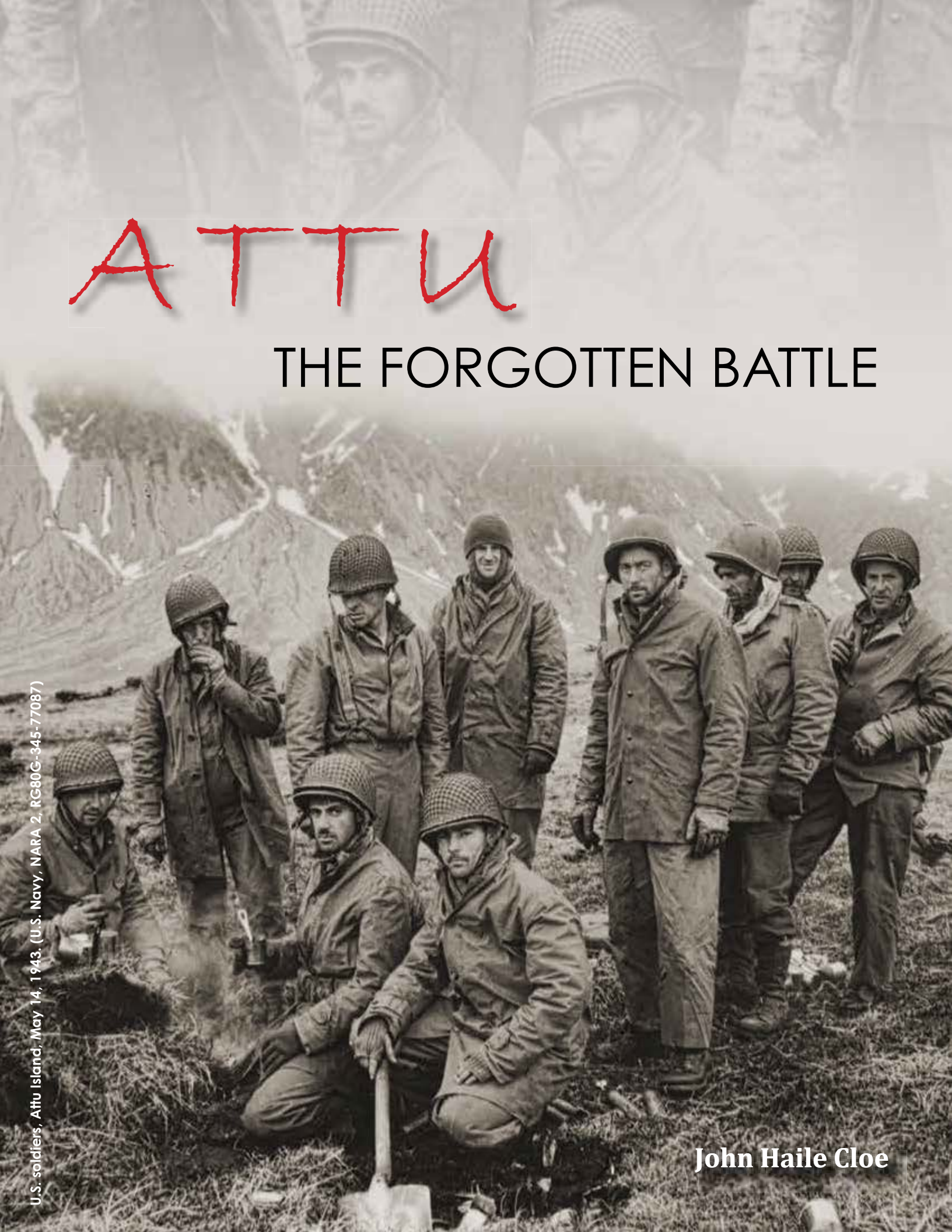


ATTU

THE FORGOTTEN BATTLE



U.S. soldiers, Attu Island, May 14, 1943. (U.S. Navy, NARA 2, RG80G-345-77087)

John Haile Cloe



As the nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural and cultural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation.

The Cultural Resource Programs of the National Park Service have responsibilities that include stewardship of historic buildings, museum collections, archeological sites, cultural landscapes, oral and written histories, and ethnographic resources.



Our mission is to identify, evaluate and preserve the cultural resources of the park areas and to bring an understanding of these resources to the public. Congress has mandated that we preserve these resources because they are important components of our national and personal identity.

Study prepared for and published by the United State Department of the Interior through the Government Printing Office.

National Park Service
Alaska Affiliated Areas
Aleutian World War II National Historic Area

Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author and contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior.

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ATTU

THE FORGOTTEN BATTLE

John Haile Cloe



Bringing down the wounded, Attu Island, May 14, 1943. (UAA, Archives & Special Collections, Lyman and Betsy Woodman Collection)

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Rachel Mason, Alaska Region, National Park Service

John Cloe, Colonel U.S. Army Reserves, Retired, and Department of Air Force Historian, Retired, was still working on the manuscript of *Attu, the Forgotten Battle* at the time of his passing in December 2016. As a military historian with expert knowledge of the Aleutian campaign of World War II, he supported and contributed to the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area, a program of the National Park Service, Alaska Region, for many years. After serving as an infantry officer in Vietnam, in 1970 he became the Alaska Air Command historian at Elmendorf Air Force Base. He organized and led tours to Attu Island by boat. In 2016 he completed *Mission to the Kuriles*, and then turned to finalizing *Attu, the Forgotten Battle*.

Because the manuscript was a work in progress when Cloe died, it is not up to the high professional standards of his other books, which were meticulously referenced. He did not have time to provide detailed footnotes or to create an index. Several of the photographs lack a source, and we have provisionally credited them to the Alaska Air Force. None of this should detract from the enormous value of this long-awaited history of the

Battle of Attu. After unraveling the factors that led up to the battle, Cloe offers a day-by-day account of the combat, followed by discussion of the lessons learned in the battle's aftermath.

Appendices C, D, and E provide an Order of Battle for both the American and Japanese forces. Ephriam Dickson has compiled a more complete and accurate version of the author's Japanese Order of Battle. Cloe's version has been retained, however, to show what conclusions were reached based on available U.S. military intelligence.

Several people helped immensely in preparing this document for publication. Thank you to Ephriam Dickson, Debra Corbett, Michael Hawfield and Janet Clemens for reviewing and commenting on drafts. We are particularly grateful to Ephriam Dickson, with the U.S. Army Center of Military History, for providing corrections based on his knowledge of the literature Cloe drew upon. Thanks also to Dael Devenport for creating the maps, Ted Spencer for providing several key photographs, and Susan Cloe for editing the manuscript. A special thank you to Francis Broderick of Archgraphics for design and layout.

FOREWORD

Major General Jake Lestenkof, U.S. Army, Retired

In *Attu: The Forgotten Battle*, Colonel John Haile Cloe, U.S. Army Reserves, Retired, has brilliantly exposed an affecting and gripping picture of this little remembered conflict, from the planning stages to the final days of bloody hand-to-hand combat and the desperate Banzai charge.

Beginning with the official after action reports of the Battle of Attu during May of 1943, there have been several accounts of this World War II contest, fought on a freezing, fog-shrouded island at the farthest end of Alaska's Aleutian Chain. But Cloe gives the reader a particularly stark understanding of how different and difficult it was to conduct military operations in the fierce, northern latitudes compared to the more notorious battles waged elsewhere in the Pacific Theater.

Presenting a detailed account of this early amphibious campaign in the North Pacific, he lays bare the grave miscalculations and chaos—from the critical highest national levels, to the poor planning and execution of the battle. Aside from Iwo Jima, the Battle of Attu claimed the highest percentage of American casualties during World War II.

Cloe's close connection with and interest in the story of Attu provides an authentic foundation for this engrossing retelling.

First, as long time official historian for the U.S. Air Force at the wing, numbered air force, command and joint level, Cloe possesses a fingertip knowledge of Eleventh Air Force operations in North Pacific and its substantial history of war and peace. Cloe describes with authority the Eleventh Air Force, established in December 1941 shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor, and offers insight into its combat operations during the Aleutian Campaign and bombing missions to Japan's Kuril Islands.

Second, as a former Army infantry officer with combat experience, Cloe's ability to describe the comparative combat capabilities of opposing forces in this battle lends a feeling of reality that many writers fail to achieve. The description of the many small unit combat encounters is among the best I have read—and I have read many.

Third, Cloe is unique among military writers in that he has, over more recent times, guided and lectured several tours to the Aleutian war

sites including Attu. He knows more about the terrain and weather on this remote island than anyone I know.

Fourth, as a devoted student of military history, Cloe deftly directs our attention to a number of World War II first experiences at Attu, thus allowing the reader an opportunity to reflect on the many lessons learned from this tenacious struggle by American and Allied forces to recapture U.S. territory from occupying Japanese. From my perspective, the hard lessons learned from Attu most certainly benefitted later amphibious operations in the Pacific and European theaters.

Cloe also helps us appreciate how the Attu reoccupation would later prove to be of great value, in part by making it possible to use the Aleutian Islands as staging areas for an air and naval offense against the Imperial Japanese in the Kuril Islands, then considered part of their home islands.

He also reminds us of the human cost of the forced evacuation and internment of the Aleut people from their ancestral homes in the Aleutians. While those on other Aleutian islands were taken to live in substandard accommodations in southeastern Alaska, the Aleuts from Attu were interned under stark conditions in Japan, where 16 of the original 41 villagers in captivity died.

Finally, Cloe describes how after the war the U.S. government disallowed Aleuts, the first native inhabitants of Attu, from returning to their island homes. Instead, Attu became a crucial outpost of the Cold War, accommodating U.S. military until well after the official thawing of political and military relations.

Students of military history and, in particular, Alaska-at-war devotees, will find Cloe's book a well-presented story of one of World War II's most dramatic but least remembered battles.

Sadly, I must include this postscript: John Cloe, the author of this document, passed on December 26, 2016 at his Anchorage, Alaska home. I know he worried about finishing this project for the National Park Service, Alaska Region. He succeeded for this work is an admirable piece about the Aleutians and our state. I will miss this man, a military veteran, a husband and father, and a good friend.

INTRODUCTION

The closure of the U.S. Coast Guard LORAN C station on Attu in 2010 left the island uninhabited for the first time since around 500BC. Today, Attu remains isolated, difficult to visit. The remnants of World War II and the Cold War are still there, as are traces of the former Aleut village. Largely forgotten is the May 1943 battle to retake the island from the Japanese who occupied Attu June 1942 as part of their Midway-Aleutian operations.

While the Battle of Midway is one of the most studied and documented battles of World War II in the Pacific, the Battle of Attu and the Aleutian Campaign are treated as a side show with paltry and often factually flawed accounts.

Attu stands out as the scene of the only land battle fought on North American soil during World War II and the second most costly assault in the Pacific following Iwo Jima in terms of number of troops engaged. The Americans suffered 71 killed or wounded retaking Attu for every 100 Japanese who defended the island.

Most people are unaware that the United States launched its first offensive operations in the Pacific with the Aleutian Campaign, June 1942-August 1943. It preceded landing on Guadalcanal by two months. It involved joint Army-Navy air, ground and sea combat operations for the first time. The recapture of Attu in May 1943 was the first time enemy-occupied American territory was retaken during the war. Also lost to general knowledge is the fact that Attu was also the first joint service amphibious assault of the war in the Pacific, and the first Army island amphibious operation of the war.

Other notable war firsts were the first sustained air campaign in American history, the first employment of aircraft carrier-based aircraft in close air support of ground forces, the first land-based bombing of the Japanese Homeland, the first and last Japanese land and aircraft carrier based air attacks against North America and the last classic daylight naval surface battle in history and the longest one of World War II.

Marine Corps General and amphibious expert, Holland "Howlin' Mad" Smith, who trained five of the 28 Army divisions qualified in amphibious operations, including the 7th Infantry Division employed on Attu, remembered: "I have always

considered the landing of the Seventh in the fog of Attu, on May 11, 1943, an amphibious landing without parallel in our military history."¹

Attu provided the first encounter with an all-out, last ditch Banzai charge by the Japanese in which they chose death over the dishonor of surrender. The concept of self-sacrifice "Gyokusai," a glorious end, was part of the psychological make-up of the Japanese soldier. It left a deep impression on General Smith, who was on Adak Island, and flew over the battlefield. "That mad charge through the fog made a profound impression and alerted me to the ever-present danger of just such a final desperate attack during my operations in the Central Pacific. Before I left the Aleutians, I decided to amplify our training to include countermeasures against such an eventuality."

Finally, overlooked by most and known to only a few, the Aleutians and the Pribilof Islands to the north were the scene of a U.S. military forced evacuation and relocation of the entire Aleut population, now also referred to as Unangax (Seasiders or Coastal People). It also saw the loss of four Aleut villages (Attu, Biorka, Kashega and Makushin) and the only imprisonment of a North American community in Japan when the Attu village residents were taken to Hokkaido Island in 1942.

The Aleutian Campaign served as the progenitor of what later became standard practice in the Pacific Theater, the bypassing of stronger held islands for weaker held ones and the turning of them into advance air and naval bases. It set the pattern. The campaign also established tactical concepts such as forward air control and low-level bomber attacks that would be used elsewhere in the Pacific.

Today, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service administers Attu as part of the Alaska National Maritime Wildlife Refuge and for its historic significance as part of the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument. The National Park Service provides historic preservation technical assistance through its partnership with the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area and Attu's National Historic Landmark status. The two federal agencies collaborate in preserving and protecting the place.

Chapter One

SETTING

Terrain

Generally, military planners try to avoid fighting battles on difficult terrain and under harsh weather conditions. This is not always easy, especially in modern warfare. Attu provides a classic example. Forces trained and equipped for desert warfare had little time to retrain and equip for the brutal conditions on Attu where they faced cold weather and mountain warfare against an acclimated and better-clothed foe who understood the terrain and consistently occupied the high grounds.

The United States Army's official history covering the Battle of Attu, *The Western Hemisphere, Guarding the United States and Its Outpost*, noted: "To the soldiers who had to fight not only the Japanese but the weather and terrain of the island, it must have seemed that the Creator of the universe was an unskilled apprentice when He brought Attu into existence."

Attu, the farthest west island in the Aleutian Chain, occupies 344.7 square miles. It is covered by precipitous mountains, many over 2,500 feet tall with the highest being 2,945 feet. It has a rugged coastline, most of which rises directly from the sea. The low areas consist mostly of spongy muskeg with a thin layer of solid earth underlain by soggy unfrozen soil, making vehicular travel, even tracked, difficult if not impossible. Some authors describing Attu mistakenly refer to muskeg as tundra. The latter consists of permanently frozen ground under a layer of solid soil while muskeg consists of wet vegetation covered by soil.

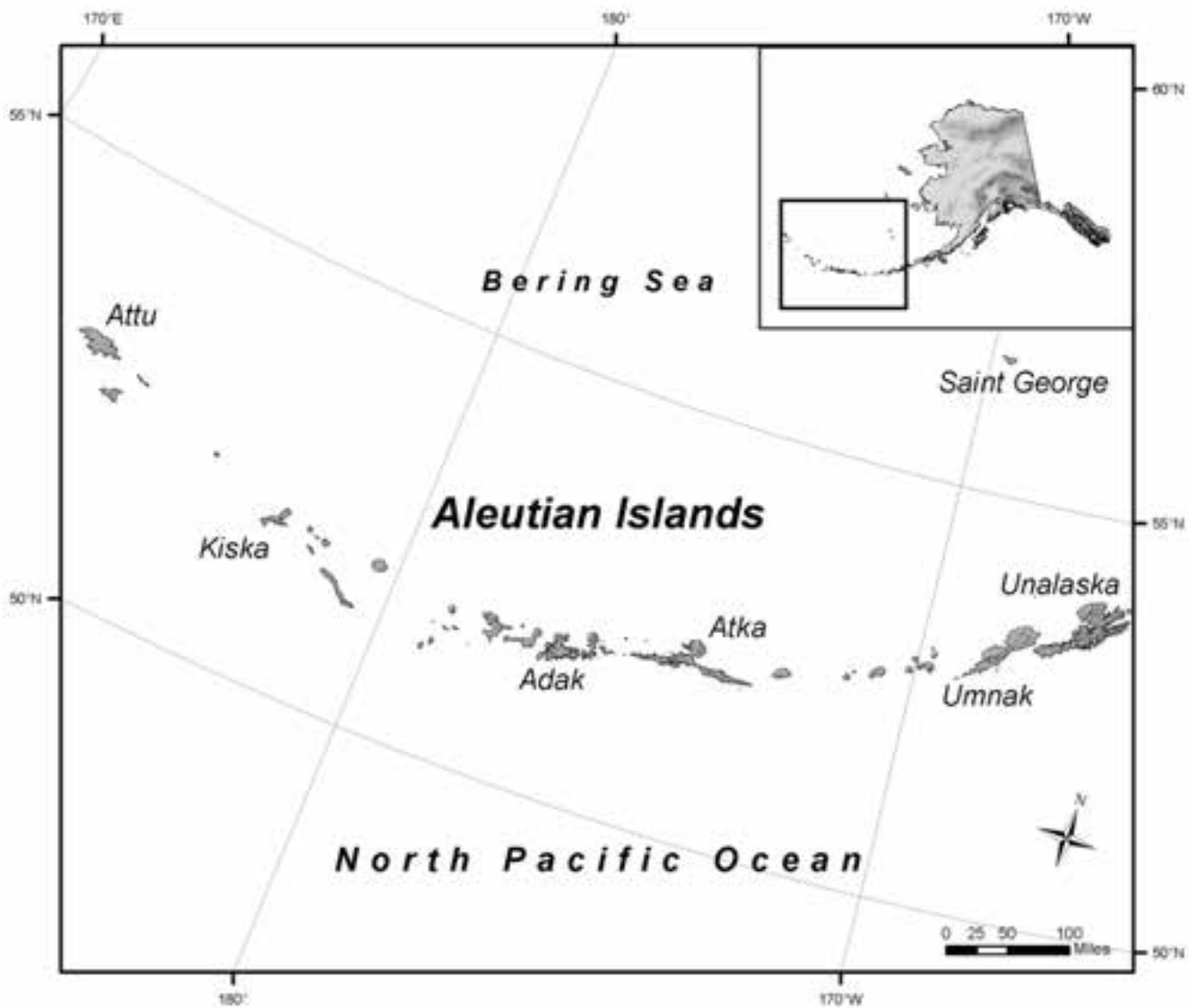
The sea approaches are hazardous due to submerged rocks and jagged coastlines. Air operations are hampered by fog and wind shears commonly referred to as williwaws.

Nine bays and coves indent the island. Five of the sheltered areas, Holtz, Massacre, Sarana and Temnac Bays and Chichagof Harbor, are located on the east side of the island. The east side is divided by a series of five ridges: Gilbert, Henderson, Prendergast, Fish Hook and Moore. Four passes, Clevesy, Jarmin, Holtz Bay-Sarana, and Holtz Bay-Chichagof, and a trail system allowed access between the compartmentalized battle areas.

The Japanese occupied the east side of the island.¹ They enjoyed the interior line advantage of moving forces from one place to another over the trail system and by means of powered barges. They dominated the high grounds during the course of the battle. Additionally, the Japanese understood how to use the terrain to their advantage because of pre-battle familiarization with the terrain and trail systems.

The Americans would pay a steep price to gain control of the passes and ridges which later bore the names of those killed leading the attacks.

Following the battle, the Army named terrain features in the battle area after those who lost their lives there. While the rationale and purpose are understood, the source behind the decisions is missing except in one instance. Colonel James D. Bush, Jr., U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Retired, in a 1983 oral history interview with the Alaskan Air



Map I-1: Aleutian Islands (NPS Map)

Command historian, recalled the naming decisions had been made shortly after the battle. Colonel Bush served as the deputy engineer on Attu and fought on Engineer Hill. He insisted that the place be named in honor of the engineers who stopped the final Japanese Banzai charge.

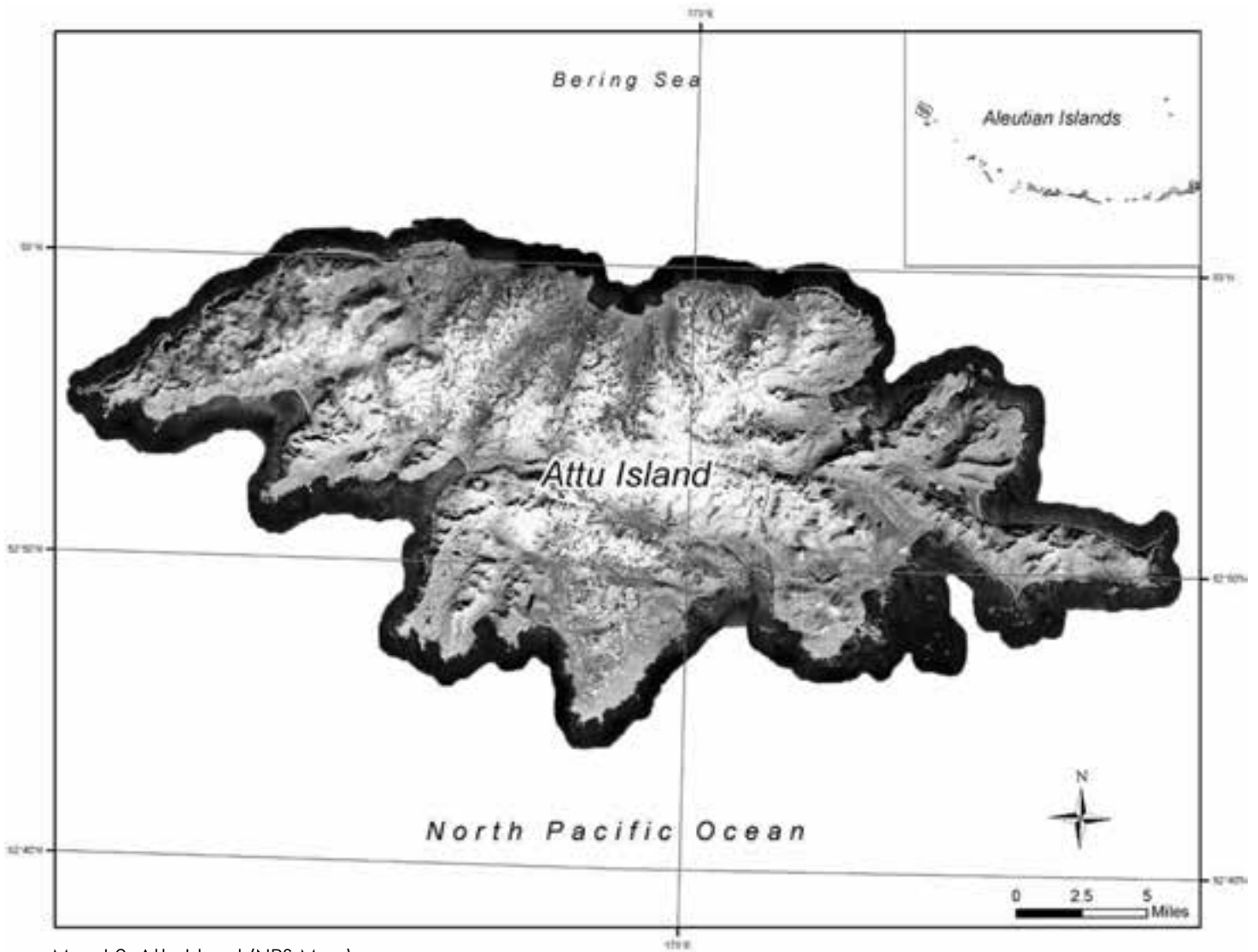
Today, few understand the significance of the names. Douglas J. Orth's *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, published in 1967 by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), lists the names and a brief explanation, but provides only a 1948 Army Map Service map of Attu as the source.

Twenty-nine geographical features (mountains and ridges, passes, rivers and streams, lakes, valleys, coves and beaches) in or near the battle area bear the names of men killed during the battle. Some figured prominently in the battle. The Army named Henderson Ridge overlooking the left

side of Massacre Valley after Lieutenant Douglas Henderson, a Navy fighter pilot, who along with Ensign Earnest D. Jackson encountered extreme winds May 14 while flying up Massacre Valley in support of the assault on Jarmin Pass. Both spun out of control and crashed. The river and a bridge across it are also named for him.

Lieutenant Harry Gilbert, a platoon leader in G Company, 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, died May 19, while leading an assault to capture Nees Point, also referred to as Point Able. It occupies the high point on the northwest end of Gilbert Ridge overlooking the left side of Massacre Valley.

Nees Point was named after Lieutenant Charles W. Nees, Company L, 32nd Infantry Regiment. Neither Nees Point nor Point Able are noted on maps or listed in Orth and the USGS web site although they appear in the



Map I-2, Attu Island (NPS Map)



Photo I-1: Aerial of Massacre Bay looking northeast taken during the 1934 Naval Expedition. The area would become the major scene of the Battle of Attu and later a major base with two airfields including one built on Alexai Point. (USN, Isaiah Davies Collection, AFHRA)



Clockwise from above: Photo I-2: Aerial of entrance leading into Chichagof Harbor looking southwest taken during 1934 Naval Expedition. The narrow rocky entrance created dangerous conditions for amphibious operations. (USN, Isaiah Davies Collection, AFHRA)

Photo I-3: Aerial, Chichagof Harbor, August 6, 1942. The village is located in the middle right below the bluff and northwest of the lake. Fish Hook Ridge is the high ground to the southwest of the harbor. (Eleventh Air Force mission reports, AFHRA)

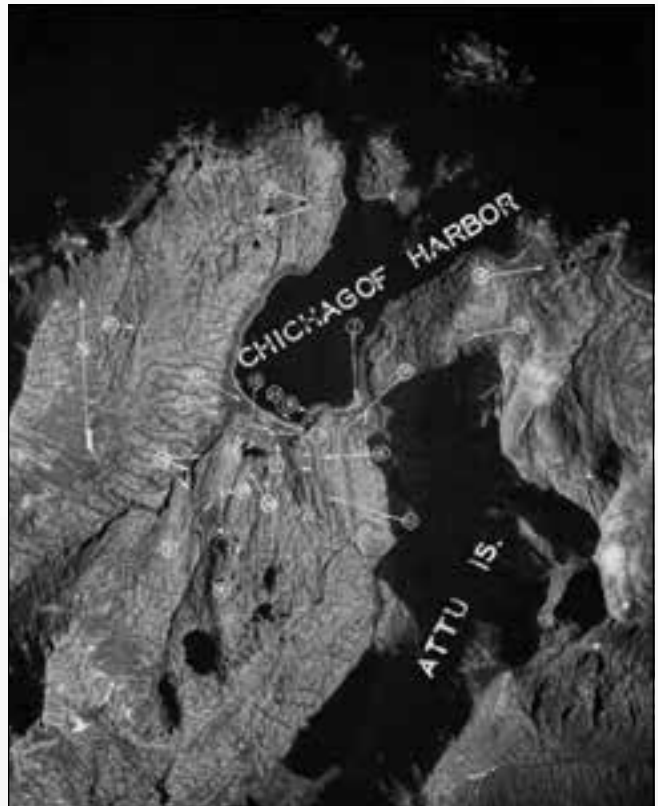


Photo I-4: (background) Aerial, Chichagof Harbor, September 8, 1942. Buffalo Ridge can be seen in the upper left cover overlooking Lake Cories. McKenzie Creek can be seen in the upper center and West Peak and Holtz Bay in the far left corner. Note the ship in the harbor. (USN, RG 181, Naval Districts and Shore Installations, NARA Pacific Region)

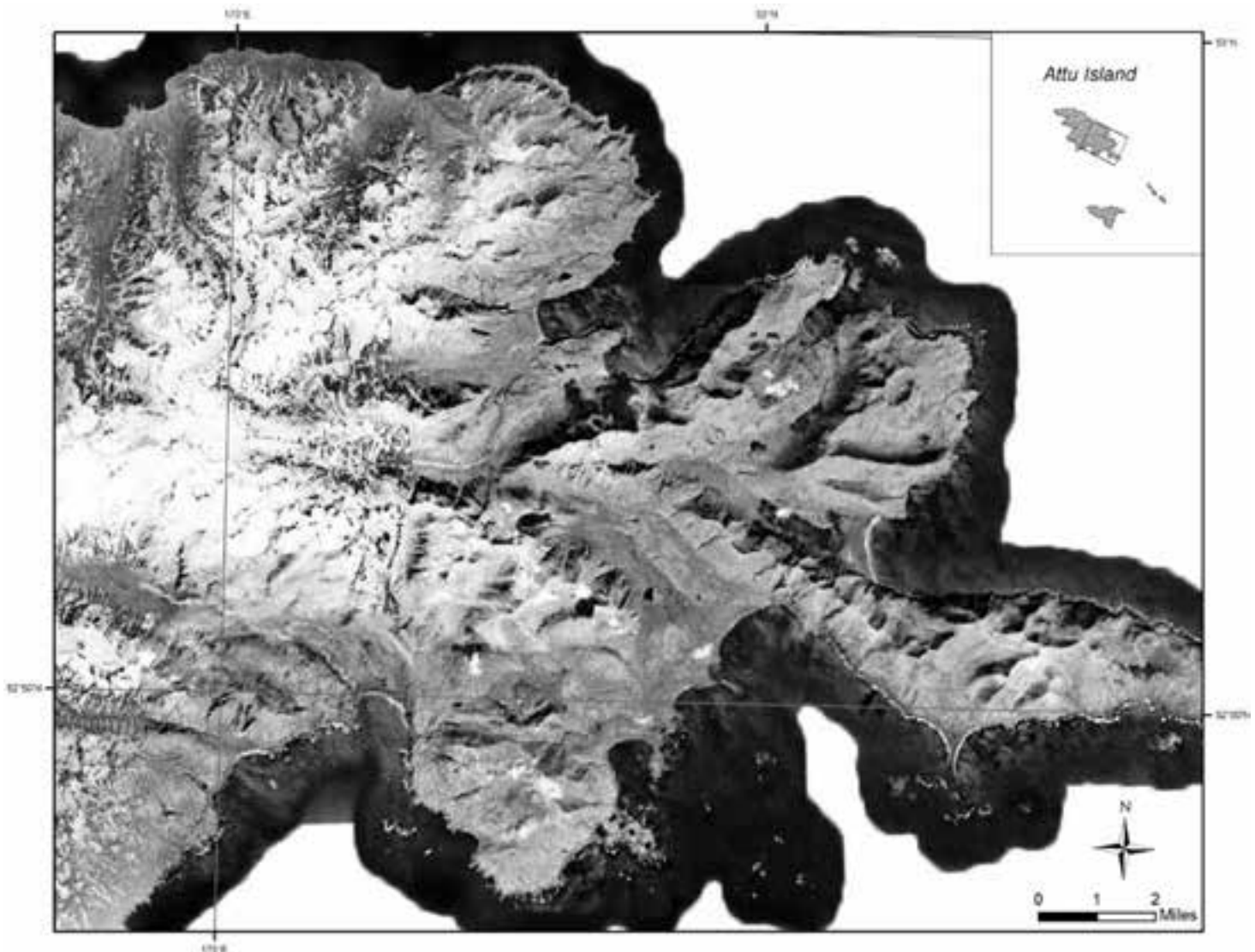




Photo I-5: Aerial, Holtz Bay, August 8, 1942, the first taken of Japanese occupation. Hill X, actually two hills separated by a saddle, is visible northwest of the West Arm beach. (Eleventh Air Force mission reports, AFHRA)

Photo I-6: (background) Oblique taken May 13 of Holtz Bay during landing operations looking northwest showing East and East Arm with Moore Ridge in center. (USN, NARA 2, 80-G-336-75446)





Map I-3: East end of Attu showing bays and coves. (NPS Map)

histories and reports of the battle. For the sake of honoring him, Point Able is referred to as Nees Point in this short history.

The Army renamed the Massacre-Holtz Pass, providing access between Massacre Valley and Holtz Bay, Jarmin Pass after Captain John E. Jarmin, Commanding Officer, L Company, 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, killed in action May 14. It provides access between Holtz Bay and Massacre Valley. The Massacre-Sarana Pass separating Massacre Valley and Chichagof Harbor was renamed Clevesy Pass after Lieutenant Samuel W. Clevesy, Platoon Leader, H Company, 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, killed in action May 19.

Two valleys below Clevesy Pass bear the names of two Army lieutenant colonels killed there. The east-west Sarana Valley was renamed Siddens Valley after Major Jack K. Siddens, Commander, 3rd Battalion,

17th Infantry Regiment, killed in action May 29. The north-south Jim Fish Valley running along the shore of Lake Cories to Chichagof Harbor was named after Lieutenant Colonel James Fish III, Executive Officer, 17th Infantry Regiment, killed in action May 29.

In addition to having a stream in Siddens Valley named after him, Captain John W. Basset has been honored with the April 1963 naming of Basset Army Hospital, later Army Community Hospital, on Fort Wainwright, Alaska, after him. Captain Basset, a medical doctor, and Commander, Company D, 7th Medical Battalion, was killed in action May 29 while attempting to organize a defense of his patients in the forward aid station in Siddens Valley.

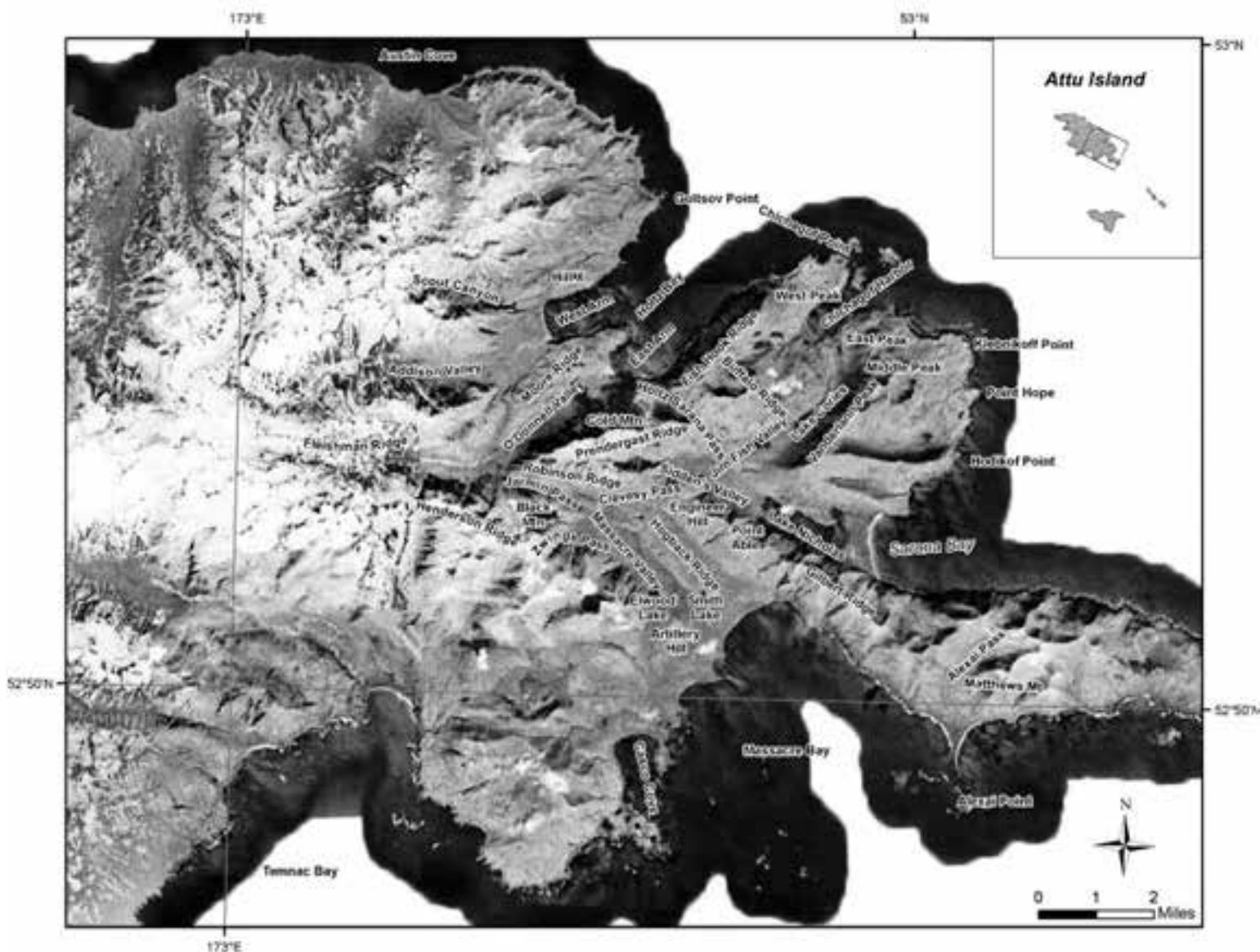
Holtz Bay is connected to Siddens and Jim Fish Valleys and Chichagof Harbor by two passes. The Holtz Bay-Sarana Pass trail runs over a saddle between the precipitous Prendergast and Fish



Photo I-7: Looking west across the beaches of the West Arm of Holtz Bay. (USA Signal Corps, NARA 2, 111-SC-175-179478)



Photo I-8: Looking east across the beaches of East Arm towards Fish Hook Ridge. (USA Signal Corps, NARA 2 111-SC-175-179480)



Map I-4a: Geographical features, Attu Island (NPS Map)

Hook Ridges. The Army named the former after Lieutenant Joseph Prendergast, B Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry, killed in action May 20 while leading a patrol up the ridge to Siddens Valley. Fish Hook received its name from its shape.

A branch of the trail leads from the wide saddle between Prendergast and Fish Hook Ridges, referred to as the Bahai Bowl, northeast to an unnamed 1000-foot pass between Newman and Washburn Peaks on Fish Hook Ridge. The trail continues northeast down to Chichagof Harbor via a steep gully cut by the McKenzie Creek. Oddly, the Army apparently failed to name the pass after the only Medal of Honor recipient of the Aleutian Campaign, Private Joe Martinez, Company K, and 32nd Infantry Regiment. Private Martinez was killed in action May 26 overcoming Japanese opposition in

the pass. It opened the way to Chichagof Harbor. A mountain outside the battle area is named after him.

Weather

Weather dominated the Battle of Attu inflicting a disproportionately large number of non-battle casualties among the ill-equipped and unprepared American invaders, limiting air support, hindering artillery and naval gun fire and disrupting radio communications.

Temperatures on Attu are relatively mild, averaging 50 degrees Fahrenheit during the summer and 33 degrees during winter months. Precipitation, rain, snow or mist occurs five to six days of the week. Dense clouds cover the island ninety percent of the time during the summer and fifty percent during the winter. Five to six days of fog a week occur during the



Map I-4b: Oblique view aerial, geographical features, Attu Island (NPS Map)

summer. There may be only eight to ten days of clear skies a year. Winds reach a velocity of over 100 miles an hour. Heavy snowfall blankets the island during the winter months and the annual rainfall averages 39 to 49 inches a year. Snow lingers in the higher elevations until late summer. Mist and fog shroud the upper slopes of mountains and ridgelines while valley floors remain clear.

The damp, cold and windy environment can create major problems for those not properly clothed and shod. Wind-driven cold rain quickly saturates clothing causing hypothermia. Cold water seeped into boots, causing immersion foot. The latter, commonly referred to as trench foot, results from the shrinkage of capillaries, cutting off the flow of blood resulting in dead tissues and

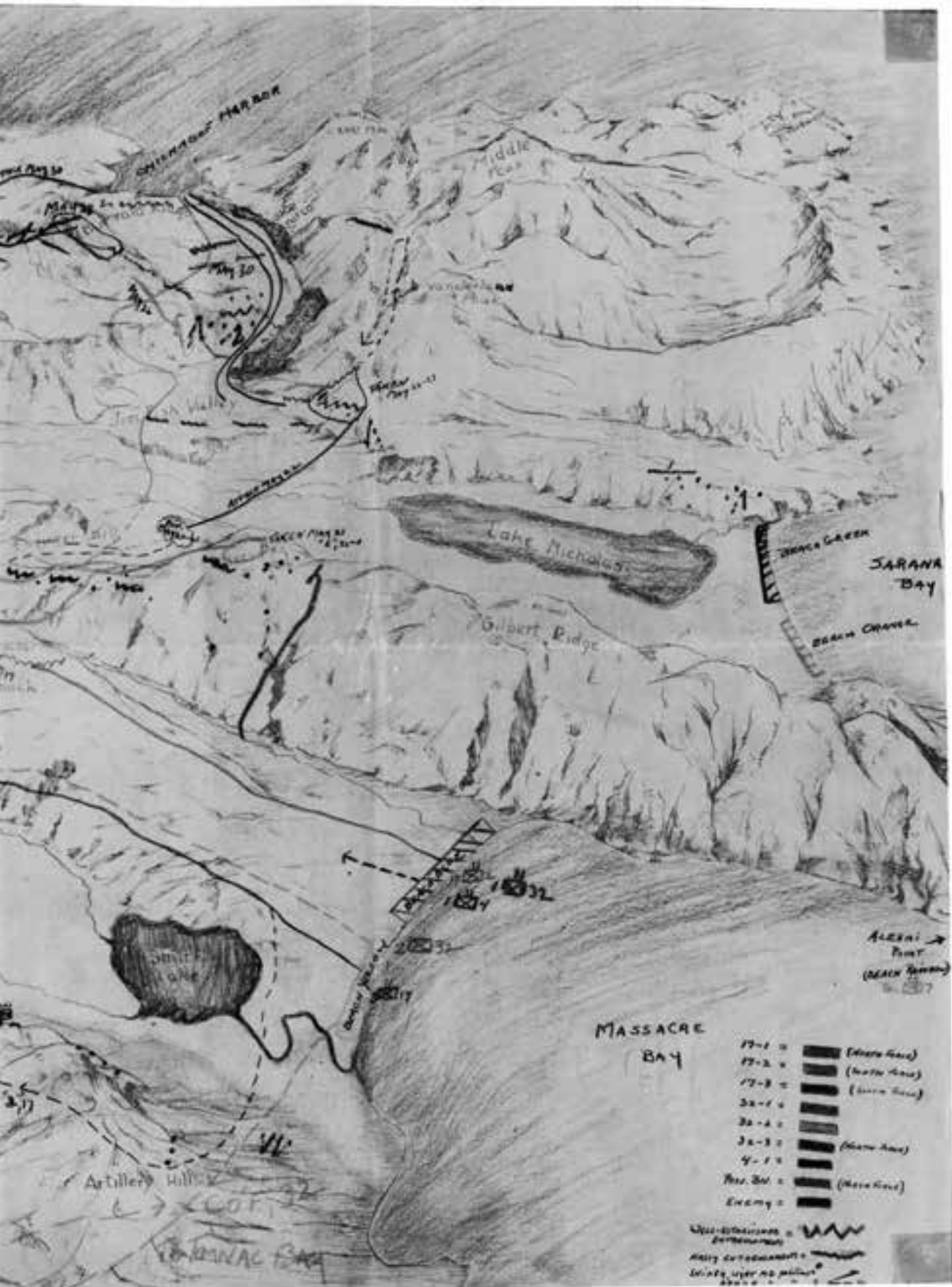
considerable pain. Gangrene can occur. A number of authors incorrectly mention frostbite, freezing of flesh in subzero temperatures. The temperatures on Attu seldom dip below freezing and medical reports do not mention it.

Terrain and weather favored the Japanese, many of whom were from the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido. The Americans, not fully understanding their impact, picked a difficult place for ground combat and paid the price.

Endnotes

¹ The Japanese had poor maps of Attu. They landed near Attu village and believed there were U.S. military stationed there (Ephriam Dickson, pers. com. to Rachel Mason)





Map I-5: U.S. Intelligence map, April 1942 showing trail system

Chapter Two

THE ISLAND AND ITS HISTORY

Russian Period

The Aleuts occupied Attu for about 2500 years before they were forcibly evacuated by the Japanese in September 1942. The first European contact came when Alexii Chirikof, the captain of the *St Paul*, sighted Attu in 1741 while returning to Petropavlovsk on Kamchatka Peninsula as part of the Vitus Bering voyage of discovery. It came at a time when the Russians had overhunted fur-bearing mammals on the Siberian coast and Kuril Islands, mostly for trade with an Asian market. The Aleutians offered a new, rich source of seals and otters. At least 30,000 people occupied the Aleutian Islands when the Russians arrived. Attu may have had as many as 1000 inhabitants. Russian fur traders counted 120-175 people in three settlements at the east end of the island. After landing in 1745, they killed at least 17 Attu men in a place later named Massacre Bay.

It marked the beginning of a rapid decline of the population the Russians called "Aleuts" as they occupied the rest of the Aleutian Islands. The deprivations of the "freebooting" Russian fur traders took an enormous toll, with approximately 5,000 Aleuts killed outright and disease and starvation reducing the population by half by 1790. Of the hundreds of villages that existed, only 39 remained after 100 years of occupation. In the Near Islands, within 20 years, by 1784 there were 100 people living in one village on Attu. The Russian-American Company was formed in 1799 to

manage the fur trade and develop other economic enterprises in Alaska. Russian Orthodox priests arrived to spread the word of Christianity while the Aleuts found ways to incorporate their traditional beliefs into the new spiritual teachings.

Russian fur traders introduced blue Arctic foxes in the Aleutians for the first time on Attu in 1757 to supplement the harvesting of sea otters. As the Aleut population continued to decline, the Russian-American Company, in order to increase profits, began consolidating villages. In 1805 it founded a village in Chichagof Harbor with resettled Aleuts from Atka and Amchitka. The original Attu inhabitants continued to live in the Massacre Bay and Sarana Bay areas. By 1848, they had moved into Chichagof Harbor. Although the Aleuts traded the furs for basic food staples, such as sugar and tea, clothing and guns and ammunition, they continued their centuries-old lifestyle of subsisting off the land and surrounding waters.

American Purchase

Following the purchase of Alaska in 1867, the Alaska Commercial Company bought out the interest of the Russian American Company and assumed management control over Alaska business enterprises including the Aleutian fur trading operation. In 1901, the Alaska Commercial Company merged with the International Mercantile Company and Alaska Goldfields, Ltd. to form the Northern Commercial Company. The Northern



Photo II-1: Mike Hodikoff and his son, George, gather driftwood in Holtz Bay. Alan G. May, an archeologist with Dr. Ales Hrdlicka's Smithsonian archeological expedition to the Aleutians took the photograph in 1936. The photograph and others taken by May appeared in a June 29, 1942 *Life* magazine article "U.S. Bombers Hit Jap Forces in Aleutians." (Alan G. May Papers, Archives and Special Collections, Consortium Library, University of Alaska Anchorage)

Commercial continued to manage the fur trade in the Aleutians until 1922 when the Aleutian Fur Company bought it out. By then, the company had abandoned Attu as being unprofitable.

Attu Village, the Last Vestiges of the Aleuts in the Western Aleutians

Attu Village had experienced a decline in population by 1922. In 1890, there were 101 people, including Natives and Creoles, living on the island. The population declined to 98 in 1900. It dropped to 29 in the 1930 census with the signing of the 1911 North Pacific Seal Convention treaty by Great Britain (for Canada), Japan, Russia and the United States. It left fox trapping and the sale of Attu baskets as the only source of cash income.

Fred Schroeder assumed responsibility for Aleutian Fur Company operations in the western

Aleutians during the 1920s and introduced new stocks of foxes to Attu. He populated the nearby uninhabited islands of Agattu, Alaid and Shemya with foxes and built cabins on Alaid and Shemya for seasonal trapping.

Attu Village prospered during the 1930s. The census for 1940 showed 44 residents in nine households. Fox trapping provided the economic mainstay, employing 12 trappers. Mike Hodikoff, the village chief, was the only salaried employee in 1940, serving as the storekeeper for \$500 a year and looking after Aleutian Fur Company interests.

Wood framed housing replaced most of the barabaras. The Aleuts replaced the driftwood and sod church in 1931 with wood framed Dormition of the Mother of God Russian Orthodox church. It featured a bell tower and Byzantine-style dome. Oral traditions claim the sale of the highly prized

Attu baskets woven by the village women funded the new church and Fred Schroeder loaned money for lumber. The Department of Interior built a school house with quarters for a school teacher couple. It featured running water, a generator providing electricity for the building, and a radio which connected the village with the rest of Alaska. As the largest structure, the school became a community center for the village.

United States Coast Guard and Department of Interior vessels visited the village on a regular basis, bringing in supplies and providing medical support. The Navy used the school house as a base when it sent a fleet of seven ships under the command of Rear Admiral Sinclair Gannon into the Aleutians in 1934 to chart the waters around the Aleutian Islands.

Strategic Interest

Serious naval interest in the Aleutians extended back to 1904, when the U.S. Navy announced plans to develop a coaling base on Kiska Island that

would support the “Great Circle Route” to protect its interest in the Far East and western Pacific. President William H. Taft signed Presidential Executive Order 1733 on March 3, 1913, setting aside the Aleutian Islands as a wildlife refuge. The order, in addition to protecting wildlife, also stipulated the Aleutians could be used for military and naval purposes.

By then, the Navy had cancelled its “Great Circle Route” plans in favor of a route across the Central Pacific. “War Plan Orange” called for the establishment of a series of advance bases in the Hawaiian Islands, Midway, Wake and Guam Islands to the west in the event that warships had to be dispatched to the Far East. While Hawaii was fortified, nothing was done on the other islands. By then, also, the Navy had switched to oil to power its vessels and the use of oil tankers to refuel them at sea.

