All ships go over to Tulagi for the night and come back in the morning if things are all right) The ship is William Penn. All are hoping that's like the President Adams. Was talking to Alberts the M.P. while waiting to go aboard. Seen the fellow that got twenty five years for leaving the front lines in face of the enemy. He got on board a ship that was leaving the Canal for Caledonia but thought that it was going to the states. First thing I did after getting aboard was to catch up on some sleep. Was awoken by Walter Morse to go on detail as a submarine lookout. Suppose to be a soft job. Lookout isn't so bad. I got a good look at the Canal on the way out. The glasses are very powerful. Didn't see any thing outside of a lot of rubbish that was thrown over board. Had an alert on about eight o'clock as planes were picked up on the radar. Alert lasted all night until dawn. Rumor is that they got an eight hour raid last night at the Canal.

Mar. 25th. Out of twenty four hours I'm on duty for eight which isn't bad. Have a special pass to get in line for chow and the canteen. The job is worth all the bother for those two privileges. Ice cream and cold fruit juices which we haven't tasted since the Adams. Have ten bucks from the knife that I made for Morse which I got fifteen dollars for. Brother-in-law borrowed three.

Mar. 26th. Quite a bit of excitement on board when we got an alert for battle stations. Seems as though they have picked up some ships in the radar and being so near the Canal think that it maybe a Jap task force on it's way there. (We can hear all that is said by the ships telephone as all lookouts where them and can hear anyone reporting in any thing that they see)

Mar. 27th. The ships that they have located in the distance are our own task force. Can see a converted air-craft-carrier with her escort of destroyers. Planes have been over to look us over carefully.

Mar. 28th. Carrier still trailing along with us. Hudson bomber was out this way this morning on patrol but can't say if it came from the Canal or Fiji. All personal is get-

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ting ready to land tomorrow. All will get off in chinos. Every one thinks that by the way that they are making us get dressed that we are getting off in some big town. All have there eyes opened for the first tavern that they see.

Mar. 29th. Are now going up the harbor. Looks pretty good compared to the Canal and New Caledonia. Not so many coconut trees etc. along the shore. Quite a few planes are flying around and makes one think of being up above. Very hot today and with these new chinos on, all feel uncomfortable. Besides we have to carry our barracks bags with us going off. Lautoka is the name of the town that we have docked at. About one hundred and fifty miles from Suva which is the capital and the best city you can go. Our camp is in Vunayasi near a town called Nadi. Just as bad as New caledonia. Nothing to see or buy.

THE END

Sayings originated in Guadalcanal

Torpedo Junction- - -Name given channel between Tulagi, Florida and Guadalcanal.
Washing Machine Charlie- - -Lone plane that came over every nite to bomb.
Pistol Pete- - -Naval Gunner that fired on the airport.
Millimeter Mike- - -Jap ground gun that fired one round every so often.
Bloody Ridge- - -Where a major battle was fought.
Red Beach- - -Where Marines killed over a thousand Japs in one night.
Willie The Louse- - -Submarine that surfaced at night and shell the airport.
Tokyo Express- - -Jap force on way to Guadalcanal to make a landing.

May tag charlie,
That son of a - - -
Each time he come over
We run for a ditch,
It seems he's just a lone eagle
But how that - - - can fly
But some one of these real good nights
I'm afraid he's going to die.
The search lights puts mm a beam on him
The guns begin to roar,
But he's just like a seagull
the way that - - - soars
He keeps right on flying
Way into the night
and we all sit in our dug outs
until he 's out of sight

Then we hear the signal
Every thing's all clear
We try to go to sleep again
Without a bit of fear
And just as we begin to snore
We hear the whistle blow
We jump right up and dress
For it's out again we go
So if you hear the cursing
You'll know what it's for
For May tag isn't all the names
The fellows call that - - -.

By- A. Davie Jr.
26th Signal Co.