Likewise, nothing was done to fortify the Aleutians other than dispatching naval charting expeditions and establishing a communications



Photo II-2: Aerial, Attu Village, Summer 1934. (USN, Isaiah Davies Collection, AFHRA)



Photo II-3: Attu Village, Summer 1934. The 1934 Navy Expedition used the school house, upper left, as an administrative and operations center while surveying the island. (USN, Isaiah Davies Collection, AFHRA)



Right, top to bottom: Photo II-4: Partially underground barabararas made of driftwood and sod provided earlier housing. (USN, Isaiah Davies Collection, AFHRA)

Photo II-5: Old church. (Alaska State Library P170-10)

Photo II-6: New church, built by funds raised by the selling of grass woven baskets. (USN, Isaiah Davies Collection, AFHRA)

Photo II-7: Interior of new church. (UAA, Archives & Special Collections, Alan G. May Collection)

station on Unalaska in the eastern Aleutians. The decision resulted in part from the 1921-1922 Washington Naval Conference. The conference, attended by nine nations, had been called to reduce naval armament in the wake of World War I. As part of the agreement, the U.S. and Japan agreed to restrict military development on their island holdings west of the 180th Meridian, an area that included the central and western Aleutians.

Additionally, the Navy viewed the Aleutians as a difficult environment for supporting large-scale naval operations. With the lapse of the Washington Armament Treaty in 1936, the Navy recommended the establishment of seaplane bases on Adak and at Dutch Harbor. Construction at Dutch Harbor did not begin until 1940. Adak was not fortified until after the Japanese occupation of the western Aleutians.

Background: Photo II-8: Attu Village School built by Department of Interior. (USN, Isaiah Davies Collection, AFHRA)

Right: Photo II-9: Charles Foster and Etta Jones wedding photograph, taken Tanana, Alaska, April 1, 1923. (Mary Breu Collection, Gift of Anchorage Museum Association, Anchorage Museum, B2011.007.8.27)





Photo II-10: The aerial of Dutch Harbor was taken after completion of the naval base and army post. Jack London allegedly named the large hill on Amaknak Island in Unalaska Bay in the eastern Aleutians Mount Ballyhoo when Dutch Harbor served as a stopover on the way to the gold fields in northwestern Alaska. The Navy later built a communications station on Amaknak Island and with the onset of World War II, Naval Operating Base Dutch Harbor. The Army built Fort Mears, lower left, named after Colonel Frederick Mears, who oversaw the construction of the Alaska Railroad. The town of Unalaska is to the south of Fort Mears. (USN, 613ABW Hist. Office)

While the U.S. Navy charted the Aleutians, the Japanese also visited there while fishing in the waters off the islands. A number of crews contained Japanese naval intelligence officers. During 1931, Japanese newspapers featured accounts of a “good will” flight of a single aircraft from Tokyo to San Francisco by way of the Aleutian Islands. To provide support, the Japanese established advance parties in the western Aleutians to take photographs and conduct surveys. The flight was called off and the parties withdrawn, taking their collected intelligence with them.

The Attu villagers, who detected signs of Japanese presence, referred to them as “boogie men.”¹

When the Japanese warships later steamed into the North Pacific and Bering Sea, their crews were familiar and accustomed to dealing with the harsh conditions there. The Japanese also viewed the area as strategically important and rich in natural resources.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs teacher, Etta Jones, 62, and her husband, Charles Foster Jones, 60, arrived on Attu in August 1941. By then, the village had 15 school-age children. Etta had taught school for the Alaska Indian Service in various locations and planned to retire after her service on Attu. Charles Foster, also employed by the Federal Government, took over the responsibility of providing mechanical training and maintenance at the school, as well as operating the radio and reporting the weather. In a letter to her superintendent, Etta described the village as being well ordered, the inhabitants “progressive, intelligent, clean and friendly.”²

Endnotes

¹ Nick Golodoff, *Attu Boy* (2012), pp. 31-32.

² Mary Breu, *Last Letters from Attu*, p. 151.



Photo II-11: Japanese vessel *Hakumo Maru*, in Chichagof Harbor, 1934. (USN, Isaiah Davies Collection, AFHRA)

Chapter Three

WAR COMES TO THE ALEUTIANS

The Midway-Aleutian Plan

Four months after the Jones' arrival on Attu, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. For the next six months, they achieved a succession of stunning victories, losing nothing larger than a destroyer. In less than six months, Japan dominated the western Pacific and eastern Asia and gained access to the strategic resources needed to fuel its economy. All the Americans could do was strike back with aircraft carrier raids including the April 18, 1942 Doolittle Raid.

Despite stunning victories, the Japanese realized they could not fight a protracted war against the industrial might of America, which was still mobilizing for war. Suffering from overconfidence, they decided to seek a climatic battle that would extend their empire further eastward by seizing the Aleutians in the North Pacific, Midway Island in the Central Pacific and Fiji, Samoa and New Caledonia Islands in the South Pacific. By establishing a new defensive line that severed the lines of communication with Australia and New Zealand and formed an early warning buffer, they hoped to negotiate a peace treaty with the United States. The Japanese also sought to seek out a surface engagement to destroy the remaining U.S. Pacific fleet.

This strategy had worked for the Japanese during the 1904-1905 Russo-Japanese War in which Japan quickly defeated the massive Russian

land and naval forces, establishing Japan as a military and naval power. Japan foolishly believed she could repeat her earlier triumph against any Western power. Pearl Harbor and subsequent victories, as well as a racial view of America as a land of gangsters and a morally corrupt society, gave her cause. While the Japanese Army was reluctant, the Navy pushed for Midway-Aleutian operations and by April 13, 1942, had completed the plan. The Japanese Imperial General Headquarters issued the Midway-Aleutian Directive April 16, 1942, two days before the Doolittle Raid.

A number of historians have inaccurately claimed the Doolittle Raiders caught the Japanese unaware and prompted the Midway Campaign. Others claimed the Japanese believed the raid originated in the Aleutians, an impossibility given the range of American aircraft at the time, which the Japanese knew. The raid did humiliate the Japanese and removed any argument about expanding its empire eastward and finishing the destruction of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, especially the aircraft carriers.

Most ignored the role the Aleutians played in the Battle of Midway. The Aleutian part included air strikes from two Japanese aircraft carriers against Army and Navy facilities on Amaknak Island in Unalaska Bay as a reconnaissance in force to divert attention away from the main objective, the



Photo III-1: The Japanese targeted the newly constructed Fort Mears, destroying barracks and killing 28 Army personnel. Elsewhere, four Navy, one Marine and one civilian construction worker were killed in action on the ground. The Navy also lost 20 airmen killed in action; three were taken prisoner. The Air Force lost eight airmen killed in action and 10 missing in action. Other than the loss of a hard-to-replace air defense radar set, there were no significant installation damages. Except for destruction of one side of a hospital in nearby Unalaska, no civilian structures were damaged and no civilians were killed. (USN, 613ABW History Office)

occupation of Midway Island. The plan also called for amphibious landings on Adak, Attu and Kiska to provide bases for anchoring the northern part of their defensive line. At the time, the Japanese planned to withdraw the garrisons before the onset of the notorious Aleutian winter weather. Another objective included Japanese efforts to protect their North Pacific fisheries. The raids were conducted as planned. The Japanese launched two aircraft carrier-based attacks in Dutch Harbor with 62 light bombers and fighters June 3-4, 1942.

The Japanese lost seven aircraft and their 13 crew members including an intact Mitsubishi

Type O, Model 21 (A6M2) Zero fighter, which the Americans recovered, repaired and flew against their fighters to determine its weaknesses and strengths. It proved a major technological bonanza. The Army Signal Corps produced a training film narrated by Captain Ronald Reagan demonstrating how it could be countered.

The attacks, the only ones of their kind against a North American target, failed in their purpose to divert U.S. Navy forces north. Despite their overwhelming advantage, the Japanese lost the Battle of Midway, June 4-6, and the strategic initiative in the Pacific. Four of their ten front-



Photo III-2: A bomb explodes near the seaplane base on Dutch Harbor. (USN, 613ABW History Office)

line aircraft carriers went to the bottom of the ocean and the Japanese sustained heavy losses of superbly trained, difficult to replace aircrews. The Americans won because naval intelligence had revealed the Japanese plans, and their commanders exercised better initiative than the Japanese who made fatal tactical mistakes in the confusion of the battle. The Japanese added to their problems by spreading their forces over a wide area in five groups including sending two of the seven carriers to the Aleutians.

Occupied by the Enemy

After debate, the Japanese decided to go ahead with the occupation of Attu and Kiska Islands in early June 1942. They abandoned plans to occupy Adak, fearing that it was too close to Umnak, where the Americans had built an airfield in secret. The Japanese did not discover it until their attacks on Dutch Harbor. By occupying the two western Aleutian Islands, the Japanese hoped to gain a psychological victory by establishing a foothold

on North American soil, hide their Midway defeat and cause Americans to divert forces north. The strategy worked, forcing the Americans to send additional forces to Alaska, which could have been used elsewhere.

The Japanese began landing the elite Navy 3rd Landing Force and a 750-man construction unit the evening of June 6 on Kiska. They captured an American ten-man Navy weather team, all of whom survived as prisoners of war. The Japanese then began bringing in coastal defense and anti-aircraft guns, aircraft and midget submarines, turning Kiska into their major bastion in the North Pacific.

Concurrently, Major Matsutoshi Hozumi landed the 1,143 man North Sea (Hokkaido) Detachment, consisting of the 301st Independent Infantry Battalion and 301st Engineer Company, at Holtz Bay, Attu Island, 190 miles west of Kiska, during the evening of June 6. Climbing over the difficult snow-covered Holtz Bay-Chichagof Harbor Pass, they reached Attu Village the next morning, Sunday, as the villagers prepared to go to church.

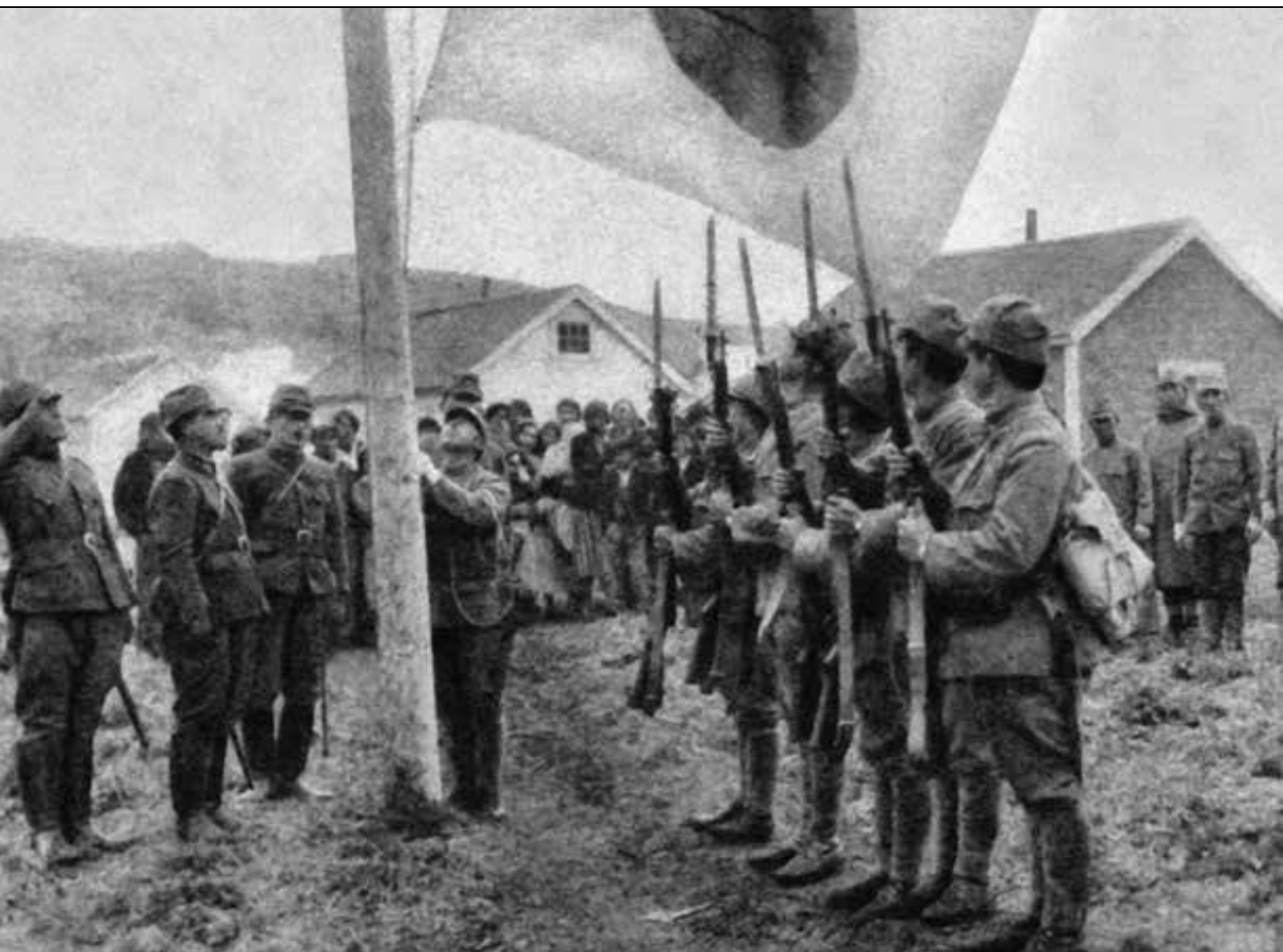


Photo III-3: Japanese raising their flag at Attu Village, June 1942. (Photo courtesy Wings over Alaska, Ted Spencer Collection)

The Japanese established Chichagof as their main base, placed the village off limits to the soldiers, and prepared defensive positions around the harbor area. They also established beach defenses at Massacre and Sarana Bays and outposts at Austin and Temnac Coves. There were 43 Aleuts living in the village at the time of landing. After an initial indoctrination, including the raising of the Japanese flag, the Japanese allowed the villagers to continue with their lives.

The Japanese murdered Charles Foster Jones and took Etta Jones to Japan. Despite the hard evidence gained in 1948 when U.S. Army Grave Registration personnel disinterred his body from

a grave near the church after the war and found a bullet hole in his forehead, accounts continued to persist that Foster committed suicide.¹

The Japanese took Etta Jones to Japan where she was interned in Yokohama with Australian nurses for the duration of the war. Etta survived the ordeal and returned to the states. Later, her great niece, Mary Breu, wrote a well-received and compelling book about Etta's experiences as a teacher in Alaska including Attu, the invasion of Attu and her captivity in Japan.

American flyers discovered the Japanese on Kiska June 8 and confirmed Japanese presence

on Attu July 2, when a reconnaissance bomber overflew their positions and spotted shipping in a harbor on nearby Agattu Island.

Radio Tokyo, with the “Navy March” playing in the background, announced on June 10 that Japan had achieved another great victory, claiming the sinking of two aircraft carriers, heavy damages to installations on Midway and the occupation of the Aleutian Islands. Radio Berlin also broadcasted the news. With the seizure of the western Aleutians, Japan reached the limits of its conquest. Two days later, the U.S. Navy Department issued a short news release that the “Japanese have made landings on a small scale on Attu...and that Japanese have been reported in the harbor of Kiska.”²

One of the myths to come out of the Aleutian Campaign is that of excessive imposition of censorship. While censorship was strictly imposed, as it was in other World War II theaters of operation, it was not as pervasive in Alaska as later historians and commentators claimed. American media quickly spread the word that North American soil had been occupied by a foreign military power for the first time since the War of 1812 that threatened mainland Alaska and the Northwest.

A U.S. public opinion research poll conducted nationwide during June 1942 showed that while only 21 percent could locate Hawaii on the map, 71 percent could readily identify Alaska including the Aleutian Islands. *Life* magazine and other news media covered the bombing of Dutch Harbor and Aleutian occupation and later reoccupation in detail. The June 29, 1942 edition of *Life* featured a two-page article, “War in Aleutians, U.S. Bombers Blast Jap Forces Occupying Attu at Far Western End of Island Chain in Alaska.” It included a drawing of the Aleutians with bombers flying overhead and photographs of Attu Village taken by archeologist Alan G. May during a 1938 visit.

Life magazine also presented a full-page photograph in its July 27, 1942 “Picture of the Week” section, of the burning Japanese transport, *Nissan Maru*, in Kiska Harbor. The editors opined, “Americans looking at this picture...may well feel ashamed...Yet this shameful occupation of U.S. soil is officially regarded as unimportant.” Others fanned the flames by writing that the Japanese would use the Aleutians for further operations against the rest of the continental United States; something the Japanese had no intention of doing. Like the Americans, they regarded the North Pacific area as a secondary theater of operations. They feared the Americans would use the Aleutian and Kuril Islands as an invasion route and took steps to fortify them.

American public opinion demanded the islands be retaken. Politicians waded in, sending a



Photo III-4: A Boeing B-17 crew from the 36th Bombardment Squadron dropped a bomb from 14,000 feet into the mid-section of the *Nissan Maru* June 18, setting it afire. The transport had arrived in Kiska Harbor shortly before with a load of coal, fuel oil and gasoline. National Park Service and Navy divers explored the wreckage in September 1989, finding it loaded with fuel barrels. The ship's mast, still above water at the time, has since disappeared. (AAC 51696, 613ABW History Office)

Congressional delegation headed by Senator Albert G. “Happy” Chandler, Democrat, Kentucky, to the Aleutians in August 1942 to investigate the situation. *The Anchorage Daily Times* dutifully reported his visit. A number of military thinkers believed the Japanese should be contained on the

islands, a reasonable course of action later carried out in other parts of the Pacific with the bypassing and neutralizing of Japanese strongholds, such as Truk Lagoon in the Caroline Islands and Rabaul on New Britain Island.

In any case, America was in no position during the summer of 1942 to launch a major offensive to retake the Aleutians. Lack of naval forces, a European first strategy, Allied plans for the invasion of North Africa and Navy plans to launch offensive operations in the southern Solomons relegated Alaska to a low priority. Aleutian commanders decided instead on a strategy of aerial and naval bombardment, establishing advance bases and naval and aerial blockade. The first proved fruitless although it wore down the Japanese. The second placed the American forces within closer striking distance of the Japanese. The third worked.

The Japanese depended on a long and tenuous supply line to maintain their increasingly isolated garrison in the Aleutians. American war vessels and aircraft sank or forced to turn back 17 of the 35 ships the Japanese dispatched between November 1942 and March 26, 1943 when the last attempted convoy was turned back during the Battle of Komandorski Islands. The battle ended any further attempt by the Japanese to bring in equipment, personnel and supplies by surface means. Instead, they now had to depend on submarines.

An awkward command structure and the egos of the commanders compounded the problem for retaking the Aleutians. In the wake of Pearl Harbor, General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, recommended that General Douglas MacArthur be placed in charge of joint operations in the Pacific Theater. Admiral Earnest J. King, Chief of Naval Operations, who considered General MacArthur vainglorious and lacking naval expertise, balked. President Roosevelt made the Solomon-like decision to divide command in the Pacific.

MacArthur became Supreme Commander of Southwest Pacific Area with authority over Australia, New Guinea and the Philippines. Admiral Nimitz was designated Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet with the responsibility for naval operations in the Pacific Theater. He also served as Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Ocean Area, a joint command responsible for the Central, North and South Pacific with an area extending roughly eastward along the 160-degree meridian from the Arctic to New

Zealand. Neither the Army nor Navy was happy with the decision.

The Navy assumed responsibility for the defense of the Aleutians. Admiral King, now aware of the Japanese Aleutian-Midway operations, declared a "fleet of state-opposed invasion." On May 21, 1942, Admiral King directed Admiral Nimitz to provide forces and assume responsibility for defending the Aleutians. Nimitz provided further guidance that the Army and Navy commanders in Alaska were to operate jointly by "mutual consent" under Navy command.

This arrangement put the two strong-willed and egotistical senior commanders in Alaska on a collision course. Rear Admiral Robert A. "Fuzzy" Theobald commanded the North Pacific Force, responsible for the defense of the North Pacific. He reported to Admiral Nimitz. Major General Simon B. Buckner, who reported to Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, Commander, Western Defense Command, headquartered at the Presidio in San Francisco, commanded the Army's Alaska Defense Command responsible for the defense of mainland Alaska. The command structure proved awkward.

Under it, General Buckner was responsible for providing the ground and air forces to Admiral Theobald and administratively and logistically supporting them. Admiral Theobald was responsible for their operational employment. Buckner, who had been responsible for the military buildup of forces in Alaska, now played second fiddle to a Navy admiral he disliked. Though both were well versed in theory, neither had any direct combat experience, although Theobald had served as a gunnery officer on the battleship *New York* (BB-34) during World War I blockade duty with the British fleet. Buckner spent the war years in the Philippines, Washington D.C., and Kelly Field, Texas.

General Buckner, outgoing in temperament and aggressive in conduct, resented the arrangement and clashed with the cerebral and cautious Theobald, at one point reading a poem in the presence of others questioning Theobald's courage. The admiral lodged a formal complaint against Buckner, but then withdrew it after General Marshall announced he would relieve Buckner of command.

Admiral King finally resolved the personality problems when he replaced Theobald with Rear Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid in January 1943. A veteran of the Coral Sea and Solomon naval



Photo III-5: Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt and then newly promoted Brigadier General Simon B. Buckner during a visit of the Western Defense commander to Alaska in 1940. (USA Signal Corps, Jack Boyd Collection, 613ABW Hist. Office)

battles, the aggressive new admiral reined in his tempestuous Army counterpart.

Like the Americans, the Japanese viewed the Aleutian Campaign as a naval operation. Vice Admiral Moshino Hosogaya, Commander of the Japanese Fifth Fleet, based at Katkoka Imperial Naval Base on Shimushu Island in the Northern Kurils, exercised overall command of Japanese forces in the Aleutians. Japanese naval units provided the garrison and defense forces on Kiska while Japanese Imperial Army forces defended Attu. The latter moved from Attu in September 1942, but were garrisoned separately at Gertrude Cove. The Japanese did not establish a unified command structure similar to the Joint Chiefs of Staff that the Americans created under the Commander-in-Chief, President Roosevelt. Instead, at every level, from the Imperial General

Staff down to garrisons, the Japanese maintained a separate service identity. Cooperation existed through mutual consent.

In the immediate response to the Japanese occupation of Kiska, the North Pacific Force launched what became popularly known as “The Kiska Blitz.” Navy Consolidated PBV Catalina patrol bombers assigned to Fleet Air Wing Four operated from Nazan Bay on Atka Island while Army B-24 Liberator four-engine bombers assigned to the Eleventh Air Force flew from Cape Field on Umnak Island, 620 miles to the east. The Kiska Blitz began June 11, 1942. The Army immediately lost a B-24 and its crew on the first mission and the Navy suffered the loss of a PBV and its crew on the final mission, flown June 14.

Despite the heroic efforts, the Kiska Blitz proved that aerial bombardment alone would



Photo III-6: Rear Admiral Robert Theobald in front of relief map of Kiska, December 12, 1942. (AAC, 613ABW Hist. Office)

not drive the Japanese from the islands. It cost 19 American lives and three planes lost and a number of others damaged. Despite American exaggerated claims at the time and later, the Japanese suffered minor damages. One destroyer was put out of commission for a short period of time. The Japanese continued to send in transports to reinforce and build up the Kiska garrison. The Eleventh Air Force settled into an air campaign with Kiska as the primary target. Weather reconnaissance flights were flown the entire length of the Aleutians to Attu to check out the islands along the way, report on the Japanese occupation of the two islands and obtain information of the eastward-moving weather pattern. Later, with the American occupation of Adak Island, the flights were extended westward of Attu as part of the blockade effort.



Photo III-7: Admiral Kinkaid proved an aggressive commander who oversaw the successful completion of the Aleutian Campaign. The photograph was taken during a planning session for the retaking of Kiska. Generals DeWitt and Buckner in the foreground look on as Admiral Kinkaid explains a mockup of Kiska. (USN, 613ABW Hist. Office)

Forced to Leave, the Aleut Ordeal

The Aleutians became a battleground. Military intelligence reported that the Japanese might seize the Pribilof Islands and Nome on the Alaska mainland in order to sever the lines of communication in the Bering Sea. At the time, the Japanese had a large naval force in the western Aleutians and completely dominated the area. Military reinforcements were rushed to Nome. At the same time, Admiral Theobald and General Buckner decided, in keeping with military doctrine, to evacuate the civilian inhabitants of the threatened islands. Japanese aircraft over flights and the presence of nearby warships directly threatened Atka Village. The seaplane tender *Hubert* embarked 61 villagers and the school teacher and her husband June 12, and a detail from another tender set fire to the village to prevent the



Photo III-8: Consolidated B-24Ds Liberators prepare to take off. (AAC, 613ABW Hist. Office)

Japanese from using the buildings. A Consolidated PBV Catalina amphibian patrol plane picked up 22 others residents two days later who had been away from the village.

The Army transport *Delarof* arrived in the Pribilof Islands three days after the main Atka evacuation and took aboard the inhabitants of St. Paul and St. George. The two evacuations were hastily carried out with short notice, allowing only minimum possessions to be taken.

Subsequent evacuations were more deliberate and orderly, but poorly planned and executed. While not directly threatened by the Japanese, the U.S. military decided in late June 1942 to evacuate the Aleuts from the Eastern Aleutians. They included Nikolski on Umnak Island, the town of Unalaska on Unalaska Island and nearby villages

of Biorka, Kashega and Makushin on Unalaska and Sedanka Islands and Akutan Village on Akutan Island. The Eastern Aleutians were in a war zone and the presence of large numbers of military and civilian contractors disrupted and strained resources and created cultural conflicts.

Federal agencies resettled the 881 evacuees in seven substandard relocation centers in southeastern Alaska, where without proper shelter, sanitation or medical attention, approximately ten percent died with the elderly suffering the most. The Aleuts were not allowed to return to their homes until after the end of the Aleutian Campaign starting in 1944. Many found their homes vandalized by the military and others. Federal authorities deemed Biorka, Kashega and Makushin too small for reoccupation and their former



Photo III-9: Consolidated PBX Catalina, Fleet Air Wing Four. (U.S. Navy, 613ABW Hist. Office)

inhabitants were sent elsewhere. These villages have never been permanently reoccupied.

The evacuation and internment reflected a systemic racial bias against Alaska Natives and other non-whites and a segregationist outlook of the nation as a whole. General Buckner, noted for his openly racial biases, while opposing their evacuation on practical grounds, considered them inferior. The Federal agencies handling the internment viewed Alaska Natives as wards of the state, to be dealt with as expeditiously as

possible. The forced evacuation applied to the Aleuts only and did not include whites, although children from mixed marriages were relocated with their Aleut parents.³

Advance Down the Aleutians

The 617-mile straight line flying distance between Umnak and Kiska under uncertain weather conditions and the lack of ground navigational aids hindered bomber operations. The 778-mile distance from Umnak to Attu was



Photo III-10: Atka Village prior to the evacuation and burning. (Alaska State Library p233-AT104)

even more difficult. Army and Navy leadership in Washington D.C. approved the construction of advance bases in the Aleutians, providing the first example of what would become common practice in the Pacific Theater, the seizure of islands and construction of air and naval bases in support of the further advance towards Japan.

In the first step down the Aleutian Chain, American forces began landing on the unoccupied island of Adak on August 30, 1942. This put bombers and fighters within 250 air miles of Kiska and 442 miles from Attu. Engineers quickly drained and dammed a tidal basin, creating a 5,000-foot runway within ten days. The Eleventh Air Force launched the first air attack from Adak against Kiska September 14, 1942 with 40 bombers and fighters. Adak served as the major headquarters base and support base for the Army and Navy in the North Pacific for the remainder of the war.

American forces next occupied Amchitka, 50 miles from Kiska, on January 12, 1943 after a reconnaissance party led by engineer Colonel

Benjamin B. Talley, with a contingent of Alaska Scouts for security, found evidence that the Japanese were planning to build an airfield on the relatively flat island. The Americans quickly built an airbase on Amchitka, further encircling the Japanese in the Aleutians. Bombers and fighters could now easily reach Kiska 90 miles away and Attu a further 192 miles from Kiska.

During the course of the Aleutian Campaign, the Japanese attempted to build airfields in the Aleutians. Americans frustrated the effort by the sinking of ships carrying airfield construction equipment and materials and constantly bombing of airfields under construction. The Americans, on the other hand, were far better equipped and manned and quickly accomplished the task within a matter of weeks.

The American presence in the eastern Aleutians and threat of an invasion from the north prompted the Japanese to change their mind about abandoning the Aleutians. The Imperial General Headquarters issued a directive June 23,



Photo III-11: Following the end of the war, the Army transferred Adak to the Navy who turned it into an anti-submarine warfare base. With the end of the Cold War, the Navy closed Adak Air Facility in 1997. (Rhodes Arnold Collection, UAF 1994-0197-00117)

1942 calling for the permanent establishment of garrisons on Attu and Kiska and building airfields on the two islands. It included bringing in reinforcements. The specter of the Russian threat in the North Pacific also haunted the Japanese.

They decided to move the Army garrison on Attu to Gertrude Cove on Kiska where it would join the Navy in the Kiska Harbor area in defending the island. Plans were made to bring in another Army garrison for Attu. The plans also included building an airfield and establishing a garrison on nearby Shemya, a small, relatively flat island to the east. Unfortunately, it did not have a natural harbor.

The Japanese began transferring their Attu garrison to Kiska in late August. By mid-September, the transfer had been completed. A small communications and weather detachment remained on Attu Island.

Captives in Japan

Forty-two Attu Aleuts left for Japan on September 17, 1942. One of the original 43, sixty-year-old John Artumonoff, the village elder and traditional chief, had died of natural causes during the occupation. Another elder, Anecia Prokopioff, 56, died aboard ship en route to Japan. Of the 41 who reached Japan, sixteen died of various causes



Photo III-12 General Talley on Amchitka Island. A PBY crew delivered and picked up the party. (Courtesy Brigadier General B.B. Talley, USA Retired)

prompted by malnutrition and starvation, often exacerbating pre-existing medical problems. Four of five babies born in captivity also died. Twenty-five Attuans, including the surviving baby, were repatriated after the war.

As internees, the Attuans and Etta Jones were entitled to repatriation in accordance with the 1929 Geneva Convention, *Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, Geneva July 29, 1929*, which classified them as non-prisoners of war. While the Japanese repatriated diplomatic corps, most news media and business personnel, they kept other civilians in internment camps. The Attu villagers suffered a 44 percent mortality rate while in Japan versus the 7.1 percent rate for civilians of other nations interned in Japan and elsewhere in its empire. The death rate of civilian internees held by Germany was 3.5 percent. Despite their status, the Attuans suffered a higher mortality rate than

military captives, 28 percent, held by the Japanese.

Following the Japanese departure from Attu in September 1942, the Americans began a systematic bombing operation to destroy the village to prevent its reuse by the Japanese. By September 29, all but the church and a small nearby building had been destroyed. Subsequent missions flown during October finished the job. The millennia-long Aleut presence on Attu Island came to an end.

The Japanese Reoccupation of Attu

The Japanese reoccupation of Attu began with the arrival of an advance party of 500 men under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Hiroshi Yonekawa in Holtz Bay October 29, 1942. It consisted of an under-strength infantry battalion and a contingent

of engineers. Three light cruisers were used to transport the force from the assembly area at the Kashiwabara Army Staging Area on Paramushiro Island in the Northern Kurils.

The Japanese planned to establish a garrison of at least 7,800 personnel, build an airfield to accommodate fighter aircraft and construct anti-aircraft and coastal defense positions. The presence of U.S. warships and bombers prevented them from achieving their goals. The Japanese were only able to bring in less than half the garrison force and none of the coastal defense guns. The lack of engineering equipment and shortage of construction personnel prevented the finishing of the airfield.

Two transports arrived November 12, followed by another seven days later. A light cruiser and destroyer arrived November 24 with anti-aircraft weaponry and engineer units. The freighter, *Cherrybourne Maru*, arrived in Holtz Bay shortly

Photo III-13: Elizabeth Golodoff, born in 1941, was among the survivors resettled in Atka when they were repatriated from Japan. She married George Kudrin. She returned to Attu in 1993 as part of a Aleut Corporation group headed by Alice Petrivelli during a military sponsored commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Attu. (Alaska State Library p233-AT102)

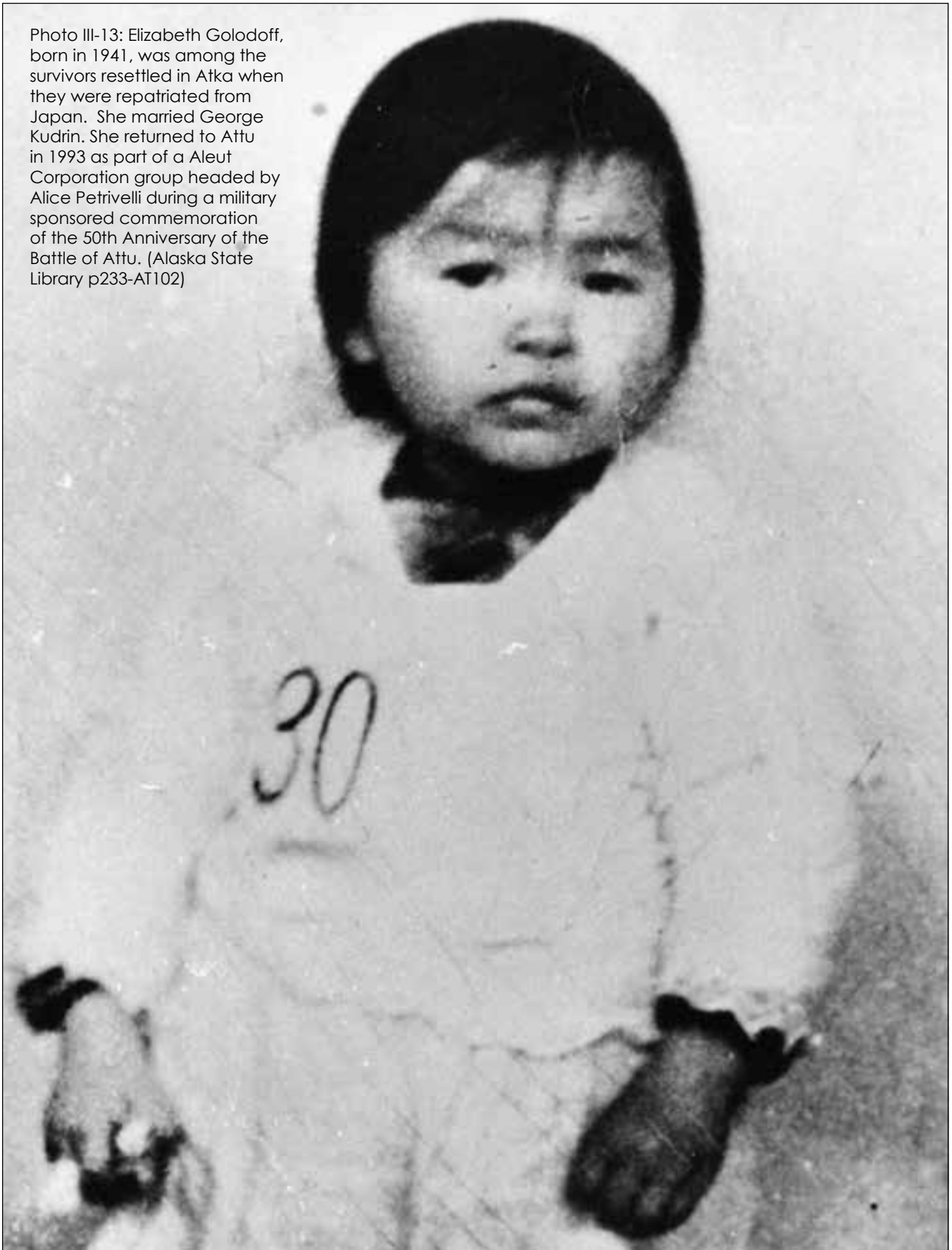




Photo III-14: Aerial photographs taken September 28, 1942 showing the school house on fire. Note the Russian Orthodox grave markers near the church. (USN, RG 181, Naval Districts and Shore Installations, NARA Pacific Region)



Photo III-15: The Japanese attempted construction of airfields on Attu and Kiska, but they suffered from a lack of equipment and materials, and incessant bombing prevented completion. American engineers quickly completed the Kiska airfield, but elected to construct an auxiliary field in the West Arm of Holtz Bay rather than complete the one in the East Arm. The Japanese left behind construction equipment and a hand cart railway for moving earth, which can still be seen today. (Mission Files, AFRA)

afterwards. Lieutenant John Pletcher and his bomber crew sank the vessel while her cargo was being unloaded. A destroyer and two freighters made it through the blockade during December.

Plans for occupying Shemya also fell victim to the blockade, weather and lack of a place to anchor and offload cargo. Two freighters arrived off the island in November 1942, but were unable to land their cargo due to high surf conditions and a lack of sheltered areas. They returned to the Northern Kurils. Two more ships tried to get through later in the month, but had to turn back. The Japanese gave up. The lack of natural harbors and coves would later plague the Americans well into the Cold War years.

January 1943 brought difficulties for the Japanese as the North Pacific Force increased the blockade effort with the arrival of additional warships. A Navy patrol aircraft spotted the *Kotohiro Maru* off Holtz Bay January 5. Three bomber crews arrived shortly afterwards and sank the freighter bringing in a load of provisions, fuel

and building materials. That same day, another bomber crew sank the *Montreal Maru* heading for Kiska with a cargo of airfield construction materials and a contingent of engineers. The loss dealt the Japanese a serious blow. They had to make do with what little they had. One laborer complained that trying to build an airfield was like “sweeping the sea with a broom.”

Bad weather forced the Japanese to cancel further cargo and personnel runs until January 28 when two cargo ships made it to Attu and disembarked anti-aircraft weapons, infantry, engineer units and part of a field hospital. Another ship arrived February 2, with the remaining infantry unit, the 303rd Independent Infantry Battalion, which would later play a key role in defending the island. Two more cargo ships made it to Attu ten days later with general cargo and airfield construction materials. The Japanese began constructing an airfield in the East Arm of Holtz Bay February 25 with hopes of bringing in 48 Zero fighters to provide air defense. The Americans

began launching bomber attacks against the construction project.

Because of the tightening blockade, the Japanese began providing escorts. Three cargo ships escorted by four warships brought in cargo of anti-aircraft guns, ammunition and airfield construction materials on March 11. They also transported 272 personnel, bringing the garrison up to about 2,650 men. They were the last surface vessels to get through the blockade. Submarines provided the only contact between the two isolated Japanese garrisons in the Aleutians and their support bases in the Northern Kurils. A submarine arrived back in the Kurils March 18 with an officer from Attu. The garrison there needed more food and anti-aircraft ammunition. Admiral Hosogaya dispatched three cargo ships loaded with food, anti-aircraft guns, lumber and 550 troops including the new garrison commander, Colonel Yasuyo Yamazaki. Two heavy and two light cruisers and four destroyers provided escort, the largest one up until then.

Rear Admiral Charles H. McMorris and a force of one heavy and one light cruiser and four destroyers intercepted the convoy March 26, 180 miles due west of Attu and 100 miles due south of the Komandorski Islands. Despite being outnumbered two to one in cruisers, the Americans engaged the Japanese in a running battle lasting three and a half hours. Admiral Hosogaya, although getting the best of his American opponents, turned back, fearing a bomber attack. He was subsequently relieved of command for his timidity.

While the Japanese gained a tactical victory, inflicting greater damages with minimal damages to themselves, they suffered a strategic defeat. The Battle of the Komandorski Islands, in addition to being the last and longest daylight surface battle of the Pacific War, was fought without the presence of aircraft. The turning back of the cargo ships and sinking of the others earlier resulted in the Japanese bringing in only half the planned garrison for Attu.

Endnotes

¹ Mikizo Fukuzawa, writing in the 1943 account, "Attack on the Aleutians," states that both Joneses attempted suicide by slashing their wrists, with Foster succeeding. The May 1948 edition of the *Alaska Sportsman* provided a similar account. A number of the villagers supported the suicide account. Professor Henry Stewart, a

consultant living in Japan, also claimed in a 1978 report to the law firm of Cook and Henderson that Foster Jones had killed himself. The firm represented the Aleut Corporation at the time in its efforts to gain restitution for the forced evacuation and internment of the Aleuts from the Aleutians during the war. Professor Stewart reaffirmed the suicide account in a paper, "Aleuts in Japan," given at the November 1993 Alaska at War conference. The evidence discovered when Foster Jones' body was disinterred goes against the report of suicide.
² U.S. Navy department news release about Japanese invasion of Attu and Kiska, June 12, 1943.

³ The most comprehensive account of Aleut evacuation and relocation is Dean Kohlhoff's *When the Wind Was a River: Aleut Evacuation in World War II* (1995).

Chapter Four

DECISION TO RETAKE ATTU

Planning

With advance bases established on Adak and Amchitka and a blockade in place, the next step involved the retaking of Attu and Kiska to clear the northern flank for the drive across the Central Pacific. Rear Admiral Francis W. Rockwell, Commander, Amphibious Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, hosted a conference at the San Diego Naval Base in late January to begin planning for the amphibious assault against Kiska.

While conventional military wisdom might dictate blockading the Japanese in the Aleutians and leaving them to slowly starve to death, other factors drove the decision to eliminate their presence. A blockade required long-term commitment of forces needed elsewhere. Adverse public and political opinion about North American soil being occupied by a foreign military power influenced decision-making. A successful conclusion of the Aleutian Campaign would put the Allies firmly on a path to victory in the Pacific. Finally, American forces could gain experience and benefit from lessons learned.

A joint Army-Navy planning staff was established. General Buckner sent Colonel William Alexander, his operations and plans officer; Colonel Lawrence V. Castner, intelligence officer; Colonel William O. Eareckson, air officer; and Lieutenant Colonel Carl T. Jones, logistical officer, to represent the Alaska Defense Command.

General DeWitt proposed that a reinforced division of approximately 25,000 men be used to retake Kiska. The War Department offered the 7th Motorized Division commanded by Major General Albert W. Brown. The division was based on Fort Ord, near Monterey, California, at the time. It had been activated in 1940 as part of the buildup of Army forces and trained and equipped for desert warfare. Most of its troops were draftees from California, Oregon, Washington and a scattering of other western states. It was sometimes referred to as the "California Division," because of a large contingent from that state that included a National Guard regiment. While no longer needed for the North African Campaign, the division had achieved a state of combat readiness and its location on the California Central Coast facilitated amphibious training and loading for an assault on Kiska. General Brown began reorganizing the division for infantry combat and training it for amphibious warfare.

Typical of divisions at the time, the 14,235-man 7th Infantry Division had three infantry regiments, the 17th, 32nd and the 159th, the latter from the California National Guard. Combat and combat support units included four artillery battalions, a combat engineer battalion, a medical battalion, a scout company, a reconnaissance company, a signal company, an ordnance company, a quartermaster company, a division headquarters company, a military police platoon and a counter-intelligence detachment.



Photo IV-1: Major General Albert Brown. (Photo courtesy Wings over Alaska, Ted Spencer Collection)

Alaskan-based infantry forces, most notably the 4th Infantry Regiment, were available. However, they were scattered throughout the territory defending Army and Navy bases and had not trained as a unit. War correspondent William Gilman referred to them as “a great immobilized army.”

The planners placed Admiral Kinkaid in overall command with Admiral Rockwell serving as the amphibious force commander; General Brown, as the ground commander; and Major General William O. Butler, commander of the Eleventh Air Force, as the air commander.

However, the plans ran into a snag when President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill and their military staffs met at Casablanca January 14-24, 1943 to plan future strategy. General George Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, questioned the need to launch a large scale amphibious operation against Kiska since the British might interpret it as U.S. unwillingness to support the “Europe first” strategy. Additionally, Marshall believed there were too many troops in Alaska. They could be put to better use elsewhere. Finally, there was not enough shipping available to transport and land a reinforced division.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff cancelled the shipping planned for Kiska but ordered training continued and the bomber missions from Adak and Amchitka increased. Admiral Kinkaid countered that Kiska should be bypassed and Attu taken with a smaller force, a forerunner of later Pacific strategy. Admiral King approved the request March 10. The Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed to limit major amphibious operations in the Pacific to securing the Solomon Islands until after the Aleutians had been cleared of Japanese. They also approved the recommendation that airbases be built on Attu and nearby Shemya for use against Japanese military installations in the Northern and Central Kuril Islands.

Intelligence at the time incorrectly estimated that the Japanese had only 500 men on Attu, no coastal defense guns and a few anti-aircraft guns. Based on that, the planners believed one reinforced infantry regiment would suffice. The planners had only a limited knowledge of Attu and depended on incomplete U.S. Geological Survey maps that showed terrain features only as far back as approximately one thousand yards from the shoreline. The effects of weather and terrain on ground operations were not completely appreciated. General Butler ordered additional photoreconnaissance missions flown over Attu in order to update the maps and gain additional intelligence.

Planning began in mid-March and continued throughout April as the planners continued to meet in San Diego. The landing was scheduled for May 7, 1943 to avoid summer fog and take advantage of calm seas. The separation of the landing force at Fort Ord from the amphibious force at San Diego and poor communications between the two hindered joint planning, which carried over into the conduct of the battle. In the words of one Army historian writing later in *The Western Hemisphere, Guarding the United States and Its Outpost*, “Seldom had operations been planned with less knowledge of what the troops would have to face.”

Initially, plans were made to use the 17th Infantry Regiment as the assault force, hold the 32nd Infantry Regiment in reserve and employ the 159th Infantry Regiment as the occupation force.

In addition to their limited knowledge of Attu, the planners made a fatal mistake in the selection of clothing and footgear for the troops. Lieutenant Colonel Jones decided and Colonel Castner, who had now been promoted to General Buckner’s chief of



Photo IV-2: Major General William O. Butler, left, and Colonel William O. Eareckson, right. (AAC, 613ABW History Office)

staff, agreed to equip the men with leather boots similar to ones worn by loggers.

Waterproof shoe packs, the boot of choice, were not stocked in sufficient quantities at the time. Additionally, the boots' construction of rubber bottoms and leather uppers provided little ankle support. While the troops were issued field jackets, they were more suited for cold, dry climate, than to the wetness encountered on Attu. Rain gear was provided but the troops had to wear them wrong side out. The rubber inner lining retained moisture.

The leather boots lacked insulation and allowed water to seep in. They became a major problem resulting in 458 cases of trench foot injuries of which 126 men required evacuation. The problem was further exacerbated by the failure of many to take proper care of their feet, which involved taking

off and drying the boots and changing socks. This did not often happen under the cold wet conditions of Attu, especially when exposed to Japanese fire. The U.S. Army, however, found that the British and Russian troops suffered fewer trench foot cases due to troop training and discipline.

The Japanese footgear, while also made of leather, came with two felt liners that could be interchanged and allowed to dry out. In contrast to the American troops, they were warmly dressed with heavy coats and gloves lined with rabbit fur, caps with ear flaps filled with kapok.

The planners were unaware at the time that the Japanese were still bringing in troops and organizing their defenses. Colonel Yamazaki arrived April 19 by submarine and assumed command of the Attu garrison. By then, Japanese intelligence



Photo IV-3: Japanese soldier on Attu dressed for winter warfare. (Photo courtesy Wings over Alaska, Ted Spencer Collection)

had learned of the American plans, anticipating an assault in June when the weather would be more favorable. Efforts to complete the airfield increased. Food became a major concern with stocks estimated to run out by mid-May. Rationing began April 1 with rice reduced to one pint a day per soldier. The beginning of the salmon and trout runs during the summer offered some hope as did the edible plants on the island. In addition to the cold and wet climate and incessant aerial attacks, the Japanese now contended with hunger.

In response to new intelligence on the increased Japanese strength, the American planners beefed up the 17th Infantry Regiment, the assault force, by adding the 2nd Battalion from the 32nd Infantry Regiment. The remaining two battalions

and two 105-millimeter howitzer batteries constituted a floating reserve aboard the Army transports at Adak. It would be needed.

The planners also combined the 7th Scout Company and 7th Reconnaissance Troop to create the 350-man 7th Provisional Scout Battalion and committed a 30-man detachment from the Alaska Defense Command's 1st Alaska Combat Intelligence Platoon, popularly referred to as "Castner's Cutthroats."

Colonel Lawrence V. Castner had formed the platoon in November 1941, recruiting volunteers experienced and skilled in outdoor living. The majority were Alaskan, including Natives. They came from various backgrounds and included hunters, trappers, miners, and fishermen. Also referred to as the "Alaska Scouts," they provided a long-range reconnaissance capability and were used to scout ahead on various Aleutian islands before initial landings were undertaken. The initial platoon consisted of 35 enlisted men and two officers, Captain Robert Thompson and Lieutenant Earl C. Acuff. It later doubled in size to accommodate the many different and various missions it was assigned. The platoon disbanded in 1946.



Photo IV-4: Colonel Yasuyo Yamazaki. (Photo courtesy Wings over Alaska, Ted Spencer Collection)



Photo IV-5: Like many who fought on Attu, "Castner's Cutthroats" collected Japanese items as souvenirs. The three men standing in the rear, from left to right are Donald Spaulding, Dale Sims and Joe Kelly. The two men on either side of the front row were probably Japanese-Americans assigned to the Interpreters and Interrogators Detachment, Alaska Defense Command. Twenty provided support during the Battle of Attu. The two men in the center are unidentified. The men are holding and wearing various Japanese items including three flags, a 1,000 stitches belt, helmets and caps, gloves, a flute, ammunition and a sake bottle. (Jim Reardon Collection)

Combat support and service support units consisted of the 48th and 49th Artillery Battalions, 13th Combat Engineer Battalion, 50th Engineer Battalion, 7th Medical Battalion, 20th Field Hospital and 7th Signal Company. Other attached units included two battalions each from 51st and 78th Coast Artillery (Antiaircraft) Regiments and a shore party company from the 5th Engineer Regiment. Because of the limited Japanese air threat, Colonel Alexander believed the air defense would not be needed. They did, however, provide valuable direct fire support with their 50-caliber machine guns as well as carrying parties to move supplies to the front lines.

To transport the assault force, the Navy committed the attack transports *Harris* (APA-21), *Heywood* (APA-6), *J. Franklin Bell* (APA-16), and *Zeilin* (APA-9) to transport the 17th Infantry Regiment and combat and service support units, and they chartered the SS *Perida* to carry the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment and its combat and service support units. Three battleships and fifteen destroyers supported the assault force.

The Army provided the transports *David W. Branch*, *Chirikof*, *U.S. Grant*, *President Fillmore* and *Richard March Hoe*, supported by the *David W. Field*, *Joseph Henry Kenneth*, and *A.J. Mackenzie* to accommodate the reserve force, the



Photo IV-6: The Navy commissioned the *Bogue Class Nassau* (CVE-16), built on a transport hull, at the Puget Sound Naval Yard, Bremerton, Washington in August 1942. The small carrier, with a flight deck of 438-feet, was part of a fleet of so-called jeep carriers built to provide convoy escort and later used to support amphibious operations. Most were built using transport hulls. The *Nassau* earned the distinction of being the first escort carrier used to support an amphibious operations and the first to launch aircraft from an aircraft carrier to provide close air support for ground troops. Following the Battle of Attu, she served throughout the Pacific and well into the Cold War before being dropped from the Navy register and scrapped in 1959. (AAC, NARA 2, RG 208)

32nd Infantry Regiment less its 2nd Battalion and its supporting forces.

All transports were overloaded with passengers and cargo. In addition to the normal combat loads of ammunition, food, water, clothing, medical supplies and other items needed to support and sustain combat operations, the Army brought aboard construction materials for post-battle development. A rumor circulated that General Brown had his personal sedan loaded. He denied it. Additionally, much of the combat cargo was incorrectly loaded, interrupting what should have been a smooth flow of materials to the beaches.

The Navy used the *landing craft, vehicle, personnel* (LCVP), better known as the Higgins boat and the *landing craft mechanized* (LCM) to land and

sustain an Army amphibious assault force against an island for the first time. The former could transport 36 combat-equipped personnel, small vehicles, artillery or four tons of general cargo; and the latter 60 troops, large vehicles, or 26.8 tons of cargo. Despite the heavy commitment in the treacherous waters of Attu, only 7.8 percent of the Higgins boats employed were lost. All the LCM remained in commission at battle's end.

Colonel Alexander, an artillery officer, recommended two 105-milimeter howitzer battalions be employed to supplement the 75-millimeter pack howitzers assigned the cannon companies of the two infantry regiments. Originally, the planners had hoped the lighter weight howitzers would suffice due to the comparative



Photo IV-7: Because of its long-range and twin-engine capabilities, the Lockheed P-38 Lightning bore the brunt of fighter operations during the Aleutian Campaign, losing 12 of its original 25 pilots killed in action or lost in accidents. (AAC, 613ABW History Office.)

ease of moving them over difficult terrain, by brute manpower if required. They, however, lacked firepower and range, 9,620 yards versus 12,620 yards for the 105-millimeter howitzer.

General Butler recommended a small escort carrier, equipped for air defense cover, close air and photoreconnaissance support to the ground troops. The Navy provided the *Nassau* (CVE-16) with a complement of 29 Grumman F4F-4 Wildcats assigned to Fighter Squadron VF-21 and three F4F-3P camera-equipped Wildcats assigned to the Marine Fighter Squadron VMO-155. General Butler also committed the 54th Fighter Squadron to provide air cover and close air support with its long-range P-38 Lightnings and assigned his bomber crews to flying missions in support of ground operations. Finally, he assigned Colonel Eareckson the responsibility of coordinating air operations over Attu.

In addition to enjoying overwhelming artillery support and complete air superiority, the Americans could depend on the gunfire of three World War I vintage battleships, *Idaho* (BB-42), *Nevada* (BB-36) and *Pennsylvania* (BB-38), equipped with a total of 34 14-inch guns, each capable of firing a 1,400-pound shell out to thirteen and a half miles.

Altogether the ground force, backed up by massive fire support, consisted of 11,000 men, giving the Americans a three-to-one advantage over the Japanese, with overwhelming artillery and naval gunfire support and complete air superiority. The only things missing were combat experience, knowledge of weather and terrain and the realization that the Japanese would fight a protracted battle to the last man.

Admiral Nimitz and General DeWitt issued a joint directive for Operation Landcrab on April 1. Planning continued in San Diego to hammer out the



Photo IV-8: The battleship *Pennsylvania* (BB-38), commissioned June 12, 1916, survived the Pearl Harbor attack. Following the attack she moved to San Francisco where she underwent major overhaul at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard before being committed to support the Attu amphibious assault. The *Pennsylvania* then deployed to the western Pacific where she provided gunfire support for amphibious assaults. She was decommissioned in 1946. The U.S. Navy photograph of her main guns was taken off Attu. She fired 242 14-inch and 2,285 5-inch rounds in support of the Northern Force during the battle. (USN, NARA 2, RG 80G-240-54530)

details. General DeWitt, a logistician by profession with no direct combat experience, had unwisely remarked that the whole operation would take only three days. It could not be done, even under ideal conditions. The Infantry standard march rate of speed with full combat gear at the time was two-and-a-half miles per hour. Uneven ground further reduced the rate and enemy opposition made it problematic.

Having never personally observed the terrain over which men would fight and die, DeWitt and others made the classical military mistake of making decisions from faulty maps. The thin blue lines denoting streams turned into raging torrents

of water and the brown contour lines on the maps became precipitous slopes. What appeared to take hours to traverse took days and the Japanese contested every inch.

General Buckner, speaking to war correspondent Howard Handleman of the International News Service, provided a more realistic appraisal. "This will be tough. The soldiers, the infantry, will have to go in there with corkscrews to dig out the Japs."¹

Commitment

In preparation for the landing of troops on Attu, the Eleventh Air Force stepped up its



Photo IV-9: Fort Mason served as the principal Pacific port of embarkation during World War II. (California State Parks)

bombing and photoreconnaissance campaign, dropping 155 tons of bombs on Kiska and another 95 tons on Attu during the first ten days of May before weather set in. While the bombs did little damage, the photographs provided useful last-minute intelligence.

The ground forces committed to the amphibious assault against Attu underwent amphibious landing training off California's Central Coast under the supervision of U.S. Marine amphibious warfare expert, General Holland "Howlin' Mad" Smith." The ground and the naval forces committed to the battle began departing from West Coast ports in mid to late April.

The 7th Infantry Division began steaming out into the Pacific under the Golden Gate Bridge from Fort Mason on April 24. Naval forces supporting the landings included the three battleships and 29 other vessels including the escort carrier for close

air support. The Navy also dispatched two heavy and six light cruisers and eight destroyers to the west of Attu to guard against the possibility that the Japanese might send a surface force to rescue their island garrison.

With the exception of those who needed to know, everyone remained in the dark about the final destination because of security concerns. It was not until all were at sea that briefings were begun to inform those committed to battle of the ordeal ahead.

General Butler concentrated the bulk of his bomber force on Adak and tasked the 54th Fighter Squadron to provide a combat air patrol over Attu with its P-38 Lightnings with a secondary mission of attacking opportune ground targets. The Navy's Fleet Air Wing Four received the mission of patrolling off Attu with its PBY Catalinas.



Photo IV-10: Plaster mockups of the battle area were used to explain terrain features to those about to be committed to battle. This one was located aboard the attack transport *Zeilin* (APA-9). (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-148-171776)

The assault force arrived at Cold Bay on the tip of the Alaska Peninsula April 30. Marine Reserve Captain John Elliot, assigned to the Marine detachment aboard the *Pennsylvania*, looked out over the bleak landscape and commented in his diary: “The ships look out of place in a world that belongs so little to man.”² The admirals and generals and their staff held a series of meetings to finalize plans.

In the rush to prepare and the lack of information on topography and offshore hazards, the planners had not settled on a final assault plan, deciding to wait until Cold Bay to make a final decision when they had more information gathered by aerial reconnaissance. In the interim, they developed five different plans. Plan A required landing of the major force in Massacre Bay and making a secondary landing on a small beach (code named Red) northeast of Holtz Bay. Plan B required the major assault in Sarana Bay. Plan C involved the landing of the entire force in Massacre Bay.

Plan D involved landing forces in the West Arm of Holtz Bay and on Red Beach. Plan E called for three landings: one at Massacre Bay, another at either the West Arm or Red Beach and a third in Sarana Bay.

On arrival, the planners decided on a revised Plan E, calling for the landing of the Southern Force on the Massacre Bay beaches (Blue end Yellow) and the Northern Force at Red Beach. The latter represented a bold move. The narrow, rocky channel to the small beach limited the number of landing barges to one at a time. The near-vertical 250-foot cliff behind the narrow beach presented a formidable challenge. The troops had to first climb the cliff and then make their way approximately three miles southwest over the rugged plateau terrain and then down steep slopes to the Japanese main camp in the West Arm of Holtz Bay. The alternative would have required a direct assault against the well-defended narrow and mined beaches at Holtz Bay, covered by artillery and defended in depth by four successive defense lines.



Photo IV-11: The conditions were crowded aboard the attack transport *J. Franklin Bell* (APA-16). Note the Higgins Boat hanging from the derrick near the bow. (US Signal Corps, NARA 2, 111-158-17174530)

Captain William Willoughby, the commander of the 7th Provisional Scout Battalion, had the hardest job of all. Plans called for landing his force during the early morning hours from the large pre-war submarines *Narwhal* (SS-167) and *Nautilus* (SS-168) and the old flush deck destroyer *Kane* (DD-235), which had been converted to a fast transport, at Austin Cove (Beach Scarlet) on the northeast side of Attu. From there, he was to make his way south through a tangle of mountain passes to the back side of the Holtz Bay main camp, well over five miles away.

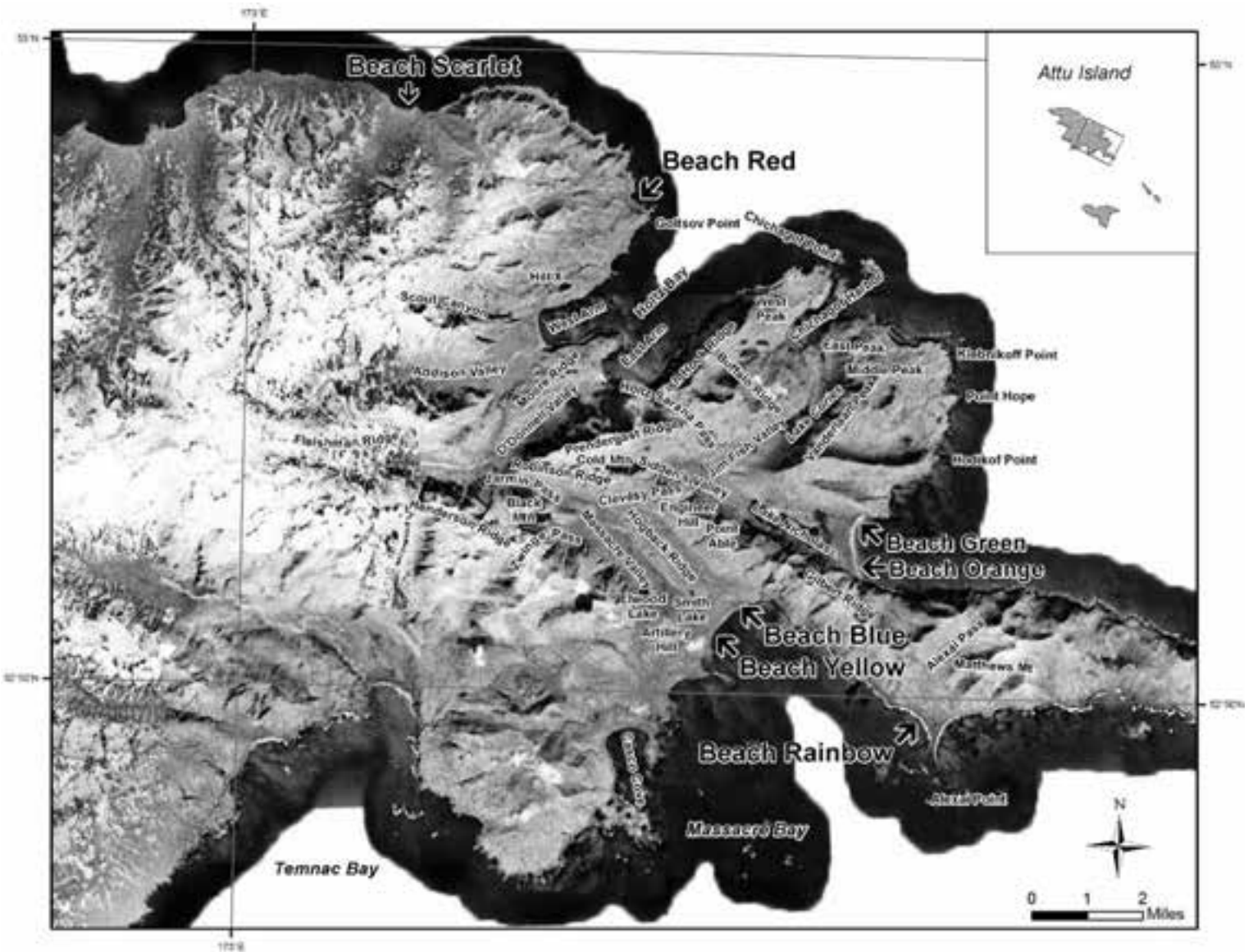
Finally, the plans called for platoon-size flanking forces to advance along Henderson and Gilbert Ridges overlooking Massacre Valley. A company-size force, landing in Casco Cove (Beach Purple) had the responsibility of working its way through Peaceful and Temnac Valleys on the southwest side of Henderson

Ridge to the head of Massacre Valley where it could flank the Japanese.

The whole operation was a classic double envelopment with the Northern and Southern Forces converging on Jarmin and Clevesy Passes, forcing the Japanese into the Chichagof Harbor area where aerial and naval bombardment would finish them off.

The planners established May 7 as D-Day and 6:00AM as H-Hour for the amphibious landings. Neither would be adhered to due to the notorious Aleutian weather.

Following completion of the final plan and preparations and following weather delays, the assault force steamed out of Cold Bay May 4 into the storm-lashed North Pacific, through Amukta Pass between the eastern and central Aleutians into the Bering Sea. The battleships with their destroyer escorts swept ahead in search of any Japanese ships near Attu.



Map IV-1: Landing Beaches. (NPS Map)

The Japanese Prepare

Colonel Yamazaki defended Attu with second-rate troops consisting of older men and raw recruits drawn primarily from Hokkaido Island and led for the most part by seasoned officers and non-commissioned officers. Unlike the Americans, they were completely cut off from personnel replacements and resupply. They fought with what they had.

What they had was the fact that they were acclimated and clothed to handle the cold wet weather, knew the terrain and weather patterns, had the advantage of being dug into well positioned, covered and concealed positions and were imbued with the Bushido (the Way of the Warrior) code and possessed uncommon valor. By now, the Japanese

had learned through their excellent intelligence-gathering system that the Americans were planning to invade Attu in early May.

Colonel Yamazaki organized his forces into two sectors, the Chichagof Harbor Sector (responsible for Chichagof Harbor and Massacre and Sarana Bays) and the Holtz Bay Sector. As noted earlier, a series of precipitous ridges separated the sectors.

He positioned his main forces in the Holtz Bay Sector with most in the West Arm. The narrow Holtz Bay, surrounded on three sides by cliffs cut by gullies, discouraged a direct amphibious assault. A narrow rock-bound entrance likewise protected Chichagof Harbor Sector, creating an equally suicidal amphibious approach. The



Photo IV-12: The Japanese took great pains to camouflage their positions including their barracks and supply buildings. This building was found on the side of a hill on the West Arm of Holtz Bay. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-169-177679)

entrance also prevented large cargo ships from entering the harbor.

The Japanese relied on powered landing craft to move personnel, equipment and materiel from one place to another on Attu. There were no docks. Everything had to be loaded and unloaded on the beaches. The precipitous trail system that connected the two sectors limited movement to personnel and light loads.

Lieutenant Colonel Hiroshi Yonekawa defended the Holtz Bay Sector with the 420-man Northern Kuril Fortress Infantry Unit, also known as the Yonekawa Force. The under-strength battalion consisted of two rifle companies and a gun company. Captain Yoshizo Ishigaki commanded the 1st Company and Lieutenant Okira Sato the 3rd Company. Lieutenant Wayama commanded

the gun company with one of its two authorized 70-millimeter light howitzers. A normal Japanese infantry battalion consisted of four rifle companies, a gun company and a machinegun company. Prior to its arrival, the Yonekawa Force had provided defense of Shimushu Island in the Northern Kurils.

Other troops in the Holtz Bay area under Lieutenant Colonel Yonekawa's command included the 526-man Aota Provisional Anti-Aircraft Defense Battalion less two companies commanded by Major Seiji Aota; the 270-man 6th Independent Mountain Artillery Company less one platoon commanded by Lieutenant Tairo Endo; the 179-man 302nd Independent Engineer Company commanded by Captain Chinozo Ono; the 270-man 2nd Company of the 6th Ship Engineer Regiment commanded by Captain Kobayashi; and the 183-man Field Hospital,



Photo IV-13: The Japanese were the first to develop a bow ramp for their landing craft, which was later incorporated into the design of the Higgins Boat. This one was among the number captured on Attu. It could carry a load of ten tons and was powered by a 80-horse power engine. (U.S. Navy, NARA 2 RG80-339-76004)

North Sea Garrison. Miscellaneous units in the Holtz Bay Sector included a wireless platoon for long-distance communications, a 34-man civilian crew brought in to install two radar sites, and a post office. The latter continued to function as long as the submarines could get through.

Major Aota divided his 16 Type 88 75-millimeter dual purpose guns and ten Type 89 20-millimeter automatic cannons, sending five Type 88s to defend the Chichagof Harbor area and dividing the Type 89 among the defended areas, including two overlooking Massacre Beach.

The 6th Independent Mountain Artillery Company possessed six Type 41 75-millimeter light howitzers. Lieutenant Endo positioned two atop Moore Ridge, separating the East and West Arms of Holtz Bay, and sent another two to defend the Jarmin Pass area.

Captain Chinzo's engineers were responsible for constructing the airfield and other engineering projects. The ship engineer company handled equipment and materiel storage and distribution. The Field Hospital, believed to have been commanded by a Captain Oura, operated a hospital and provided medics to the infantry companies.

Major Tokuji Watanabe defended the Chichagof Harbor Sector with the 664-man 303rd Independent Infantry Battalion. Lieutenant Toshio Hayashi commanded 1st Company, Lieutenant Hitoshi Honna, 2nd Company Lieutenant Yutake Goto, 4th Company, Lieutenant Yatuka Kato, the machinegun company and Lieutenant Hashiba the gun company. A small transportation company provided logistical support. A platoon from the 6th Independent Mountain Artillery Company and the two



Above: Photo IV-14: The Japanese employed the Type 88 75-millimeter dual-purpose gun extensively as an anti-aircraft and direct fire gun. The Type 88 provided the Japanese with their main artillery defense capability on Attu. This one was captured in the West Arm of Holtz Bay. It was dug in and protected by a berm to withstand anything but a direct hit. Unlike Kiska, where whole batteries of the 75-millimeter guns remain, only one gun can be found today in the East Arm. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-156-174190)



Left: Photo IV-15: The Japanese Type 89 20-millimeter machine gun cannon served as the standard mobile antiaircraft weapon which also could be used in the antitank and personnel role. Of the ones on Attu, one remains today at the closed U.S. Coast Guard Station. Another can be found on North Head, Kiska. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-169-177741)



Clockwise from above: Photo IV-17: Type 17 mountain gun at the Fort Lewis Army Museum near Fort Lewis is one of four captured on Attu. (Courtesy Dan Rynanen)



Photo IV-18: Only one Type 92 70-millimeter howitzer was found on Attu. Normally two were assigned to the gun company of an infantry battalion. This one, captured in Holtz Bay, belonged to the Yonekawa Force, a battalion at half strength. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-175-179750)



Photo IV-19: A small number of Type 94 37-millimeter antitank guns were captured on Attu. The Japanese also employed the gun in an antipersonnel role. American troops attacking Clevesy Pass encounter one that had been dug in. The one in the photograph was found in Holtz Bay. The Alaska State Museum in Juneau has one of the captured guns donated by the Army on prominent display. The barrel of another from the closed Coast Guard LORAN station on Attu is on display at the Alaska Veterans Museum in Anchorage. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, RG111-169-177747)

Background: Photo IV-16: Two of the four Type 41 75-millimeter mountain guns captured on Attu were found on top of Moore Ridge overlooking Holtz Bay beaches. Its range of 6,575 yards covered the landing beaches in the East and West Arms of Holtz Bay. The photograph was taken by T/4 George F. Noland on 29 May 1943. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-SC-177752)





Photo IV-20: The Americans found many weapons still in storage on Attu. The open wooden crates reveal a Type 38 Arisaka rifle and Type 99 Nambu light machinegun. (U.S. Navy, NARA 2, RG80G, 232-52288)

companies from the Aota Provisional Anti-Aircraft Defense Battalion were attached to the battalion.

The battalion was relatively new, having been formed on the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido in October 1942 from local recruits. It had been originally intended for Shemya and had departed the Kashiwabara Army Staging Area on Paramushiro Island November 7 aboard the *Montreal Maru*. The American blockade, however, prevented the transport from getting through. The battalion, less one of its rifle companies, reached Attu January 31, 1943. It consisted of three rifle companies, each organized into six rifle, nine light machinegun and three grenade launcher squads; a heavy machinegun company with eight machineguns; and a gun company without its 70-millimeter light howitzers.

In addition to being outnumbered, the Japanese were lightly armed compared to the Americans. The Japanese soldiers on Attu were equipped with the Type 38 6.5-millimeter (.256-caliber) and upgraded Type 99 7.7-millimeter (.303-caliber) bolt action Arisaka rifle, holding five rounds. The Americans

possessed the semi-automatic .30-caliber M1 Garand with an eight-round clip. The Arisaka required the manipulation of a bolt action and the use of a stripper clip to insert rounds. The M1 firer simply pulled the trigger until the clip emptied and ejected and then inserted another clip by holding back the bolt and pushing it in with his thumb. The Japanese did equip a number of their Arisakas with telescopic scopes and effectively employed them for long range sniping.

The Japanese enjoyed an advantage in the employment of machineguns. Like the German Army, the Japanese emphasized the machinegun with the riflemen providing support. While an American infantry battalion had an authorization of six light and four heavy machineguns, the Japanese authorization called for nine light and eight heavy machineguns. The Japanese employed the Nambu Type 96 6.5-millimeter and Type 99 7.7-millimeter light machineguns with a maximum effective range of 1,640 yards, and the Type 92 Arisaka 7.7-millimeter heavy machinegun with maximum effective range of 1,500 yards. Unlike American



Photo IV-21: The Americans captured a large number of Arisaka heavy machineguns on Attu, one of which is shown above with its carrying handles. With tripod, the machinegun weighed 122 pounds, and unlike the Nambu light machinegun could not be easily carried in the assault. Its weight and tripod made it a steady and accurate firing platform and the slow rate of fire of 200 rounds per minute, which sounded like a woodpecker, did not overheat the barrel. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-169-177744)

machineguns, both could be equipped with telescopic sights for long-range sniping.

In addition to the rifles and machineguns, the Japanese employed the Type 89, 50-millimeter (1.96-inch) grenade launcher in large numbers on Attu. Both official and unofficial accounts refer to incoming mortar rounds, when in fact they were grenades. Although the Japanese Army was equipped with mortars, none were found on Attu other than ones used for anti-aircraft defense. A crew of three operated the ten-pound grenade launcher, which had an effective range of 710 yards. A well-trained and experienced crew could fire 25 rounds a minute with great accuracy.

The Americans far outnumbered the Japanese in artillery. While the Japanese fielded fifteen 75-millimeter dual purpose guns, four 75-millimeter mountain guns, one 70-millimeter light howitzer, a handful of 37-millimeter anti-tank guns and ten 20-millimeter automatic cannons, the Americans possessed twenty-four M2A1

105-millimeter howitzers with considerably more range and firepower; twelve 75-millimeter pack howitzers; and a large number of 37-millimeter direct fire anti-tank guns. The latter proved useful for “sniping” at Japanese defense positions.

The waterlogged muskeg hindered the operations of the howitzers despite use of tracked vehicles to pull them forward. Road building provided the only viable solution to moving them and other equipment as well as supplies forward during the course of the battle. Colonel Alexander recommended wooden platforms be built to provide stable firing support.

Colonel Yamazaki, forewarned through radio intercepts, assumed that the Americans would land in the main bays, Holtz, Massacre and Sarana, and advance to seize the passes connecting the three bays and Chichagof Harbor.

Holtz Bay provided a formidable challenge to an attacking force. The bay is divided into the West and East Arms, both dominated by steep ridge



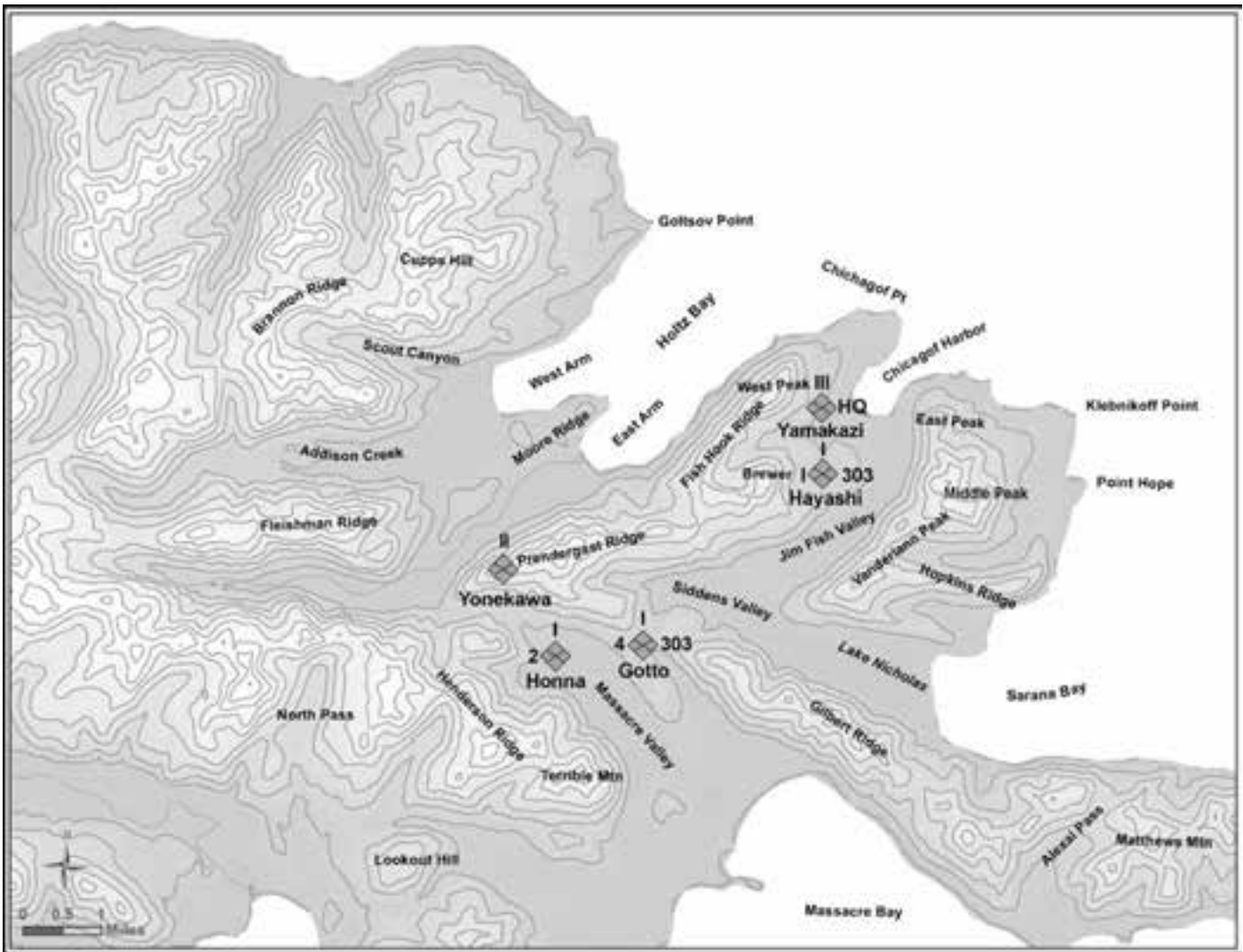
Photo IV-22: Various accounts incorrectly claim that the Japanese employed mortars on Attu. The confusion resulted from the wide use of the 50-millimeter grenade launcher, which in the skill hands of the Japanese soldiers proved deadly. It bridged the range gap between the hand thrown grenade and the mortar. The Japanese equipped the weapons squad in a rifle platoon with three to four grenade launchers. The launcher fired high explosive, smoke and signal rounds. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-169-17745)

lines on both sides and a narrow frontal approach axis. Heavy surf resulting from the narrow confines hinders amphibious landings.

Lieutenant Colonel Hiroshi Yonekawa's forces heavily fortified the Holtz Bay area by placing the 75-millimeter dual purpose guns in covered and concealed positions that could withstand anything but a direct hit. The two 75-millimeter mountain guns atop Moore Ridge covered both arms of the bay. The guns were positioned to provide interlocking fire targeted against landing barges. The Japanese prepared for the contingency that shore and air bombardment might destroy the guns by establishing flanking positions on each side of the bay and preparing beach defenses in four successive lines of resistance, with the final defense line at the head of Addison Valley to block any force attempting an approach from the rear. Their plan

of action called for stopping the American assault on the beach and destroying the landing force there.

Their plans for Massacre and Sarana differed. Rather than try to defend the broad beach areas with thinly spread defensive forces lacking artillery support, the Japanese chose to position their forces at the narrow head of the valleys in covered and concealed positions that took advantage of the low-hanging fog. The plan called for drawing the Americans away from their supply and support bases on beaches. The Japanese correctly reasoned that the Americans would be unable to use wheel and track vehicles on the muskeg, and instead would have to depend on manpower to resupply their forward forces. As a result, for every man directly engaged, two would be required to keep him supplied and four to carry the wounded back in stretchers.



Map IV-2: Japanese defenses (NPS Map)

The tactic initially fooled the Americans who landed on the two and a half mile wide Massacre Beach into thinking Massacre Valley was lightly defended. The valley runs northwest from the beach and is divided into East and West Massacre Valleys. West Massacre Valley occupies low, marshy ground cut by streams. Hogback Ridge dominates East Valley and offers an easier axis of advance. The Valley narrows into Jarmin Pass. Gilbert Ridge on the right and Henderson Ridge, both consisting of steep mountains with knife edge saddles, dominate the valley. The terrain favors the defender and offers a classic example of how a smaller force can prevail against the much larger force.

In defending the Massacre Valley area, the Japanese stationed a few troops in the beach area whose intent was to report on and harass the landings and then draw the Americans up

the narrowing, funnel-shaped valley where they could be engaged with concentrated fire from machineguns, rifles, and grenade launchers in covered and concealed defensive positions. The Japanese lacked artillery support other than two 75-millimeter mountain guns in Jarmin Pass. What they had was absolute command of the terrain and the ability to defeat a superior but confused attacking force unable to see and engage their enemy.

The Japanese made similar plans for the Sarana Bay area, but reasoned that the Americans would not attempt an attack from that area due to the confining of the avenues of approach by Lake Nicholas.

While the Japanese developed a sound defensive plan, it failed because of the unexpected. Instead of a frontal assault in Holtz Bay, the Americans landed troops at Red Beach northeast



Photo IV-23: The M2A1 105-millimeter howitzer entered production in 1941 and saw service in all theaters of operation, gaining a reputation for accuracy and punch. It had an effective range of 12,270 yards and far outranged and outperformed the limited Japanese artillery capabilities on Attu. Because of the difficulty moving over the water soaked terrain on Attu, the 105s were employed from the beach area during most of the battle. This one is shown near the shoreline of Massacre Beach. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-148-171798)

of Holtz Bay and conducted a flanking attack. The Japanese, believing this approach impossible, did not establish an outpost overlooking the narrow beach and were unaware of what had happened until the American forces had come ashore. The Americans in turn waited too long to land troops, and ran out of daylight. Uncertain of their locations in the fog, with faulty maps, they halted their advance, a bad tactical decision.

While the Holtz Bay defense failed, the Massacre Bay defense succeeded. The Americans only achieved success when the Japanese were forced to evacuate Holtz Bay, leaving their rear exposed.

Major Watanabe deployed the 303rd Independent Infantry Battalion into position at the head of Massacre Valley to defend the passes leading into Holtz Bay and Chichagof Harbor.

Lieutenant Hitoshi Honna's 2nd Company defended the narrow, 600-foot high Jarmin Pass, flanked on the left by Black Mountain and on the right by Robinson Ridge. Lieutenant Yutake Goto's 4th Company defended the 500-foot high Clevesy Pass.

The two Japanese companies defending Jarmin and Clevesy Passes established a series of strong defensive positions stretching from the steep slopes of Henderson Ridge on the left and curving in an arch along the slopes of Black Mountain, across the entrance of Jarmin Pass to Robinson Ridge and Cold Mountain overlooking the right side of Jarmin Pass, across Clevesy Pass to the slopes of Gilbert Ridge. The Japanese also established observation posts atop Nees Point on the Gilbert Ridge which overlooked Clevesy Pass and the entire Massacre Valley.

Photo IV-24: Massacre Valley today (June 2016) looking northwest towards Jarmin Pass from near Clevesy Pass. Black Mountain stands out on the left and Robinson Ridge on the right. (Photo by author)



War is the realm of uncertainty; three quarters of the factors on which action in war is based are wrapped in a fog of greater or lesser uncertainty. A sensitive and discriminating judgment is called for; a skilled intelligence to scent out the truth.

—Carl von Clausewitz, Prussian military analyst, *Vom Kriege*, 1832





Photo IV-25: Jarmin Pass as it narrows down between Black Mountain and Robinson Ridge. (Courtesy Blaine Cornelison)

Lieutenant Toshio Hayashi's 1st Company occupied positions on Sarana Nose and Buffalo Ridge overlooking Siddens and Jim Fish Valleys, guarding the way into Chichagof Harbor.

The Japanese prepared the battlefield well, choosing defensive positions that provided cover and concealment and positioned their machine guns to provide long-range plunging fire. Snipers were positioned at right angles to cover the approaches to the machinegun nests. The grenade launchers covered depressions where the Americans might take cover. A system of tunnels and trenches afforded quick and easy movement. Telephone wire strung along the ground provided secure communications. Established caches of food and supplies throughout the battle areas eased the burden of re-supply. The low-hanging fog along the ridges and mountain sides concealed positions while providing good observation of the American troops huddled in water-filled foxholes below.

While the Japanese could look down and see the battlefield, the Americans could only see the mist above them.

To counter the invasion, the Japanese began assembling a force of battleships, aircraft carriers and cruisers in Tokyo Bay. By the time they had gathered in late May, it was too late. Intelligence of the effort, however, caused concerns among the senior American leaders off Attu at the slow progress being made on the island.

Vice Admiral Shiro Kawase, who had replaced Admiral Hosogaya as the Commander, Fifth Fleet on March 30, 1943, could offer little support from his Northern Kuril bases other than to order three I-Class (I-31, I-34 and I-35) submarines to take up stations off Attu. He also ordered the seaplane tender *Kimikawa Maru* to proceed to Attu and launch scouting planes on a nuisance raid and alerted his bomber crews to begin preparing missions. Finally, he departed in the heavy cruiser

Maya with the destroyer *Usugumo* as an escort to join and support the *Kimikawa Maru*. Because of the overwhelming U.S. naval presence in the Attu area, there was really nothing he could do. Only submarines managed to get though and they proved ineffectual.

Elsewhere, the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters issued orders that Attu be reinforced with 4,500 troops from the Kuril Islands, but then realized it did not have the means of safely transporting them and countering the larger American forces landing on Attu. The headquarters rescinded the order May 19 and two days later ordered that the garrisons on Attu and Kiska be evacuated and relocated to the Kurils. The American blockade of Attu thwarted attempts by submarines to take off the garrison. The Japanese gave up the effort May 28, ending any hope, as remote as it was, that the garrison would be saved.

Endnotes

¹ Handleman, Howard. *Bridge to Victory*. New York: Random House, 1943, p. 79.

² John Elliot, diary, April 30, 1943.

Chapter Five

DAY OF BATTLE

May 11, Landings

The Attu assault force arrived off Attu May 7 to find high winds and corresponding surf on the landing beaches. Admiral Kinkaid postponed the landings a day at a time for the next two days. Weather improved by the 10th with forecasters predicting clear weather the next day. As planned, the Attu assault force split into two groups. The attack transports *Harris*, *Heywood* and *Zeilin* transporting the Southern Force moved into position off Massacre Bay.

The battleship *Nevada*, six destroyers and seven other vessels took up positions to support the Southern Force landings. The destroyer *Macdonough* (DD-351) and the minelayer *Sicard* (DM-20) collided in the dense fog and had to head back to Amchitka. The *Macdonough* was to have served as the fire control center for naval gunfire in Massacre Bay and the *Sicard* as a landing craft control ship. The minelayer *Pruitt* (DM-2) assumed the responsibility for guiding the landing boats in with its radar.

The *J Franklin Bell* with the Northern Force aboard moved into position off Holtz Bay. The battleships *Pennsylvania* and *Idaho*, five destroyers and a seaplane tender supported the Northern Landing Force. Admiral Kinkaid had established his headquarters aboard the *Pennsylvania*.

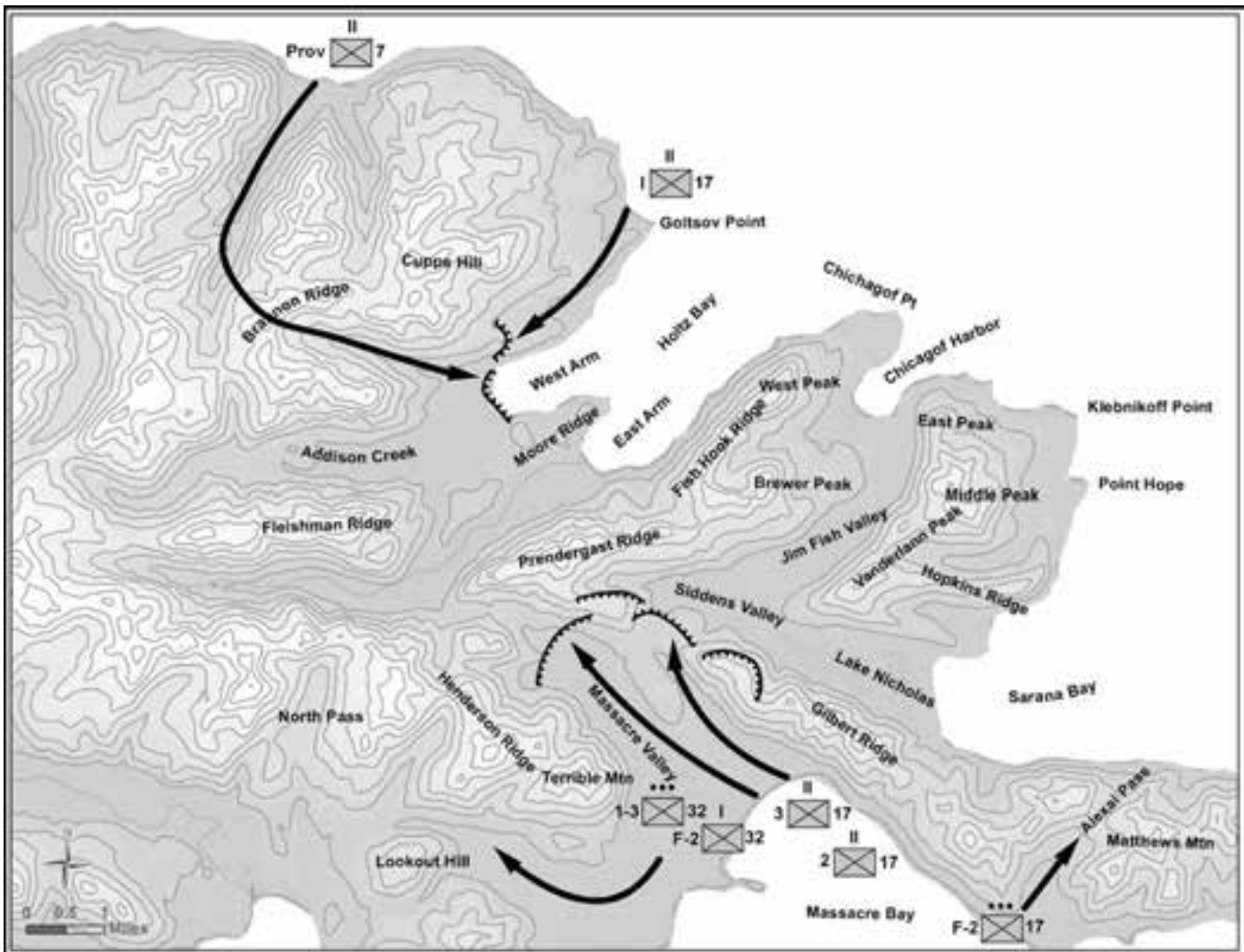
War correspondent Howard Handleman reported that the men made final preparations for landing, packing and repacking combat loads and sharpening knives.¹ A day's worth of K

and emergency rations, canned heat and water purification tablets and mess kits went into the pack along with a change of socks and underwear, sleeping bags and shelter halves. The soldiers greased and re-greased their boots in the hopes they would be water proofed.

The landings began on May 11. The 7th Scout Company from the 7th Provisional Scout Battalion, paddled ashore at Austin Cove on schedule at 5:30AM from the submarines *Narwhal* and *Nautilus*, which had transported the 244-man force from Dutch Harbor in their cramped confines. The crew of the destroyer fast transport *Kane* carrying the 175-man 7th Reconnaissance Troop, however, lost their way in the weather and did not reach Austin Cove until six hours later. Captain Willoughby decided not to wait and began climbing up the steep valley leading to the nearly 2,500-foot mountain saddle overlooking Holtz Bay where he planned to wait for the rest of his force to catch up.

Captain Willoughby and the main force reached the saddle four miles inland overlooking Holtz Bay by 5:00PM. He decided to stop for a re-supply airdrop, wait for the remainder of his force to catch up, rest and spend the night there before proceeding down the steep slopes to the Holtz Bay area.

Fog plagued the landing of the Southern Force, which began moving into position during the early morning hours of May 11 for the planned 7:40AM launch of the first wave. The attack transports arrived in the transport area at 7:19AM dropped



Map V-1: May 11, Landings (NPS Map)

anchor and waited. The tops of mountains could be seen through the breaks in the thick fog hovering over Massacre Bay. Word came down at 8:40AM to “lower all boats” for the first assault wave. The fog worsened and boats in the water had to circle. Finally, at 3:36PM with fog clearing, the first wave got underway. By 5:00PM, it was ashore.

Men crammed into the bowels of transport ships on the trip north and then exposed to prolonged circling of landing boats suddenly found themselves in a strange and terrifying place. Handleman recalled the overcrowded conditions of the transports. There was not enough activity or exercise. Men played poker and read to pass the time. There were few places to sit other than bulkheads, ladders and coiled ropes.

Handleman talked to Private Simeon Pletnikoff, a member of “Castner’s Cutthroats” who was

concerned about a girl, Mary Hodikoff, he had met while attending school at the Wrangell Institute. She was now a prisoner in Japan.²

Major Edward P. Smith’s 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment less Company F, landed on Blue

Facing page, background: Photo V-1: With the onset of war, the Navy began converting ocean liners into attack transports by installing heavy derricks to accommodate landing barges and expanding passengers quarters to accommodate over a thousand troops. The *Heywood* (APA-6) was built in 1919 as the *City of Baltimore* for passenger service. The Navy acquired her in 1940 and commissioned her as the *Heywood*. The attack transport participated in landing Marines on Guadalcanal on August 7, 1942. Following repairs in California, she landed troops on Attu, and went on to participate in amphibious assaults in the Pacific to earn seven battle stars. The photograph was taken May 11. (USN, NARA 2, 80-G-50801)



Left to right: Photo V-2:
Disembarking into a
Higgins boat May 11.
(U.S. Army Signal Corps,
NARA 2, 111-147-171522)
Photo V-3: Loading
105-millimeter howitzer
into Higgins boat. (U.S.
Army Signal Corps,
NARA 2, 111-148-171796)

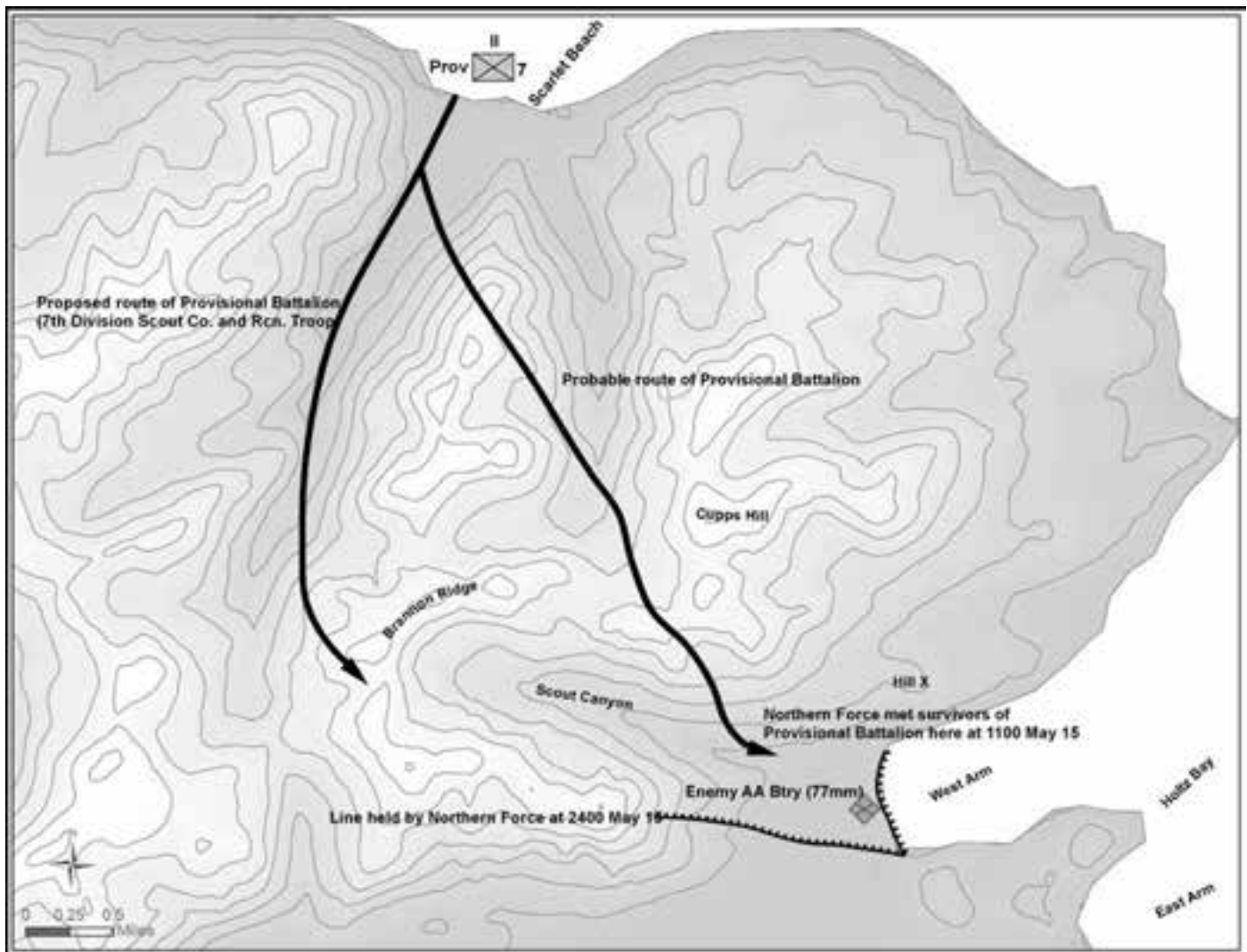




Photo V-4: Austin Beach where scouts landed. (AAF, NARA 2, RG-208)



Photo V-5: Scout force, lower center of photograph in long dotted line, heading for Holtz Bay over difficult terrain. (AAF, 613ABW Hist. Office)



Map V-2: Few original tactical maps can be found of the battle area. This recreated one shows the proposed and actual route taken by the scouts from Scarlet Beach to their position behind the Japanese in the West Arm of Holz Bay. (613ABW Hist. Office). (NPS Map)

Beach on the right side of the bay and began moving up Hogback Ridge. The 3rd Battalion, under the command of Major James R. Montague, landed on Yellow Beach, the left side of the bay and advanced up the marshy valley floor to the left of Hogback.

Private Raymond V. Baun from the 3rd Battalion remembered: "We had been in boats all day long waiting to come to the island. Then we landed in fog as thick as mashed potatoes, expecting a wild dash across the beach with bullets flying, and there weren't any."

By 7:00PM, the 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry had reached a point approximately 2,500 yards inland when it began receiving scattered rifle fire, halting their advance. After an hour's delay, they resumed their advance, encountering increased rifle fire from

the shelf in front of Jarmin Pass and the sides of the valley and light artillery fire from the two 75-millimeter mountains guns in the Clevesy Pass area. With darkness approaching, the battalions halted again, reorganized and established night defensive positions approximately 600 yards from Jarmin Pass. The 2nd Battalion established a blocking position abreast of Clevesy Pass. Both would remain stuck there despite repeated attacks until May 17.