NARRATIVE OF OPERATIONS, AMERICAL DIVISION, AT GUADALCANAL

FIRST PHASE

The Americal Division with certain attached units, commercially loaded and designated as Task Force 6814, left the United States on January 23, 1942, with the mission of occupying and defending New Caledonia. The original convoy consisting of seven large transports escorted by suitable naval forces arrived in Melbourne, Australia, February 28th; unloaded, unit loaded, and departed for New Caledonia, arriving at Noumea on March 12th, 1942. The infantry of this division (132nd, 164th, and 182nd) came from three different National Guard divisions; the artillery was formed from the 72nd Field Artillery supplemented by a howitzer battalion from the 180th Field Artillery. Organization of the division and training for subsequent jungle operations began after arrival in New Caledonia and was carried on concurrently with activities and dispositions incident to the basic defense mission.

The movement to the Solomons began by shuttling combat teams began with the departure on October 9th, 1942, and arrival at Guadalcanal on October 13th of the 164th Infantry. The first twenty-four hours ashore was a trying experience for troops entering combat for the first time. Heavy daylight bombing attacks seriously interfered with the unloading and during the first night, Henderson Field was shelled by enemy battleships (14-inch shells), cruisers, and destroyers, causing many casualties. The enemy continued to act aggressively on land, sea, and in the air until defeated in his attack on Henderson Field, October 23-25, an operation in which the 164th Infantry took part in a manner which merited praise from Major General A.A. Vandegrift, USMC, Commanding.

On November 3rd, the 1st Battalion, 164th Infantry relieved a battalion of the 5th Marines in the front line of an offensive which had been launched west across the Matanikau on November 1st. During the period of November 4 to 11, the regiment, less this battalion, brigaded with the 7th Marines, operated successfully in offensive action against a Japanese force landed near Koli Point during the night of November 2-3.

The successful defense of Henderson Field, October 23-25, during which one Japanese Infantry regiment was practically annihilated, plus the pending arrival of the entire Americal Division had caused the Commanding General to launch an offensive west of the Matanikau River with Kokumbona as the objective. This was initiated by a successful crossing of the Matanikau on November 1st and had

proceeded some 3 miles westward when on November 11th it became necessary to withdraw all troops (except one battalion of the 7th Marines, which remained at Koli Point) into the perimeter to meet a critical situation.

Aerial reconnaissance had for several days reported a concentration of transports in the Northern Solomons-New Britain area which, coupled with other intelligence, made it apparent that the enemy intended making a major effort to reinforce his troops on Guadalcanal. Enemy daylight bombing attacks interspersed with dive and torpedo bombing attacks on friendly shipping had been intensified and one ship had been torpedoed by a submarine while unloading off Lunga Point. As a result, General Vandegrift decided to occupy the position defenses of Henderson Field and adjacent installations, bounded on the east and west by the Tenaru and Matanikau Rivers and on the south by strung wire. The main position was divided into two sectors with the Lunga River as the boundary, the east sector from Lunga to Tenaru being commanded by Brigadier General William R. Rupertus, USMC: the west sector by Brigadier General Edmund B. Sebree, United States Army. Troops assigned to the west sector were the 164th Infantry, the 182nd Infantry (then enroute), and the 8th Marines. The remainder of the 1st Marine Division and attached units occupied the east sector. Artillery was grouped within the perimeter to support either sector.

On the night of November 11-12, enemy warships heavily shelled Henderson Field and the area adjacent to the beach in the vicinity of Lunga Point, destroying four airplanes and causing some casualties. Shortly after midnight, November 12-13, the spearhead of a large enemy naval formation, including two battleships, reached the Guadalcanal area and was furiously attacked by U.S. Naval Task Forces, commanded by Admirals Scott and Callaghan. This engagement took place just offshore and generally around Savo Island, some of the shells falling on Guadalcanal. The successful results of this engagement are so generally known as to require no detailed repetition. About noon on November 14th, a convoy of 12 Jap transports heavily loaded with troops was sighted moving south about 200 miles north of Guadalcanal. Our air forces made three strikes that day, sinking 8 transports and damaging 4 others. Shortly after daylight, November 15, four damaged transports apparently from the convoy were beached along the Guadalcanal coast between Tassafaronga and Dome Cove and were destroyed before they could unload. November 15th marked the end of a definite phase of operations on Guadalcanal. This was made more evident by the fact that from November 13th to on or about January 25th, the enemy made no aerial attacks during daylight hours.