While the battalions were advancing, two 105-millimeter howitzer batteries from the 48th Field Artillery Battalion set up their guns on wooden firing platforms on grounds near the water's edge. Forward observer (FO) parties went forward with the assaulting infantrymen. The



artillerymen established a fire direction center (FDC) near the howitzers to plot and coordinate artillery fires. An FO party radioed the coordinates of a Japanese position, the FDC plotted it and passed direction, distance and gun elevation to the howitzer gun crews. A gun crewmember pulled a lanyard. A round whistled up the valley. The FO observed the explosion and called in corrections. Other rounds were fired until the FO was satisfied that the target was being bracketed. Gun crews spun wheels adjusting direction and elevation. The call, "fire for effect," came down. The opening of the 19-day battle for Attu had begun.

Other Higgins boats brought in the flanking forces that were providing protection on either side of the two battalions advancing up Massacre Valley.

Lieutenant Charles K. Paulson, a platoon leader from Company F, 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry, landed at the foot of Jackass Ravine due east of the Massacre Beach. Paulson and his platoon had the difficult mission of providing right flank

Photo V-6: Private Simeon Pletnikoff with pack board. (AAF, NARA 2, RG-208)



Photo V-7: The Americans used both LCVPs (landing craft, vehicle, personnel, known as Higgins boats) and the larger LCMs (landing craft mechanized) shown above on Blue Beach to land personnel and cargo. They also brought ashore small tractors which proved difficult to operate in the muskeg. (AAF, NARA 2, RG-208)



Photo V-8: Troops advancing towards Jarmin Pass. The photograph was taken from Hogback Ridge. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG-111-157-174503)

security by climbing to the top of Gilbert Ridge and then working their way northwest along the narrow ridgeline and linking up with the rest of his battalion in Clevesy Pass, separating Massacre Valley from Chichagof Harbor. What appeared to work in the plan failed in execution due to Japanese opposition and difficult terrain. The platoon descended to the floor of Massacre Valley near the beach area May 15, exhausted and hungry.

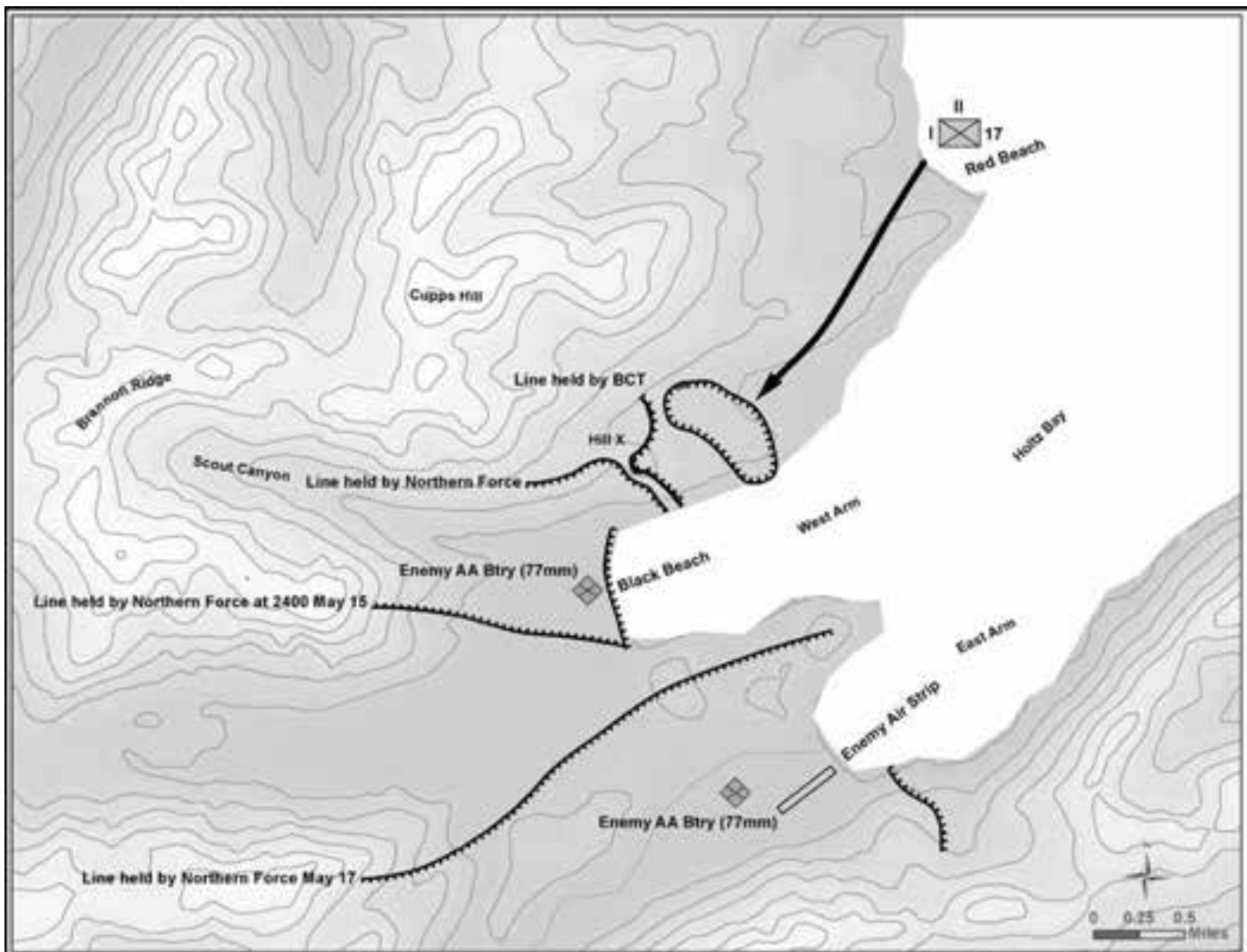
In conjunction with Lieutenant Paulson, a reconnaissance platoon from the 7th Reconnaissance Troop landed to the south at Alexai Point (Rainbow Beach), climbed to the top of Gilbert Ridge and moved eastward to the peninsula's tip without encountering any Japanese.

Lieutenant Odus E. Long, a platoon leader on detail from Company I, 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, provided left flank security for the 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry, by climbing to the top of Henderson Ridge from Massacre Bay and working their way to Jarmin Pass. Like Paulson's platoon, Lieutenant Long and his men encountered difficult terrain and Japanese opposition. The platoon found an abandoned Japanese camp. Japanese snipers fired at the platoon and opposition stiffened as

it moved towards the head of Massacre Valley, forcing Lieutenant Long to order a halt and go into a defensive position. They remained there until Jarmin Pass was retaken.

Captain Robert E. Goodfellow, Commander, F Company, on detached assignment from the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, had the responsibility of landing at Purple Beach at Casco Cove on the left flank, then proceeding over the Peaceful Valley Pass to Temnac Valley and then working his way through the pass to the head of Massacre Valley where he could flank the Japanese. The Higgins Boats put the men ashore on Yellow Beach instead. The company climbed to the top of Artillery Hill overlooking Massacre Beach where they found two abandoned 20-millimeter cannons and a plentiful supply of ammunition. The Japanese apparently left their weapons behind rather than stay and fight. If they had remained, they would have done considerable damage to the landing forces below.

Captain Goodfellow and his men reached Temnac Valley, but were unable to find the pass leading into the head of Massacre Valley due to faulty maps and the maze of mountains.



Map V-3: Because of the lack of map coverage, Army mapmakers had to create ones from aerial photographs. The maps still contained gaps in coverage and lacked accuracy. The map recreated above covers the Holtz Bay area and shows troop movements. (613ABW Hist. Office) (NPS Map)

The Higgins boats returned to pick up the second wave of remaining personnel, equipment and supplies, landing them at around 8:55PM. The front ramp of one of the returning *Heywood's* boats dropped open while approximately 1,000 yards off shore. The boat sank with the loss of its crew.

By the end of the day, approximately 2,000 men, including Colonel Edward D. Earle, Commander, 17th Infantry Regiment and the Southern Force, had landed at Massacre Bay. General Brown and his staff came ashore at 9:00PM from the *Zeilin* and set up their command post near Lake Elwood.

Elsewhere, the landing of the Northern Force went as planned. Sixteen men from "Castner's Cutthroats" led by Captain Robert Thompson embarked at 9:00AM in two Higgins Boats from the

J. Franklin Bell. At approximately 100 yards from shore, they transferred to two 25-foot dories and paddled ashore, landing 300 yards north of Red Beach in a small cove and headed south. Company A, 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, followed next. Fifty-one-year old Colonel Frank E. Curlin, Northern Force commander, and Commander Carl "Squeaky" Anderson, the beach master, accompanied them.

After finding no evidence of Japanese at the landing beach area and establishing security, they signaled for the rest of the battalion and its artillery support, Battery A, 48th Artillery Battalion, and the 75-millimeter mountain guns from cannon company, to come ashore from the *Bell*.

By 4:15PM, the advance elements of B Company had made it ashore and by 6:00, the rest of the



Photo V-9: The arrow in the photograph above points to Red Beach and the steep escarpment beyond. The high mountains overlooking the West Arm of Holtz Bay can be seen beyond. (AAF, NARA 2, RG 208).



Photo V-10: Because of the steepness of the escarpment and the need to travel fast to the first objective, Hill X, the men left behind their heavy rucksacks including sleeping bags with plans for sending back carrying parties. The worn area in the upper right shows where a cable tram was established. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-169-177655)



Photo V-11: Hill X, in the right foreground overlooking the West Arm of Holtz Bay was the initial objective. The Japanese reached it first. The photograph was taken November 28, 1942. The Japanese freighter *Cherrybourne Maru* can be seen at the head of the bay. Captain John Pletcher led a flight of four Martin B-26 Marauders from the 73rd Bombardment Squadron the same day that left the freighter burning and sinking in the water. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, 613ABW Hist. Office)

assault force of 1,600 was ashore. Crews set up four 75-millimeter guns from the regimental gun company and four 105-millimeter howitzers from the 48th Field Artillery Battalion. Supplies continued to arrive as Higgins boat crews continuing shuttling back and forth.

Major Albert V. Hartl led the 1st Battalion as it climbed the escarpment and advanced towards the first objective, Hill X, two small peaks connected by a saddle with the highest being 800 feet, approximately 1.5 miles southeast of Red Beach. By now, the operation was behind schedule and the planned air support had been cancelled due to weather.

At 7:00PM, the lead platoon encountered a four-man Japanese patrol, killing two. The other two escaped to warn their superiors. Shortly afterwards, the Japanese began firing at the

Americans with their 75-millimeter dual purpose guns from the West Arm. At around 9:30PM, Major Hartl, uncertain of his location and due to a faulty map and growing darkness and the location of the enemy ahead, decided to halt the advance about 800 yards short of Hill X rather than pushing on and occupying the high ground before the Japanese got there. It was a classic bad tactical decision. The Japanese moved troops from Lieutenant Okira Sato's 3rd Company and Captain Kobayashi's engineer regiment into the previously-prepared positions during the night.

The first day of battle, plagued by low visibility, proved bad for air operations. The deck crews of the *Nassau* began launching the fighters at 6:30AM, the first of three unsuccessful missions flown that day. Two pilots strafed Captain Willoughby's rubber rafts. Others dropped propaganda leaflets

over Chichagof Harbor around 10:00AM, alerting Japanese that the invasion was underway. The Japanese found them amusing.

On return to the escort carrier, two pilots, unable to locate it in the limited visibility, ditched in the icy waters near the destroyer *Aylwin* (DD-355) and were rescued. Two other planes cracked up on landing. The deck crews pushed them over the side. Other than going down in the history books as the first close air support mission flown from an aircraft carrier in support of ground troops, nothing was accomplished. Four fighters had been lost, the Japanese were alerted and Willoughby's force was cut off from sea evacuation.

The 11th Air Force committed nine B-24s and twelve B-25s under the control of Colonel Eareckson flying in a B-24. The bomber crew arrived over Attu, finding the battle area covered in clouds except for a small hole in the clouds over Holtz. Eareckson ordered them to return to Adak and bomb Kiska on the way back. Two B-24 crews did not receive the word and dropped their bombs along with propaganda leaflets on Holtz. Lieutenant Wheeler noted in his diary, "weather rotten...mullered around over Attu about an hour...dropped through holes on Holtz."³ One B-24 crew dropped supplies by parachute to Captain Willoughby's men on a ridge above the clouds. The crew observed the men below recovering them.

While the landings were being made, the *Idaho* and *Pennsylvania* bombarded the Japanese in Chichagof Harbor by radar for an hour during the morning before switching to the Holtz Bay area during the afternoon in an attempt to destroy the 75-millimeter gun positions at the two locations. The destroyer *Phelps* (DD-360) joined the effort against the Holtz Bay targets.

Paul Nobuo Tatsuguchi entered a notation in the diary that he kept during the battle that was later found along with other documents that survived destruction after battle's end. It became one of the better-known Japanese diaries to survive the war.

Carrier based planes flew over, fired at them. There is a low fog and the summit is clear. Evacuated to the summit. Air raids carried out frequently until 1000 [10:00AM]. Heard loud noise. It is naval gun firing. Prepared battle equipment. INFORMATION-American transports, about 41, begin landing at Hokkai Misaki [probably Red Beach]. Twenty boats landed at Massacre Bay. It seems that they are going



Photo V-12: Dr. Paul Tatsuguchi. (Photo courtesy Wings over Alaska, Ted Spencer Collection)

*to unload heavy equipment. DAYS ACTIVITIES-Air raid, naval gun firing and landing of American troops.*⁴

Doctor Tatsuguchi received his education in the United States, graduating from Pacific Union College, a Seventh-Day Adventist college near Angwin, California, in 1932. He returned briefly to Japan where his father, a Seventh-Day Adventist, ran a prosperous dental practice in Hiroshima. Tatsuguchi returned to the U.S. in 1933 and entered the College of Medical Evangelists at Loma Linda University, California. He graduated in 1937, served an internship in the White Memorial Hospital in Los Angeles, earned his medical doctor's degree and the right to practice in California in 1938.

Tatsuguchi returned to Japan in 1939 where he accepted a position in the Seventh Day Adventist sanitarium in Tokyo. In the interim, he had married Taeko Miyake, the daughter of a Seventh-Day Adventist pastor in Honolulu. Their first daughter, Misako, was born in 1940. The Japanese Imperial Army drafted him in early 1941 and sent him to a military medical school.

Suspicious of his American and Seventh-Day Adventist affiliations, the Army did not commission Tatsuguchi, but made him acting medical officer. He arrived on Attu in March 1943. He left behind his wife, Taeko, pregnant with their second child, Mutsuko. Paul wrote his wife a final letter, saying he was on an island, probably Paramushiro in the Northern Kurils. Several weeks later, the Japanese authorities sent Taeko a lock of his hair, a Japanese military custom that prepared relatives for the possibility that their loved ones might not be returning and it would be impossible ship ashes back.

Paul Tatsuguchi was apparently assigned to the Field Hospital, North Sea Garrison and serving in the Holtz Bay area when the American landing occurred.

May 12-13, Stalemate in Massacre Bay, Success in Holtz Bay

May 12 turned into a dismal day as the exhausted and cold Americans woke to the reality of war in Massacre Bay. The unseen Japanese fired

on the two battalions huddled in shallow defensive positions. Company K, led by Captain Ernest F. Brash, 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry, supported by artillery fire, attempted to seize Jarmin Pass at 8:30AM. The Japanese drove them back with machinegun and grenade launcher fire.

The *Nevada* bombarded the mouth of the pass and the slopes of Black Mountain to the left beginning at 11:25AM for 40 minutes without any appreciable effect. Companies K and L, led by Captain John E. Jarmin, launched another attack at 3:50PM under the cover of more artillery. They advanced approximately 100 yards and then dug in after being halted by machinegun fire.

Communications between the battalions and regimental command post broke down as radios became inoperable due to the wetness. Colonel Earl and a scout from "Castner's Cutthroats" went forward to locate the front lines. A Japanese sniper shot him and badly wounded the scout. General Brown ordered Colonel Wayne C. Zimmerman, a



Photo V-13: Colonel Wayne Zimmerman commanded the Southern Force throughout the battle. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-156-174146)



Photo V-14: The North American B-25 Mitchell median bomber provided low-level bomber support during the battle. The ones shown above off Attu were assigned to the 73rd Bombardment Squadron, based on Amchitka Island. (AAC, 613ABW History Office)

46-year old West Point graduate and division chief of staff, to assume command.

The realization that it was going to take more than three days to secure Attu sank in. Resupply of the forward forces from the beach proved difficult because of the waterlogged and broken terrain and Japanese fire. It took carrying parties most of the day to bring up food and ammunition and evacuate the wounded.

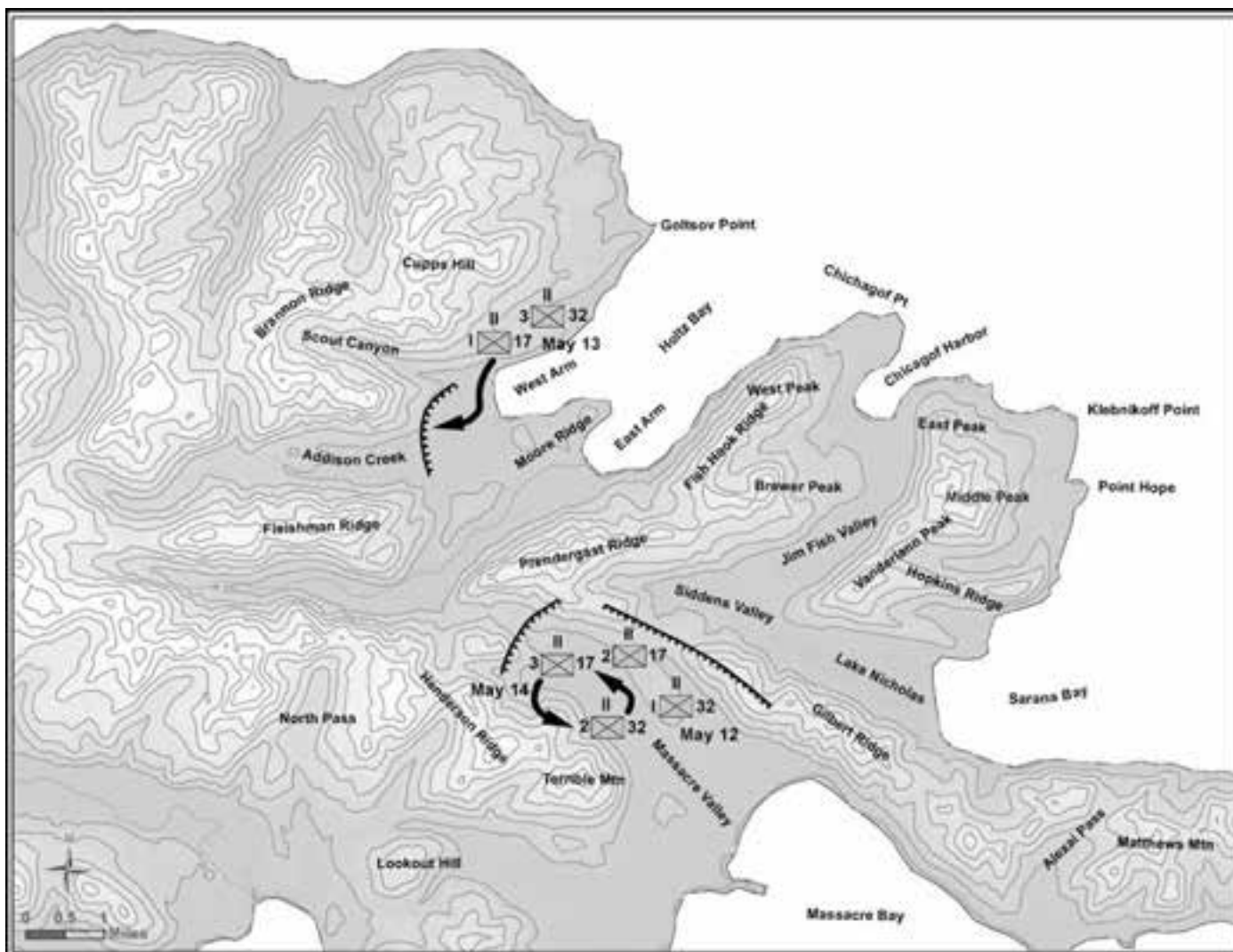
General Brown ordered Major Charles G. Fredericks to land his 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment and advance up Massacre Valley in support of the pinned down 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment. The battalion disembarked from the *Perida* with E, G and H companies, moved up the valley, and established its headquarters 400 yards to the rear of the 3rd Battalion.

By 9:00AM May 12, in the Northern Front area, the fog lifted and the 1st Battalion launched an attack supported by artillery, naval gunfire and air strikes to seize Hill X. The Japanese, who had occupied pre-dug defensive positions, fought back with machinegun and grenade throwers. The Americans occupied the ridge leading up to Hill X by the end of the day, taking heavy casualties,

including platoon leader Lieutenant Robert K. Moore from B Company, who gave his name to the nearby ridge separating the East and West Arms of Holtz Bay.

While closed over Massacre, weather cleared sufficiently in the Holtz Bay-Chichagof Harbor area for the full force of bomber and fighters to be brought to bear. Colonel Eareckson, from his perch as air controller in a B-24 circling the battlefield below, directed strikes against pre-selected targets. The 73rd and 77th Bombardment Squadrons each flew a mission with six B-25 medium bombers dropping 86 bombs totaling 25,800 pounds in the Holtz Bay area. The 404th Bombardment Squadron committed six B-24 heavy bombers that dropped 240 bombs totaling 24,000 pounds targeted against the 75-millimeter dual purpose guns in Holtz Bay, including one 750 yards from Hill X.

The 54th Fighter Squadron flew two missions with nine P-38 Lightnings against the 75-millimeter gun positions in Chichagof Harbor, dropping 500-pound general purpose and 120-pound anti-personnel fragmentation bombs. They also strafed Japanese position. One P-38 was shot down but the pilot was rescued by the destroyer *Phelps* (DD-360).



Map V-4: May 12-13, Stalemate in Massacre Bay, Success in Holtz Bay (NPS Map)

Wildcat pilots flew three missions. The first, consisting of two F4F-4s was catapulted off the carrier deck at 11:43AM on a reconnaissance mission over Holtz Bay. The second mission of eight fighters began launching at 12:37PM in direct support of the ground assault against Hill X. The Navy pilots strafed the Japanese positions on the forward slopes of Hill X and dropped 100-pound “daisy cutter” bombs, designed to explode above the ground by adding a 20-inch extension to the nose. The third mission of eight launched at 5:10PM. It went after several Japanese barges in Holtz Bay that were trying to land troops between Red Beach and Hill X and isolate Northern Force from its source of reinforcement and re-supply. The Navy pilots broke up the counter-landing attempt.

While the air strikes were in progress, Lieutenant Anthony Brannon from the 21st Bombardment Squadron air dropped supplies by parachute to the 7th Provisional Scout Battalion. The B-24 crew observed the men below recovering the bundles.

Captain Willoughby’s force, after a grueling trek over mountain pass, had reached a point overlooking Holtz Bay, forcing the Japanese to split their forces, one facing the Northern Force and another guarding its left flank. Exhausted and suffering from exposure, the provisional battalion established defensive positions.

Paul Tatsuguchi noted in his diary: *U.S. forces landed at Shiba Dai [Holtz Bay] and Massacre Bay. The enemy has advanced to the bottom of Missumi Yama from Shiba Dai. Have engaged them. On*

*the other hand, Massacre Bay is defended by only one platoon, but upon the unexpected attack, the AA machine gun cannon was destroyed and we have withdrawn. In night attack we have captured twenty enemy rifles. There is tremendous mountain artillery firing. Approximately 15 patients came to the field hospital. The field hospital is attached Area Engineer Unit.*⁵

May 13 dawned cold and wet. Clouds hung over the battlefield. Colonel Zimmerman ordered the 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry, to conduct another attack at 7:00AM with the newly-arrived 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry providing support. Fog delayed the attack, which finally got underway during late afternoon supported by artillery and naval gunfire.

The 3rd Battalion got to within 600 yards of the entrance to Jarmin Pass before Japanese machinegun, rifle and grenade launcher fire drove them back to the same position occupied since May 11. The battalion settled down for another night spent in their soggy positions on the valley floor dominated by Japanese positions to the front and both sides and infiltrators from the rear.

While the attack was underway, the 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Earnest H. Bearss, less A and B Companies, came ashore at Massacre. It moved up Hogback Ridge to a bivouac area 2,000 yards from the beach where it went into reserve.

By now four American battalions were committed against two Japanese companies defending the Jarmin and Clevesy Passes. Despite overwhelming odds the Japanese continued to prevail against repeated ground assaults supported by two 105-millimeter howitzer batteries and the off shore firepower of the battleship *Nevada* and five destroyers.

The Northern Force achieved more success by taking the rest of Hill X overlooking the Japanese main camp in the West Arm of Holtz Bay.

The strain of combat and exposure to the elements had taken a toll on the 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry. No provisions had been made for carrying parties, and the battalion had to rely on its own men to move supplies from Red Beach, 4,000 yards to the rear. Engineers solved the problem of getting equipment and supplies up the 250-foot cliff by putting in a dead man anchor at the top and using a tractor to winch its way up. A cableway was then built using the

tractor's winch to move equipment and supplies up and lower the wounded. Jeeps could now be used for transport over the more firm higher grounds.

Japanese artillery fire from their main camp in the West Arm continued to interfere with operations. The Americans needed to seize the West Arm. Colonel Curlin arrived during the afternoon of May 13 to take command of the Northern Force and prepare for an assault on the main camp the next day. The 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel John "Mickey" Finn, came ashore from the Army transport *Chirikof* during the early evening. All the reserves had been committed.

Weather again prevented effective air support. Four B-24s were committed. One made it through and dropped forty 100-pound general purpose bombs on Chichagof Harbor through the overcast. The other crews dropped their bombs on Kiska. Billy Wheeler wrote: "Mission switched to Kiska."⁶

Fog cleared, and the *Nassau* catapulted a flight of nine Wildcats in the late afternoon. The pilots flew low-level bombing and strafing missions in support of the final assault against Hill X.

Elsewhere, the Japanese attempted a bombing mission against the Americans ships offshore by launching 19 torpedo-equipped twin-engine Mitsubishi G4M1 "Betty" twin-engine medium bombers from the Imperial Navy's 24th Air Flotilla, based on Kurabu Field, Paramushiro Island in the Northern Kurils over 750 miles away. The bomber crews ran into difficult weather and turned back. The Japanese had developed plans to support their garrison with air and submarine attacks, but American air and naval superiority frustrated the efforts.

Paul Tatsuguchi noted in his May 13 diary entry: *Our two submarines from Kiska assisted us have greatly damaged two enemy ships. The enemy has advanced to the bottom of Missumi Yama. First Lt. Suyuki (probably Lieutenant Suzuki, 2nd Company, Aota Provisional Anti-Aircraft Defense Battalion) died by shots from rifle. Continuous flow of wounded in the field hospital. Took refuge in the trenches during daytime and took care of the patients during the bombardment. Enemy strength must be a division. Our desperate defense is holding up well.*⁷



Photo V-15: Engineers overcame the steep escarpment by establishing a cableway. The tableland between the escarpment and Hill X permitted the use of jeeps to move men, equipment and supplies. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-156-174155)



Photo V-16: Top of escarpment, Red Beach. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-157-174502)

May 14, Failure at Jarmin Pass

May 14 brought more bad weather with low hanging clouds and fog. Colonel Zimmerman launched another attack at 11:00AM following a 30-minute artillery and naval bombardment. The 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry attempted to gain control of Jarmin Pass. Again, the Japanese repulsed the attack. The Americans got to within 300 yards of the entrance before being driven back. Two rifle company commanders, Captains John J. Jarmin, and Ernest F. Brash from the 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry, died. The other two commanders broke under the strain, one leaving for the rear May 12 followed by the other May 17.

That night, Colonel Zimmerman visited the battalion. He found Major James R. Montague, the commander, in a state of shock and relieved him. The 3rd Battalion, suffering from high losses and low morale, had become a spent force. The battalion had only received partial rations of cold food and many of the men had discarded their

sleeping bags during the advance from the beach. The lack of visibility and the difficulty locating Japanese positions hindered operations. The harsh operational environment and difficulty of resupply had also taken their toll on the men.

Colonel Zimmerman ordered the battalion withdrawn from the front line for rest and recovery and replaced it with the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry, which had been held in reserve further down the valley. The 3rd Battalion moved back to warm tents and hot food. Major Jack K. Siddens, the former executive officer, assumed command and began the process of rebuilding.

Despite the difficulties, the Northern Force initiated its plan to seize the Japanese main camp in the West Army of Holtz Bay with a two battalion assault supported by the battleships *Idaho* and *Pennsylvania* and destroyer *Phelps* plus two 105 millimeter batteries now emplaced near Red Beach. The newly arrived 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry, however, experienced difficulty getting into place



Photo V-17: The relatively flat and muskeg-free area above Red Beach provided firm ground for jeeps and the towing of 37-millimeter antitank guns that could be used in support of assaults of Japanese positions. Elsewhere, men had to pull the gun into position using ropes. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG80-G-345-77086)



Photo V-18: A Navy photographer took this photograph May 14. Combat and conditions had taken their toll as can be seen in the haggard faces of the soldiers. (U.S. Navy, NARA 2, RG80G-345-77087)

and Colonel Culin postponed the attack until the next day. Japanese artillery in Holtz Bay, in the meantime, continued to fire at the Americans.

The 7th Provisional Scout Battalion, in support of the planned attack, attempted an attack against the Japanese main camp with only limited success. By now the battalion was short on supplies and suffering from exposure and hunger.

Elsewhere, the Japanese attempted to launch an attack against the American ships off Attu with 19 torpedo-equipped Mitsubishi G4M twin-engine "Betty" bombers from Kurabu Cape Field, Paramushiro Island in the Northern Kurils. The mission turned back due to weather. One of four B-24 Liberators made it through the weather and dropped four 100-pound bombs on the Japanese in the Chichagof Harbor area.

May 14 turned out badly for the *Nassau* Wildcat pilots. Two planes, flown by Lieutenant Douglas Henderson and Ensign Earnest D. Jackson, were caught in a wind gust flying up Massacre Valley and slammed into the ground, killing both. Lieutenant Commander Lloyd K. Greenamyre, the squadron commander, disappeared. Another pilot had to ditch in the ocean. The crew of the *Aylwin* rescued him. Someone later named the ridge overlooking the left side of Massacre Valley, the river running down the valley, and the bridge crossing it after Lieutenant Henderson.

Four of six B-24 crews succeeded in dropping forty 100-pound general purpose bombs on Holtz Bay in support of the planned ground attack.



Photo V-19: One of the Wildcats going down in Massacre Bay. (U.S. Navy)

Lieutenant Anthony Brannan and his B-24 crew crashed into a ridge behind Holtz Bay with loss of all nine aboard while trying to drop supplies to the 7th Provisional Scout Battalion in marginal visibility. Brannan Ridge, 2.8 miles northeast of the West Arm of Holtz Bay, is named after him. Billy Wheeler reported: *21st (Bombardment Squadron) B-24 trying to locate scout party crashed. Later found by Infantry. All dead. Crew buried beside aircraft. Comdr, Lt Anthony Brannan.*⁸

By now, the battleships had expended all their high explosive rounds. Admiral Kinkaid also became concerned when signal intercepts revealed the Japanese were assembling a fleet in Tokyo Bay to counter American warships off Attu and rescue their garrison.

General Brown informed Admiral Rockwell that his forces were being held up by the Japanese

in well-concealed positions on the high ground that were difficult to locate and almost impossible to destroy with artillery fire. The Japanese had established observation posts near the crest of Gilbert and Henderson Ridges that overlooked the American axis of advance up Massacre Valley. General Brown went on to say that the steep snow-covered slopes and the Japanese occupation of the high ground made attacks difficult and that his forces were suffering a disproportionate number of casualties compared to those inflicted on the Japanese. He asked for additional reinforcement beyond his divisional reserves. Three Infantry battalions supported by combat support and service support units were operating in Massacre Valley. Two Infantry battalions and their support plus the exhausted scout battalion were operating in the Holtz Bay area.



Photo V-20: The U.S. Army Signal Corps photograph taken May 17, shows troops in the lower bottom advancing towards Jarmin. The Japanese had established defensive positions above the fog where they could fire at long range at the Americans below without being seen. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-157-174505)



Photo V-21: Bringing down the wounded May 14 for transfer to a landing barge and then a Navy vessel offshore. The 20th Field Hospital, after some initial difficulties, set up field hospitals off the landing beaches where surgery could be performed. Medics down to platoon level accompanied the front line units as first responders. (UAA, Archives & Special Collections, Lyman and Betsy Woodman Collection)



Left: Photo V-23: Engineers resorted to using stream beds to move supplies as far forward as possible. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-147-171524)

Background: Photo V-22: Tracked vehicles became stuck in the muskeg. Road construction provided the only solution to moving supplies and equipment forward; otherwise, everything had to be carried forward on the backs of men. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-147-171738)



Right: Photo V-25: A road was bulldozed to Clevesy Pass in time to support the second phase of the battle. The bulldozers can be seen below on the right side of Massacre Valley where the current road now runs. (Larry Reineke Collection, Knight Library, University of Oregon)

Background: Photo V-24: Because of the difficulty moving supplies and equipment forward, they piled up on the beaches. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-158-174519)





Photo V-26: African-Americans were generally assigned to combat support units such as engineer and quartermaster and were present during the Battle of Attu. Privates H.L. Lucas, M.H. Winston and O.L. Bruford rest from their work unloading cargo on the beach. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG 111-156-174096)

Admiral Kinkaid asked for justification for the additional forces. General Brown replied that the resupply route up Massacre Valley was exposed to Japanese fire, and personnel at the head of the valley were suffering from a shortage of supplies. The evacuation of the wounded took up to two days and required a stretcher party of eight. He asked for road-building equipment so that vehicles could move supplies forward more quickly and efficiently. He noted that the troops were nearing a state of exhaustion brought on by the Japanese resistance and the operational environment. Admiral Rockwell added his comments that the capture of Attu would be a slow process, reinforcements should

be sent, continued air strikes conducted to the maximum extent and no further naval bombardment conducted. Admiral Kinkaid remained unsatisfied with the slow progress being made on Attu.

By now, news of Attu began filtering back from the reporters covering the battle. The *Anchorage Daily Times'* May 14 edition citing a Washington DC Associated Press article, "Yanks Storm Attu Island," reported an unknown number of Japanese well dug in and supported by anti-aircraft and machine guns had met the invasion. The article noted that media correspondents were on the island and promised further coverage. It quoted Secretary of War Henry Stimson as being optimistic.⁹

Tatsuguchi's diary entry for May 14 noted: *Continuous flow of wounded to our field hospital caused by the fierce bombardment of enemy land and naval forces. The enemy has a great number of Negroes and Indians. The West Arm Units have withdrawn to near Shitagata-Dai in a raid. I was ordered to the West Arm but it was called off. Just lay down from fatigue in the barracks. Facial expression of the soldiers back from the West Arm is tense. They all went back to the firing line soon.*¹⁰

Tatsuguchi's entry about a large number of African Americans may have resulted from confusion associated with the many Mexican Americans and Native Americans assigned to the 7th Infantry Division made up mostly of draftees from the western states. In a strictly segregated Army, no African-Americans were assigned to the combat units on Attu. Photographs taken in the beach area show a number of them engaged in unloading cargo. None of the official histories and accounts mentions their contributions to the battle.

May 15: Relief of General Brown

Colonel Zimmerman launched another attack against Jarmin Pass May 15, this time with the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry augmented with a company from the 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry. The Japanese drove it back to the starting point. One of the battalion's men, Sergeant Louis Adami, recalled the experience starting with the name Massacre Valley that "had spooked the boys." The battalion suffered its first casualty when Japanese hidden on the side of Henderson Ridge shot the man from behind. The inability to see the Japanese demoralized the battalion. Japanese fire became more intense as the battalion advanced towards Jarmin Pass. Adami remembered men being hit and his friend Lawrence K. Isaacs turning and looking down the valley before dying without saying a word.

Finally, on May 15, Colonel Culin achieved success when he launched a two battalion attack with the 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry and 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry against the Japanese main camp in Holtz Bay, only to find that the garrison had moved up onto Moore Ridge, leaving behind their dead, including the badly wounded who had been given shots of morphine to finish them off. The two American battalions linked up with the exhausted 7th Provisional Scout Battalion, which had suffered 11 men killed in action and another 13 missing in action. The terrain and weather had taken a terrible

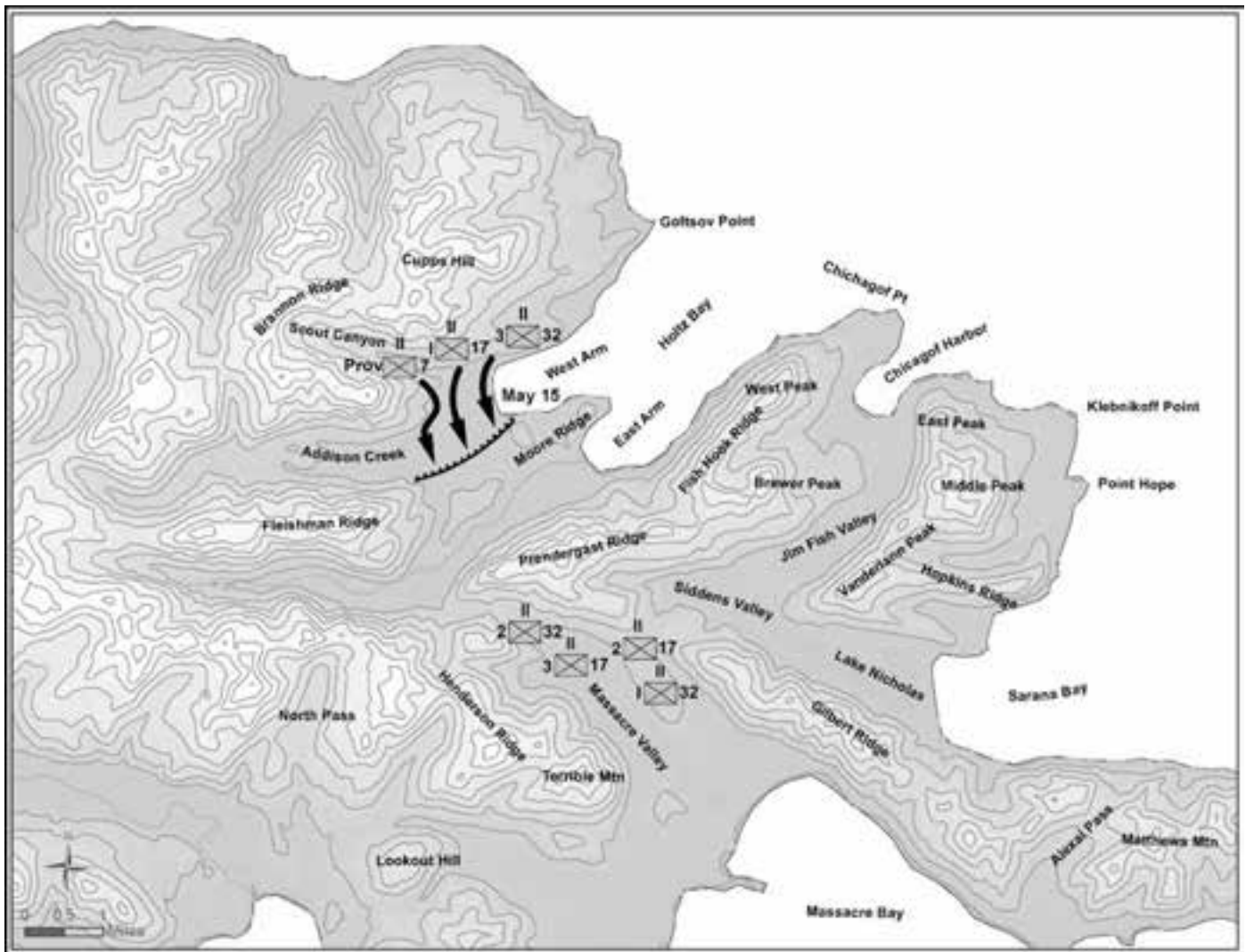
toll. Of the original 420-man force, only 165 were fit for duty.

Because of overcast and limited visibility, the five B-24s from the 36th Bombardment Squadron committed in support of the Holtz Bay May 15 assault turned back. Billy Wheeler's only diary entry for the day was "Wx out."¹¹ One B-24 crew from the 21st Bombardment Squadron managed to airdrop 40 parachute loads of supplies to the Northern Force during four passes. Five parachutes failed to open. The 54th Fighter Squadron committed six P-38s to air patrols over Attu. The pilots dropped five 120-pound fragmentation bombs on Japanese positions in Holtz.

By now all six infantry battalions and their support were ashore. Despite this, two under-strength Japanese infantry battalions had upset the planned envelopment plan. The frontal assaults by the Southern Force had failed. While the Northern Force had achieved success, it had been costly.

The cold and damp and the elusive and unseen enemy had worn down the Americans. General Brown asked for more troops, requesting the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment held in reserve on Adak for the occupation of Shemya. He asked, on the recommendation of Colonel Talley, that equipment be shipped from Adak to build a road to the head of Massacre Valley to ease the supply logjam and allow artillery to be brought up. The requests angered and bewildered Admiral Kinkaid who expected a quick victory and General DeWitt who had promised it. The request for road building equipment troubled Kinkaid who now thought it would take weeks, not days to secure the island.

Brown visited with Rockwell aboard the *Pennsylvania* who sided with him in his request for additional troops and road building equipment. Admiral Kinkaid remained firm in his decision, citing "unsatisfactory progress." In addition to the slowness ashore, he was concerned about the dangers to his ships from the naval forces that the Japanese were assembling and the submarines lurking off Attu. Compounding the problem, Admiral Kinkaid and General DeWitt lacked a clear picture of the battle's progress due to faulty communications. Brown's detailed situation reports had not reached them. The Alaska Defense Command staff had misinterpreted the urgent request for more supplies and equipment, planning



Map V-5: May 15-16: Turning Point (NPS Map)

to send them by barge, not fast transport. No one apparently had thought to send anyone ashore to personally assess the situation.

Admiral Kinkaid decided late May 15 to relieve General Brown and replace him with Major General Eugene M. Landrum, the commander of the Adak garrison who had led the occupation of the islands the year before. General DeWitt had originally proposed General Landrum to command the ground assault force because of his Alaskan experience. It would, however, mean the highly irregular relief of General Brown, who had proven at the time to be a capable division commander.

Neither DeWitt nor Colonel Alexander, the Alaska Defense Command G-3 (operations and plans) liked Brown, which colored DeWitt's judgment. Neither Kinkaid nor DeWitt had

experience in ground combat. As flag officers, comfortably ensconced in their Adak digs with its flag officer accommodations, they expected results without knowing the efforts required to obtain them or the dangerous and miserable conditions faced by the men engaged in combat.

General Brown, through no fault of his own became one of 16 division commanders to be relieved of command during World War II. Following relief, General Brown commanded a training center and then went to Europe to command the 5th Infantry Division during the closing days of World War II before assuming command of another division in Korea. He retired in 1949.

General Brown did not learn until after World War II that General DeWitt had given him an unfavorable officer efficiency report. DeWitt apparently never



Photo V-27: General Eugene Landrum. (Photo courtesy Wings over Alaska, Ted Spencer Collection)

exercised normal military courtesy to discuss it with him. It blocked Brown's promotion chances.

General Landrum arrived from Adak in a PBY and went ashore on May 16. The division staff provided a situation briefing on his arrival at the advance headquarters on the shore of Lake Elwood. General Landrum ordered Colonel Castner to prepare an estimate of the situation with a deadline of 2:00PM the next day.

Colonel Castner and the division staff proposed two courses of action. The first proposed reinforcing the Northern Force and seizing Jarmin Pass, using both the Northern and Southern Forces, then launching a concerted attack on Chichagof Harbor. The second called for containing the Japanese in Jarmin Pass, reinforcing the Northern Force and a coordinated attack by both forces against Chichagof Harbor. The staff recommended plan two, which soon became overcome by events.

The 52-year old Landrum had enlisted in the Army in 1910, and received a commission six years later. He spent World War I in the Philippines and with the American Expedition Force in Siberia. Assignments to Washington DC, Fort Benning,

Fort Leavenworth and Fort Lewis followed. He graduated from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the Army War College and became an expert in amphibious warfare. He was serving as Chief of Staff, 3rd Infantry Division, when he received orders for Alaska. One of his first duties was commanding the amphibious force that landed on Adak.

Following his Alaska assignment, General Landrum was assigned to Europe where he commanded the trouble-prone 90th Infantry Division for two months before being relieved of command. He reverted to his permanent rank of colonel after the war. He retired in 1951. When he assumed command of the 7th Infantry Division, General Landrum was recovering from a broken leg which limited his ability to visit the forward positions.

Only Moore Ridge stood in the way of clearing the Japanese from Holtz Bay. Paul Tatsuguchi wrote his entry for May 15: *If Shitigati Dai [Moore Ridge] is taken by the enemy the fate of East Arm is decided, so orders was given to destroy all the wounded soldiers by giving them shots in the arm and die painless. At the last minute there was an order from Headquarters Sector Unit to proceed to Chichagof Harbor by way of Umanose [Fish Hook Ridge].*¹²

May 16-17, Holtz Bay Taken, Jarmin Pass Secured

The 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry, supported by a company from the 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry, conducted another attack to seize Jarmin Pass May 16 with similar results. Between 11-16 May, the Southern Force had made five frontal assaults against the pass, all of which had failed. During this time, the Americans had taken heavy casualties and suffered from exposure and the lack of supplies. The reformed 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry replaced the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry on the front lines during the night. The 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry remained on Hogback Ridge, blocking the Japanese in Clevesy Pass.

The Northern Force assaulted Moore Ridge May 16. First Lieutenant William R. "Wild Bill" Davis, leading B Company, 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry, found a covered approach on the northern end of Moore Ridge. The company worked its way up the extremely steep slope on the right flank of the Japanese and established a dominating position on the high ground by 6:00.PM. It then moved south along the ridge before it ran into Japanese



Photo V-28: In addition to stocks of food, the Americans found cases of Japanese ammunition, some of which they arranged in a display. The center section show both antitank and antipersonnel 37-millimeter rounds. The large box to the right contains two 75-millimeter dual purpose gun rounds. The three large, upright rounds are for the 75-millimeter mountain gun. Below them are 20-millimeter rounds. The Navy man holds a Type 97 hand grenade. (U.S. Navy, Pacific Region, NARA 6, RG 181)

opposition and halted. The rest of the battalion moved to the top of the north end of the ridge. The foothold gained by the Americans sealed the fate of the Japanese on the ridge.

The *Nassau* committed sixteen Wildcats in support of the assault on Moore Ridge. The first flight of six Wildcats was launched at 7:30AM followed by five at 8:36AM and the rest at 9:24AM. Lieutenant Junior Grade Francis R. Register and Marine Sergeant Waldo P. Breden were reported missing in action.

Overcast and limited visibility stymied Eleventh Air Force support. The day called for six B-24s from the 36th Bombardment Squadron, six B-25s from the 73rd Bombardment Squadron and six more Mitchell

crews from the 77th Bombardment Squadron to support operations in Holtz. None made it through. Colonel Eareckson, who was provided forward air control support in another B-24, dropped fourteen 100-pound general purpose bombs and departed. A lone B-24 crew from the 21st Bombardment Squadron dropped 22 parachute loads of supplies to the Northern Force. Two loads containing ammunition were lost. Six P-38s from the 54th Fighter Squadron made it through and furnished air cover, dropping their 120-pound fragmentation over Chichagof before departing.

Elsewhere, the Japanese submarine I-34 fired four torpedoes at the attack transport *J. Franklin Bell*, barely missing her. American destroyers

responded by depth charging the submarine 30 miles east of Agattu. The Japanese confirmed after the war that the I-34 had made it back to port with severe damages.

Colonel Culin launched a night attack shortly after midnight on May 17 to take the rest of Moore Ridge. The 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry, reached the ridge top by 3:00AM to find that the Japanese had withdrawn from the ridge. Patrols sent into the East Arm discovered that the Japanese had abandoned Holtz Bay, leaving behind large stocks of supplies and equipment including their artillery guns. Lieutenant Colonel Hiroshi Yonekawa's force had retreated to Prendergast and Fish Hook Ridges May 16-17 where they dug in and waited for the expected American assault.

Colonel Yamazaki had decided to wage a battle of attrition from his positions on the high ground. By now the Japanese were subsisting on one meal a day, usually a single ball of cold rice. Some broke under the strain of the cold and hunger, breaking away from the rest and attacking American positions in order to be shot and put out of their misery. The seriously wounded sought suicide to end their suffering.