SECOND PHASE

The advance on Kokumbona had reached a line about 3,000 yards west of the Matanikau River and was proceeding slowly but surely with heavy casualties on both sides when the situation described in the "FIRST PHASE" necessitated withdrawal into the perimeter defense. As soon as the results of the naval and air action of November 13-15 were learned, an offensive to the west was again directed. The first step in the operation was to secure crossings over the Matanikau and with that in view, strong patrols were sent forward to protect necessary reconnaissance parties.

Early on November 18th, the 2nd Battalion, 182nd Infantry crossed the river and went into position in the left sector of the proposed bridgehead. The enemy makes no attempt to interfere with this movement. On the following day, the 1st Battalion, 182nd Infantry, crossed the Matanikau with the mission of occupying the right sector of the bridgehead. Company "B" 8th Marines covering this movement made contact with a strong Japanese force about 1,500 yards west of Point Cruz and a sharp fire fight resulted. This company was forced to withdraw to avoid being outflanked, took position on a ridge just east of and running south from the base of Point Cruz, reorganized and again attempted to move forward, with artillery support but could not make a substantial advance. During the action just described, the 1st Battalion, 182nd Infantry was moved to assembly areas, prepared to attack and seize their objective. The remainder of the day was devoted to patrol action and development and a limited objective attack was ordered for daylight 20 November with the mission of seizing the high ground which outlined the front of the right sector. During the night of November 19-20, the enemy shelled the assembly areas with artillery and mortar fire, causing many casualties, several of whom were officers, and interfering seriously with control. The attack began shortly after daylight on the 20th but encountered such severe and intense fire of all classes that the objective was not reached. The zone of heaviest enemy fire was along the right (beach) and Companies "A" and "C" received the greatest number of casualties. It was the first combat experience of this unit and there was considerable confusion and some straggling. However, confidence was soon restored and a well-controlled and disciplined firing line organized. While the enemy strength was unknown, it was apparent that additional troops would be required to seize the objective and orders were issued that afternoon for the 164th Infantry to move forward under cover of darkness and attack at daylight November 21st generally south of the position held by the 1st Battalion.

The attack was launched as ordered and after severe fighting, the 1st Battalion, 182nd Infantry, advancing along the beach, seized Point Cruz and pushed their forward elements about 100 yards west of there but could advance no further. The 164th Infantry, after heavy fighting, was able to occupy that portion of the objective

assigned. An attack was again ordered on the morning of November 22nd, but again no substantial advance was made. Therefore, on the afternoon of that day, the 8th Marines were directed to attack at daylight on November 23rd, passing through the lines of the 164th Infantry and seizing a ridge some 200 yards to the front of the lines then occupied. This attack was launched as ordered but after an entire day of severe fighting, it became evident that further advance would not be possible without accepting casualties in numbers to preclude the advisability of this action. Consequently, on the evening of November 23rd, units then in line were directed to dig in and hold their positions. Each night from November 20th to 24th and on many nights thereafter, the enemy launched attacks which were repelled with heavy enemy losses. Thus, on November 24th, the position west of the Matanikau was stabilized and the lines remained unchanged until the general Corps attack was launched on January 10th.

From a captured document it was later determined that a meeting engagement with the 2nd Japanese Division had taken place on the morning of November 20th.

THIRD PHASE

On December 8th, the 1st Marine Division headquarters were withdrawn and Major General Alexander M. Patch, U.S.A, assumed command of the island. It was about this time that information was received of the pending arrival of the 25th Division and the 9th Marine Regiment. The 132nd Infantry and the last remaining elements of the Americal Division arrived at Guadalcanal on or about December 8th and a plan was made for a sustained, determined offensive to be initiated when we had obtained our full ground strength.