Paul Tatsuguchi along with others began the difficult climb over the Holt Bay-Chichagof Pass the night of May 16-17. *At night about 11:30 o'clock under cover of darkness I left the cave. Walked over muddy roads and steep hills of no-man's land. No matter how far or how much we went we did not get over the pass. Was rather irritated in the fog by the thought of getting lost. Sat down after 30-40 steps would sleep dream and wake up, same thing over again. We had few wounded and had to carry them on stretchers. They got frost-bitten feet, did not move after all the effort. Met Sector Commander Colonel Jamaki [Colonel Yamasaki?]. The pass is a straight line without any width and steep line toward Chichagof Harbor. Sitting on the rear and lifting feet I slid down very smoothly and changed direction with the sword. Lay down about 20 minutes after that, went down to Chichagof Harbor. After struggling all the time, had expended nine hours, for all this without leaving any patients. Open a new field hospital.*¹³

The Northern Force spent the remainder of May 17 consolidating their positions in Holtz Bay and shifted its beach operation from Red Beach to the beaches in Holtz Bay. The move of support

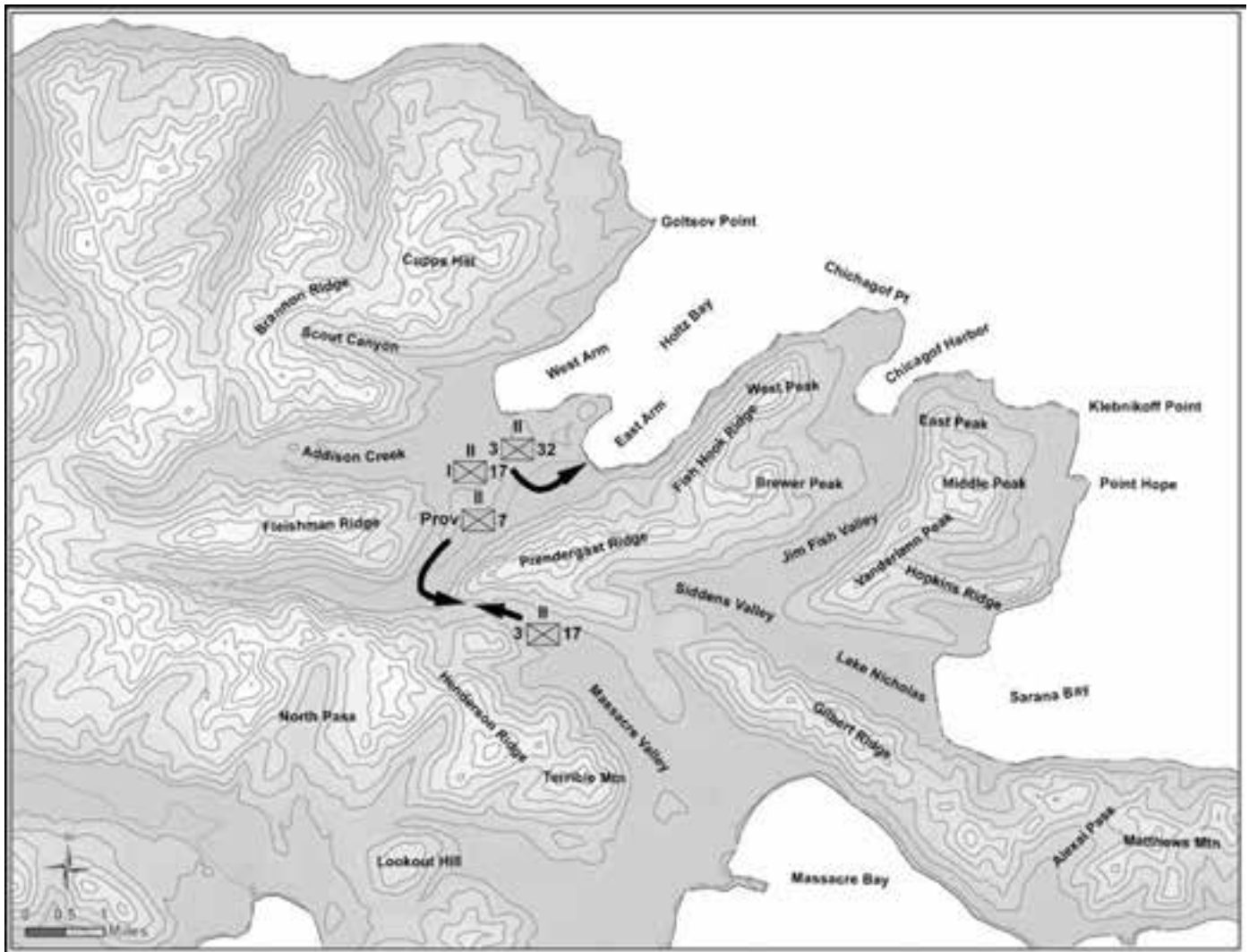
bases ended the need for carrying parties to move supplies and equipment from Red Beach. However, it did not end the use of men to move heavy loads over rugged terrain for future operations, which became a fact of life in the days ahead.

The abandonment of Holtz Bay left the Japanese defending Jarmin Pass in an untenable position. Colonel Yamazaki ordered Major Watenabe to consolidate his 303rd Battalion for the defense of Clevesy Pass, which provided access to Chichagof Harbor. This was accomplished during the night of May 16-17.

Colonel Zimmerman spent the morning of May 17 looking for signs of Japanese in Jarmin Pass. Seeing none, he sent a patrol led by Lieutenant Morris C. Wiberg from I Company, 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry to investigate. The patrol reached the pass without seeing any Japanese, but decided not to go through it. Colonel Zimmerman decided to personally lead another patrol consisting of Wiberg's patrol and a detachment of Alaska Scouts. They crossed the tableland in front of the pass, cut by trenches and pockmarked by shell craters, and entered the pass with its steep walls on either side. The Alaska Scouts moved to the top of the pass where they could see Holtz Bay in the distance. Other than the dead, the patrol found no Japanese in Jarmin. I Company moved up and occupied the pass. Early the next morning, Lieutenant Wiberg led a small patrol down into Holtz where they met a patrol at 2:30AM from the 7th Reconnaissance Troop.

The withdrawal of the Japanese from Holtz Bay changed the situation. The battle entered a new phase, one of seizing the high ground overlooking Chichagof Harbor. The 7th Infantry Division troops, now reinforced by 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment under the command of Lieutenant Colonel John D. O'Reilley, which arrived May 17 from Adak where it had been held in reserve for the occupation of Shemya, began the grim combat of mountain warfare. By now there were 11,500 American troops on Attu and the 7th Infantry Division had suffered 1,100 casualties, 500 of which were exposure cases. Japanese forces were being steadily whittled down.

Heavy fog over the battlefield prevented the Eleventh Air Force and *Nassau* from flying missions May 17. Billy Wheeler's only diary entry "*Wx out*" summed it up.¹⁴



Map V-6: May 17-18, Holtz Bay Taken, Jarmin Pass Secured (NPS Map)

Paul Tatsuguchi wrote: *The Yenegoia* [Yonekawa] detachment abandoned East and West Arm and withdrew to Umanose [Fish Hook Ridge]. About 60 wounded came to the field hospital. I had to care for all of them by myself all through the night. Heard that the enemy carried out a landing in Chichagof Harbor. Everyone did combat preparations and waited. Had two grenades ready. Second Lt Omura [medical officer attached the 6th Independent Mountain Artillery Unit] left for the front. Said farewell. At night a patient came in who had engaged a friendly unit by mistake and had received a wound on the wrist. The counter-sign is "Isshi Hoke."¹⁵

May 18, Transition to Mountain Warfare

Admiral Rockwell declared the amphibious phase over on May 18, and departed for Adak

aboard the *Pennsylvania* (BB-38) the next day, taking with him the bulk of his forces. Three destroyers and a handful of auxiliary vessels including the venerable gunboat *Charleston* (PG-61) remained to provide naval gunfire and other support.

Navy battleships and destroyers conducted 35 shore bombardments during May 11-18. Fog made target detection difficult and ship radar had to be used to plot the fire. Shore control parties directed the fire. By May 14, the battleships had exhausted all their approximately 1,000 rounds of 14-inch high explosive shells, leaving the destroyers to provide support with their 5-inch guns. While a few lucky shots did destroy Japanese positions, the naval gunfire did have a major impact on Japanese morale, forcing them to take cover, producing casualties and shattering nerves. It also lifted the morale of American troops.

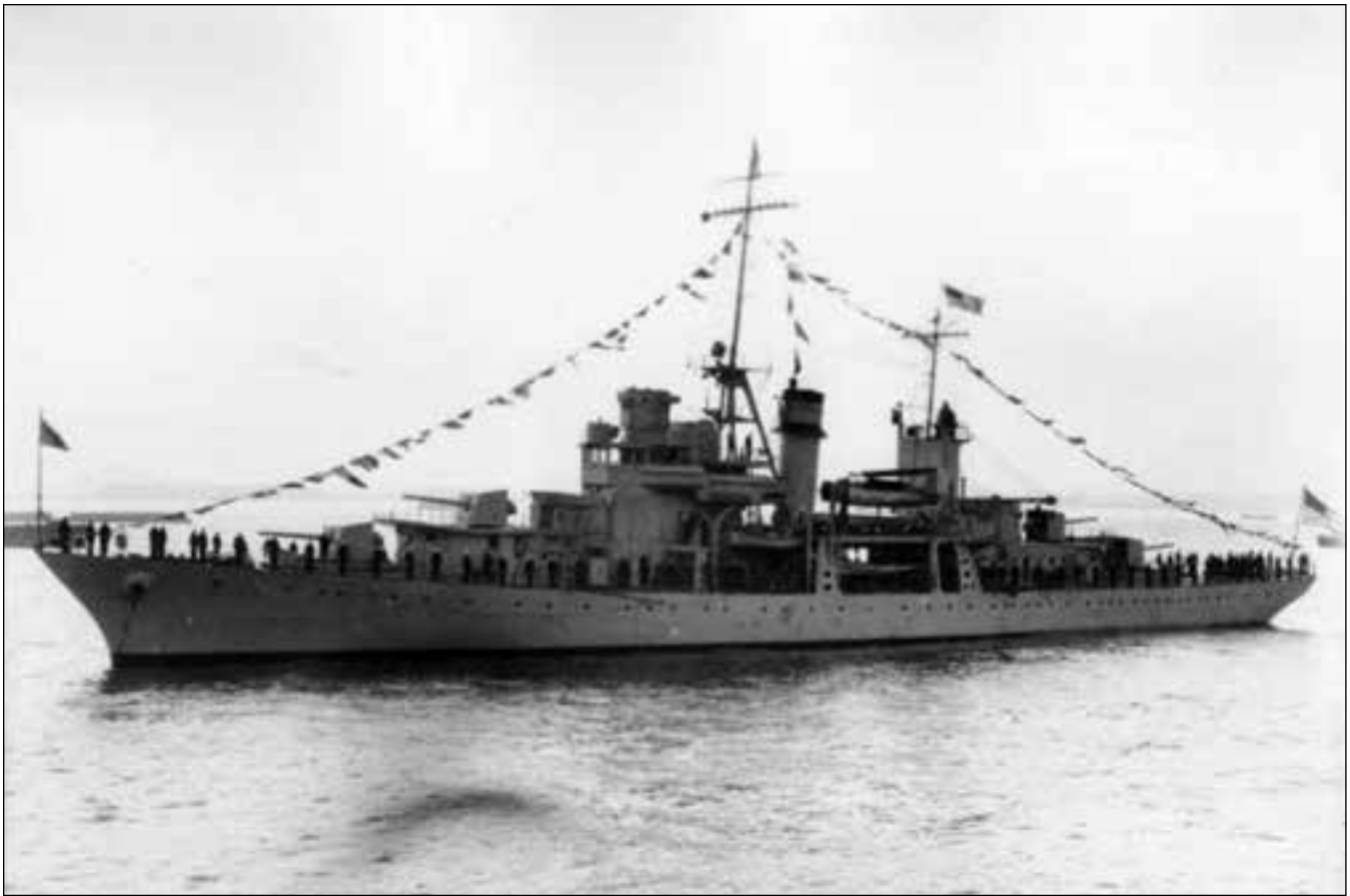


Photo V-29: The Erie Class gunboat *Charleston* (PG-51) served the longest in Alaska of any naval vessel, from 1940 to 1945 and participated in the major landings in the Aleutians. Commissioned in 1936, the *Charleston* was decommissioned in 1946 and transferred to the Massachusetts Maritime Academy as a training ship until 1959, when she was returned to the U.S. Maritime Administration for final disposition. (USN, U.S. Naval Institute Photo Archives)

General Landrum and his staff completed the plans for the next phase of the battle. It called for the Southern Force to seize Clevesy Pass and destroy the Japanese positions in the area with the 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry reinforced by Company C, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry, with the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry in support and the 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry in reserve. The Southern Force would then advance down Jim Fish Valley, seize Sarana Nose on the right side and Buffalo Ridge on the left to secure the approaches to Chichagof Harbor. Additionally, the Southern Force was tasked with committing the newly arrived 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment to gain control of the heights on the southern slopes of Prendergast Ridge.

The Northern Force, consisting of the 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment and 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment received orders to ascend the northern slopes of Prendergast Ridge and

linkup with the units from Southern Force to seize the Holt-Sarana and Holtz-Chichagof Passes. Both forces would then move northeast over Fish Hook Ridge towards Chichagof. The orders committed the Americans to fighting the battle in the mountains. Both forces began moving into their line of departure positions during the afternoon.

Generally, assaults are conducted over low grounds where command and control can be more easily exercised, fire support effectively employed and reinforcements and supplies brought forward. By deploying troops along the ridgelines overlooking Siddens and Jim Fish Valleys and Holtz Bay, General Landrum committed his forces to one of the most difficult military operations, mountain warfare. Trained and equipped ground troops are required not only to overcome enemy opposition but also to be able to climb and traverse steep, exposed slopes where one slip of the foot can mean



Photo V-30: The aerial photograph taken of troops traversing the steep slopes of Fish Hook Ridge illustrates the difficulties men faced in difficult mountainous terrain. (AAF, NARA 2, RG 208)

death. The 7th Infantry Division with neither the training nor equipment committed its troops in slick sole boots on ice encrusted knife-edged ridges and deep, snow-covered slopes.

Howard Handleman quoted General Landrum: "I know this country and my heart bled for the boys. I had to send them up there. I know how cold and bitter it was on the mountains. But I knew death was bitterer."¹⁶

The Southern Force spent May 18 regrouping and reorganizing in preparation for the assault on Clevesy Pass. The 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment was withdrawn into force reserve, leaving the reinforced K Company to guard Jarmin Pass.

The 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment moved up into position near the command post of the 17th Infantry Regiment. The 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment moved about a mile up Hogback Ridge and bivouacked in force reserve. The other parts of the 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, A and B Companies, came ashore from where they had been held in shipboard reserve.

Company size combat patrols went out during the night of May 18-19 to probe and seize Japanese positions along the high ground on the sides of Clevesy Pass. Starting in the early morning hours of May 19, Company C, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry attempted to take Nees Point on the right side of the

pass and a platoon from F Company, 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry tried to seize Cold Mountain on the left side of the pass. The Japanese repulsed both night attacks to clear the two flanks.

By now the 7th Infantry Division soldiers, after the normal grinding-down process endured by green troops facing battle for the first time, had become seasoned troops. Senior leaders became more adept at managing combat. Junior leaders, unable to cope with battle, had been sent to the rear and replaced with more capable leaders. The men doing the fighting had become more battle-wise. Logistical support improved.

Again, foul weather prevented air missions from being flown on May 18.

Paul Tatasuguchi wrote in his diary: *At night there was phone call from sector unit Hq. In some spots on the beach there are friendly float type planes waiting. Went to Attu Village church-felt [apparently part of the structure was still standing] like someone's home-some blankets were scattered around. Was told to translate a field order presumed to have been dropped by an enemy officer in Massacre Bay. Was ordered to evaluate a detailed map sketch, which was in the possession of Capt Robert I. Edward [Operations Officer, 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment], Adj. Of. Col. Smith [Major Edward P. Smith, Commander, 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment]. Got tired and went to sleep. First Lt. Ujue is now in charge of translation.*¹⁷

May 19-20, Clevesy Pass Secured

At 9:30AM, May 19, the 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment with the 1st and 2nd Battalions, 32nd Infantry Regiment supporting launched an attack to seize Clevesy Pass and the surrounding high grounds. The 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry led off first, advancing 720 yards up into the broad pass dominated by Cold Mountain on the left and the towering eminence of Nees Point on the right. Engineer Hill, to the front, crowned the pass. The 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry followed at noon.

Fighting for the pass continued all day and into the night with the wiping out of machinegun positions and a dug-in 37-millimeter antitank gun. A Japanese sniper killed Lieutenant Samuel W. Clevesy, Jr., H Company, 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry as he was in the process of positioning his heavy machinegun platoon. By noon May 20, the two battalions succeeded in securing Clevesy Pass

including Engineer Hill and the lower slopes of Cold Mountain, but not Nees Point.

During the attacks, the 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry heavy weapons company fired 81-millimeter mortar smoke rounds to mask the attack. The Japanese mistook the smoke as gas and began donning masks. In the confusion, the battalion overran the Japanese positions.

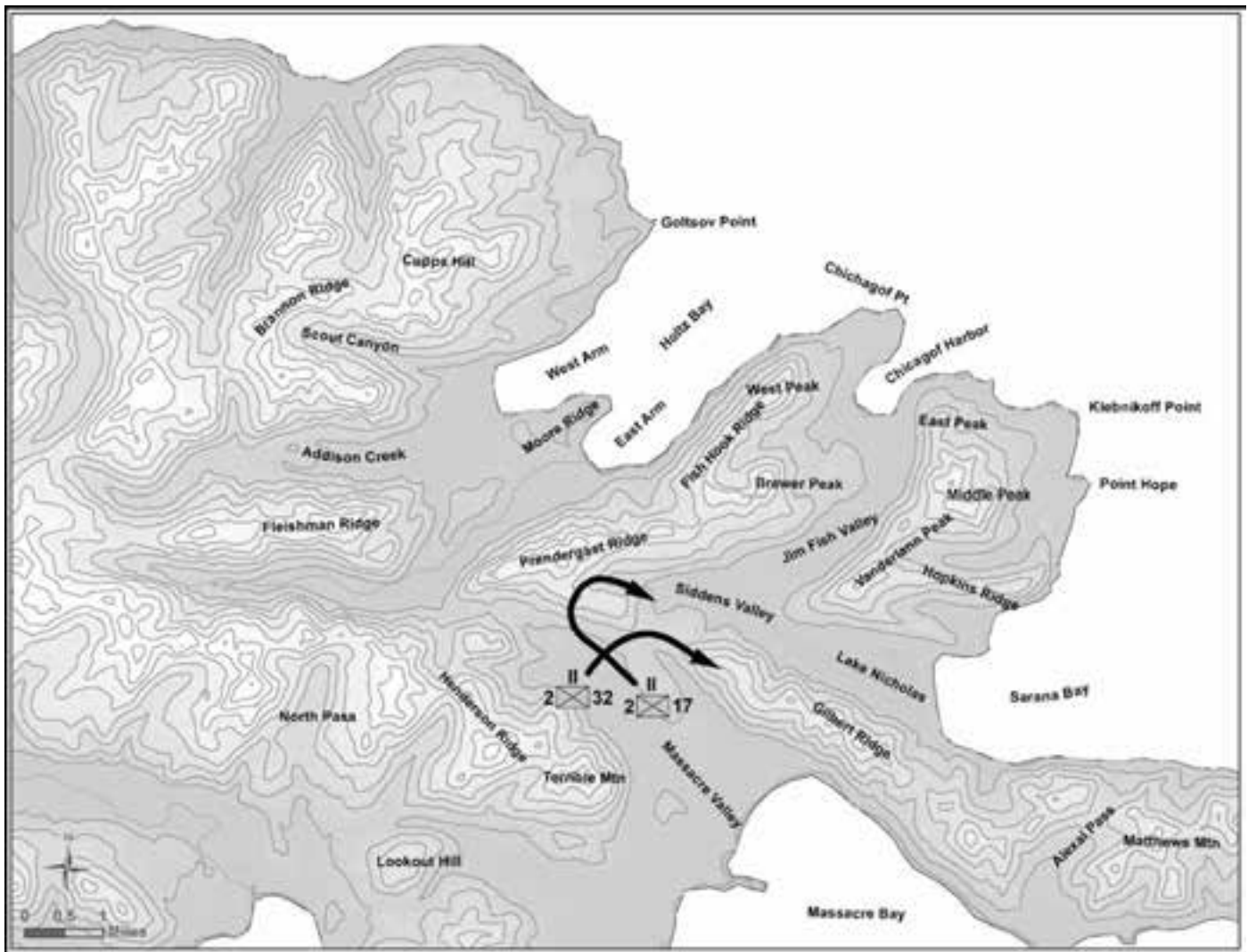
The weather improved with overcast of 1,000 feet allowing the bombers to get through. Colonel Eareckson had switched to a Navy Vought OS2U Kingfisher. The nimble observation float plane provided a better forward air control platform than the cumbersome four-engine B-24. It allowed Eareckson to get closer to the action.

Four B-24 crews from 36th Bombardment Squadron dropped 240 100-pound bombs on Chichagof. Five B-25 crews from the 73rd Bombardment Squadron followed by six B-25s from the 77th Bombardment Squadron dropped 89 300-pound general purpose bombs on Japanese positions in Siddens Valley in support of the ground attack on Clevesy Pass. The 54th Fighter Squadron flew air cover missions followed by bombing and strafing attacks against targets of opportunity.

Paul Tatsuguchi's May 19 entry noted: *The hard fighting of our 303rd Battalion in Massacre Bay is fierce and it is to our advantage. Have captured enemy weapons and used that to fight enemy closing under fog. Five of our men and one medical NCO died. Heard that enemy pilots dropped several bombs near Omanose [Fish Hook Ridge]. The enemy naval gun-firing near our hospital is fierce, stopping about 30 yards away.*¹⁸

After climbing into position during the night of May 19-20, Company G, 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry launched a successful early morning attack to secure Cold Mountain despite intense machine gun and grenade launcher fire. The Japanese continued to defend Nees Point. Company G, 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry attempted to take the point during the afternoon and was repulsed with loss of life including that of Lieutenant Harry Gilbert for which the ridge was later named. Major Charles G. Fredericks, the battalion commander, then ordered Captain Harvey Stevenson, Commander, E Company to conduct a night attack with the words "go up and stay."

Lieutenant Hitoshi Honna and the 40 to 50 remaining men from 2nd Company defending



Map V-7: May 19-22, Cleveley Pass and Suddens Valley Secured (NPS Map)

Cleveley Pass had established a strong defensive site atop the precipitous 2000-foot mountain with four machineguns. Honna yelled down derisive epithets in perfect English, as the Americans attempted to claw their way up the 45-degree slopes. The night attack succeeded in killing all the Japanese and securing the point by the early morning hours of May 21. The company earned a Distinguished Unit Citation.

While the fight was in progress to secure Nees Point, the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry moved over Cleveley Pass May 20 and began ascending Prendergast Ridge with the mission of linking up with the Northern Force making its way up from Holtz Bay. Lieutenant Joseph Prendergast from B Company and his patrol came under Japanese fire shortly after leaving Engineer Hill. A round hit Prendergast, killing him. The rest of the battalion

reached the top of the cold, icy wind swept ridge and began moving towards the Sarana-Holtz Pass separating Prendergast Ridge from Fish Hook Ridge.

The movement of troops to the higher elevation required a considerable effort during the rest of the battle to keep them supplied and evacuate the wounded. The 13th Combat Engineer Battalion and the 50th Engineer Battalion completed the construction of a road to Cleveley Pass. A tramway was installed at the top of the pass to the valley floor below. From there carrying parties moved the loads by foot up the steep slopes and deposited them at supply dumps on top of the ridges.

Beginning on May 19, Colonel Culin began sending patrols up the precipitous slopes of Prendergast Ridge from Holtz Bay to find a route to the Holtz-Chichagof Pass and link up with the



Photo V-31: The movement of troops to Prendergast and Fish Hook Ridges required that they be supported and resupplied by soldiers who passed one item at a time up lines that extended two to three miles. There was no other way other than brute strength. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-175-179468)

Southern Force fighting its way up from Jim Fish Valley. One succeeded in finding the Holtz Bay-Chichagof Trail, and the 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment supported by two companies from the 1st Battalion, 17th Regiment, began working their way up the steep trail May 20, slowly and eventually overcoming Japanese resistance on four small hills that stood in the way.

Foul weather prevented air missions from being flown by the Eleventh Air Force. The *Nassau*, however launched its final mission of the Battle of Attu May 20. Weather conditions improved by noon, and the deck crew launched four Wildcats at 1:30PM followed by four more flights of four between 3:40 and 5:50. The pilots bombed and

strafed Japanese positions in the Chichagof Harbor area. The *Nassau* departed shortly afterward for Adak and the trip back to San Diego.

Due to the desire to take advantage of breaks in the weather, the small escort carrier seldom operated more than 40 miles off the coast and at one point came within ten miles of Holtz Bay. It proved that an escort carrier could be used to provide close air support during amphibious assaults, a practice later followed in the Pacific. The support came at a cost. Five pilots and eight planes were lost.

Paul Tatsuguchi wrote: *Was strafed when amputating a patient's arm. It is the first time since moving over to Chichagof Harbor that I went in an air raid shelter. Enemy plane is a Martin [mistaken*

for a Wildcat]. *Nervousness of our CO [commanding officer, probably Captain Yamato] is severe and he has said his last word to his officers and NCOs-that he will die tomorrow-gave all his articles away. Hasty chap this fellow. The officers on the front are doing a fine job. Everyone who heard this became desperate and things became disorderly*¹⁹.

May 21-22, Sarana Nose and Prendergast Ridge Captured

While the Southern Force secured the Clevesy Pass area May 21, the 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry succeeded in occupying Hill Four of four hills leading up to Prendergast Ridge. General Landrum changed the mission of the Northern Force to advancing with the Southern Force to seize Fish Hook Ridge overlooking Chichagof Harbor.

Fish Hook Ridge dominated the left side of Jim Fish Valley and Sarana Nose overlooked the right side. The defenses on both sides of the narrowing entrance to the harbor rendered a direct approach to Chichagof Harbor along the floor of Jim Fish Valley problematic.

A 300-foot ceiling stymied bombing operations as the 7th Infantry Division prepared for an assault on Fish Hook and Sarana Nose. The Eleventh Air Force planned three bombing missions of six B-25s each for May 21. They arrived over Attu, circled waiting for a break in the clouds and then diverted to Kiska where they dropped their bombs. The 54th Fighter Squadron made it through, flying four combat air patrols followed by bombing and strafing attacks.

While the Battle of Attu raged, the Japanese Imperial Headquarters issued Directive No. 246 for Operation KE Go on May 21 for the evacuation of Kiska, primarily by submarine. Plans also called for the use of surface ships, weather permitting. The evacuation plan also called for an attempt to rescue the Attu garrison if possible.

Fearing an attack against the Northern Kurils, the directive addressed its defenses. It called for the deployment of fighters and anti-aircraft units to provide air defense and shore batteries to protect against an amphibious invasion. Plans also required improvements in the infrastructure.

The Japanese submarine evacuation of Kiska began May 27 employing 13 I-Class submarines with the arrival of the I-7 at Kiska with food, ammunitions and a radio beacon. The submarine

took aboard 60 passengers, mostly sick and wounded, 28 boxes of ashes of those who died on the island, and four tons of spent shell cartridges. Other I Class submarines managed to make it through the blockade, but the attrition rate proved too costly, and the Japanese began planning a surface evacuation.

Paul Tatsuguchi's cryptic diary comment for May 21 read: *At 0600 strafing killed one medical man. Okayaki wounded in right thigh and fractured arm. During night a mortar shell came awful close.*²⁰

Colonel Zimmerman ordered the 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, which had been in reserve since its mauling before Jarmin Pass, to take Sarana Nose, a ridgeline jutting from the east into Jim Fish Valley that dominated the narrow entrance of the valley leading into Chichagof Harbor. The assault got underway at 6:30AM May 22, when thirty-two heavy machineguns, fourteen 37-millimeter anti-tank guns, twenty-three 81-millimeter mortars, a section of 75-millimeter pack howitzers and four batteries of 105-millimeter howitzers opened fire on the Japanese positions in what proved to be the first successful use of coordinated, mass fire support of the battle.

The fire support worked. The men led by Lieutenant Colonel James "Jim" Fish III, the regimental executive officer, quickly overcame the dazed Japanese, killing the remnants of Major Watanabe's 303rd Independent Infantry Battalion, who did not get away. The Americans lost few personnel.

While the east side of the route of advance towards the Japanese in Chichagof had been cleared, Fish Hook Ridge, rising high above the valley floor, and Buffalo Ridge overlooking the harbor on the left remained formidable obstacles defended by a determined, dug-in enemy hidden in fog and enjoying the advantage of occupying the high ground.

Colonel Zimmerman ordered the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry to take the high plateau on the left side of Jim Fish Valley leading up Buffalo Ridge towards Brewer Peak on Fish Hook Ridge to the north. Following a repeat of the Sarana Nose bombardment, the attack began at 4:45PM on May 22, meeting limited opposition, accomplishing its mission by late evening. Fish Hook Ridge still dominated the narrow entrance to Jim Fish Valley running along the shoreline of Lake Cories to Chichagof Harbor.



Photo V-32: Looking southwest from the Holtz Bay-Sarana Pass towards Moore Ridge separating the East and West Arms of Holtz Bay. The "Bahai Bowl" can be seen in the lower center. The tracks in the snow lead up to the pass between Newman Peak and Washburn Peak. The slopes of the latter can be seen on the right. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2 111-SC-175-179484)

While the assault on Sarana Nose was underway, the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment succeeded in driving the Japanese off the top of Prendergast Ridge, despite the bitter cold along the exposed ridge and the rugged snow and ice-covered terrain. From their ridge top vantage point, the men could see patrols from the 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry making their way up from Holtz Bay.

Because of the weather, no air support missions were flown in support of the two assaults. The Japanese, however, dispatched approximately 15 "Betty" medium bombers from the Imperial Navy's 24th Air Flotilla on May 22 against shipping off Attu. American ship crews counted 12 torpedoes launched, none of which found their marks. After making their attacks, the Japanese bomber crews

circled over Chichagof Harbor and dropped packages before disappearing to the west.

The taking of Sarana Nose and Prendergast Ridge further isolated the Japanese. General Landrum, on May 22, ordered an assault on Fish Hook Ridge, a rugged semicircular snow-covered, knife-edge ridge bending like a fish hook almost two miles towards the final objective, Chichagof Harbor. Four high points dominated its top, starting with Newman and Washburn Peaks overlooking the Holtz Bay-Sarana and Holtz Bay-Chichagof Passes to the south. Brewer Peak to the northeast guarded Jim Fish Valley and West Peak to the north overlooked Chichagof Harbor. The "Bahai Bowl" separating Prendergast and Fish Hook Ridges where the Holtz Bay-Chichagof and Holtz Bay-Sarana Bay Trails

intersected provided a relatively flat area from which to make an attack on the first objective, the steep and narrow Holtz Bay-Chichagof Pass between Newman and Washburn Peaks.

The Japanese had prepared a defensive line of snow trenches, rifle pits and machinegun nests connected by snow tunnels along the slopes of Washburn and Newman Peaks that extended along the southern slopes of Brewer Peak down Buffalo Ridge to the floor of Jim Fish Valley. The line blocked the Holtz-Sarana and Holtz-Chichagof Passes and the entrance to Jim Fish Valley.

By now, the Japanese were in a desperate position, fighting a protracted battle of attrition, and hoping to kill as many Americans as possible. Paul Tatsuguchi noted in his diary entry for May 22: *Seventeen friendly medium bombers destroyed a cruiser off shore. By naval gun firing, a hit was scored on the pillar pole of tent for patients and the tent gave in and two died instantly. From 0200 in the morning until 1600 stayed in fox holes. The days rations 1 go. 5 shakar [1.5 pounds] nothing more. Everybody looked around for food and stole everything they could find.*²¹

The Japanese apparently inflated accounts of Japanese bomber and submarine attacks against American shipping off Attu for morale purposes. No American ship was struck during the course of battle. Tatsuguchi's account of food shortages is correct. In the movement from Holtz Bay to Chichagof, food stocks had to be abandoned due to lack of transport.

May 23-25, Attack to Take Holtz Bay-Chichagof Harbor Pass on Fish Hook Ridge

In preparation for the assault on Fish Hook, the 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry, led by Major Edward P. Smith moved up from Siddens Valley, relieved the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry during the morning of May 23, and launched an assault off the narrow end of Prendergast Ridge across the "Bahai Bowl" at 5:00PM to seize the Holtz-Chichagof Pass. Japanese machinegun fire drove the men back after they had advanced 200 yards.

The 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry, which had come up from Holtz Bay established a defensive position in the "Bahai Bowl" on the north slope of Prendergast Ridge and waited in reserve. That night, it sent a reinforced platoon combat patrol into the Holtz-Sarana Pass. It destroyed three

machinegun positions, before withdrawing at 1:25AM on May 24. Another battalion patrol strung a telephone wire between its command post and the command post of the 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment, establishing direct communications between the Southern and Northern Forces.

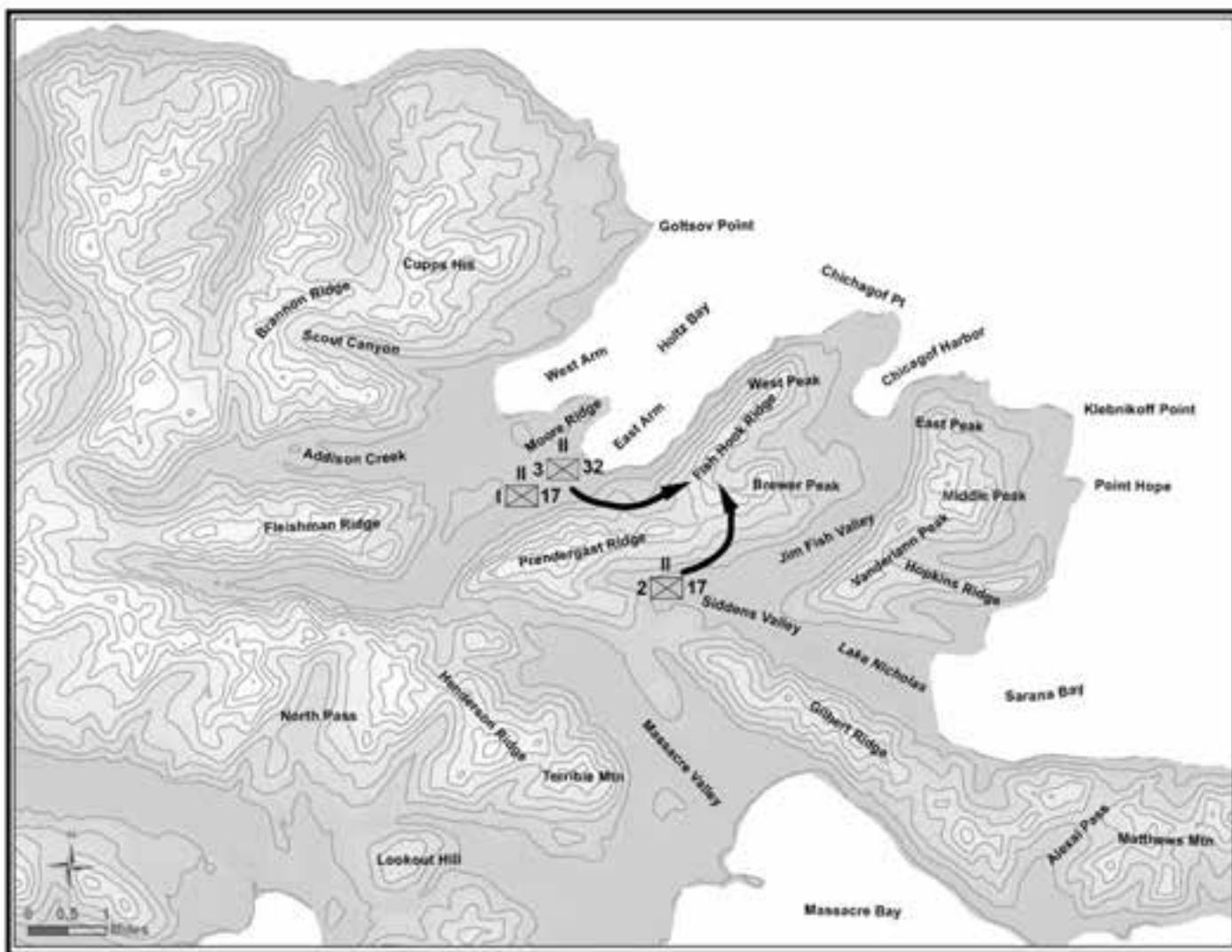
Colonel Zimmerman launched another attack down Jim Fish Valley with the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry and 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry towards Lake Cories. They reached a point 300 yards from the lake before being stopped by determined Japanese resistance on Buffalo Ridge.

Weather again prevented air support missions from being flown. The Eleventh Air Force launched six B-24s and twelve B-25s, but had to divert them to Kiska. Again, the 54th Fighter Squadron succeeded in reaching Attu and providing an air combat patrol of three flights of six P-38s each.

A patrolling PBY crew alerted the last flight led by Lieutenant Colonel James R. Watt, Commander, 343rd Fighter Group and his flight while they were over Sarana Bay at 14,000 feet that 16 "Betty" medium bombers from Kurabu Cape Airfield were heading for Attu. Colonel Watt and his flight spotted the Japanese bombers about the same time. The "Betty" crews jettisoned their bombs and headed back to the Kurils. In a running air battle that lasted approximately twenty-five minutes, the Americans claimed five of the Japanese bombers shot down and seven others seen trailing smoke. Lieutenant Frederick Moore received credit for shooting down three, Lieutenant Henry C. Higgins one, Lieutenant John Geddes one, and Lieutenant Colonel Watt one.

In turn, Colonel Watt reported that his controls were vibrating badly and the right engine was losing its coolant. He disappeared on the way back to Amchitka. As Lieutenant Geddes pressed his attack, the entire right side of his canopy blew up. He managed to make it back to Attu where he ditched his Lightning off the coast. A Navy Kingfisher flown by Lieutenant Ferguson picked him up and transferred him to a nearby destroyer.

Weather on Attu continued to be miserable. Paul Tatsuguchi wrote: *It sleeted and was extremely cold. Stayed in Missumi Barracks alone. A great number of shells were dropped by Naval gunfire, rocks and mud fall over the roof. It fell down. In a fox hole about 50 yards away. Hayasaka, a medical man, died instantly by a piece of shrapnel through the heart.*²²



Map V-8: May 23-28, The Struggle for Fish Hook (NPS Map)

General Landrum ordered coordinated attacks May 24 to seize the Holtz Bay-Chichagof Harbor Pass. The 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry from the Southern Force moved over the southern slopes of Prendergast Ridge, while the 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry, less two companies from the Northern Force, worked its way along the northern slopes. Heavy Japanese machinegun fire, however, drove both forces back to their lines of departure on Prendergast Ridge as they attempted to negotiate their way across the “Bahai Bowl.” The 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment and 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment advanced up Jim Fish Valley. The Japanese fire from Buffalo Ridge halted them near the southern end of Lake Cories.

The day ended with the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment moving into position behind the

2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry and the 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry succeeding in getting two companies into the Holtz Bay side of the Holtz-Sarana Pass.

While the ground forces failed to achieve their objectives, the day turned out to be a good one for air operations. The clouds and fog cleared away. Agattu Island stood out clearly in the distance 35 miles away under bright sunlight. The Eleventh Air Force launched bomber missions against the Japanese in Chichagof Harbor. The first mission of six B-24s arrived shortly after noon and was followed by another mission of five B-25s. Fourteen P-38 sorties were committed in three combat air patrols followed by strafing missions. A total of fifteen and a half tons of bombs were dropped. Anti-aircraft fire was light, and the strikes were flown at low-level. Correspondent Howard Handleman



Photo V-33: The aerial taken of the steep valley leading down from Fish Hook Ridge illustrates the difficulties faced by the men who fought there. Note the artillery and bomb craters in the lower center. (AAF, NARA 2, RG 208)

described the air strikes as “the best air show of the war for Attu.”²³

Billy Wheeler wrote in his diary: *Clear Wx. Pilots observed island beginning to turn green and saw snow clearing. Could see troops on ground. Five B-24s out. Bombed gun position at Buffalo Ridge.*

*Flew low over Jap positions, received no fire. Strafed positions. Had a field day.*²⁴

One bomber crew accidentally dropped its bombs in the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry area. No one was injured. That, and the Wildcat attack on May 16, during the assault on Moore Ridge, were the only

incidents during the battle of friendly troops being attacked by their own aircraft.

In preparation for the next day's attack, General Landrum ordered every 105-millimeter gun possible to be dragged up the newly built road in Massacre Valley by track vehicle. The artillerymen succeeded in getting a few part way up, but still had to fire over Gilbert Ridge in support of infantry forces trying to gain access to Fish Hook Ridge. A 37-millimeter gun crew dragged a gun up by ropes onto Prendergast Ridge from Holtz Bay where it could provide direct fire in support of troops assaulting Fish Hook Ridge.

With the Americans closing in, Paul Tatsuguchi noted in his diary: *Naval gun firing, aerial bombardment, trench warfare, the worst is yet to come. The enemy is constructing a position. Bn. Commander died at Umanose [Fish Hook Ridge]. They cannot accommodate their patients. It has been said that at Massacre Bay district, the road coming through sector unit headquarters is isolated. Am suffering from diarrhea and feel dizzy.*²⁵

By now news of the ongoing battle was beginning to appear in the media. The weekly magazine, *Newsweek*, was among the first to print an account of the battle, which appeared in their May 24 1943 edition. The Navy Department had not yet released an official public release. The *Newsweek* article noted that the Imperial Japanese Headquarters had issued a news release on the day that the Americans landed.

The night turned cold and bitter with both sides preparing for the next day's attack. General Landrum launched another at 10:45AM May 25 to gain the Holtz Bay-Chichagof Harbor Pass with the 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry on the left and 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry on the right. Air strikes and artillery supported the assault. The 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry supported by the 1st Battalion, 4th Battalion succeeded in taking Newman Peak overlooking the pass. The 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry advance halted in the face of determined Japanese fire.

While the attack was in process, the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry and 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry had resumed their assault at 6:30AM under bitterly cold conditions towards Lake Cories, only to be slowed down and halted by Japanese fire from Buffalo Ridge.

Weather again permitted air support. The 36th Bombardment launched two missions of

seven B-24s and the 77th Bombardment Squadron two missions with eleven B-25s against the Japanese in the Chichagof Harbor area. The 54th Fighter Squadron dispatched 20 P-38s in relays to provide air cover and bomb and strafe targets of opportunity. Billy Wheeler wrote: *Observed ground troops assaulting Fish Hook Ridge, extremely steep. To us the ridge, 2000 feet high, looked terrifically steep, like a wall in fact to the receding snow still clings. Troops 200 feet of top when B-24 reached LP [launch point for dropping bombs].*²⁶

All Americans were now suffering from a shortage of supplies as the carrying parties struggled to keep up with the demands. The Japanese suffered more and were rapidly running out of food and ammunition.

Paul Tatsuguchi wrote: *By naval gun firing, it felt like the Missumi barracks blew up and things lit up tremendously. Consciousness becomes vague. One tent burn down by a hit from incendiary bombs. Strafing planes hit the next room, two hits from a 50 caliber shell, one stopped in the ceiling and the other penetrated. My room is an awful mess from sand and pebbles that have come from the roof. First Lt from medical corps is wounded. There was a ceremony to grant the Imperial Edict. The last line of Umanose [Fish Hook Ridge] was broken through. No hope for reinforcements. Will die for the cause of Imperial Edict.*²⁷

May 26, Joe Martinez, Medal of Honor

The next morning, May 26, while the 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry supported by a company from the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry secured Newman Peak. The 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry launched another attack to take Washburn Peak and clear the way through the Holtz Bay-Chichagof Harbor Pass. Companies I and K earned Distinguished Unit Citations, and Private First Class Joe P. Martinez the Medal of Honor during the assault of the peak and pass.

With Company A, 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry reserves, Lieutenant Colonel John M. "Mickey" Finn's 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry with Company C from the 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry launched the assault during the early morning hours of May 26. By 9:00AM they had reached the 2,500-foot crest of Washburn Peak, but then were held up by Japanese machinegun and rifle and grenade launcher fire.



Photo V-34: Looking east towards Chichagof Harbor from the pass between Washburn and Newman Peaks on Fish Hook Ridge. The tracks of the Japanese who evacuated the East Arm of Holtz Bay can be seen leading down into McKenzie Creek. West Peak is to the left. Private Joe Martinez earned the Medal of Honor for securing this pass during the final days of the battle. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2 111-SC-175-179479)

The attackers encountered Japanese fortifications blocking access to the Holtz-Chichagof Pass. Company K managed to come to within 150 feet of the top of the narrow, knife-edge pass, before being blocked by a series of snow trenches in front of the pass and positions on either side. At this point, Private Martinez, a 24-year-old Browning Automatic Rifleman, stood up and waved others forward. Martinez singlehandedly assaulted the trenches, firing his BAR and throwing his hand grenades. He reached the top of the steep pass where a sniper shot him in the head. Others, seeing his example, got up and followed him, overcoming the dazed Japanese and clearing the way for

the advance on Chichagof. The man's courage represented a defining moment in the battle to retake the island.

Private Martinez died the next day. The War Department published General Order No. 71 on October 27, 1943, awarding him the Medal of Honor, the only one for the North Pacific.

Martinez had been one of nine children born to Jose Manuel and Eduvigen Romo Martinez in Taos, New Mexico. The family moved to Ault, Colorado, where Martinez was drafted and sent to Camp Roberts, California, for basic training before being assigned to the 7th Infantry Division. He is buried in the Ault Cemetery. Three statues of him were



Photo V-35: Private Joe Martinez. (Photo Courtesy Wings over Alaska, Ted Spencer Collection)



Photo V-36: The memorial plaque placed on the banks of Henderson River in 2013 in honor of Private Martinez. (Photo by author)

erected in Ault, Greeley and Denver, Colorado. Red Caldwell of Colorado arranged for a bronze plaque honoring Joe Martinez to be placed by the U.S. Fish

and Wildlife Service on the banks of the Henderson River on Attu in 2013.

Two lost and confused Japanese surrendered, becoming the first POWs of the battle. They willingly talked. The Americans learned that the Japanese situation was desperate, with food and ammunitions running out. General Landrum decided to make a direct appeal to the Japanese and ordered surrender leaflets printed.

While the two battalions consolidated their positions in the Holtz Bay-Chichagof Harbor Pass, Major O'Reilly led his 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry along the knife-edge Fish Hook Ridge towards Peak Four. By May 27, after overcoming Japanese resistance along the way, the battalion reached the summit of West Peak. The 1,950-foot peak loomed over Fish Hook Ridge, Chichagof Harbor to the northeast and Buffalo Ridge to the east. Because of the near-vertical drop into Chichagof, they could go no further.

Again, weather favored air support with 1,800-foot ceilings and broken clouds. The Eleventh Air Force dispatched eight B-24s, eleven B-25s and twelve P-38s in support of the attack. The B-24 crews from the 36th Bombardment Squadron dropped 124 500-pound on Japanese positions in the Chichagof Harbor area. The Japanese fired back with their remaining anti-aircraft guns. The crews reported seeing five guns at the beginning of the bomb runs and two afterwards.

The 77th Bombardment Squadron committed five B-25s against the Chichagof Harbor, each carrying eight 300-pound general purpose bombs. Six Mitchells from the 73rd Bombardment Squadron followed, each carrying a similar bomb load. The 54th Fighter Squadron continued to fly combat air patrols over Attu, followed by bombing and strafing attacks against the Japanese in the Chichagof area.

Paul Tatsuguchi's diary entry for May 26: *Diarrhea broke out and continues steady, pains severe. Took everything in pills, morphine and opium, then everybody slept well. Strafing by planes. Roof broke through. There are less than 700 left from more than 3,500. Wounded from coast defense units [may have been referring to the anti-aircraft gun crews]. Field hospital held post office. The rest are on the firing line.*²⁸

27-28 May, Buffalo Ridge Taken

Buffalo Ridge, jutting out into the upper end of Jim Fish Valley at a right angle from Fish Hook

Ridge, dominated the left side of the valley. It remained the only obstacle in the way to the trapped Japanese. Colonel Zimmerman ordered the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry, augmented by Companies C and D from the regiment's 1st Battalion, to seize the ridge.

Major Charles G. Fredericks, the 2nd Battalion commander, launched the attack on May 27. Again, the Japanese pushed back the attack, this time 200 yards short of the ridge crest. Weather again closed in and only a single B-25 crew made it through to drop a bundle of aerial photographs taken the previous day. The Japanese continued to resist.

Paul Tatsuguchi wrote in his diary: *There is pound trench mortar, also AA gun. The company on the bottom of Attu Fuji had been completely annihilated except one. Rations for about two days. I wonder if Commander Yenegami and some of his men are still living. Other companies have been completely annihilated except one or two. Three hundred and third battalion has been defeated. Yenegami is still holding Umanose [Fish Hook Ridge]. Continuous cases of suicide. Half of the Sector Unit Hq was blown away. Ate half fried thistle. It is the first time I have eaten something fresh in six months. It is a delicacy. Order from the Sector Commander to move the field hospital was called off.*²⁹

General Landrum ordered another attack the next day, May 28 supported by heavy artillery. The 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry reached the top of the ridge, encountering only limited opposition. It did not, however, reach the point where it could observe Japanese activity in Chichagof Harbor. While the Buffalo Ridge operation was underway, the 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry reinforced with B Company from the 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry had advanced down Jim Fish Valley to a point just beyond the south end of Lake Cories and established a night defense position in preparation for launching a morning attack against Chichagof Harbor.

The Americans now dominated the high ground around Chichagof. Lieutenant Oliver Glenn flew low on Chichagof Harbor that evening in his PBY and dropped a bundle of surrender leaflets. They contained a message from General Landrum to Colonel Yamazaki informing him of his hopeless situation and asking for his unconditional surrender. General Landrum went on to say that the Japanese "soldierly conduct" had "been worthy

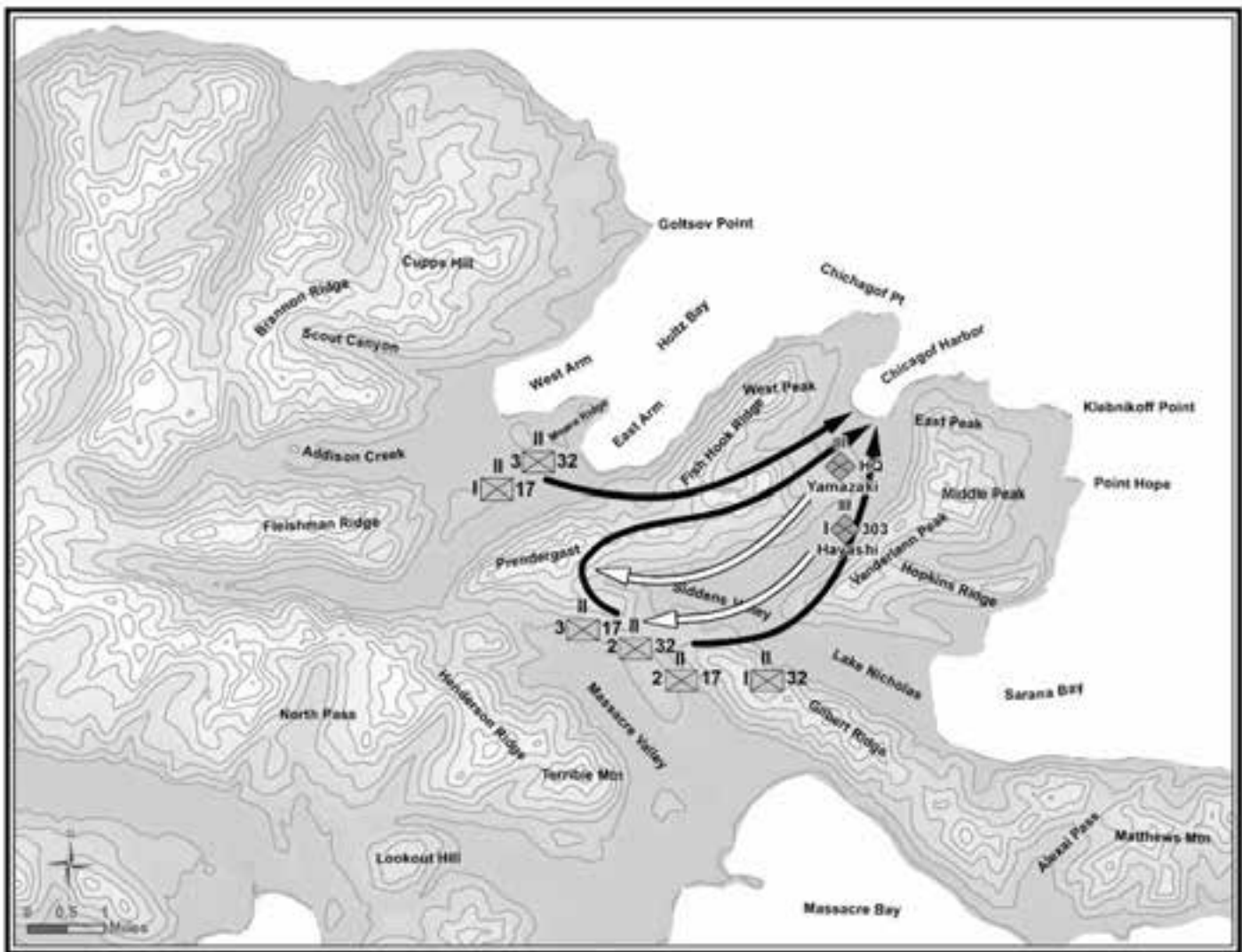
of the highest military tradition." General Landrum asked Colonel Yamazaki to send a delegation to the American lines under a white flag of truce.

General Landrum ordered a full-out assault against Chichagof Harbor the next day beginning at 7:00AM. As nightfall came, the American units were spread across the battlefield. The 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry remained in the Holtz Bay area. The 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry was on Fish Hook Ridge and the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry had established positions in Holtz Bay-Sarana Pass and atop West Peak overlooking Chichagof Harbor.

The assault forces were in place. The 2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry and 1st and 2nd Battalions, 32nd Infantry occupied the slopes of Buffalo Ridge. The 3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry occupied Jim Fish Valley. Major Jack Siddens, the battalion commander, ordered the attached B Company, 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry, which had not seen combat, to establish a night defensive position part way up the southwest side of Lake Cories. The narrow defense frontage blocked access to the widening Jim Fish Valley.

Eight units occupied the Clevesy Pass area, which had become the logistics center. The larger units included Companies D and F, 50th Engineer Regiment; Company E, 13th Engineer Regiment; Service Company, 17th Infantry Regiment; and the 7th Medical Battalion. Other smaller units included fifteen infantrymen from the 4th Infantry Regiment, four 75-millimeter mountain guns from Cannon Company, 17th Infantry, a battery of 105-millimeter howitzers on Hogback Ridge and 60 artillerymen on the slope of Engineer Hill directing artillery fire.

Paul Tatsuguchi wrote his final diary entry: *Today at 2000 (8:00PM) o'clock we assembled in front of Hq. The field hospital took part too. The last assault is to be carried out. All the patients in the hospital were made to commit suicide. Only 33 years of living and I am to die here. I have no regrets. Bonsai to Emperor. I am grateful that I have beloved wife, who loved me to the last. Until we meet again, grant you God speed. Miseka [Misako] who just became four years old will grow up unhindered. I fell sorry for you Fakiko [Mutsuko] born February this year and never will see your father. Well be good Matsue [brother]. Goodby. The number participating in this attack is almost a 1000 to take artillery positions. It seems like the enemy is expecting an all out attack tomorrow.*³⁰



Map V-9: Final Assault (NPS Map)

The diary has become an enduring legacy of the Battle of Attu featured in articles, a book and film productions. Japanese-American Sergeant Yasuo “Sam” Umetani from the intelligence staff, Alaska Defense Command, translated the hand-written diary and various copies were passed around. The original diary in Japanese disappeared.

Accounts vary on how the diary was found. Two men, Master Sergeant William W. Laird and Private John Hirn, claimed they found it, with Laird claiming he shot Tatsuguchi in one version and in another that he threw a grenade into the hole where Tatsuguchi was crouching. Yet another account has the doctor emerging from a cave waving a Bible and shouting “don’t shoot, I am a Christian.” NBC Dateline aired an account of the Battle of Attu December 29, 2000 titled *Forgotten Soldiers*,

Untold Story of World War II Battle on American Soil, narrated by Tom Brokaw. It featured a dramatized reconciliation meeting between Laird and Tatsuguchi’s younger daughter, Mutsuko (Laura).

Japanese authorities did not allow Doctor Tatsuguchi to tell his wife, Taeko, that he was on Attu in the few letters that made it back to Japan. She was later employed by the American occupation force and in 1954 immigrated with her two daughters to America. Her daughter, Laura, married a college professor. She and her husband journeyed to Attu together in 1993 for a veterans’ reunion.

May 29, Engineer Hill

Colonel Yamazaki’s force by now had been reduced to around 700 starving men trapped on all four sides in the narrow confines of Chichagof



Photo V-37. General Buckner, second from left, came ashore shortly after the battle's end. He talks with Colonel Frank L. Culin, Commander, Northern Force, hands on ski pole, and Lieutenant Colonel John "Mickey" M. Finn, back to camera, near Colonel Yamazaki's headquarters near Chichagof Harbor. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-168-177605)

Harbor. He had four choices: surrender, stand and fight at Chichagof, retreat to the warren of mountains to the east, or attack. Given the Japanese Bushido code, surrendering was not an alternative. The other three, with food and ammunition virtually exhausted, would only prolong the inevitable agony.

Colonel Yamazaki decided to launch a night attack during the early morning hours of May 29 with the objective of seizing the supplies and equipment on Massacre Beach and turning the artillery there against the Americans at the head of Massacre Valley.



Photo V-38: Many of the Japanese soldiers committed suicide rather than surrender. *I will calmly offer up my soul. I will never suffer the disgrace of being taken alive*, was the Japanese soldier's oath. Field Marshall William J. Slim, Commander, British Fourteenth Army in the China-Burma-India Theater of operations, wrote: *The strength of the Japanese Army lies in the spirit of the individual Japanese soldier. He fought and marched till he died. If five hundred Japanese were ordered to hold a position, we had to kill four hundred and ninety-five before it was ours—and then the last five killed themselves.*³¹ In photo above, U.S. soldiers on Attu view Japanese dead after Bonzai attack. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-175-179-462)

Yamazaki organized his assault force. The decimated 303rd Independent Infantry Battalion took up positions on the left flank with the mission of capturing Clevesy Pass. The remnants of the Yonegawa Force occupied the right flank in support of the 303rd. The remainder of the Army forces, under Colonel Yamazaki's adjutant, formed in the rear of the two infantry battalions as a second and third reserve force. Finally, the remaining naval forces were organized in the third reserve force.

The attack began during the early morning hours of May 29. The infantry in the lead headed through the narrow confines between the Lake Cories and the lower slopes of Fish Hook Ridge into Jim Fish Valley towards the slopes of Engineer Hill.

Company B experienced the first brunt of the Japanese attack. Major Siddens' decision to position the inexperienced company which had spent the entire battle in reserve, in an exposed forward position proved unfortunate. For some unexplainable reason, someone had ordered them to move to the rear around 3:00AM for a hot breakfast in preparation for the planned 5:00AM

assault against the Japanese. Normal tactical doctrine requires units in contact with the enemy to stay in place and have food brought to them. Leadership failed, and the price was paid.

A postmortem failed to find the culprit and someone reasoned that an English-speaking Japanese disguised as an American had issued the order. It opened the way for the Japanese final suicidal assault.

The Japanese smashed through the company's rear guard and overwhelmed the others strung out in a line before they could defend themselves. The screaming Japanese moved down Jim Fish Valley and across Siddens Valley, catching the 3rd Battalion by surprise, brushing past the companies deployed across Jim Fish Valley and killing Lieutenant James Fish, Executive Officer, 17th Infantry Regiment, and Major Siddens. A number of Japanese paused at the medical clearing station, spending 30 minutes killing helpless patients and their poorly armed medical attendants.

The Japanese attack caught the Americans by surprise. The first warning came when those escaping

in front of the Japanese began scrambling up the slopes of Clevesy Pass. Quick-thinking officers and NCOs from the engineer companies quickly organized a defense centered on Engineer Hill. Lacking automatic weapons, they managed to stop a number of fleeing infantrymen carrying automatic weapons and put them into the defense line.

The main Japanese attack, led by Colonel Yamazaki, came against the American right flank in an attempt to capture Nees Point and gain access to Massacre Valley. The Americans found his body later, his hand clutching his sword. Shortly after the battle, the Americans erected a wooden interpretive sign at the foot of Clevesy Pass honoring him, a rare gesture considering the intensity of the war at the time. American military personnel replaced it in 1950 with a bronze marker mounted on a concrete base. It remains there today in good condition.

General Landrum dispatched a hastily-organized reinforcement force. By now the sun had risen to reveal that the Japanese had degenerated into unorganized marauding bands. Those that the Americans did not kill committed suicide. They lay in clumps in front of the positions they had tried to take. Two companies from the 4th Infantry Regiment moved down into the valleys, spending the remainder of the day hunting down and killing over sixty Japanese. The next day, the Americans occupied Chichagof Harbor.

The Americans were shocked by the carnage that left piles of Japanese bodies, many horribly disfigured in the manner of their dying. While the Japanese had conducted mass charges during other battles in the Pacific, this was the first one conducted by a full garrison as a last-ditch effort that ended in suicide by the survivors. Forgetting the mystique of American last stands, such as the Alamo, Little Big Horn and Wake Island, American journalists looked on the Japanese Bonsai charge with disgust. Robert Sherrod, in a July 5, 1943 *Time* article, "Perhaps He is Human," described the average Japanese soldier as being unreasoning and ignorant. A May 19, 1943 *New York Times* article referred to the soldiers as "aboriginal savages" who would fight to the death.³²

Endnotes

¹ Handleman, p. 79.

² Handleman., p. 64.

³ Billy Wheeler diary, May 11, 1943.

⁴ Paul Tatsuguchi diary, May 11, 1943.

⁵ Tatsuguchi diary, May 12.

⁶ Wilder diary, May 13.

⁷ Tatsuguchi diary, May 13.

⁸ Wheeler Diary, May 14.

⁹ "Yanks Storm Attu Island," *Anchorage Daily Times*, May 14, 1943.

¹⁰ Tatsuguchi diary, May 14.

¹¹ Wheeler diary, May 15.

¹² Tatsuguchi diary, May 15.

¹³ Tatsuguchi diary, May 16.

¹⁴ Wheeler diary, May 17.

¹⁵ Tatsuguchi diary, May 17.

¹⁶ Handleman, p. 173.

¹⁷ Tatsuguchi diary, May 18.

¹⁸ Tatsuguchi diary, May 19.

¹⁹ Tatsuguchi diary, May 20.

²⁰ Tatsuguchi diary, May 21.

²¹ Tatsuguchi diary, May 22.

²² Tatsuguchi diary, May 23

²³ Handleman, p. 188.

²⁴ Wheeler diary, May 24.

²⁵ Tatsuguchi diary, May 24.

²⁶ Wheeler diary, May 25

²⁷ Tatsuguchi diary, May 25.

²⁸ Tatsuguchi diary, May 26.

²⁹ Tatsuguchi diary, May 27.

³⁰ Tatsuguchi diary, May 28.

³¹ Field Marshall William J. Slim.

³² Robert Sherrod, "Perhaps He Is Human," *Time*, July 5, 1943, pp. 28-29; *New York Times*, May 19, 1943.

Chapter Six

AFTERMATH

The Costs

Counting the large number of casualties during World War II was difficult and imprecise. The official Army history covering the battle, *The Western Hemisphere, Guarding the United States and Its Outpost*, lists 549 American dead, 1,148 wounded and about 2,100 suffering non-battle injuries and diseases. The official Army history figures have been widely accepted.

The official Navy history, *Aleutians, Gilberts and Marshalls*, lists 552 Americans killed in action and 1,140 wounded in action, but noted the figures were certainly too low and probably does not count those who later died of wounds.

The figures from the Army and Navy histories differ from a detailed report submitted by the 7th Infantry Division surgeon March 25, 1944 of the final tabulation. According to the surgeon's report, 559 Americans died in battle, 1,138 were wounded, and another 1,555 suffered injuries, of which 1,237 resulted from exposure to the cold and wet environment. Another 577 were diagnosed with various ailments, of which 94 were psychological conditions.

Japanese casualty figures vary. *The Western Hemisphere, Guarding the United States and Its Outpost* states there were approximately 2,250 Japanese on the island of which 29 survived as prisoners of war. *The Aleutians, Gilberts and Marshalls* states the Japanese suffered 2,351 killed in action and 28 taken prisoner.

Scholars have debated the prisoner numbers. Otis Hayes, an intelligence officer on the Alaska Defense Command staff at the time, later wrote in his book, *Alaska's Hidden Wars*, that the Americans captured 29 Japanese. Two lost and confused Japanese soldiers stumbled into American lines May 26. Americans found 14 dazed Japanese, some wounded, among the dead from the Banzai charge. A Nisei Interpreters and Interrogators Team found ten Japanese soldiers hiding in a cave and persuaded them to surrender. Of the unknown number of Japanese who hid out after the battle, one was captured in late August, another was taken two weeks later and a third shortly afterward.

Michael McLaughlin, an Anchorage attorney who has researched the Battle of Attu in detail and visited the battlefield on multiple occasions, claims 28 Japanese were captured and one, an officer, was killed while trying to escape. His research was based on multiple sources from the National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, Maryland and the records of Camp Tracy, an interrogation center.

According to McLaughlin, the Japanese prisoners of war, all enlisted, were transported to Fort Mason in San Francisco in various groups according to when they were captured. Two were admitted to nearby Letterman General Hospital. The others were confined in the former immigration center on Angel Island in San

Francisco Bay for processing. Twenty-five went to the interrogation center at Camp Tracy east of San Francisco. All 27 were eventually taken to a prisoner of war camp on Fort McCoy, Wisconsin.

Burying the Dead

The victors began the sad process of collecting the dead and cleaning up the battlefield of discarded equipment and supplies. Grave registration personnel had established two temporary cemeteries during the battle, one in the West Arm of Holtz Bay and a larger one near the shoreline of Massacre Bay at the foot of a waterfall off Gilbert Ridge, appropriated named Little Falls Cemetery.

Body recovery personnel collected the American dead, many from ridges, mountain slopes and passes. A medical officer examiner recorded the details of the bodies after they had been stripped of clothing. Fingerprints were taken. A clerk carefully wrote down the names, date of death and unit of assignment. Personal effects were collected, tagged, bagged and sent to the Quartermaster Depot in Kansas City for return to the next of kin. The bodies were carefully wrapped in blankets and secured with cords. One identification tag was left with the body and the other retained to be nailed on the Christian Crosses or Stars of David.

Bulldozers hollowed out spaces for eight bodies, each 18-inches apart. Chaplains held burial services and bulldozers pushed the dirt back in over the graves. Quartermaster personnel carefully recorded the places of burial. The Japanese were buried in common graves near where they fell with signs noting how many were in the grave. The common graves included one next to the Little Falls Cemetery.

The Impact on Japan

The Battle of Attu drove home to the Japanese leadership the fact that they were no longer on the offensive, with the real possibility of losing the war. They now needed to increase efforts to inspire patriotism and boost public morale with accounts of heroic deeds and assurances “that their sacrifices would lead to ultimate victory.” The Japanese media published accounts that glorified the defenders of Attu, turning them into national heroes who exemplified the Bushido code.

The Emperor recognized Colonel Yamazaki and 25 of his officers and men for “conspicuous gallantry,” and awarded additional citations to “heroes of the army, navy, merchant marine and civilian employees on Attu.” Yamazaki received a posthumous promotion to general. The Japanese held a ceremony on the one-year anniversary of the Battle of Attu in the prefecture where General Yamazaki was born, attended by an estimated 100,000.

U.S. Media Coverage

Despite later assertions that a veil of secrecy had been imposed, the Battle of Attu received considerable media coverage in the U.S. and a number of books published during 1943-1944 covered the battle in depth. Nine war correspondents were accredited to cover the battle. They included Keith Wheeler, *Chicago Times*; Sherman Montrose, NEA-Acme Newspictures; Frank H. Bartholomew, United Press Vice President in Charge of the Pacific Area; Russell Annabel and James A. McLean, Associated Press; Eugene Burns, William L. Wortos and Howard Handleman, International News Service; Foster Hailey, *New York Times*; Robert Sherrod, *Life* and *Time* magazines; Charles Perryman, News of Today cameraman; Morley Cassidy, *Philadelphia Bulletin*; John Tresilian, *New York Daily News* photographer; William Gilman, North America Newspaper Alliance; and Wilson Foster, National Broadcasting Company.

Robert Sherrod, who later achieved fame in the Pacific covering Marine amphibious landing, gained his experience on Attu, writing a gripping series of multiple page articles in *Time* and *Life*. His career might have come to an end on Attu. He planned to spend the night of May 28-29 with his friend Lieutenant Colonel Jim Fish, when he received an invitation from a visiting Army surgeon to spend the night aboard an Army transport anchored in Massacre Bay with the promise of a hot shower, steak dinner and the sharing of a bottle of whiskey. Sherrod hesitated, not wanting to walk the five plus miles back to the beach, but the enticement was too much. He was by then cold, wet, dirty and exhausted. That night, the Japanese killed all those in Colonel Fish's tent.

Lessons Learned

Admirals King and Nimitz met in San Francisco May 28, 1943 for one of their 18 conferences held

Right: Photo VI-1: Graves Registration personnel established Little Falls Cemetery on the east side of Massacre Valley near the bay at the foot of a waterfall coming off Gilbert Ridge. (Museum of the Aleutians, Unalaska, Alaska)

Background: Photo VI-2: A second temporary cemetery was established in Holtz Bay Cemetery for those who died in the area. (Stanly Titus Collection, 613ABW History Office)





Photo VI-3: Another cemetery was established for the Japanese adjacent to the Little Falls Cemetery. (Stanly Titus Collection, 613ABW History Office)

during the war. Attu was on everyone's mind. Americans were still learning the techniques of amphibious warfare, having conducted only two major ones: Guadalcanal and North Africa. President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill had concluded their Washington (Trident) meeting three days prior. They reaffirmed a Europe First strategy and called for stepping up the war against Japan in the Pacific with the objectives of eliminating the Japanese Aleutian occupation, securing the Solomon Islands, Bismarck Archipelago and New Guinea, and taking the Central Pacific islands.

Planning had started for the Central Pacific operations and King wanted information on Attu. He asked General DeWitt, who offered little. Admiral Rockwell admitted many mistakes had been made, and said that because of the Japanese opposition, the war in the Pacific would be long and brutal. The conference minutes noted: "All agreed that the only way to beat the Japanese is to kill them all."¹ The Americans essentially followed the strategy of attrition as they sought to destroy shipping and aircraft faster than the

Japanese could produce them and kill as many Japanese as possible.

The Central Pacific turned out to be a violent confrontation of attrition between two great naval powers involving hundreds of ships, thousands of planes and hundreds of thousands of men and a massive logistical effort. In the end, when the Japanese lost the aircraft carrier capability and government that had led their nation to power, they fell. The capture of the Mariana Islands put the Americans within heavy bomber striking distance of the Japanese Home Islands. The Japanese continued to fight on.

While the Americans won the tactical victory in the Aleutians, the Japanese achieved a strategic one by tying down forces that could have been used more effectively elsewhere. Attu could have been easily isolated because of its tenuous lines of communication to the support bases in the Northern Kurils. The battle did, however, provide valuable lessons learned. Military commanders and their staffs learned from the mistakes in the succeeding amphibious operations of the Pacific. They also learned something about the fanaticism of the Japanese.

Attu provided a glimpse at the willingness of the Japanese to die. General Buckner noted the Japanese soldier on Attu had proven himself a “tough fighter, with great physical endurance and fortitude. He was not afraid to die.” Those who fought on Attu, however, found that while the Japanese were masters at camouflage and concealment and infiltration, they were not good at all around defense. While they prepared to defend one avenue of approach, they became confused when the attack came from another direction. The Japanese failed to coordinate their weapons fire and adapt to changing situations. They remained low in their defense positions when under heavy fire, allowing the Americans to approach, fire at point blank range and hurl grenades. When cornered, the Japanese launched uncoordinated attacks, exposing themselves to concentrated defensive fires.

The senior U.S. leadership who conceived and planned the assault on Attu failed to realize that weather and terrain posed the greatest threat to success. Hasty in their planning, they were slow to react. They had been overconfident in their assessment of conditions and believed the battle could be quickly won, which contrasted with what had been already learned at Guadalcanal and on New Guinea. Intelligence proved faulty, which was further compounded by inaccurate maps. Joint planning and training proved inadequate, resulting in confusion at the loading docks and landing beaches and costly delays once ashore.

The 7th Infantry Division had not adequately trained its junior officers and NCOs in handling their troops. The conditions found on Attu compounded the problems. Troops first subjected to hostile fire responded in bewilderment. Leaders broke under the pressure and became ineffectual. Those who attempted to move forward came under well-aimed fire and were killed or wounded. Fortunately, the majority soon adapted to the conditions and became battle hardened and combat wise.

The division, owing to its initial desert training, was not prepared for Attu conditions, which demanded cold weather and mountain warfare expertise, clothing and equipment. In addition to being inadequately clothed, the green troops committed to battle failed to take care of themselves. The 7th Provisional Scout Battalion could only muster 40 men able to walk after five days of action. In contrast, the 30-man “Castner’s Cutthroats”

detachment, recruited because of their outdoors skills and experienced in Alaska conditions, lost one man killed in action, two wounded and one man with a slight case of trench foot.

While the assault troops had undergone amphibious training and understood the procedures, it had been under ideal conditions on the Central Coast of California. The conditions on Attu proved difficult and hazardous. Fog, shoals and rocks took their toll. By May 12, ten percent of the landing barges had been incapacitated.

The transport ships had been improperly combat-loaded, with cargo needed first buried under less critical cargo. In addition to cargo needed for battle, construction materials needed for later base development had been put aboard. Unloading and transporting equipment and supplies ashore was not well organized. By May 13, the day planners anticipated that the unloading operations would be completed, only half of the cargo had been unloaded.

Once ashore, the ground forces were faced from the outset with the problem of moving supplies and equipment from the beaches to the front lines. The beaches soon became littered with equipment and boxes of supplies due to delays in transporting them to the front lines where they were needed. The vehicles that made it ashore became bogged down in the muskeg and unable to traverse the steep terrain. The Northern Force enjoyed some success on the firmer, relatively flat ground overlooking Holtz Bay. Jeeps were winched up the escarpment overlooking Red Beach and used to move supplies forward. Everything else had to be carried forward on the backs of men or pulled in sleds. Six to eight men were required to pull the 37-millimeter antitank gun and the 75-millimeter mountain howitzer forward by ropes. A similar number were required to pull a sled loaded with their ammunition.

Fog and clouds also hindered artillery support, and forward observers for the 105-millimeter howitzers who experienced difficulties spotting Japanese positions. Muskeg prevented the guns from being moved off the beach area until later in the battle when a road was built to Clevesy Pass. The Japanese tactic of spreading defenses over a wide area made it not worthwhile to fire battery concentrations. Single guns were often fired instead at specific targets with greater effect. The



Photo VI-4: Aerial view of Betio, Tarawa Atoll, Gilbert Islands, 24 November 1943. View is to the north toward "The Pocket," the last place of Japanese resistance. Courtesy U.S. Navy, https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a9/Tarawa_aerial_view_24_Nov_1943.jpg

only solution to the supply and artillery problem was to build roads to move everything forward, a time and resource-consuming process adding to the frustration of senior leaders who had foreseen a quick victory.

Weather plagued air operations and missions could only be flown on eight of the nineteen days. The men on the ground made substantial gains when air and artillery support were provided. Only two days of clear, bright sunshine occurred.

The *Nassau* (CV-16) proved that a small escort carrier could be effectively employed providing close air support to ground forces ashore. The small *Bogue* Class carrier was originally built using a cargo ship hull as a convoy escort carrier and aircraft transport and classified as an auxiliary aircraft carrier (ACV). The *Nassau* commander, Captain Austin K. Doyle, recommended the designation be changed to better reflect a combatant role and the small carrier be employed in support of amphibious landings. The Navy leadership agreed, and escort carrier became an integral part of amphibious assaults for the remainder of the war.

The three Navy battleships conducted fire support from too much distance according to doctrine at the time, which required battleship

bombardment be conducted well clear of any shore obstacles including mines. Radar plots were used in most of the bombardments because of the fog. While a few lucky shots did destroy Japanese positions, most missed their targets. The general thinking was that the large explosions would force the Japanese to take cover and shatter their nerves.

Lessons from Tarawa, a Comparison

While the American Army and Navy forces and their Australian ally continued their advance towards Japan through the Solomon Islands and along the north coast of New Guinea, Admiral Nimitz's staff completed plans for amphibious landings on Makin and Tarawa Atolls in the northern Gilbert Islands as the first step to secure the Central Pacific. Unlike the shoestring Attu operations, the Gilberts involved the greatest fleet assembled in the Pacific to date: 13 battleships, 19 aircraft carriers, 15 cruisers and a host of destroyers, transports and smaller vessels totaling approximately 200. The effort also included 27,600 assault troops, 7,600 garrison troops, 6,000 vehicles and 117,000 tons of equipment.

The 27th Infantry Division, New York National Guard, provided a regimental combat team to assault Makin. The men encountered limited Japanese opposition. The 2nd Marine Division assaulted the

tiny one-square-mile island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll November 20, 1943, encountering elite Japanese naval special landing and base forces and a formidable defense system. The Marines secured Betio four days later at a cost of 980 Marine and 29 sailor lives and another 2,101 wounded. The Japanese lost 4,630 men. Nineteen Japanese and 125 Koreans were captured. Four Marines received the Medal of Honor. The Marines proved that Americans were just as willing as the Japanese to die when confronted with final battle decisions.

Tarawa exposed the U.S. public to the full impact of war dead for the first time after reporters, including Robert Sherrod, and photographers provided graphic descriptions and images. The battle shocked the American public. Attu quickly slipped from the public mind and soon became overshadowed by other epic battles in the Pacific.

Endnotes

¹ Conference minutes from San Francisco meeting, May 28, 1943.

Chapter Seven

MISSION TO THE KURILS

Bridge to Victory

A combined American-Canadian force landed on Kiska August 15, 1943 to find that the Japanese had abandoned the island. For almost fifteen months, approximately 8,500 Japanese on Attu and Kiska had tied down a military force of American and Canadians that reached a peak of 144,000 in mid-August 1943. The Aleutian Campaign cost approximately 1,000 American and Canadian lives. The retaking of the two islands assured the American and Canadian public that the Japanese no longer threatened the North American continent.

According to the postwar U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey of the Pacific, the recapture of the Aleutians also sent a strong message to the Japanese, who now feared an invasion from the North. The Japanese reinforced their garrisons in the Kuril Islands. The Americans reduced theirs in Alaska except for the western Aleutians and Adak and Amchitka Islands. It represented a shift by the Japanese from using the Kurils as a staging area for North Pacific operations to one using the northernmost islands of the Japanese homeland to block any offensive from the north by the Americans. It was essentially a reverse of the Aleutian Campaign. Now a smaller American force would tie down a larger Japanese force.

With the Aleutian Campaign over, Alaskan military leaders began looking to the Kurils and possibilities they offered for reaching the Japanese homeland. The Alaska Defense Command displayed a poster in its offices showing men, guns and tanks

moving westward over a bridge superimposed on a map of the Bering Sea and North Pacific. Titled "Bridge to Victory," it illustrated the desires of Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, Commander, Western Defense Command, and Lieutenant General Simon B. Buckner, Commander, Alaskan Defense Command, to use Alaska as an invasion route to Japan.

It was not a new concept. Brigadier General William "Billy" Mitchell, reporting on his December 1923-July 1924 trip to the Far East, believed the best invasion route to Japan was by way of the Aleutian and Kuril Islands. He considered the route through the Central Pacific, then proposed in the Navy's "War Plan Orange," too costly and difficult to support. Looking at a map, the northern route did appear to offer the quickest way to the Japanese homeland. General Mitchell, however, did not consider the notoriously bad weather and difficult terrain of the Aleutian and Kuril Islands or the need for Russian basing rights.

General DeWitt, on July 30, 1943, submitted a proposal to General George C. Marshall, Army Chief of Staff, for the invasion of Paramushiro and Shimushiro in the Northern Kurils. The occupation of the two islands would provide American air bases 650 miles from the lightly defended Hokkaido Island and 1,300 miles from Tokyo, and it would provide access to the Sea of Okhotsk, threatening Japan's northwest flank. Finally, General DeWitt noted that the occupation of the Northern Kurils



Photo VII-1: Base construction on Attu began as the battle was ending with the arrival of equipment and construction materials. The island became a forward base for air and naval operations against the Kuril Island that included a large fuel infrastructure for aircraft and warships. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-168-177632)

would deny the Japanese access to the nearby bountiful fishing waters. He estimated that in addition to the 144,000 American and Canadian troops on hand, he would need another 54,000 men, plus additional heavy and medium bomber squadrons for long-range air support. He proposed that the invasion be carried out in April or May 1944 when the weather conditions were favorable and the troops sufficiently trained.

However, General Marshall's staff had its doubts. The final decision was postponed until after Kiska was retaken. General DeWitt remained optimistic, noting in an *Anchorage Daily Times* interview following the retaking of the island, "I have waited three years for this day. Alaska is the base from which to launch the offensive. Today we have a chain of bases from San Francisco to Attu to carry out the ultimate destruction of Tokyo."

General Marshall's plans staff was less optimistic about the northern route. In its September 26, 1943 assessment of General DeWitt's proposal, the staff expressed its concern that the invasion in the spring of 1944 would divert forces from the planned offensive in the Central Pacific and slow down the advance there. The staff also believed that Americans might find themselves in the same predicament that the Japanese had experienced in occupying Attu and Kiska. Finally, to be successful, the invasion forces would require basing rights on the Kamchatka Peninsula, which needed Russian approval. The Soviet Union, at the time, continued to honor its April 13, 1941 neutrality pact with Japan. Engaged in a titanic struggle with Germany, it was not willing to take on another enemy until the situation suited its needs.



Photo VII-3: The U.S. Navy photograph of Casco Field was taken shortly after the end of World War II. Army and Navy bomber crews used the field during war for flying bombing and reconnaissance missions against the Northern Kurils. It remains operational in support of the Coast Guard and others until the closure of the station. (USAF, 613ABW Hist. Office)

General Marshall's staff concluded that planning should be continued for an invasion in the spring of 1945, with bases on Attu and nearby Shemya developed for that purpose. In addition, the bases would provide a place for launching air and naval strikes against Japanese military and fishery installations in the Northern and Central Kurils. The staff also recommended the continuation of diplomacy with the Soviet Union for basing rights and the garrisons in Alaska reduced to the lowest possible level. General Marshall reviewed its recommendations and in a hand written marginal note on the paper, scribbled, "80,000 by July 1, 1944...as rapidly as shipping can be found."² Admirals King and Nimitz concurred with the recommendations.

The North Pacific was relegated to the dust bin of history. The Central Pacific now became the Navy's primary focus.

Attu as a Major Base

While the Army and Navy reduced their bases elsewhere in Alaska, they began a major construction program to expand their presence in the central and western Aleutians. It included building major bases on Attu and Shemya and a small base on Kiska, and expanding the bases on Adak and Amchitka.

The construction effort on Attu began while the Battle of Attu raged. On May 12, 1943, Colonel Benjamin B. Talley and an engineer party surveyed an airfield site on Alexai Point. The 807th



Photo VII-2: The 807th Engineer Aviation Battalion arrived May 28 and began constructing Alexai Point Army Air Base. The first aircraft, a C-47, landed June 7 to evacuate wounded. It served as a forward bomber base until the Navy could complete Casco Field. (U.S. Navy, NARA 2, RG80G, 500-204311)

Engineer Aviation Battalion arrived on May 28. It immediately began building Alexai Point Army Air Base as the first construction priority. By July 10, construction reached the point where the first mission to the Kurils could be launched. Eight North American B-25 medium bomber crews bombed military facilities in the Northern Kurils in the first land based air attack against the Japanese Home Islands. It was the beginning of the many raids that would be launched from Attu.

Army engineers turned their attention next to the construction of Camp Earle in Massacre Valley, named after Colonel Edward P. Earle, killed in action during the Battle of Attu. The Western

Defense Command authorized Camp Earle June 15, 1943. The authorization included runways at Alexai Point, an auxiliary runway in the West Arm of Holtz Bay, a 3,612,000-gallon bunker fuel tank farm on the backside of Artillery Hill, storage facilities for 380,000 gallons of aviation gasoline and 500,000 gallons of motor gasoline, a road connecting Massacre and Holtz Bays and Chichagof Harbor, a 2,700-foot storage tunnel in the Clevesy Pass area, four air defense radar sites and facilities to house and support 8,316 men. Contractors, primarily West Construction Company, were used in the endeavor.

The Navy began runway construction on Casco Field, named after seaplane tender *Casco*



Photo VII-4: The Eleventh Air Force celebrated Army Air Forces Day on Attu in May 1945 featuring a display of its aircraft. Aircraft from bottom to top are North American B-25J Mitchell, Consolidate B-24D Liberator, Douglas C-47 Skytrain and Boeing B-17H search and rescue aircraft. (Ken Taylor Collection, 613ABW Hist. Office)

(AVP-12), on July 11, 1943. The field became operational on October 1 with the completion of the 6,000-foot pierced steel plank north-south runway. The Navy used its construction battalion, commonly referred to as Seabees, in its construction projects.

In addition to Casco Field, the Seabees built six piers and docks, port facilities, seaplane and PT boat bases, a water distribution system, a power plant and electric distribution system, two tank farms with a capacity of 1,347,500 gallons of aviation fuel, a 5,500-gallon motor gasoline storage tank and three tanks that could hold 93,500 gallons of diesel fuel. The effort also included 13,500 feet of steel piping and a distribution system to connect the various tank farms with the refueling dock and 16 miles of dirt roads. Finally, the construction effort included erecting enough housing to accommodate 7,650 men.

By the end of July 1943, the Navy population of Attu had reached 4,317 in what became known as Navy Town. The total Army and Navy population increased to 15,223 by January 1945. Attu and nearby Shemya Island provided the bases for the launch of air and naval attacks against military installations and fisheries in the Northern and Central Kurils. Army B-25s from Attu and B-24 Liberators from Shemya flew 935 sorties (one flight by one aircraft), dropping 659 tons of bombs. The Navy flew 692 sorties from Attu and dropped 245 tons of bombs using Consolidated PBV Catalinas and Lockheed PV-1 Venturas and PV-2 Harpoons.

Endnotes

¹ Meeting of General Marshall's staff, September 26, 1943.

Chapter Eight

The remnants of war remain, although memories have dimmed.

COLD WAR AND REMEMBRANCE

Abandonment of the Island

The military abandoned the Aleutian Islands following the end of World War II except for Adak and Shemya which were needed for the Cold War. The Navy placed Naval Air Station Attu on a maintenance status in November 1946 and abandoned the islands by 1950. The Army continued to maintain a small caretaker force on Attu until 1953 when it abandoned the island after engineers had rendered Camp Earle unusable. The Alaska District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers declared Camp Earle and the Army airfields surplus in August 1953. While leaving Casco Field intact, Army engineers dug trenches across the runways at Alexia Point in 1949 to prevent its use. Only the U.S. Guard remained on Attu, maintaining the LORAN station there.

Long Range Navigation, LORAN for short, had been developed during World War II as a long-range navigational system by which ships and aircraft could triangulate their position from shore based radio transmitter stations. Navy construction engineers built the first station on Attu at Theodore Point on the southeast tip of the island between November 1943 and January 1944. It began operations June 8, 1944 and operated until June 22, 1949 when the LORAN-A station on Murder Point near Casco Cove took over. The Murder Point station operated until July 10, 1961 when the LORAN-A/C station adjacent to Casco Field went on the air in a former weather observation building. LORAN Station Attu provided

radio-navigation service to mariners in the Bering Sea and North Pacific as part of a chain that included stations on St. Paul Island in the Pribilofs, Port Clarence on Alaska's northwest coast and two Russian operated stations in Siberia.

The LORAN-A ceased operations June 30, 1979 and it became a LORAN-C. The latter went off line February 8, 2010 under the last commander of the 20-man detachment, Chief Warrant Officer Jeff L. Rosenberg. Demolition experts demolished the 625-foot tower. LORAN Station Attu had been expensive to maintain and relied on bi-weekly C-130 flights from Kodiak for administrative and logistic support and annual ship deliveries of fuel and bulk cargo. With the implementation of the Global Positioning System, LORAN became obsolete. Keeping it, even as a backup, proved unnecessarily expensive.

You Can't Go Home Again : Repatriation of the Attu Aleuts

The military repatriated the 25 surviving Attuan captives to the United States from Japan at war's end. Several of them suffered from acute tuberculosis, exacerbated by starvation and malnutrition during their imprisonment, and were taken to hospitals in Washington state. Federal authorities overseeing war-ravaged Attu, still occupied by the military and littered with unexploded ordnance, determined that a community would be too expensive to rebuild,



Photo VIII-1: Coast Guard Station building, Attu. (U.S. Coast Guard, 613ABW Hist. Office)

administer and support. Additionally, the main source of revenue, fox farming, had dried up with the collapse of the market due to fashion changes. Biologists had also found that the foxes were destroying indigenous wildlife. Instead of returning to Attu, eleven of the survivors were resettled on Atka Island in December 1945 where they joined the Atkans who had been returned there from Southeast Alaska to remake their lives. Some of the young people from Attu were sent to a boarding school at Eklutna; one joined the military. A few of the surviving Attuans never returned to Alaska.

At the instigation of the U.S. Interior Department, the U.S. Justice Department obtained an award of \$32,000 to compensate the Attuans immediately after the war from the Japanese assets frozen in the U.S. as a result of the war. Individual payments were made in 1951, the largest being \$2,358. The other Aleuts who had been relocated to internment centers in Southeast Alaska during the war had to wait for justice to be served.

President Reagan signed the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands Restitution Bill into law as Public

Law 100.383 on October 10, 1988. It represented the end of a long struggle begun in the late 1970s by Aleut leaders to seek compensation. Republican Senator Ted Stevens included their cause as part of the Congressional Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, created in 1980 to address the suffering of American citizens because of their ancestry. While the Commission focused primarily on Japanese-Americans, Senator Stevens and others ensured that Aleuts were also to be compensated.

Public Law 100.383 provided individual and group financial compensation. It also established funds to preserve Aleut cultural, provide scholarships, and improve community centers and quality of life. A later amendment added funding to repair churches damaged during the war. The law also included \$15 million awarded to the Aleut Corporation for the loss of Attu. In a bureaucratic quirk, the Attu villagers were not included in the settlement. They had been interned in Japan, not the United States. Japan, in turn, claimed its peace treaty



Photo VIII-2: Looking northwest across destroyed Attu Village June 1943. The village still bears the scars of war with bomb and shell craters, debris and the remnants of Japanese positions. (U.S. Navy, NARA 2. RG80, 334-75116)

with the United States extinguished any claims of restitution.

Further actions were taken to deed back traditional lands lost as a result of outside incursions. Debra Corbett, the Alaska Regional archeologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, at the time, went to Attu in 1988 with a team of archeologists and land surveyors from the Bureau of Land Management and Fish and Wildlife to locate and delineate the village and to document Aleut use of the island. She recalled:

We took Innokenty Golodoff with us to help. He had been a young man about 19 [actually 25] years old when he was taken to Japan during the war. We delineated a rather large area which included the village, located mainly on the front end of the valley at the beach. It also included a lake at the head of the valley and the meadows in between as those were important to the community. There was a cemetery toward the head



Photo VIII-3: The Army transported former Atka villagers back to Atka in April 1945 on the *David W. Branch*. An Army Signal Corps photographer recorded members of the Dirks family walking towards one of the houses not set afire and past lumber provided by the Army for rebuilding their lives. The *Branch* returned in December 1945 bringing eleven people from the former Attu Village. (U.S. Army Signal Corps, NARA 2, RG111-443-254417)

of the valley as well but we were unable to locate it precisely.¹

The village site along with other selected sites in the Aleutians was subsequently transferred to the Aleut Corporation.

Repatriation of Remains

United States Army Grave Registration personnel removed 590 American war dead from Little Falls and Holtz Bay cemeteries during 1947. It was part of a world-wide effort that included repatriation of 1,566 remains in

Alaska from temporary cemeteries that had been established at various Army and Navy bases. Congress had enacted Public Law 384 on May 16, 1946, funding the location, disinterment and repatriation of war dead for reburial in places designated by next of kin.

The effort also included disinterring the 235 Japanese remains from marked mass grave sites on Attu and transporting them for reburial in a mass grave site in the Fort Richardson Cemetery in 1947. The Japanese government sent a delegation to Alaska in July 1953 that supervised the disinterment and cremation of the remains



Photo VIII-4: The Japanese burial site in the Allied Plot, Fort Richardson National Cemetery. (Photo by author)

in accordance with Buddhist and Shinto customs. The ashes were reinterred in coffin crates and a single headstone placed above the burial listing 18 names of those who could be identified and the others were listed as “Two Hundred Seventeen Unknown.”

A group of 19 Japanese including Kuneo Sato, a former prisoner of war captured on Attu, made a pilgrimage to Alaska in July 1964 to honor their war dead in the Fort Richardson Cemetery. They placed a wooden pole above the headstone with the following inscription.

At this place a memorial service is conducted for the dead. Accordingly, the visitor’s wish is promptly fulfilled when the soul awakes from its sleep to become a Buddha.

At Attu Island 21 years ago these soldiers died in the war, so, thinking of their souls, we hold this memorial service for their departed spirits.

They can go into Buddha’s world with Buddha’s instruction and guidance.

July 26, 1964. Japan-Buddha-Cultural Association, sponsored by Comfort Soul Group. (Signed Hochimoto Gyoin, Uchi Mitzunori and Seventeen Families Representatives)

In 1981, a group of Japanese citizens in Anchorage arranged the wooded marker, which had deteriorated, to be replaced.



Photo VIII-5: Foster Jones grave site. (Photo by author)

The other Japanese remains were not recovered after the battle because of the widely spread battlefield, rugged terrain, press of time, failure to properly mark the sites, and solitary deaths in hidden places. Two Coast Guard men, hiking the slopes of Brewer Peak in August 1980, discovered the skeletal remains of a Japanese soldier. They reported it. When the recovery team arrived, they found the remains of another Japanese soldier nearby. The Japanese Consulate in Anchorage arranged for the remains to be cremated and shipped back to Japan for interment in the Yasukuni Shrine, Tokyo, Japan's memorial to her war dead.

A team consisting of five Japanese and three Americans visited Attu in July 2007 to search for remains. The effort resulted from an American request to search for the remains of Marines missing in action on Iwo Jima. The Japanese had developed a list of six sites they wanted to see, including one established before the battle in the

Chichagof Harbor area. The others included the upper end of Massacre Valley, two in Clevesy Pass and one beside Lake Cories.

Coast Guard personnel provided assistance. The team found two left shoes, bone fragments and pieces of leather. A larger team supported by Army personnel returned in 2008. They found two skeletal remains near Lake Cories after two weeks of pick and shovel work. Attempts to recover them with an earth digger proved fruitless due to the rugged terrain. No further attempts have been made to recover remains.

Charles Foster Jones was among those whose remains were repatriated from Attu. Simeon Oliver, a BIA Alaska Native Service teacher on Atka, along with former Attu villagers Mike Lokanin and Alfred Prokopioff, accompanied Lieutenant Colonel Tony C. Frank, Graves Registration Officer to Attu in June 1947 to locate Jones' grave. The two Attuans had assisted with Jones' burial

in 1942. They found the former village site completely bare except for two small Army huts. Bulldozers had leveled the village site, apparently leaving the church grounds undisturbed.

It took Mike Lokanin and Alfred Prokopioff a few minutes to locate the foundation outline of the church and then a grave depression a few paces from its northeast corner aligned with the mounds of two small graves. Colonel Frank instructed the graves registration officer on Attu to disinter Charles Foster Jones' remains. While nothing was said about repatriating the remains of the approximately 15 villagers buried there, he instructed that a fence be erected around the cemetery since it was considered by the Aleuts as "Holy Ground blessed by the Priest."

A graves registration team accompanied by Mike Lokanin and Alexei M. Prosoff disinterred Charles Foster Jones' remains July 2, 1948. Colonel Frank submitted a report stating that Jones had died from a small caliber gunshot wound in the forehead.

Etta Jones, because of Charles Foster's long association with Alaska, requested that her husband be buried in the land he loved. Charles Foster was buried with military honors in the Fort Richardson Cemetery in Plot A, Row One, Grave Two, on August 19, 1948. He qualified as a civilian for burial in a military cemetery because he had been employed by the Federal government and killed during wartime as a result of hostile actions. Much later, Mary Breu, Etta Jones' great niece, and her son visited Charles Foster Jones's grave. They were probably the first family members to do so.

Cold War

The World War II alliance with the Soviet Union quickly broke down at war's end. The late 1940s represented a transition to the Cold War. The Soviet Union developed a nuclear capability and the means to deliver it across the Polar Region from its Arctic staging bases near Alaska.

Alaska became a front line of defense with over 270 Cold War defense sites, large and small. While the emphasis during World War II had been on perimeter defenses, the forces were concentrated during the Cold War years around the main bases, providing early warning with radar stations throughout Alaska, maintaining forward operating bases, and having the ability to deploy forces forward to threatened areas.

By the early 1950s, the Army and Navy had abandoned their bases in the Aleutians except for Adak, which the Navy turned into an anti-submarine warfare base, and Shemya, which the Air Force used to support aircraft transiting the Great Circle Route and later as a secret base for collecting intelligence on and monitoring Soviet space and missile developments.

Cold War interest remained. The United States, Soviet Union and United Kingdom signed the Limited Test Ban Treaty in October 1963 banning above-ground testing of nuclear devices. The treaty attempted to slow down nuclear weapons development and eliminate the threat of nuclear fallout. It allowed underground nuclear testing with the consequent need for seismic stations to detect and monitor underground detonations. It resulted in the construction of a web of unmanned underground stations managed by the Air Force Technical Application Center. The system needed testing to determine its accuracy and to differentiate between a nuclear explosion, earthquakes and other underground disturbances. Three stations were built in Alaska, one near Eielson Air Force Base, a second at Burnt Mountain and the third on Attu.

The Air Force awarded a contract on June 17, 1966 to place an unmanned seismic station in Clevesy Pass. The contract required an addition to the Coast Guard Station dormitory, repairing the road to Clevesy Pass, and installing the underground vault housing the device. The contractor completed the project in November 1966.

To test the effectiveness of the system, the Air Force Technical Application Center required a number of underground high explosions. One of the first involved the October 29, 1965 detonation of an 80-kiloton nuclear device 2,300 feet below the surface of Amchitka Island. Project Long Shot, the first underground nuclear explosion in Alaska, was designed to establish the travel time of an underground nuclear explosion and develop a more accurate monitoring system for underground nuclear testing.

Cold War concerns continued. The Soviet Union began fortifying the Southern Kuril Islands during 1978-79 to improve its strategic position in the Far East and to send a message to all concerned. The United States responded to the Kuril military buildup with plans to defend the Aleutians against Soviet incursion. They included the fortification of

Attu, but the idea was quickly dropped because of limited airfield facilities and unfavorable terrain.

Following the election of President Reagan in 1980 and his vow to overcome “The Evil Empire,” his Secretary of Navy, John Lehman, announced “The Maritime Strategy” calling for a 600-ship navy, the forward deployment of naval ships and annual exercises of naval forces near Soviet home waters. It included transient exercises of carrier battle groups through the North Pacific, and amphibious training landings in the Aleutian Islands.

President Regan’s Strategic Defense Initiative, popularly known as “Star Wars,” resulted in the construction of a missile launch facility on Shemya and a helicopter hangar on Attu to gather further intelligence on Soviet space and missile developments. Both were used for a limited time before the project was cancelled, the hangar on Attu dismantled, and the launch facility on Shemya closed.