Three intermediate steps essential to an eventual all out victory were as follows:

- a. Securing Mt. Austen, a prominent hill-mass east of the Matanikau and some five miles south of the beach, which dominated Henderson Field, and all installations adjacent thereto.
- b. Driving the Japanese west of Kokumbona, which would prevent him from employing artillery against the airfields.
- c. Blocking a north-south trail running from Kokumbona to Beaufort Bay on the south coast which might offer either a movement to our south flank or an escape for Japanese forces who might be trapped east of the Poha River.

General Patch directed the 132nd infantry to occupy Mt. Austen conducted necessary reconnaissance; this operation was initiated on December 17th. The Mt. Austen area had been patrolled previously and from the information obtained, it was

not believed that the enemy had any sizable force there. Consequently, the 3rd Battalion, 132nd Infantry moved out to accomplish this objective. They reached the edge of the jungle of Mt. Austen shortly after noon on December 17th and after penetrating the jungle were held up by enemy machine gun fire which inflicted some casualties and resulted in the battalion commander devoting the remainder of the afternoon to reconnaissance and disposing his force for an attack on the morning of December 18th. The attack was launched as scheduled, but shortly thereafter, the battalion commander, Lt. Col. William C. Wright, 132nd Infantry, was killed, which resulted in some confusion and required reorganization. The advance continued but it soon became apparent that enemy resistance was such that one battalion could not accomplish the mission. Consequently, the 1st Battalion, 132nd Infantry, commanded by Lt. Col. Earl R. Ripstra, was moved forward and directed to envelop the enemy's right east flank. Enemy resistance was stubborn. Supply, which at this time was entirely by hand carrier, was difficult and it eventually became necessary to delay until the Engineers could construct "jeep" roads along the grassy slopes to the edge of the jungle near the summit. When the enemy was fixed and his positions located, successful operations permitted the 2nd Battalion, 132nd Infantry, commanded by Lt. Col. George F. Ferry, and a wide flanking movement to the south, to capture Hill 27, which resulted in clearing the enemy from the northern and eastern slopes of Mt. Austen. This was successfully accomplished on January 2nd against stubborn enemy resistance and repeated counterattacks. Enemy losses during this period approximated 400. On January 9th, the 35th Infantry executed a brilliant flanking movement which, assisted by the 3rd Battalion, 182nd Infantry (attached to the 25th Division) succeeded in pocketing and later annihilating the famed OKA regiment, which was strongly dug in on the northwestern slope of Mt. Austen near the headwaters of the Matanikau.

FOURTH PHASE

The attack of the XIV Army Corps was successful and Kokumbona was occupied on January 25th. During this period the 182nd Infantry, less 3rd Battalion, was attached to the composite Army and Marine Division commanded by General A. DeCarra, USMC, which made the holding attack generally west along the beach. The 3rd Battalion, 182nd Infantry and the Americal Division Mobile Combat Reconnaissance Squadron were attached to the 25th Division which made the main attack, an envelopment of the enemy right (south) flank. The 164th Infantry and the 132nd Infantry occupied defensive positions within the perimeter defense (Henderson Field Beachhead). When Kokumbona was reached, it was evident that the enemy was in full retreat and a pursuit was ordered. On February 1st, command of the western force passed from General DeCarra to General Sebree. The 2nd Battalion, 132nd Infantry, with an additional heavy weapons company and a battery

of artillery attached, landed in the vicinity of Verahue on February 1st, with the mission of advancing north and east against the enemy rear. The main forces advancing to the west at that time were composed of the 161st Infantry, (25th Division), 147th Infantry (an independent regiment), and the 6th Marine regiment. The enemy made a stubborn defense along the Bonegi River against the 147th Infantry, but after crossing the Bonegi, resistance was confined to small delaying groups. The force advancing northeast, effected a juncture at 4:25 P.M., February 9th, southeast of Cape Esperance at the Tenamba River. This terminated all organized Japanese resistance on Guadalcanal.

By command of Brigadier General SEBREE:

[signed]
Major, A.G.D.,
Adjutant General.