The Environmental Legacy

In their hurry to leave, Army and Navy personnel paid little attention to the environmental damage and the unsightly and dangerous debris left behind. cursory cleanups were conducted and high value items removed during the Aleutians during 1940s and 1950s.

Residents of the Aleutians and others complained. In November 1975, Congress directed the Department of Defense to evaluate the debris problem. The Alaska District, U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers (COE) sent survey teams to physically inventory the former major World War II sites on the Alaska Peninsula and the Aleutian Islands.

They found the battlefield on Attu spread over a 15-square-mile area littered with structures and artifacts including two Japanese Model 88 (1928) dual-purpose 75-millimeter anti-aircraft guns and a steel wheel roller in the East Arm of Holtz Bay. Two 1935 vintage tractor-pulled scrapers were noted near the runway at Casco Cove and in a dump near Murder Point. The report described the phony water tower on Murder Point used to hide a signals intelligence radio antenna. The chapel on Hogback Ridge still stood. It has since collapsed. The team located the outlines of Little Falls Cemetery. It reported a Lockheed P-38 Lightning in Temnac Valley. The rare fighter was removed in 1999 and restored to display condition on Elmendorf Air Force Base by a team of volunteers.

They also visited the former village site in Chichagof Harbor. They found the bronze memorial left by the Navy in 1950 marking the location of the destroyed village. It remains there and is still legible. The team located the church and cemetery site. They reported a stone marking the location of Charles Foster Jones’ grave site.

The Alaska District published the results in *Debris Removal and Cleanup Study Aleutian Islands and Lower Alaska Peninsula, Alaska*, June 1977 in which it presented various options from complete clean up to doing nothing at all. The study recommended that when a cleanup occurred, care should be taken to preserve historic structures such as gun emplacement and concrete defense structures.

The United States Navy and Air Force began debris cleanup on Adak and Shemya in the 1980s, removing many of the World War II artifacts and significant structures in the process. The Alaska District, COE, oversaw the cleanup of formerly used defense sites (FUDS), primarily located in or near population centers. In 2016, it began a cleanup of oil spill sites near the former Coast Guard station resulting from World War II activities.

Subsequent to the report, the Alaska District, COE, issued *Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Aleutians and Lower Alaska Peninsula*, September 1979; and the environmental firm, Envirosphere, under contract with the National Park Service, Alaska Region, and the Alaska District, COE, issued its *World War II in Alaska: A Historic and Resources Management Plan*, in 1987.

Designation as a National Historic Landmark and Valor in the Pacific Site

The Envirosphere report, submitted in compliance with Section 106 of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act, described the Attu battlefield site as “the single most significant site associated with World War II in Alaska historic context,” and made 17 historic preservation recommendations. Number one called for a detailed survey and documentation of the battlefield. The report also recommended only a partial cleanup to preserve the island’s historic integrity.

Documenting the Attu battlefield, because of its remoteness and inaccessibility proved challenging. Responsibility rested with the National Park Service in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The National Park Service was established in 1916

to promote and preserve the Nation's natural and cultural resources. Part of the effort has been to restore battlefields, mostly from the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, to their original conditions by removing subsequent physical developments.

Despite the difficulties, the NPS began the documentation process including visits to Attu. In 1984, Erwin N. Thompson, NPS historian, prepared the National Register of Historic Places nomination form to recognize the national significance of the Attu battlefield, Casco Field and Alexia Point Army Air Forces Base.

Battlefield specifics included: all battlefield sites; the American landing beaches in Massacre Bay, Red Beach and Austin Cove; the Japanese landing beaches in Holtz Bay and the defense sites there including the partially completed runway; Japanese defense sites, known and unknown, in the battlefield; the Aleut village and Japanese headquarters sites in Chichagof Harbor; and the countless bomb and shell craters found in the battlefield.

Post battle sites, in addition to the two airfields, included: American ammunition magazines at the head of West Massacre Valley and northwest of Casco Field; the "coastal radar station" (actually communication tower), disguised to look like a water tower, at Murder Point; the Army chapel on Hogback Ridge (since collapsed) including nearby pine trees planted by soldiers; the Japanese memorials on Engineer Hill including the one erected by the Americans to Colonel Yamazaki; evidence of military occupation on Engineer Hill; and the Lockheed P-38G Lightning wreckage in Temnac Valley (removed in 1999).

With the exception of the memorials on Engineer Hill, Erwin Thompson excluded the post 1945 structures from consideration. They included the other memorials, the U.S. Coast Guard stations including the abandoned one near Murder Point.

On February 4, 1985, William P. Clark, Secretary of the Interior, designated the "Attu Battlefield and U.S. Army and Navy Airfields" as a National Historic Landmark.

Further recognition resulted when President George W. Bush signed Presidential Proclamation 8327 on December 5, 2008 establishing the Attu Battlefield as one of nine historic sites in the World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument. The proclamation also included the listing of the Japanese Occupation Site on Kiska Island and the

Consolidated B-24D Liberator wreckage on Atka Islands as Valor in the Pacific sites.

Memorials

Attu also has meaning to the Japanese. Of the 14 memorials placed there, the Japanese were responsible for five, including the large Peace Memorial. All five are located on the crest of Engineer Hill. The 18-foot, seven ton, star-shaped Peace Memorial was erected in 1982 by the Japanese government, with U.S. approval. It honors both American and Japanese dead in the Pacific and is dedicated to world peace. Two stone memorials with Japanese inscriptions, a memorial to a slain Japanese doctor and another bronze memorial with Japanese inscriptions, are located nearby.

Shortly after the battle, the Americans erected interpretive panels throughout the battlefield including one commemorating the former Attu Village and another honoring Colonel Yamazaki, placed near the bottom of Clevesy Pass where he fell. In 1950, they were replaced with bronze plaques mounted on concrete bases on orders from the Commander, 17th Naval District. The village site also contains a commemorative plaque created by the Aleut Corporation in memory of those Aleuts interned in Japan. The Alaska Veterans Museum later arranged for replacement when weather destroyed the original.

The former Coast Guard station is the site of four memorials. One, of unknown origin, placed at the base of the flagpole honors Brigadier General Erick H. Nelson, one of the Around the World Douglass Cruiser pilots. The other, inspired by Navy Chaplain Joseph McCloskey' observation that there was no memorial honoring those who served and fought in the Aleutians, was dedicated June 1981. It is also located at the flagpole base.

A third plaque was dedicated at the Coast Guard Station during a June 1993 memorial service attended by American veterans of the battle, members of the Aleut Corporation including a survivor of Japanese internment and a Japanese delegation that included Colonel Yamazaki's son. It honors those who fought and died on Attu.

A fourth plaque was dedicated at the Coast Guard station in June 2011. It resulted from the efforts of Bill Jones, a veteran of the 17th Infantry Regiment, who was wounded on Attu. It honors those who fought by his side and died on the island.

Later, another group erected an interpretive sign at the foot of Clevesy Pass as a memorial to the 50th Engineer Regiment, honoring their stand on Engineer Hill. When Bill Jones died, Jack Jonas, a Korean War veteran, took up the cause of having the Japanese Peace Memorial removed. When that proved impossible, he championed a similar memorial for the Americans. The Alaska Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife did what it could. It resulted in the placement of a memorial to Private Joe Martinez on the banks of the Henderson River in June 2013. The Region also installed four interpretive panels nearby, explaining the Aleutian Campaign, the Battle of Attu, the internment of the Attu Aleuts in Japan and a short account of Private Martinez's brave actions resulting in the posthumous award of a Congressional Medal of Honor. Two benches afford rest and contemplation.

Today Attu remains a deserted island, difficult to reach, off the beaten path of World War II battlefields. Except for routine visits by U.S. Fish and Wildlife and other interested personnel in the research motor vessel *Tiġla* (Eagle in Unangam Tunuu, the Aleut language), birding expeditions, occasional military tours, remembrance visits by Japanese, and stopovers for sailing and fishing boats, the place is seldom visited. The remnants of war remain, although memories have dimmed.

Endnotes

¹ Debra Corbett, pers. com. to author.

Appendix A
Geographical Names, Battle of Attu
(Updated 02/10/2016)

The primary sources for this list are Donald J. Orth's Dictionary of Alaska Place Names (1967) and the U.S. Geological Survey's Geographic Place Names Phase I Data Compilation (1997-1981) along with the USGS Geographic Place Names Post Phase I Board/Staff Revisions (2000). Many of the names come from the U.S. Corps of Engineers Army Map Service and include Map Sheets Attu C-4 NW, C-4SW, C-4NE, C-4SE and C-3SW, Alaska, Aleutian Islands.

Abbreviations used include Army Map Service (AMS); Board of Geographic Names (BGN); U.S. Army (USA); United States Geological Survey (USGS); World War II (WWII); Russian Imperial Navy (IRN)

Name	Named By/After	USGS Listing/AMS Map
Addison Valley	USA, WWII, AMS 48; Orth; USGS, Phase 1A (90-91)/Amus Addison, Walnut Grove MN; Killed in Action (hereafter the acronym KIA).	ID 1419768; 52°48'44"N173°18'11"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 10/01/92; NE coast, extends from beach West Arm, Holtz Bay SW to head of valley along creek of same name. AMS 54 Attu C-4NW AK, Aleutians.
Addison Creek	USA, WWII, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Amus Addison, Walnut Grove MN; KIA.	ID 1416066; 52°54'34"N173°00'00"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; heads 2 miles NE of Attu Mountain, flows E through Addison Valley, 6.5 miles to West Arm, Holtz Bay. C-4NW.
Alexai Beach	US Coast & Geodetic Survey 1938; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/Alexai Point.	ID 1416075; 52°49'34"N173°17'35"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; E shore of Massacre Bay. C-4SE.
Alexai Cove	USGS, Phase 1A (90-91)/Alexai Point.	ID 1419761; 52°49'50"N173°17'20"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 10/01/92. C-4SE.
Alexai Creek	AMS 48; Orth/Alexai Point.	ID 189359; 52°49'45"N173°18'38"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN: Entry Date 03/23/01; flows SW & SE 2.4 miles to Bedard Cove near Alexai Point. C-4SE.
Alexai Pass 850 feet	AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81) /Alexai Point.	ID 1416076; 52°50'57"N173°20'15"E; Attu Map C-2; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; SE end of Gilbert Ridge. C-4SE.
Alexai Point C-4SE	AMS 43; referred to as Big Mike Point in 1944 Aleutian Coast Pilot (p. 133); Orth/site of Alexai Army Air Base; selected by Col B.B. Talley, US Army Corps of Engineers 5/43, built 43/44.	ID 1416077; 52°48'44"N173°18'11"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN 01/01/38; Entry Date 01/01/00; at E entrance to Massacre Bay and SW end of Bedard Cove. C-4SE.
Angle Creek	Not documented.	Not documented. C-4SW.

Name	Named By/After	USGS Listing/AMS Map
Attu Village	USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/Attu Village listed in 1880 census with 107 people; 107 in 1890; 2 in 1930, 44 in 1940. Village destroyed during World War II. U.S. Military forces referred to it as Chichagof Village at the time.	ID 1416083; 52°56'15"N173°14'15"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN- Entry Date 03/31/81; on NW shore of Chichagof Harbor, on NE coast of island. C-4NE.
Austin Beach	USA, WWII, AMS 48; Orth /Capt Emory Austin, Provisional Scout Battalion, New York, NY; KIA.	ID 1893423; 52°59'08"N173°04'25"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; at head of Austin Cove, 1 mile long, N coast Attu. C-4NW.
Austin Cove	Listed in 1946 supplement to 1944 Aleutian Coast Pilot; Orth USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Capt Emory Austin, Provisional Scout Battalion, New York, NY; KIA.	ID 146087; 52°04'28"N173°28'11"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; at mouth of Ballentine Creek, 1.5 mile wide. C-4NW.
Austin Pass	USA, WWII, AMS 48; Orth/Capt Emory Austin, Provisional Scout Battalion; N Y, NY; KIA.	ID 18933424; 52°55'55"N173°02'45"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; between Ballentine and Addison Creeks N central Attu. C-4NW.
Ballentine Creek	USA, WWII, AMS 48; USGS Phase 1 (76-81)/ Kenneth Ballentine, Davison MI; KIA.	ID 1416089; 52°59'90"N173°30'50"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; head on Brannon Ridge, flows NNE down valley to mouth at Austin Cove. C-4NW.
Barabara Point	USA, WWII, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1A (90-91)/ Russian-Aleut name.	ID 1419760; 52°50'10"N173°11'58"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 10/01/92; in Pyramid Cove, SE Attu coast. C-4SE.
Bassett Creek	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Capt John Bassett, 7 th Medical Battalion, San Diego, CA; KIA 29 May (Mitchell, <i>The Capture of Attu</i>); Name not recorded by USGS; Bassett Army Community Hospital, Fort Wainwright hospital named after him.	ID 1893522; 52°53'00"N173°13'15"E; Attu Map C-3; Entry Date 03/23/01; E end Attu, head on Robinson Ridge, flows E through Siddens Valley to Lake Nicholas, 2.3 miles long. C-4NE.
Bedard Cove	AMS 48; previously recorded as "Lastova Bay" by Jochelson (1925, p. 24); USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/Not documented.	ID 1416093; 52°49'19"N173°18'49"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; NE of Alexai Point, 1.2 miles wide.
Black Mountain 2,600 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS Phase 1 (76-81)/ Not documented.	ID 1416097; 52°52'51"N173°07'17"E; Attu Map C-3 Entry Date 03/31/81; on east central Attu, N of Henderson Ridge. C-4NW.
Blond Cove	Not documented	
Brannon Ridge 2,400 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/A.N. Lieutenant Anthony Brannon, 21 st Bombardment Squadron, KIA.	ID 1416101; 52°56'45"N173°03'57"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; 4 miles W of Holtz Bay, 1.4 miles long. C-4NW.
Brewer Peak	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth; USGS, Phase 1A (90-91) /Luther Brewer, Charlotte NC, KIA.	ID 1419748; 52°54'55"N173°16'05"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 10/01/92; see Southwest Peak.

Name	Named By/After	USGS Listing/AMS Map
Buchanan Ridge	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Not documented.	ID 1416104; 52°55'45"N173°03'40"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; between Addison Valley and Scout Canyon, 1.5 miles long. C-4NW.
Buffalo Head 950 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Not documented.	ID 1893747; 52°54'30"N173°13'30"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; 2.3 miles SSW Attu Village. C-4NE.
Casco Beach	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth / Navy seaplane tender <i>Casco</i> (AVP-12).	ID 1893844; 52°49'30"N173°10'15"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; in Casco Cove, 0.4 miles long. C-4SE.
Casco Cove	1944 Aleutian Coast Pilot; USGS, Phase 1 (76- 81); shown as Hula Bay in manuscript map drawn by L.M. Turner in 1880; published as Casco Cove in 1944 Aleutian Cost Pilot /Navy seaplane tender <i>Casco</i> (AVP-12).	ID 1416115; 52°48'54"N173°09'56"E; Attu Map C-3, BGN, Entry Date 03/31/81; N of Murder Point, 1.4 miles long. C-4SE/SW.
Casco Point	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth / Navy seaplane tender <i>Casco</i> (AVP-12).	ID 1893845; 52°48'50"N173°10'45"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; N en- trance to Casco Cove, between Casco Cove and Pyramid Coves. C-4SE.
Casco Cove Coast Guard Station Airport	FAA listing of airports and other landing areas in U.S., 1981; built during WWII, designated Casco Field, Naval Air Station, Attu; used by Coast Guard LORAN Station, Attu from 1961- 2010/ Navy seaplane tender <i>Casco</i> (AVP-12).	ID 1417577; 52°49'42"N173°10'19"E; Map Unknown; BGN; Entry Date 06/01/95.
Chichagof Beach	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth /Russian sailing vessel.	ID 1893900; 52°55'30"N173°14'45"E, Map Attu C-3; BNG; Date Entry 03/23/01; at head of Chichagof Harbor, 0.5 miles long.
Chichagof Harbor	Cited as cited as USGS, Phase 1 (01/01/00)/ Russian/sailing vessel, Probably named in 1830 by A.K. Etolin for brig <i>Chichagof</i> , which he commanded. The name was first published by Capt Tebekov, IRN (1852, map 30), as "Gavan Chichigova," i.e. Chichagov Harbor.	ID 1416118; 52°55'55"N173°14'32"E; Map Attu C-3; BNG 01/01/1890; Entry Date 01/01/00; on N coast, 0.5 miles wide; site of former Attu Village.
Chichagof Point	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76- 81) /Russian sailing vessel; shown as "Cape Turner" on manuscript by L.M. Turner in the 1880s.	ID 1416119; 52°56'36"N173°14'33"E; Map Attu C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; be- tween Holtz Bay and Chichagof Harbor.
Clevesy Pass 800 feet (Massacre- Sarana Pass)	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Lt Samuel W. Clevesy, H Company, 2 nd Battalion, 17 th Infantry, Burwell NE; KIA 19 May 43 (Mitchell, <i>The Cap- ture of Attu</i>); Name not recorded by USGS.	ID 1893955, 52°52'55"N173°10'30"E; Map Attu C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; NW end of Gilbert Ridge.
Coast Artillery Hill, 550 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (01/01/00); later referred to as Artillery Hill/ Not recorded.	ID 1854185, 52°51'09"N173°11'00"E; Map Attu C-3; BGN 01/01/69; Entry Date 03/30/00; 1 mile SE of Terrible Mountain and 1 mile north of Navy Town. C-4SE.

Name	Named By/After	USGS Listing/AMS Map
Cold Mountain, 2,300 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Not recorded.	ID 1416129; 52°54'02"N173°09'06"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/81; SW end of Prendergast Ridge. C-4NW.
Cupps Hill	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81) / Not recorded	ID 1416141; 52°57'07"N173°06'05"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81. C-4NW.
Devils Mountain 2,400 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Not recorded.	ID 1894101; 52°51'42"N173°07'47"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; on Gilbert Ridge. C-4SW.
Discher Escarpment	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Not recorded.	ID 1894116; 52°50'45"N173°04'00"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; 0.8 miles north of Temnak Bay, 1.2 miles long. C-4SW.
Eckman Beach	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Not recorded.	ID 1894222; 52°53'23"N173°17'20"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; on Hodikof Bay.
Eckman Creek	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Not recorded.	ID 1894256; 52°51'37"N173°10'35"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry date 03/23/01; flows E to Hodikof Bay.
Engineer Hill (Engineer Ridge)	USA, WW II; Orth/site of engineer defense that stopped final Japanese assault during Battle of Attu.	ID 1894265; 52°53'05"N173°11'45"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry date 03/23/01; NW end of Gilbert Ridge.
Faneto Hill	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Not recorded.	ID 1894322; 52°56'15"N173°01'33"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; 0.9 miles E of Winter Lake. C-4NW.
Fleishman Ridge	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81) / Edward Fleishman, San Francisco, CA.	ID 1416167; 52°53'57"N173°02'17"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; be- tween O'Donnell Creek and Addison Creek. C-4NW.
George Creek	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Not recorded.	ID 1416170; 52°49'50"N173°30'43"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; S side of Henderson Ridge, flows to Temnac Bay. C-4SW.
Gilbert Ridge 1,500-1,700 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Lt Harry Gilbert, G Company, 2 nd Battalion, 32 nd Infantry Regiment; Chicago, IL; KIA 21 May (Mitchell, <i>The Capture of Attu</i>).	ID 1416173; 52°51'47"N173°14'46"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; extends NW 5.5 mi. from Alexai Pass to Clevesy Pass.
Jim Fish Valley	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Lt. Col. James Fish II, Executive Officer, 17Inf Regiment; Carmel CA; KIA 22 May (Mitchell, <i>The Capture of Attu</i>).	ID 1894939; 52°53'50"N173°13'00"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; ex- tends from Siddens Valley to Lake Cories.
Kingfisher Creek	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Not recorded.	ID 1895154; 52°49'22"N173°09'45"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry 03/23/01; flows E 2 miles to Casco Cove. C-4SW.

Name	Named By/After	USGS Listing/AMS Map
Henderson Ridge	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/ LT Douglas Henderson, USNR, Composite Squadron VC-21; KIA 14 May (Mitchell, <i>The Capture of Attu</i>).	ID 1894695; 52°58'00"N172°52'30"E; Attu Map C-4; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; extends W 6 miles from Terrible Mountain NW of Navy Town. C-4SE/SW.
Hogback Ridge	On AMS 54 map; shown on map pp. 8-9 in Mitchell, <i>The Capture of Attu</i> . Referred to frequently in Attu battle report but no further entry.	Not recorded. C-4SE.
Hodikof Bay	Listed as Hodikof Bay in 1954 Coast Pilot, shown as Purvis Cove in AMS 48/Derived from Hodikof Point.	ID 1416187; 52°53'17"N173°16'56"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; on N shore of Sarana Bay.
Hodikof Island	USGS, Phase 1A (90-91)/derived from Hodikof Point.	ID 1419753; 52°52'20"N173°17'40"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 10/01/92; in Sarana Bay.
Hodikof Point	Listed as Hodikof in 1944 Aleutian Coast Pilot; Hodikof Bay in AMS 48/Mike Hodikof, Attu Village Chief, died while interned in Japan.	ID 1416188; 52°53'43"N173°17'44"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN 01/01/66; Entry Date 01/01/00; E of Pierucci Ridge, at N end of Hodikof Bay, 1 mile NE of Krupa Point at N entrance of Sarana Bay.
Hodikof Reef	USGS, Phase 1A (90-91)/Derived from Hodikof Point.	ID 1419754; 52°53'02"N173°18'10"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 10/01/92; between Hodikof Island and Hodikof Point.
Holtz Bay	Orth; USGS, Phase 1 (01/01/00)/ Russian; possibly from German word holtz for wood, called "Goltsovaia Bay" by Capt Lutke, IRN (1836, p. 329), also referred to as "Bukhta Goltsovaya," meaning "Goltsovaya Bay" (Tebenkov, 1852, map 30); also referred to in Orth as Bukhta Golsovaya and Goltzef Bay; and by BGN as Goltsovaia Bay, Goltzef Bay and Gotzeb Bay.	ID 1416190; 52°56'50"N173°11'31"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN 01/01/44; Entry Date 01/01/00; NE side of Attu. C-4NW.
Holtz Bay East	Coast Pilot, 1947 (Pt 2, p. 492); USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/See Holtz Bay.	ID 1416149; 52°55'38"N173°10'36"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date: 03/31/81; extends E from center point of Holtz Bay.
Holtz Bay West	Coast Pilot, 1947 (Pt 2, p. 492); USGS Phase 1 (76-81)/See Holtz Bay.	ID 1416149; 52°55'38"N173°10'36"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; extends west from center point of Holtz Bay
Holtz Sarana Pass	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Not recorded.	ID 1897425; 52°54'15"N173°11'30"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; 03/31/01; between Newman Peak and Prendergast Ridge
Hopkins Ridge	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Not recorded.	ID 1894736; 52°53'15"N173°15'20"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; 03/23/01; extends W between Eckman Creek and Lake Nicholas

Name	Named By/After	USGS Listing/AMS Map
Jackass Pass 1,100 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Not recorded.	ID 1416195; 52°51'20"N173°15'19"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry date 03/03/81; on Gilbert Ridge. C-4SE.
Jarmin Pass (Massacre-Holtz Bay Pass) 600 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Capt John E. Jarmin, Commanding Officer, L Company 3 rd Battalion, 17 th Infantry Regiment, Lincoln NE; KIA 14 May (Mitchell, <i>The Capture of Attu</i>).	ID 1894929; 52°53'20"N173°07'45"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry date 03/23/01; E end of Attu, head of Massacre Valley. C-4NW.
Krupa Point	AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (01/01/00)/Not recorded.	ID 1416215; 52°52'67"N173°16'25"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN 01/01/65; Entry date 01/01/00; at SE end of Hodikof Bay in Sarana Bay.
Lake Cories	USA, WWII, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Not recorded.	ID 1416137; 52°54'16"N173°13'59"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry date 03/31/81; 1.5 miles south of Chichagof Harbor, 0.7 miles long.
Lake Elwood	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Charles Elwood, KIA.	ID 1894256; 52°51'37"N173°10'35"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry date 03/23/01; W Massacre Valley. C-4SE.
Lake Nicholas	USA, WWII, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Not recorded.	ID 1416266; 52°52'37"N173°14'17"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry date 03/31/81; W of Sarana Bay.
Lookout Hill 3000 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Not recorded	ID 1894929; 52°53'20"N173°07'45"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry date 03/23/01; E end of Attu, head of Massacre Valley. C-4SW.
Massacre Bay	Orth; USGS, Phase 1 (01/01/00)/Site of killing of Aleuts; name given by G.I. Davidov 1802, presumably to the killing of 15 Aleuts by promyshenniki in 1745. "Ibiyennaya" meaning "massacre harbor" (Sarichev, 1826, map 13), Imperial Russian Navy, P. Lutke (1836, p. 329) and "Subienna" by Grewingk (1849, p. 235).	ID 1416235; 52°49'36"N173°13'12"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN 01/02/44; Entry date 01/01/00; SE side of Attu. C-4SE.
Massacre Bay, East Channel	Aleutian Coast Pilot, 1944; Orth/Derived from Massacre Bay.	ID 1894189; 52°48'30"N173°16'30"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry date 03/23/01; E entrance to Massacre Bay. C-4SE.
Massacre Bay, West Channel	Aleutian Coast Pilot, 1944; Orth/Derived from Massacre Bay.	ID 1897250; 52°49'00"N173°12'15"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry date 03/23/01; W entrance to Massacre Bay. C-4SE.
Massacre Beach	USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/Derived from Massa- cre Bay	ID 1416236; 52°51'19"N173°12'41"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry date 03/31/81; SE side coast of Attu. C-4SE.
Massacre Valley, East	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Derived from Mas- sacre Bay	ID 1894208; 52°35'19"N173°12'30"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry date 03/23/01; extends from Clevesy Pass to Massacre Bay SW of Gilbert Ridge. C-4SE.

Name	Named By/After	USGS Listing/AMS Map
Massacre Valley, West	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Derived from Massacre Bay.	ID 1897272; 52°51'00"N173°12'00"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry date 03/23/01; extends from Jarmin Pass to Massacre Bay. C-4SE.
Martinez Mountain 4,500 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48/ PFC Joe Martinez, K Company, 2 nd Battalion, 32 nd Infantry Regiment; Taos NM; KIA 26 May, Medal of Honor (Mitchell, <i>The Capture of Attu</i>).	ID 1895596; 52°52'25"N173°03'25"E; Attu C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; between Temnac River and O'Donnell Creek on E central Attu. C-4SW.
Moore Ridge	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Lt Robert K. Moore, B Company, 1 st Battalion, 17 th Infantry Regiment, Sedalia MO; KIA 12 May (Mitchell, <i>The Capture of Attu</i>).	ID 1895750; 52°55'20"N173°09'00"E; Attu C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; between East and West Arms, Holtz Bay. C-4NW.
Murder Point	USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/Shown in AMS 43 as "Murder (Little Mike) Point in 1944 Aleutian Coast Pilot (p. 133); originally named by Russians "Krasnow Mys," translated as Red Cape (Sarichev, 1826, map 26).	ID 1416254; 52°47'46"N173°10'21"E; Attu C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; W entrance to Massacre Bay.
Navy Cove AMS 54 Attu		ID 1416258; 52°50'32"N173°12'10"E; Attu C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81. C-4SE.
Navy Town	WW II, AMS 48/Navy administrative and housing area.	ID 1416259; 52°50'27"N173°10'32"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; W shore of Massacre Bay.
Nees Point (also referred to as Point Able)	Not recorded on AMS 48 or Orth. Named after Lt. Charles E. Nees, Company L, 32 nd Infantry, KIA.	Listed in casualty list and histories. No other record.
Newman Peak 2,000 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1A (90-91)/ Donald Newman, Cadwell ID, KIA.	ID 1419749; 52°54'10"N173°12'10"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 10/01/92; 2.5 miles SW of Attu Village.
North Pass 350 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Not recorded.	ID 1416274; 52°50'48"N173°05'06"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; between head of Peaceful River and George Creek on SE side of Attu. C-4SW.
O'Donnell Creek	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Thomas O'Donnell, Billings MT.	ID 1416279; 52°55'41"N173°09'07"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; flows NE to East Arm, Holtz Bay. C-4NW.
O'Donnell Valley	AMS 48; Orth/Thomas O'Donnell, Billings MT.	ID 1896025; 52°55'05"N173°09'20"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; formed by O'Donnell Creek. C-4NW.
Owens Ridge	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Alfred Owens, Detroit MI; KIA.	ID 1416284; 52°57'01"N173°01'29"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; NE of Winter Lake, NE Attu. C-4NW.
Peaceful River	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Not recorded.	ID 1416288; 52°49'31"N173°10'56"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; head at North Pass, flows SE to Pyramid Cove on SE coast. C-4SE/SW.

Name	Named By/After	USGS Listing/AMS Map
Peaceful Valley	AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1A (90-91)/ Not recorded.	ID 1419747; 52°49'55"N173°12'00"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 10/01/92; formed by Peaceful River, on SE side of Attu. C-4SE/SW.
Pierucci Ridge	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Unknown.	ID 1416293; 52°53'40"N173°16'00"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; ex- tends from Vanderlann Peak to North Ridge on E end of Attu. C-4NE.
Point Hope	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Unknown.	ID 1416299; 52°54'49"N173°18'09"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; SE coast of Attu.
Prendergast Ridge	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81)/ Lt Joseph Prendergast, B Company, 1st Bat- talion, 4 th Infantry; Ware, MA; KIA 20 May (Mitchell, <i>The Capture of Attu</i>).	ID 1416301; 52°53'35"N173°08'46"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN-; Entry Date 03/31/81; S of East Arm, Holtz Bay, E end of Attu
Pyramid Cove	Aleutian Coast Pilot, 1944; USGS, Phase 1 (76- 81)/Not recorded.	ID 1416303; 52°49'11"N173°11'32"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; W shore of Massacre Bay, SE coast of Attu.
Red Beach	USA, WWII, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81) / Landing beach, Northern Force, Battle of Attu.	ID 1416310; 52°57'46"N173°09'41"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; on Bering Sea N of Holtz Bay; Attu Map C-3. C-4NE.
Robinson Ridge	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth /Beverly Robinson, Carmel, CA.	ID 1896390; 52°53'25"N173°09'25"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; between Massacre Valley and Prendergast Ridge. C-4NW.
Scout Canyon	USA, WWII, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76- 81)/7 th Provisional Scout Battalion.	ID 1416323; 52°55'44"N173°07'30"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; ex- tends 2.5 miles to head of West Arm, Holtz Bay. C-4NW.
Siddens Valley	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81) /Maj. Jack Siddens, Commanding Officer, 3 rd Battalion, 17 th Infantry Regiment; Carmel CA, KIA 29 May (Mitchell, <i>The Capture of Attu</i>).	ID 1416336; 52°52'55"N173°13'04"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; formed by Bassett Creek, on E coast of Attu W of Lake Nicholas.
Simpson Peak 1,470 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/James Simpson, Lebanon KT; KIA.	ID 1896645; 52°54'20"N173°15'15"E; Attu Map C-3 BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; 0.5 miles E of Lake Cories, E Attu.
Steller Cove	Not documented	
Southwest Peak	AMS 48; Orth/reported by LT William Gibson, USN, North Pacific Exploring Expedition, 1855, US Coast and Geodetic Chart 9198 shows Southwest Peak, but also published AMS 48 as Brewer Peak; see Brewer Peak/ Unknown.	ID 1896766; 52°54'45"N173°12'43"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; 2.2 miles SW of Attu and 1 mile S of West Peak.

Name	Named By/After	USGS Listing/AMS Map
Taylor Peak 1,910 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1A (90-91)/ Carroll Taylor, Woodville OH; KIA.	ID 1419751; 52°54'05"N173°17'05"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 10/01/92; 1.6 miles SW of Point Hope.
Temnac Bay	Not documented	ID 1416363; 52°24'37"N173°02'41"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN-01/01/65; Entry Date 01/01/00. C-4SW.
Temnac Beach	Not documented	ID 1419790; 52°50'05"N173°03'30"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 10/01/92. C-4SW.
Temnac River	Not documented	ID 1416364; 52°54'05"N173°17'05"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81. C-4SW.
Temnac Valley	Not documented	ID 1419779; 52°54'05"N173°17'05"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 10/01/92. C-4SW.
Terrible Mountain 2,050 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Phase 1 (76-81).	ID 1416365; 52°51'23"N173°09'06"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; SE end of Henderson Ridge. C-4SW.
Thirty-Seven Hill 700 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/37mm anti-tank gun.	ID 1896943; 52°50'44"N173°09'10"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; W of Navy Town on N bank of Peaceful River. C-4SW.
Vanderlann Peak 1,810 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Gary Vanderlann, Maywood, CA.	ID 1897187; 52°53'39"N173°14'30"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/23/01; 1.1 mile N of Lake Nicholas.
Veith Ridge	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Phase 1 (76-81)/ Unknown.	ID 1416377; 52°57'45"N173°03'45"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/32/81; E of Ballentine Creek. C-4NW.
Washburn Peak 1,700 feet	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Phase 1A (90-91)/ Kenneth Washburn, Springfield OH, KIA.	ID 1419758; 52°54'50"N173°12'01"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 10/01/92; 2.7 miles SW of Attu Village.
Williams Lake	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Phase 1A (90-91).	ID 1419769; 52°53'30"N173°05'15"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 10/01/92; south of Addison Creek at its mouth on Holtz Bay. C-4NW.
Winter Lake	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81).	ID 1416389; 52°56'04"N173°00'07"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; in course of Diehm Creek.
Young Hill	USA, WW II, AMS 48; USGS, Phase 1 (76-81).	ID 1416392; 52°55'24"N173°01'57"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 03/31/81; SE of Winter Lake. C-4NW.
Zwinge Valley	USA, WW II, AMS 48; Orth/Unknown.	ID 1897395; 52°18'19"N173°52'40"E; Attu Map C-3; BGN; Entry Date 07/23/01; N coast of Attu, flows N through Winter Lake to Blond Cove. C-4NW.

Sources: Donald J. Orth, *Dictionary of Alaska Place Names*, Geological Survey Professional Paper 567, GPS, Washington DC, 1967. Cited as Orth.

USGS Geographic Names Information System (GNIS): geonames.usgs.gov/domestic/index.html.

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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Nautical Chart, latest edition at time of Phase 1A data compilation (1990-1991). Cited as USGS, Phase 1A (90-91).

Army Map Service, Corps of Engineers, Washington DC, 1954, 1:25,000, Map Sheets Attu C-4 NW, C-4SW, C-4NE, C-4SE and C-3SW, Alaska, Aleutian Islands, compiled from Alaska 1:25,000 AMS Q831, Sheets 1143 11NW and 1143SW, 1943 and from U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey Charts T-6969, T-8474, 1944.

Lt John J. Mitchell, compiler, *The Capture of Attu, As Told by the Men Who Fought There*, Infantry Journal Press, Washington DC, Oct 1944; referred to as Mitchell, *The Capture of Attu*.

Appendix B**Abbreviated Census, Attu Village, 1940**

HH#	Name	Relation	Age	Occupation	Income	Remarks
HH1	Hodikoff, Mike	Head	44	Store Keeper	\$550	Village Chief, died in Japan
	Hodikoff, Anaisie	Wife	36			Died before 1942 invasion
	Hodikoff, Angelina	Daughter	18			
	Hodikoff, Steve	Son	11			
	Hodikoff, George	Son	10			
	Hodikoff, Margaret	Daughter	2			
	Lakanoff, Mike	Adopted son	29	Trapper		
	Berenin, John	Lodger	18	Trapper		
	Golodoff, Metrofan	Lodger	79			Died before 1942 invasion
	Horosoff, Parascovia	Lodger	19			Married Mike Lokanin
HH2	Artumonoff, John	Head	74			Died in 1942 during occupation
	Artumonoff, Peter	Son	19	Trapper		
	Artumonoff, Barbara	Daughter	17			
	Artumonoff, Sergius	Son	11			
	Golodoff, Matfey	Nephew	36	Trapper		
	Lakanoff, Mary	Lodger	22			
HH3	Prosoff, Mike	Head	59			
	Prosoff, Aleck	Son	28	Trapper		
	Prosoff, Vladimir	Son	8			
	Prosoff, Elizabeth	Daughter	21			
HH4	Prokopioff, Anecia	Head	56			Died en route to Kiska
	Prokopioff, Helen	Adopted Daughter	9			
	Prokopioff, Fakia	Grand-daughter	5			
	Golodoff, Leonty	Boarder	9			
HH5	Prokopioff, Angafengal	Head	31	Trapper		
	Prokopioff, Mary	Wife	41			
	Prokopioff, Velenin	Adopted Son				
HH6	Golodoff, Garman	Head	50	Trapper		
HH7	Golodoff, Lavrenti	Head	27	Trapper		
	Golodoff, Olean	Wife	25			
	Golodoff, John	Son	11			

HH#	Name	Relation	Age	Occupation	Income	Remarks
	Golodoff, Nick	Son	3			
	Golodoff, George	Son	6 m			
	Golodoff, Willie	Brother	28	Trapper		
	Golodoff, Julie	Sister-in-law	19			
	Prosoff,	Niece	8m			
HH8	Hodikoff, Fred	Head	40	Trapper		
	Hodikoff, Annie	Wife	28			
	Hodikoff, Martha	Daughter	4			
	Hodikoff, John	Adopted son	18	Trapper		
	Prosoff, Martha	Lodger	37			
	Prosoff, Agnes	Lodger	5 m			
HH9	Golodoff, Inti	Head	26	Trapper		
	Golodoff, Annie	Sister	21			

Source: Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, Population-Alaska, Third Judicial District, Aleutians, Attu Village. Enumerated May 2, 1940 by Douglas Gray.

Appendix C

Order of Battle, Battle of Attu, American

(Revised 25 Nov 2012)

The American forces committed to the invasion of Attu were organized into two naval and air task forces, Task Force 16 and Task Force 51 under the overall command of RADM Thomas C. Kinkaid, Commander, North Pacific Force.

Task Force 16, drawn from Alaska based and deployed forces commanded by Admiral Kinkaid, consisted of:

Task Group 16.1, Shore-Based Air Group commanded by MG William O. Butler, which was further broken down into:

Task Group 16.1.1, Air Striking Group, composed of bombers and fighters from the Eleventh Air Force. Only B-24s and P-38s from the 54th Fighter Squadron were committed in direct support of the battle.

Task Group 16.1.2, Air Search Unit, commanded by CAPT Leslie E. Gehres, consisting of Fleet Air Wing PBYS and seaplane tenders providing sector searches over the waters off Attu.

Task Group 16.2, Alaska Sector Escort and Supply Group, commanded by RADM John W. Reeves.

Task Group 16.3, Motor Torpedo Boat Group, commanded by LTCOMDR James B. Denney.

Task Group 16.5, Submarine Group, commanded by COMDR Charles W. Gray. The group included the *Nautilus* Class *Narwhal* (SS-167) and *Nautilus* (SS-168) class large submarines used to transport 217 members of the 7th Infantry Division's Provisional Scout Battalion for a landing at Austin Cove, Attu.

Task Group 16.6, Southern Covering Force, commanded by RADM Charles H. McMorris, consisted of the light cruisers *Raleigh* (CL-7), *Detroit* (CL-8), *Richmond* (CL-9), *Santa Fe* (CL-60), and destroyers *Bancroft* (DD-598), *Caldwell* (DD-605), *Coglan* (DD-606), *Frazier* (DD-607), and *Gansevoort* (DD-608). It had the mission of protecting the landing of the Southern Force at Massacre Bay.

Task Group 16.7, Northern Covering Force, commanded by RADM Robert C. Giffen, consisted of the heavy cruisers *San Francisco* (CA-38), *Wichita* (CA-45) light cruiser *Louisville* (CL-28);

and destroyers *Balch* (DD-363), *Hughes* (DD-410), *Morris* (DD-417) and *Mustin* (DD-413).

Task Group 16.8, Attu Re-enforcement Group, commanded by CAPT Charles L. Hutton, consisted of the 32nd Infantry Regiment, less 2nd Battalion aboard the US Army Transports *Chirikof*, and *U.S. Grant* at Adak.

Task Group 16.9, Tanker and Service Group (operating independently), consisted of the refueling ships *Brazos* (AO-4), *Cuyama* (AO-3), *Guadalupe* (AO-32), *Neches* (AO-47), *Platte* (AO-24), and *Tippecanoe* (AO-21) and destroyer tenders *Black Hawk* (AD-9) and *Markab* (AD-21).

Task Group 16.10, Shemya Occupation Group, Brig Gen John E. Copeland, consisted of the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment and the 18th Engineer Regiment, and had the responsibility of occupying Shemya once Attu was secured. The transports included

St. Mihiel (AP-32), SS *William L. Thompson*, the small transports *North Coast Alaska* and *Yukon*, and the cargo ship *Franklin Macveagh*.

Task Force 16 supported Task Force 51, Assault Force, commanded by RADM Francis W. Rockwell, who reported to Admiral Kinkaid. Task Force 51 consisted of:

Task Group 51.1, Support Group, under RADM Howard F. Kingman, composed of the prewar battleships *Idaho* (BB-42), *Pennsylvania* (BB-38) and *Nevada* (BB-36), the escort carrier *Nassau* (CVE-16); the destroyers *Abner Read* (DD-562), *Ammen* (DD-527), *Edwards* (DD-265), *Farragut* (DD-348), *Hull* (DD-350), *Macdonald* (DD-351), *Mead* (DD-602) and *Phelps* (DD-360) and the seaplane tender *Williamson* (AVD-2). The support group was responsible for shore bombardment and naval air and gunfire support of ground forces.

Task Group 51.2, Transport Group, commanded by CAPT Pat Buchanan, provided troop transport with attack transports *Harris* (APA-21) and *J. Franklin Bell* (APA-16), transports *Heywood* (AP-12) and *Zeilin* (AP-9) and carrying the 17th Infantry Regiment and combat and service support units, and the chartered SS *Perida* carrying the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment and its combat and service support units. Destroyers escorts assigned to Task Group 51-2 included the *Aylwin* (DD-355), *Dale* (DD-353), *Dewey* (DD-349), *Kane* (DD-235), and *Monaghan* (DD-354). Two light

minelayers *Pruitt* (DM-22) and *Sicard* (DM-20) served as landing craft control vessels. The *Sicard* collided with the destroyer *Macdonald* the night before the landing on Attu, damaging both vessels. The *Sicard* towed the *Macdonald* to Adak and then proceeded to San Francisco.

Task Group 51.3, Minesweeper Group, commanded by LTCMDR B.A. Fuetsch, consisted of the minesweepers *Chandler* (DMS-3), *Long* (DMS-12) and *Perry* (DMS-17) and was responsible for clearing the approaches into the landing beaches of mines.

Task Group 51.4, Landing Force, commanded by MG Albert E. Brown, consisted of the 17th Infantry Regiment reinforced with the 48th Field Artillery Battalion and division engineer, medical, signal troops, a 30-man detachment of Alaska Scouts, the 2nd Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment in reserve and the Provisional Scout Battalion.

7th Infantry Division Order of Battle

When the United States Army began mobilizing for war in 1940, it had five infantry divisions. By the end of the war, it had slightly over 100 including sixteen armored, two cavalry divisions (dismounted as infantry) and a mountain division. The Army configured the division to be the smallest formation that could conduct independent operations, although that was not always the case. The division was organized on the triangle concept, with three infantry regiments each having three infantry battalions which in turn had three infantry companies further broken down into three infantry platoons with three infantry squads. The "rifle" companies and platoons were supported by a weapons company at the battalion level and a weapons platoon at the company level. The triangle system allowed for two units to be on the front line and one in the rear as reserve, commonly termed as "two up and one back."

A typical infantry division, in addition to the three infantry regiments, had four artillery battalions, a combat engineer battalion, a medical battalion, a signal company, ordnance company, quartermaster company, a reconnaissance company a division headquarters company and a military police platoon. A major general commanded the division with a brigadier general serving as the artillery commander. An infantry division was authorized 14,253 personnel of which 2,916 served

as combat infantrymen. The rest provided combat and combat service support.

The division artillery provided fire support with four battalions, three of which were equipped with light M2A1 105mm howitzers and one with the medium M114 155mm howitzers. Each battalion was organized into three batteries four guns each commanded by captains and consisting of 100 men each. A service battery was assigned to each battalion to provide maintenance and ammunition support. Each battalion also provided forward observers and fire direction centers. Each 105mm battalion was assigned to a specific infantry battalion and provided direct support. The 155mm battalion provided general support. The forward observers accompanied the unit they supported and called in and directed fire. The fire direction center, located with the guns, computed the fire and provided instructions to the gun crews.

The infantry regiment, authorized 3,118 personnel, was organized into three infantry battalions each with four companies. The twelve companies were lettered A through M skipping J. The fourth company in each battalion, D, H and M were heavy weapons companies. In addition to the infantry battalions, each regiment had a regimental headquarters and headquarters company, a service company, an anti-tank company, a cannon company, a reconnaissance and intelligence platoon and a medical detachment.

The headquarters and headquarters company contained the command section consisted of a colonel who served as the regimental commander, a lieutenant colonel who served as his executive officer and deputy commander; a S-1 (personnel) staff headed by a captain; a S-2 (intelligence) staff headed by a captain; a S-3 (operations and plans) staff headed by a major; a S-4 (logistics) headed by a major; chaplain staff; and communications staff.

The anti-tank company, commanded by a captain, consisted of three platoons, each equipped with three wheel mounted M3 37mm anti-tank guns and an anti-tank mine platoon. The 37mm anti-tank gun was later replaced by the more powerful British designed M1 57mm gun when it was found that the 37mm gun was incapable of

stopping German tanks. It, however, provided an effective weapon for direct fire against Japanese positions in the Pacific Theater. The Japanese lacked a significant armored capability.

The cannon company organized into three platoons, each equipped with two self-propelled (track mounted) 105mm howitzers. (The cannon companies in the two regiments committed to Attu were equipped with a similar number of 75mm pack howitzers instead.) The cannon company usually operated from a central location in direct support of its parent regiment.

The service company, commanded by a captain, provided maintenance, transportation, service and supply support. The reconnaissance and intelligence platoon, led by a lieutenant, reported to the S-2 and was assigned to the headquarters and headquarters company. It conducted reconnaissance patrols and collected intelligence. A major medical officer (doctor) commanded the medical detachment, which in addition of medical personnel contained a dental section. The regimental surgeon oversaw the operations of surgeons located at the battalion level and the medics at the company and platoon level.

The infantry battalion, authorized 860 personnel, consisted of three infantry companies, a heavy weapons company, a headquarters company, an anti-tank platoon, a communications platoon, an ammunition and pioneer platoon (A&P) and was commanded by a lieutenant colonel with a major as his deputy or executive officer (XO).

The heavy weapons company, authorized 166 personnel, provided the battalion commander with the capability of adding combat weight to sections of the battlefield that required it. It was organized into a small command group consisting of a captain commanding, a lieutenant executive officer and a first sergeant with clerical support. It contained two machine gun platoons, each equipped with four Browning M1917A1 water cooled 30 caliber heavy machineguns and one mortar platoon with six M1 81mm mortars.

The anti-tank platoon, led by a second lieutenant, was authorized four 37mm anti- guns.

An infantry or rifle company consisted of an authorized 193 men organized into a small company headquarters, usually a captain commanding, a first lieutenant executive officer, master sergeant first sergeant, a company clerk and radio/telephone operator. The company was organized into three rifle platoons and one weapons platoon led by second lieutenants and platoon sergeants.

Each rifle platoon, with 41 men authorized, consisted of three rifle squads of twelve men each led by a sergeant and armed with eleven M1 rifles and a M1918 Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) . Two riflemen normally assisted the BAR man. The platoon was the basic fighting unit and the closest one in contact with the enemy.

The weapons platoon with 35 men authorized was divided into two light machine gun squads each equipped with a M1919 light, air cooled 30-cal machine gun and a 60-mm mortar squad with three M2 60mm mortars. The machineguns were generally employed in pairs to provide suppressive and covering fire in the offensive and grazing and converging fire during the defensive. The mortars were employed as a group to provide indirect fire.

The 7th Infantry Division was a typical infantry division. It was first active from 6 December 1917 to 22 September 1921 and saw limited service on the Western Front during World War I. It was reactivated at Camp (later Fort) Ord, California 1 July 1940 under the command of Maj Gen Joseph W. Stilwell with three infantry regiments assigned: the 17th, 32nd and 53rd. Other combat and combat support units included the 31st, 48th, 49th and 57th Field Artillery Battalions, the 7th Scout Company, the 7th Reconnaissance Troop, the 13th Engineer Battalion, 7th Medical Battalion, 7th Signal Company, 707th Ordnance Company, 7th Quartermaster Company and the 7th Counter Intelligence Detachment.

Upon activation, the 7th Infantry Division was assigned to the III Corps of the Fourth U.S. Army and sent to Oregon for tactical maneuvers. It also practice amphibious landings on the California coast. Following Pearl Harbor, the division moved to Camp San Luis Obispo, where it continued

training. The 53rd Infantry Regiment was replaced by the 159th Infantry Regiment, California National Guard, on 29 October 1941 following induction into Federal service. The 159th Infantry Regiment did not participate in the Battle of Attu, but later occupied the island. It was relieved from assignment to the 7th Infantry Division 23 August 1943 and replaced by the 184th Infantry Regiment, California National Guard, which along with the 17th and 32nd Infantry Regiments remained with the division to the end of the war.

The 7th Infantry Division was re-designated the 7th Motorized Division 9 April 1942 and began training for desert warfare in the Mohave Desert in preparation for deployment as a division equipped and trained for desert warfare. When President Roosevelt made the decision on 30 July

1942 to invade North Africa at the urging of Prime Minister Churchill and against the advice of his senior leadership, the 7th Infantry Division was later, somehow, left out of the forces selected for Operation Torch. It was again re-designated an infantry division on 1 January 1943 and began rigorous amphibious training on the California coast under supervision of U.S. Marines.

The 17th Infantry Regiment was designated the assault force for Attu with the 32nd Infantry Regiment as the shipboard reserve. The 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 17th Infantry Regiments were committed to the 11 May landing on Massacre Beach with the 2nd on Beach Red on the right and the 3rd to Beach Yellow on the left. The 1st Battalion was committed to Beach Red on the northern end of Holtz Bay.

Organization of 7th Infantry Division for Battle of Attu

Headquarters and Headquarters, 7th Infantry Division
17th Infantry Regiment
32nd Infantry Regiment
1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment (attached)
48th Artillery Battalion
49th Artillery Battalion
7th Provisional Scout Battalion
 7th Scout Company
 7th Reconnaissance Troop
13th Combat Engineer Battalion
50th Engineer Battalion (attached)
78th Coast Artillery Regiment (Anti-aircraft) (attached)
7th Medical Battalion
20th Field Hospital
7th Signal Company

Note: The 7th Reconnaissance Troop and 7th Medical Battalion received the Distinguished Unit Citation

17th Infantry Regiment (Assault Force)

Regimental Headquarters and Headquarters Company
 Col Edward P. Earl, Regimental Commander, KIA 12 May
 Col Wayne C. Zimmerman, Chief of Staff, 7th Infantry Division, 11-12 May, Regimental Commander, 12 May-2 June
 Lt. Col. James "Jim" Fish, Executive Officer, KIA 29 May
 Capt Henry R. Sievers, S-1
 Capt Robert P. Brust, S-2
 Maj Joseph A. Schor, S-3
 Capt Harry L. Beatty, Assistant S-3
 1/Lt Alfred W. Owens, Assistant S-3, KIA 30 May

Capt Julius S. Busse, Regimental Chaplain
1/Lt Clarence J. Merriman, Assistant Chaplain
1/Lt Clyde R. Hahn, Assistant Chaplain
1/Lt William A. Abrahamson, Communications Officer
1/Lt Rolland L. Steele, Liaison Officer
WO Auldon H. Parson, Assistant Communications Officer
WO Harold W. Brush, Regimental Band Leader
Capt Ritchie H. Clarke, Commanding Officer, Regimental HQs Company
1/Lt LeGrand A. Pendrey, Executive Officer, Regimental HQ Company, 11-24 May; S-3, 3rd Battalion, 24 May-2 June
1/Lt Winfield H. Maples, Intelligence Officer, HQ Company

Service Company

Maj. David B. Affleck, Regimental S-4
1/LT Paul S. Foster Jr., Assistant S-4
WO Harold W. Webber, Assistant S-4
Maj. Richard K. Hudson, Special Duty with 7th Division G-4
Capt William N. Brimmer, Personnel Adjutant and Liaison Officer
1/Lt William E. Brown, Assistant Personnel Adjutant, 11-16 May, Platoon Leader, I Company, 17 May-8 June
Capt Charles J. Davison, Commanding Officer, KIA 29 May
1/Lt Woodrow A. Spranger, Special Service Officer
1/Lt Clyde M. Akridge, Transportation Officer, 11-28 May, Commanding Officer 29 May-2 June
WO James J. Tully, Assistant Transportation Officer
1/Lt Howard H. Cherry Jr., Munitions Officer
WO Wilfred J. Fienhage, Ammunition
2/Lt William W. Grisham, 1st Battalion S-4
2/Lt John W. Wyker Jr., 2nd Battalion S-4
1/Lt Allen R. Murphy, 3rd Battalion S-4

Note: The Service Company received the Distinguished Unit Citation.

Anti-Tank Company

Capt Warren J. Hughes, Commanding Officer
1/Lt Willis Lawson, Company Executive Officer
1/Lt John D. McCue, Platoon Leader
2/Lt Fred D. Preuett, Platoon Leader
2/Lt James R. Miller Jr., Platoon Leader
2/Lt Francis E. Barden, Platoon Leader, 11-16 May; Platoon Leader G Company, 17 May-2 June

Cannon Company

Capt James E. Simmons, Commanding Officer
1/Lt Denmark C. Jensen, Company Executive Officer
1/Lt George H. Feister, Platoon Leader
1/Lt Rex V. Carr, Platoon Leader
2/Lt George C. Wyatt, Platoon Leader

Medical Detachment

Maj. James B. Cochrane, Regimental Surgeon
Capt Marvin L. Chernow, Assistant Regimental Surgeon, 11-29 May, WIA and evacuated 29 May
1/Lt Thomas E. Shea, Assistant Regimental Surgeon
Capt John S. Martin, Regimental Dental Surgeon
1/Lt Richard Shrago, Assistant Dental Surgeon

Capt Joseph B. Brune, 1st Battalion Surgeon
1/Lt Henry F. Goldberg, Assistant 1st Battalion Surgeon
Capt Morris R. Gordon, 2nd Battalion Surgeon
1/Lt Russell J. Sazman, Assistant 2nd Battalion Surgeon
1/Lt Carl M. Becker, 3rd Battalion Surgeon

1st Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment

Maj. Albert V. Hartl, CO
Maj. Clarence S. Chandler, XO
Capt Maynard B. Weaver, S-1
1/Lt Barry K. Sugden, S-2
Capt Robert H. Johnson, S-3
1/Lt David J. Morkan, HQ Co XO
1/Lt Leon Etchemendy, Transportation Officer
1/Lt J.C. Harrell, Anti-Tank Officer
2/Lt Herbert C. Smallwood, A&P Officer
2/Lt Robert L. Ludwig, Communications Officer
2/Lt Oscar A. Groner, Assistant Anti-Tank Officer

A Company,

Capt Richard H. Natske, CO
1/Lt David M. Hutchinson, XO
1/Lt Glen A. Weitzel, Platoon Leader
2/Lt John A. Ellison, Platoon Leader
2/Lt Morton R. Furtney, Platoon Leader
2/Lt Robert P. Birkhimer, Platoon Leader
2/Lt Joseph F. Dougherty, Platoon Leader

B Company

Capt James R. , CO, WIA 16 May
1/Lt William R. Davis, XO 11-15 May, CO 16 May-2 June
1/Lt Harry T. Lundquist, SD with Division G-4
2/Lt J.C. Shirley, Platoon Leader
2/Lt William J. Cassinelli, Platoon Leader
2/Lt Alfred J. Palmer, Platoon Leader, evacuated 15 May as operational causality
2/Lt Robert K. Moore, Platoon Leader, KIA 12 May

C Company

Capt Harold F. Duis, CO
1/Lt George E. Linebaugh, XO
1/Lt Warren E. Youker Jr., Platoon Leader
1/Lt Charles E. Murphy, Platoon Leader
2/Lt Odus E. Long, Platoon Leader
2/Lt Clarence P. Muckenstrum, Platoon Leader
2/Lt Isidore I. Feinstein, Platoon Leader

D Company

Capt William E. Siegel, CO
1/Lt David S. Marshall, XO
1/Lt Richard A. Snow, Platoon Leader
1/Lt Samuel M. Thomas, Platoon Leader
2/Lt Watson L. Hause, Platoon Leader

2nd Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment

Maj. Edward P. Smith, CO
Maj. Ealon H. Standeven, XO
Capt Paul F. Mackin, S-1
1/Lt Charles E. Hoagland, S-2
Capt Robert J. Edwards, S-3
1/Lt Paul S. Hunt, Transportation Officer
1/Lt Vernon C. Blichfeldt, Anti-Tank Officer
2/Lt George M. Bradley, A&P Officer
2/Lt Robert D. Jones, Communications Officer

E Company

Capt William F. Staab, CO
1/Lt George E. Adams, XO
2/Lt William A. Beeston, Platoon Leader
2/Lt William E. Copeland, Platoon Leader
2/Lt Raymond F. Bradbury, Platoon Leader
2/Lt William H. Beeston, Platoon Leader

F Company

Capt Delbert L. Bjork, CO
2/Lt Albert P. Fong, XO, KIA 25 May
2/Lt Harold W. Hahn, Platoon Leader, WIA 19 May
2/Lt Donald K. Reynolds, Platoon Leader, WIA 19 May
2/Lt Paul H. Brundage, Platoon Leader, KIA 21 May
2/Lt Charles K. Paulson, Platoon Leader
2/Lt John W. Edrington, Platoon Leader

G Company

Capt Raymond E. Jones, CO, WIA 16 May
1/Lt Robert L. Washnok, XO
2/Lt Walter C. O'Neil, Platoon Leader
2/Lt Robert E. Little, Platoon Leader, KIA 25 May
2/Lt Francis J. Crohan, Platoon Leader, KIA 22 May
2/Lt Joseph S. Hunter, Platoon Leader

H Company

Capt John J. Womack, CO
1/Lt Roland A. Baumgartner, XO
1/Lt Marvin A. Elliott, Platoon Leader, 11-23 May, CO L Company 23 May-2 June
1/Lt Winfred O. Chancellor, Platoon Leader 11-14 May, CO G Company 15 May-2 June
2/Lt Lawrence Leney, Platoon Leader
2/Lt Harry T. Moore, Platoon Leader
2/Lt Samuel W. Clevesy, Platoon Leader, KIA 19 May

3rd Battalion, 17th Infantry Regiment

Maj. James R. Montague, CO, 11-18 May, SD with Port HQ U.S. Army 26 May-2 June
Maj. Jack K. Siddens, XO, 11-18 May, CO 19-29 May, KIA 29 May
Maj. Lee Wallace, XO 18-29 May, CO 30 May-2 June
1/Lt Eugene L. Mcgee, S-1, KIA 29 May
2/Lt Robert O. English, S-2, WIA 30 May
Capt Earls W. Nelson, S-3, KIA 29 May
2/Lt James D. Neill, Assistant S-3

1/Lt William J. Cavanagh, Transportation Officer, KIA 29 May

2/Lt George W. Schwant, Platoon Leader

2/Lt James J. O'Dea, Communications Officer

I Company

Capt John B. Gilbert, CO, Operational Casualty, evacuated 17 May

1/Lt Ward J. Redmond, XO, 11-15 May, CO, 16-25 May

1/Lt Hubert D. Long, Platoon Leader

2/Lt Charles C. Duddy, Platoon Leader

2/Lt Claude S. Rayburn, Platoon Leader, KIA 27 May

2/Lt Joseph L. Daigle, Platoon Leader, CO 25 May-2 June

2/Lt Kenneth B. Sawdey, Platoon Leader

K Company

Capt Ernest F. Brash, CO, KIA 14 May

1/Lt Charles T. Frazee, XO, 11-13 May, CO 14 May-2 June

1/Lt George W. Thayer, Platoon Leader, 11-13 May, XO 15 May-2 June

1/Lt Sam C. Beasley, SD Service Co, Special Units Supply Officer, 11-27 May, Platoon Leader, 28 May-2 June

2/Lt Chester L. Wheeler, Platoon Leader, WIA 18 May

2/Lt Morris C. Wiberg, Platoon Leader, WIA 24 May

2/Lt Kenneth B. Thompson, Platoon Leader, WIA 12 May

L Company

Capt John E. Jarmin, CO, KIA 14 May

1/Lt John F. McCoin, XO

2/Lt Bronne A. Bruzgo, Platoon Leader, WIA

2/Lt Russell W. Beegle, Platoon Leader, WIA

2/Lt Albert P. DeBoard, Platoon Leader, KIA

2/Lt William H. Masters, Platoon Leader, WIA

2/Lt John F. Welsh, Platoon Leader,

M Company

Capt Edward T. Smith, CO, Operational Casualty, evacuated 12 May

1/Lt Howard S. Allen, XO, 11-12 May, CO 13 May-2 June

1/Lt Donald G. Artus, Platoon Leader

2/Lt Glenn L. Fadden, Jr., Platoon Leader

2/Lt Richard D. Dickey, Platoon Leader

2/Lt Stephen C. McIntyre, Platoon Leader

Note: B Co, 1st Bn, 17th Inf, F Co, 2nd Bn, 17th Inf and Service Co, 17th Inf earned the Distinguished Unit Citation

32nd Infantry Regiment (Reserve Force)

Col Frank L. Culin, Regimental Commander

1st Battalion, Lt Col Earnest H. Bearss, CO, Maj James H. Keller, XO

A Company, Capt Harry W. Kingham, Commanding

B Company, Capt Victor A. Fenner, Commanding

C Company, Capt Charles W. Murphy

D Company, ?

2nd Battalion, Maj Charles G. Fredericks

E Company, Capt Harvey H. Stevenson, 1/Lt John W. Wolfe

F Company, Capt Robert E. Goodfellow

G Company, ?

H Company, ?

3rd Battalion, Lt Col John M. Finn
I Company, Capt Burt O'Donnell
K Company, Capt John H. Ducan
L Company, Capt William H. Langendorf
M Company, Capt John P. Cannon

Note: E, and K Companies, 2nd Bn and I Co, 3rd Bn, 32nd Inf received the Distinguished Unit Citation. Private Joe P. Martinez, I Co, earned the Medal of Honor.

1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment,
Maj John D. O'Reilly, CO
Capt Wallace C. Liberty, XO
Capt Robert C. Ratliff, S-1 and HQ Co CO
1/Lt Francis J. Viox, S-2
Capt Stanley S. Warren, S-3
1/Lt Donald E. Smith, MTO
2/Lt Russel C. Taliaferro, P&A Platoon
2/LT Larry R. Frampton, 33mm AT Platoon
2/Lt Raymond J. Jarratt, Communications Officer
2/Lt Howard T. Welte, Liaison Officer
Capt Hugh G. Cleary, Battalion Surgeon
2/Lt Robert M. O'Brien, Asst Battalion Surgeon
Headquarters Company,
Capt Robert C. Ratliff, CO

A Company
Capt Donald B. Neuman, CO
1/Lt Elmer Bloomquist, XO, KIA
2/Lt Joseph Prendergast, 1st Platoon, KIA
1/Lt Herbert S. Levin, 2nd Platoon
2/Lt William A. Hash, 3rd Platoon
1/Lt Jean P. Feeigenbaum, Weapons Platoon

B Company
1/Lt Jack A. Henley, CO
1/Lt William F. Sturgeon, XO
1/Lt Wayne A. Barnes, 1st Platoon
1/Lt Frank K. Wilson, 2nd Platoon
1/Lt John C. Gillespie, 3rd Platoon
1/Lt John C. Wingert, Weapons Platoon

C Company
Capt John K. Macintyre, CO
1/Lt Philip J. Ackley, XO
2/Lt Richard M. Zimmerman, Co HQ
1/Lt Richard H. Estrin, 1st Platoon
1/Lt William O. Van Wyke, 2nd Platoon
2/Lt Luther S. Brewer, 3rd Platoon
1/Lt Robert J. Abbey, Weapons Platoon

D Company
Capt John E. Radeback, Jr.
1/Lt Raymond C. Miller
1/Lt Burton R. Brazil

1/Lt Cyriel M. Hebrank, Jr.
1/Lt Joseph A. Weslowski
L Company, 37th Infantry Regiment (attached)

Appendix D

Order of Battle, Battle of Attu

Japanese Forces

By Ephriam D. Dickson III

In his unfinished manuscript at the time of his death, John Cloe included a list of Japanese officers and their units known to have been on Attu Island at the time of the battle. Cloe's roster was drawn entirely from the U.S. Army's *Final Report of Reduction and Occupation of Attu from the Combat Intelligence Point of View*, a declassified intelligence memorandum published in August 1943 just two months after the battle had ended. The Army had created this list from various Japanese documents found on Attu as well as from the interrogations of 27 surrendered Japanese soldiers. Since then, however, considerably more information has become available.

While large quantities of Imperial Japanese Army and Navy records were destroyed by the end of the war, U.S. forces did capture millions of pages of documents and those containing intelligence information were eventually transferred to the National Archives. Following diplomatic negotiations a decade after the war, these captured records were finally returned to Japan in 1958 where a portion of them are now preserved at the Center for Military History Archives at the National Institute for Defense Studies in Tokyo. Among the surviving documents are the monthly operations reports for the North Sea Garrison. A part of the Northern District Army, the North Sea Garrison was a geographical command created in early 1943 for the western Aleutians as well as the Japanese base of operations at Paramushiro in the Kuril Islands. Under the command of General Juichiro Mineki, the North Sea Garrison was divided into three sub-commands: Sector 1 (Kiska Island), commanded by Colonel Sato; Sector 2 (Attu Island), commanded by Colonel Yasuyo Yamasaki; and Sector 3 (Paramushiro), commanded by a series of different senior officers. These operations reports were apparently prepared monthly by General Mineki's staff and forwarded to the headquarters of the Northern District Army located in Sapporo, Hokkaido Island, Japan.

The following roster of Japanese officers was originally submitted with the operations report for

September 1943 and first published in Japanese in 1968 in the famed *Senshi Soshō* (戦史叢書 or *War History Series*), a landmark 102 volume study of Japan's operations during World War II prepared by former Japanese officers. The roster was included in Volume 21 北東方面陸軍作戦: アッツの玉砕 (*Army Operations in Northern Pacific Area: The Loss of Attu*) and is presented here for the first time in English, a translation made from the published version.

Another critical document for confirming the list of Japanese officers on Attu Island is a memorial booklet titled 山崎軍神部隊 (*Yamasaki: God of Forces*) published in Tokyo in 1944. This remarkable record lists the name of every enlisted soldier and commissioned officer killed on Attu, with their rank (promoted one level posthumously), their hometown, and a photographic portrait. The memorial booklet reveals the names of two additional commissioned officers not included in the *Senshi Soshō* list. Lieutenant Commander Hiroshi Emoto (江本弘) was an Imperial Japanese Navy officer from the 5th Fleet headquarters on Kiska Island, temporarily sent to Attu to conduct an inspection and was caught up in the battle. His body was reportedly found in 1953 in a cave on Attu during a visit by a Japanese delegation. The memorial booklet also lists a logistics cadet named Yonekichi Igari (猪狩米吉), but his story yet remains a mystery.

Together, the *Senshi Soshō* and the Attu Island memorial booklet establishes that 103 Japanese commissioned officers were killed on Attu. The author is now working to create a full roster of all Japanese forces on the island and hopes to use the captured documents and POW interrogations to establish where each unit was located as the Battle of Attu commenced.

Acknowledgements: Special thanks to Akira Takizawa and Dan King who reviewed and patiently corrected my initial translations of the *Senshi Soshō* list.

在アッツ島北海守備隊將校一覽表
List of Officers, Attu Island, North Sea Garrison

(昭一八・五・二調)
(May 2, 1943)

(「北海守備隊作戦経過報告書」による)
(According to the "North Sea Garrison Operations Report")

<p>北海守備第二地区隊本部</p> <p>長 大佐 山崎保代 26 副官 大尉 津屋二郎 少 13 附 大尉 沼田宏之 准 47 少尉 貝森秀三郎 ○ 主大尉 鳥羽京二 現 医大尉 山本常明 現</p>	<p>Headquarters, 2nd Sector, North Sea Garrison</p> <p>Commander Colonel Yasuyo Yamasaki Adjutant Captain Jiro Tsuya Attached Captain Hiroyuki Numata Second Lieutenant Hidesaburo Kaimori Captain (Quartermaster) Kyoji Toba Captain (Medical) Tsuneaki Yamamoto</p>
<p>北千島要塞歩兵隊</p> <p>本部</p> <p>長 中佐 米川浩 31 副官 中尉 兒玉富五郎 ○ 主少尉 中山惣吉 ○ 医中尉 柴田穆 ○ 同少尉 網塚博 ○ 同見土 渡邊初男 ○</p>	<p>North Kuril Island Fortress Infantry Unit</p> <p>Headquarters</p> <p>Commander Lieutenant Colonel Hiroshi Yonekawa Adjutant First Lieutenant Tomigoro Kodama 2nd Lieut. (Quartermaster) Sokichi Nakayama First Lieut. (Medical) Atsushi Shibata 2nd Lieut. (Medical) Hiro Tsunazuka Cadet (Medical) Hatsuo Watanabe</p>
<p>1</p> <p>長 大尉 石垣由藏 特 5 附 少尉 今井清 ○ 同 小出松幸 ○</p>	<p>1st Company</p> <p>Commander Captain Yoshizo Ishigaki Attached Second Lieutenant Kiyoshi Imai Second Lieutenant Matsuyuki Koide</p>
<p>3</p> <p>長 中尉 佐藤明 ○ 附 少尉 三上賢良 ○ 同 古宮三郎 ○ 同 齋藤俊明 ○</p>	<p>3rd Company</p> <p>Commander First Lieutenant Akira Sato Attached Second Lieutenant Kenryo Mikami Second Lieutenant Saburo Komiya Second Lieutenant Toshiaki Saito</p>
<p>銃砲隊</p> <p>長 中尉 和山千五郎 ○ 附 少尉 中島慶治 ○ 同 吉田四郎 ○</p>	<p>Gun Company</p> <p>Commander First Lieutenant Chigoro Wayama Attached Second Lieutenant Keiji Nakajima Second Lieutenant Shiro Yoshida</p>
<p>北千島要塞歩兵隊通信班</p> <p>長 少尉 小野虎雄 ○</p>	<p>North Kuril Island Fortress Infantry Unit Signal Squad</p> <p>Commander Second Lieutenant Torao Ono</p>

北千島要塞歩兵隊衛生班	Kuril Island Fortress Infantry Unit Medical Squad					
長 医中尉 山田文雄 現	Commander	1st Lieut. (Medical)	Fumio Yamada			
独立歩兵第三百三大隊	303rd Independent Infantry Battalion					
本部	Headquarters					
長 少佐 渡邊十九二 36	Commander	Major	Tokuji Watanabe			
副官 中尉 岡崎裕雄 ○	Adjutant	First Lieutenant	Yasuo (or Hiroo) Okazaki			
暗 同 小林豊 ○	Cypher	First Lieutenant	Yutaka Kobayashi			
兵瓦 少尉 藤井昌 ○	Weapons & Gas	Second Lieutenant	Masa Fuji			
附 同 古田耕一 ○	Attached	Second Lieutenant	Koichi Furuta			
主少尉 岩井宏作 55		2d Lieut. (Quartermaster)	Kosaku Iwai			
同同 吉田正男 ○		2d Lieut. (Quartermaster)	Masao Yoshida			
医中尉 廣瀬清臣 現		1st Lieut. (Medical)	Kiyoomi Hirose			
同同 福永祐正 現		1st Lieut. (Medical)	Sukemasa (or Yusei) Fukunaga			
同少尉 晴山静 現		2nd Lieut. (Medical)	Sizu Haruyama			
同見土 田村六郎 ○		Cadet (Medical)	Rokuro Tamura			
1	1st Company					
長 中尉 林俊夫 53	Commander	First Lieutenant	Toshio Hayashi			
附 少尉 小田島米藏 ○	Attached	Second Lieutenant	Yonezo Odashima			
同 喜美候部謙正 ○		Second Lieutenant	Yoshimasa Kimikobe			
同 小野清治 ○		Second Lieutenant	Kiyoji (or Kiyoharu) Ono			
2	2nd Company					
長 中尉 本名仁 ○	Commander	First Lieutenant	Hitoshi Honna			
附 同 大村範夫 55	Attached	First Lieutenant	Norio Omura			
少尉 阿部多喜夫 ○		Second Lieutenant	Takio Abe			
同 森山茂 ○		Second Lieutenant	Shigeru Moriyama			
4	4th Company					
長 中尉 後藤豊 ○	Commander	First Lieutenant	Yutaka Goto			
附 少尉 千葉胤雄 ○	Attached	Second Lieutenant	Taneo Chiba			
同 星野始豊 ○		Second Lieutenant	Harutoyo Hoshino			
同 前川文男 ○		Second Lieutenant	Fumio Maekawa			
MG	Machine Gun Company					
長 中尉 加藤裕 特 8	Commander	First Lieutenant	Yu Kato			
附 同 角谷時本 ○	Attached	First Lieutenant	Origami Kakutani			
同 竹脇敬二 ○		First Lieutenant	Keiji Takewaki			

<p>ia</p> <p>長 中尉 橋場友吉 ○ 附 同 内村清蔵 ○</p>	<p>Gun Company</p> <p>Commander 1st Lieutenant Tomoyoshi Hashiba Attached 1st Lieutenant Seizo Uchimura</p>
<p>北海守備第二地区隊砲兵大隊</p> <p>本部</p> <p>長 大尉 波々伯部利雄 少 11 副官 少尉 須藤勇之助 ○</p>	<p>Artillery Battalion, 2nd Sector, North Sea Garrison</p> <p>Headquarters</p> <p>Commander Captain Toshio Hohokabe Adjutant 2nd Lieutenant Yunosuke Sudo</p>
<p>第六要塞山砲兵隊</p> <p>長 少尉 遠藤平 ○ 附 同 永山重治 ○ 同 生島俊治 ○</p>	<p>6th Fortress Mountain Artillery Unit</p> <p>Commander 2nd Lieutenant Taira Endo Attached 2nd Lieutenant Shigeharu Nagayama 2nd Lieutenant Toshiharu Ikushima</p>
<p>北海守備第二地区隊高射砲大隊</p> <p>本部</p> <p>長 少佐 青戸慎士 46 附 少尉 横井桂雄 ○</p>	<p>Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion, 2nd Sector, North Sea Garrison</p> <p>Headquarters</p> <p>Commander Major Masashi Aoto Attached 2nd Lieutenant Takao Yokoi</p>
<p>独立野戦高射砲第二十四中隊</p> <p>長 中尉 外山利助 ○ 附 同 岡本芳文 ○ 少尉 安部親宏 ○ 同 鈴木健次 ○ 同 浦瀬榮次 ○ 医少尉 幸田清一郎 ○</p>	<p>24th Independent Field Anti-Aircraft Artillery Company</p> <p>Commander 1st Lieutenant Toshisuke Sotoyama Attached 1st Lieutenant Yoshifumi Okamoto 2nd Lieutenant Chikahiro Abe 2nd Lieutenant Kenji Suzuki 2nd Lieutenant Eiji Urase 2nd Lieut. (Medical) Seiichiro Koda</p>
<p>独立野戦高射砲第三十三中隊</p> <p>長 中尉 小山亨 54 附 同 牧野保守 55 同 内田勝 ○ 少尉 西山峯夫 ○ 同 佐野仁三郎 ○ 医少尉 大村紀二 ○</p>	<p>33rd Independent Field Anti-Aircraft Artillery Company</p> <p>Commander 1st Lieutenant Toru Koyama Attached 1st Lieutenant Yasumori Makino 1st Lieutenant Masaru Uchida 2nd Lieutenant Mineo Nishiyama 2nd Lieutenant Zinzaburou Sano 2d Lieut. (medical) Noritsugu Omura</p>

<p>独立高射砲第三十五中隊</p> <p>長 大尉 左右田信男 特 12 附 中尉 石井仁作 ○ 少尉 熊坂高明 ○ 同 吉田功 ○</p>	<p>35th Independent Anti-Aircraft Artillery Company</p> <p>Commander Captain Nobuo Souda Attached 1st Lieutenant Jinsaku Ishii 2nd Lieutenant Takaaki Kumasaka 2nd Lieutenant Isao Yoshida</p>
<p>独立工兵第三百二中隊</p> <p>長 大尉 小野金造 少 10 附 中尉 鈴木重清 ○ 少尉 三谷力 ○ 同 齋藤健壽 ○ 同 貫名鳳成 ○</p>	<p>302nd Independent Engineer Company</p> <p>Commander Captain Kinzo (or Kanezo) Ono Attached 1st Lieutenant Shigekiyo Suzuki 2nd Lieutenant Chikara Mitani 2nd Lieutenant Takehisa (or Kenju) Saito 2nd Lieutenant Hosei Nukina</p>
<p>第二十四要塞工兵隊ノ一小隊</p> <p>長 少尉 荒井善之助 ○</p>	<p>1st Platoon, 24th Fortress Engineers</p> <p>Commander 2nd Lieutenant Yoshinosuke (or Zennosuke) Arai</p>
<p>独立無線第十一小隊</p> <p>長 中尉 長谷川明 ○</p>	<p>11th Independent Radio Platoon</p> <p>Commander 1st Lieutenant Akira Hasegawa</p>
<p>北海守備隊野戦病院 (大浦班)</p> <p>長 医大尉 大浦直二郎 ○ 附 同中尉 矢野達 現 同 渡邊弘 現 衛少尉 齋藤繁治 ○ 医見士 林信平 ○ 薬見士 武政良夫 幹</p>	<p>North Sea Garrison Field Hospital (Oura Unit)</p> <p>Commander Captain (Medical) Naojiro Oura Attached 1st Lieut. (Medical) Tatsu Yano 1st Lieut. (Medical) Hiroshi Watanabe 2d Lt. (Hygiene) Shigeharu Saito Cadet (Hygiene) Nobuhira Hayashi Cadet (Pharmacy) Yoshio Muneko</p>
<p>北海守備隊司令部</p> <p>築 兵大尉 矢敷喜作 現 航基 中尉 中込茂治 少 20 情 中尉 氏家達二 准 55 兵站 技見士 坂元力 幹</p>	<p>Headquarters, North Sea Garrison</p> <p>Fortification Captain (Ordnance) Kisaku Yashiki Air Base First Lieutenant Shigeharu Nakagome Information First Lieutenant Tatsuji Ujiie Logistics Cadet Chikara Sakamoto</p>

<p>船舶工兵第六聯隊第二中隊</p> <p>長 大尉 小林徳雄 少 12 附 中尉 藤原武 54 少尉 中元大八 ○ 同 杉村録三郎 ○ 同 金子寛貞 ○ 医見土 幸島優一 ○</p>	<p>2nd Company, 6th Shipping Engineer Regiment</p> <p>Commander Captain Tokuo Kobayashi Attached 1st Lieutenant Takeshi Fujihara 2nd Lieutenant Daihachi Nakamoto 2nd Lieutenant Rokusaburo Sugimura 2nd Lieutenant Hirosada Kaneko Cadet (Medical) Yuichi Koshima</p>
<p>第三十碇泊場アツツ支部</p> <p>長 中尉 内田松五郎 ○ 附 少尉 倉澤武重 ○</p>	<p>30th Anchorage Group, Attu Branch</p> <p>Commander 1st Lieutenant Matsugoro Uchida Attached 2nd Lieutenant Takeshige Kurasawa</p>
<p>船舶固定通信隊アツツ島通信所</p> <p>長 見土 堀井正一 幹</p>	<p>Ship's Fixed Communication Corps, Attu Island Office</p> <p>Commander Cadet Shoichi Horii</p>

備考

期別欄中○ハ召集者ヲ、幹ハ甲種幹部候補生ヲ、現ハ現役将校ニシテ期別ノ明瞭ナラザル者ヲ示ス。

Remarks:

In the class column: "○" means those recalled to duty. 幹 means A-Class officer candidates. 現 means active duty officers whose class is not known.

Appendix E

Order of Battle, Battle of Attu, Japanese

Editor's note: This Order of Battle compiled by John Cloe is incomplete, and was based on faulty military intelligence as Ephriam Dickson notes in Appendix D. It is included in order to illustrate how the American military reconstructed the Japanese Order of Battle.

The typical Japanese infantry division was organized as a triangular formation similar to an American division with three infantry regiments, each having three battalions. Other formations assigned to the Japanese division included, the normal field artillery, engineer and medical organizations found in an American division. Additionally, the Japanese had a reconnaissance regiment. The authorized strength of a division averaged around 18,048, although only about 15,000 could be fielded.

Below division level, each infantry regiment consisted of four battalions, an anti-tank company, a gun company and a signal company totaling around 3,347 men, similar to the size and organization of its American counterpart and commanded by a colonel.

The infantry battalion was organized into four infantry companies numbered 1 through 4, a heavy machinegun company and a gun company commanded by a major or lieutenant colonel with an adjutant (executive officer) as his assistant. Intelligence, medical and veterinary officers provided staff support. The battalion headquarters was authorized six officers and 22 enlisted men. A transport section of 35 brought the total to 62. While numbered, the battalion often bore the name of its commander.

A captain or first lieutenant commanded an infantry company which consisted of three platoons, each commanded by a second lieutenant. Except for the lack of a weapons platoon, it was organized similar to an American company and similar in strength. The command section was also similar to an American company. Each platoon consisted of three rifle squads with 14 men each and a grenade launcher squad with 10 men giving

it strength of 55 officers and men. Each rifle squad was equipped with a Nambu Type 96 or 99 light machinegun manned by a gunner with two ammo bearers, giving the platoon three machineguns. The grenade launcher squad was authorized four Type 89 50mm grenade launchers manned by four gunners and six ammo bearer.

The heavy machinegun company consisted of four platoons and an ammunition section with an authorized manning of 136. Each platoon was divided into two sections, each with one Arisaka Type 92, 7.7-mm heavy machinegun in giving the company a total of eight.

Like the Germans, the Japanese emphasized the machinegun with the riflemen providing support. While an American infantry battalion had an authorization of six light and four heavy machineguns, the Japanese authorization called for nine light and eight heavy machineguns.

The gun company was organized into two gun sections and one ammunition section. Each section was authorized one Type 92, 70mm light howitzer manned by a section leader, ten canoneers and three drivers. The company had an authorization of 50 men. Only one Type 92, located in Holtz Bay, was found on Attu.

The Japanese had an infantry equivalent regiment on Attu which did not fit the standard organizational structure. The Americans encountered one under-strength infantry battalion and another at half-strength, an antiaircraft battalion, a mountain gun company, an engineer company, an anchorage unit, a field hospital and various miscellaneous units that comprised a garrison force of approximately 2,400 under the command of Col Yasuyo Yamazaki.

303rd Independent Infantry Battalion, also known as the Watanabe Battalion

Headquarters, 11 Officers and 90 Enlisted
Major Tokuji Watanabe, Commanding Officer (CO)
1/Lt Okezaki, Adjutant
1/Lt Fukuzaka, Medical
2/Lt Furhata
2/Lt Yoshida

Probation Officer Tamura, Medical

1st Company, 4 Officers and 92 Enlisted

1/Lt Toshio Hayashi, CO
2/Lt O. Yonezo, 1st Platoon Leader
2/Lt Kemasa Kimikobe, 2nd Platoon Leader
2/Lt Seiji Ono
Warrant Officer Kenji Chiba

2nd Company, 4 Officers, 92 Enlisted

1/Lt Hitoshi Honna, CO
1/Lt Omura, 1st Platoon Leader
2/Lt Shigeru Moriyama, 2nd Platoon Leader
2/Lt Takio Abe, 3rd Platoon Leader
Probation Officer Ube

3rd Company

4th Company, 4 Officers, 90 enlisted

1/Lt Yatuka Goto, CO
1/Lt Hashiba, 1st Platoon Leader
2/Lt Fumio Maedawa, 2nd Platoon Leader

Machinegun Company, three Officers, 90 Enlisted

1/Lt Yatuka Kato, CO
?, 1st Platoon
2/Lt Keiji Takewaki, 2nd Platoon Leader
2/Lt Kokura, 3rd Platoon Leader
Warrant Officer Jintaro Nishimura

Gun Company, two officers, 92 enlisted

2/Lt Hashiba,

Transportation Unit, attached, 70 enlisted

Northern Kurile Fortress Infantry Unit, Lt Col Hiroshi Yonekawa

1st Company, 140 men (Ishigaki Unit)

Capt Yoshizo Ishigaki, CO
2/Lt Koide
2/Lt Tamura

3rd Company, 160 men (Sato Unit)

1/Lt Okira Sato, CO
2/Lt Mikami, 1st Platoon
2/Lt Furumiya, 2nd Platoon
2/Lt Saito, 3rd Platoon

Gun Company, 130 men (Wayama Unit)

1/Lt Wayama
2/Lt Keije Nakajima, 1st Platoon
2/Lt Yoshida, 2, Platoon
Warrant Officer Otomo, 3rd Platoon
Warrant Officer Muramoto, 4th Platoon

Aota Provisional Anti-Aircraft Defense Battalion, Maj. Seiji Aoto, CO
Battalion Headquarters, Capt Sauda
1/Lt Risuke Sotoyama
1st Company (33rd Independent AA Unit)
1/Lt Toru Koyama, CO
2/Lt Sano, 1st Platoon
2/Lt Nishiyama, 2nd Platoon
Machine Cannon Company, 1/Lt Makino
2nd Company (24th Independent AA Unit)
1/Lt Okamoto, CO
2/Lt Suzuki, 1st Platoon
2/Lt Abe, 2nd Platoon
3rd Company (35th Independent AA Unit)
1/Lt Ishii, CO
4th Company (formed by drawing men from the other companies)
1/Lt Uchida, CO

6th Independent Mountain Artillery Unit
2/Lt Taira Endo, CO
2/Lt Juji Nagayama, 1st Platoon
2/Lt Kijima, 2nd Platoon
Master Sergeant Okido, 3rd Platoon
2/Lt Omura, attached medical officer

The 302nd Independent Engineer Company.
Capt Chinzo Ono, CO
1/Lt Shigeo Suzuki, 1st Platoon
2/Lt Sentaro Arai, 2nd Platoon
2/Lt Matani, 3rd Platoon
2/Lt Tatsuo Saito, 4th Platoon
Probation Officer Nukina

The 2nd Company, 6th Ship Engineer Regiment.
Capt Kobayashi, CO
2/Lt Kaneko, 1st Platoon
?, 2nd Platoon
2/Lt Sugimura, 3rd Platoon
2/Lt Nakamoto, 4th Platoon

The Field Hospital, North Sea Garrison

Miscellaneous units included a 34 man civilian radio construction crew that arrived aboard the *Kimakawa Maru* from Kiska on 10 March to install two radar stations near Chichagof Harbor, 21 men who arrived from Kiska in a submarine 27 April to construct barracks for air force personnel; the 11th Independent Wireless Platoon and a construction section which arrived on 25 November in the same convoy that brought in the 302nd Independent Engineer Company. A post office rounded the total of the miscellaneous units.

Appendix F

Japanese Weapons Captured on Attu

(1/02/2015)

The Americans held a quantity and quality superiority in weapons over the Japanese. Examples of Japanese weapons captured on Attu were shipped Aberdeen Proving Grounds, MD, for evaluation by the Foreign Materiel Branch. Evidence of tests on these and other captured weapons showed that American weapons were in many cases superior. For example, while the Japanese employed the 6.5-mm Arisaka bolt-action as their standard infantry rifle, the Americans armed their infantry with the Garand M1 30-cal semiautomatic rifle.

Rifles

Arisaka Type 97: The Japanese used two versions of the standard issue Arisaka rifle on Attu. The Type 97 (also referred to as the Type 38 or 38th Year Rifle) was a 6.5-mm (.256 cal), bolt action rifle fed by a 5-round internal magazine based on the German Mauser design. The 6.5-mm round, however, lacked hitting power due to its small size and low muzzle velocity.

Arisaka Type 99: Based on experiences in China and Manchuria, the Japanese re-chambered the Arisaka to accept the 7.7-mm (.303-cal) round. The resulting Type 99 (manufactured between 1939 and 1945 also had an internal magazine that held five rounds and an effective range of 440 meters (481 yards). Both rifles were equipped with a sword type bayonet and could be equipped with a 2.5 powered telescopic sight for sniping. The Japanese extensively used the Arisaka to snipe at Americans from long distances. Although the Japanese planned to replace the Type 97 with the Type 99, it never occurred due to the demands of the war. A number of brand new Type 99s were found in their packing crates on Attu.

The Arisaka rifle was inferior to the Garand M1 rifle, the standard Infantry weapon of U.S. troops. The M1 was a semi-automatic, gas operated 30-cal rifle that accommodated eight rounds in an internal magazine that was clip fed. While the Japanese soldier had to manipulate a bolt in order to chamber a round, his American counterpart simply

pulled the trigger. The gas from the firing round drove the bolt back, ejecting the spent cartridge and chambering a new round. When the last round fired, the clip exited the chamber with a decided ping. A full clip was then inserted by holding back the bolt and pushing it in.

A few British Enfield rifles were also found.

Machineguns

Nambu Type 96: The Japanese employed the Nambu Type 96 in large numbers on Attu. The Type 96 was an air cooled, gas operated 6.5-mm light machine gun, with a top loading, curved 30-round magazine. Its light weight of 20 pounds permitted it to be used as an assault automatic rifle when equipped with a bi-pod. It featured a bayonet mount and could be equipped with a telescope for long range sniping. It had a muzzle velocity of 2,410 feet per second and a rate of fire of 550 rounds per minute with an effective range of 1,640 yards and a maximum range of 4,374 yards.

Nambu Type 99: The Japanese also employed the Nambu Type 99, similar to the Type 96, but chambered for the 7.7-mm round. The top-loading, curved magazine held 30 rounds. The Japanese appeared to employ the Type 99 in greater numbers than the Type 96 and used both for long-range sniper fire, firing in bursts of three to four rounds at long-range with the aid of the telescopic sight. One light machinegun was assigned to each infantry squad.

The Americans employed the Type 96 and 99 equivalent, the Browning M1919 belt fed, air cooled 30-cal light machinegun throughout the war. The weapon was heavier than its Japanese counterpart, weighing 31 pounds. It had a rate of fire of 400 to 600 rounds per minute and an effective range of 1,500 yards. Unlike the magazine fed Japanese light machine guns, the belt fed Browning allowed for longer rates of fire before the ammunition box where the rounds were stored was exhausted. Normally, a crew of two, gunner and loader, could operate the M1919, but in practice it required two

ammo bearers. The four men divided the load, which consisted of the gun, the tripod mount, tool kit and ammunition contained in a heavy-duty steel water proof container with folding handles. Two M1919s were authorized in the weapons platoon at company level. They were used to lay down a base of fire during the assault and defensive fires in the defense. Unlike the Japanese light machinegun, the M1919 was difficult to fire on the move because of its weight and type of construction. A lighter weight bi-pod was also used for easier handling and allowed the gun to be fired from the prone position. No provisions were made for mounting a telescopic scope, and unlike the Japanese, the Americans seldom used the M1919 for long range sniping.

The closest automatic weapon Americans had to the Japanese light machinegun was the M1918 Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) found in the rifle squads of the infantry platoons. Each squad was equipped with one or two of the weapons. Private First Class Joe Martinez, K Company, 3rd Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, earned the Medal of Honor as a BAR man. John Browning designed the 30-caliber weapon to fulfill a World War I need for an assault weapon that could be slung over the shoulder and fired from the hip. A twenty round bottom loading magazine held the ammunition. The weapon weighed 19 pounds and featured a bipod which provided stability when fired from the prone position from a prepared position. The BAR could be used in the defense and in the assault. It fired 500 to 650 rounds per minute and had an effective range of 1,500 yards.

The Arisaka Type 92: The Arisaka Type 92, 7.7-mm (.303-cal), gas operated, air cooled heavy machinegun was found in large numbers on Attu. Produced from 1932 to 1941, it became the standard heavy machine gun of the Japanese Army. Copied after the French Hotchkiss M1914, it loaded a 30-round strip of cartridges from the side, which frequently jammed. In addition, it slowed the rate of fire due to the requirement to frequently change to another strip. Its effective rate of fire was 200 rounds per minute and cyclic rate of 450 rounds. The tripod mounted heavy machine gun was carried by the weapons squad in the infantry platoon. It earned the name "Woodpecker" because of its distinctive sound. A crew of three operated

the Type 99, which had an effective range of 1,500 yards and maximum range of 4,587 yards. In addition to open sights, the machinegun could be equipped with a telescopic sight.

Grenade launcher

Type 89: The Japanese also employed the Type 89, 50-mm (1.96 inches) grenade thrower or launcher in large numbers on Attu. Official and unofficial accounts consistently refer to incoming mortars rounds when in actuality they were from the grenade thrower. American troops could tell when a round was launched by the tell-tale pop the round made leaving the tube. Although the Japanese Army was equipped with mortars, none outside of a number of barrage mortars used for air defense were found on Attu. The Type 89 fired high explosive, smoke and pyrotechnic shells. It featured a rifled barrel, a bubble leveling device on the right side, a line engraved on the barrel for sighting the launcher and a knurled knob for raising or lowering the firing pin: the higher the pin was up, the shorter the range. The launcher had an effective range of 650 meters (710 yards) for high explosive shells. The high explosive shell exploded on impact. A fragmentation grenade could also be fired with a timed fuse delay. In the hands of skilled operators, it proved very accurate. A crew of three could discharge 25 rounds per minute. The Americans and their allies referred to it as the knee mortar due to its curved base plate. Attempts to fire it from the upper leg resulted in injury and sometimes broken bones due its heavy recoil. It weighed 10.25 pounds and could easily be carried slung over the shoulder.

Anti-aircraft Weapons

The Osaka Type 98 20mm Anti-Aircraft Machine Cannon: A relatively large number of these Japanese anti-aircraft cannon, based on the French 13.2mm Hotchkiss machine gun and the Swiss Oerlikon 20mm cannon, were found on Attu. The gun was used in a dual purpose role with a typical 20-round clip containing one tracer round and one high-explosive round. Two abandoned guns with a plentiful supply of ammunition were found on the high ground overlooking the left flank to the Massacre Bay landing beach. If manned, they could have caused considerable damage to the landing operations. It was mounted on a split trail wagon wheel type carriage for transport. An experienced

crew could set it up for firing within three minutes. It fired a maximum of 300 rounds per minute and had a range of 5,000 meters (5468) horizontal and 3,500 (3827) vertical. Eleven were found on Kiska.

The Type 88 75mm Dual Purpose Gun: This gun was employed on Attu in a dual-purpose role. It had an effective range of 6400 meters (21,000 feet) for air defense and 13,800 meters (15,000 yards) for surface fire. A good crew could fire 15-20 rounds per minute. It fired a 6.5 kilogram (14.3 pound) high explosive round with a muzzle velocity of 720 meters (2362 feet) per second. A crew of 12 operated the gun, although four could if needed. The Type 88 could be turned 380 degrees and elevated from minus seven to plus 85 degrees. The gun was also equipped with simple telescope sighting device and a correctional apparatus for calculating the aim-offset point. The mounting also held a hand setting fuse-setting machine which allowed the round to be set to explode at a predetermined altitude or ground distance. The round could also be set for impact detonation. Range was determined by an optical range finder. The Japanese built around 2,500 and they were in service from 1927 to 1945 as the standard Japanese Army anti-aircraft weapons. The gun could be moved when mounted on two rubber tires and emplaced by unfolding five spider legs which provided a stable, adjustable base. Eleven were captured in the Holtz Bay area, five on the East Arm and six on the West Arm. An additional five-gun battery plus one gun set up in a firing position were captured in Chichagof Harbor. Twenty-two were later found on Kiska. The guns proved effective against the Americans in the Holtz Bay area and were used by them against the Japanese in turn following capture. The Japanese gun emplacement measured 18 by 20 feet in the inside diameter with the outside diameter being 37 to 44 feet. The guns were dug into the ground at a depth of five feet which allowed the barrel to just clear the revetment when in a horizontal position. Three to five small dugouts, four feet wide and five feet deep, were located along the walls, which were used mainly for storage of ready ammunition. Tunnels ran from the gun positions of living quarters nearby, which were dug into the ground with only the roof showing. Usually, each gun had its own set of quarters. The 25 by 11 foot quarters sometimes had a kitchen and latrine attached.

Anti-Tank

Type 94 37mm Anti-tank Mountain Guns: Only a few of these anti-tank mountain guns were found on Attu, notably one encountered during the assault on Clevesy Pass in the saddle at the junction with Sarana Valley. Nine were later found on Kiska. The Type 94 was based on a German design and was obsolete by World War II despite having entered service in 1936 and ineffective against American armor. The Japanese employed it as a direct fire weapon on Attu. The weapon was mounted on wagon type wheels and presented a low-profile and could be fired in the prone positions. An armored shield provided protection to the firing crew. Normally, four were assigned to an Infantry regiment and operated by a crew of eleven. A well trained crew could fire 30 rounds a minute. The Type 94 fired a high explosive anti-tank round out to a range of 4,500 meters (4,900 yards) with an effective range of 2,870 meters. Despite its ineffectiveness against American armor, the Japanese employed the weapons through the war for lack of a better anti-tank gun. Some 3,400 were produced. General Buckner donated one to Alaska. It is currently on display at the Alaska State Museum.

The American M3 37mm anti-tank gun was superior to the Japanese Type 94. It was the first anti-tank gun fielded by the U.S. It could be pulled by a jeep or manhandled by the crew. First introduced in 1940, it soon proved ineffective against German armor and was replaced by the British developed 57mm anti-tank gun. It remained, however, the standard infantry anti-tank gun in the Asiatic-Pacific Theater during the war due to a limited Japanese armored threat. Each infantry regiment had twelve and each battalion had four authorized. The M3 was also authorized in the division combat engineer, headquarters and maintenance companies. The Americans employed the 37mm anti-tank gun in the direct fire role using high explosive and canister rounds. A telescopic sight and the elevation and traverse wheels were mounted on the left side making it possible for one gunner to fire the weapon. The Americans on Attu used it to snipe Japanese positions from long ranges.

Field Artillery

Type 92, 70mm Light Howitzers: The Americans found one of these light howitzers in the Holtz Bay area and emplacements for three others. Two were later found on Kiska. The small howitzer with a spit trail carriage was specially designed for the Infantry and intended for offensive operations. It could also provide harassing fire in the defense and be used as a mortar. It fired a 3.75-kg (8.3-lb) high explosive round with a range of 7,500 yards and provided the Japanese with the capability of firing from reverse slopes. The light-weight gun (212-kg or 465-lb) mounted hard rim wheels could be easily man handled over rough terrain by its crew of ten, which was often halved. It fired a semi-fixed high explosive shell in which the propellant powder charge and range could be adjusted by inserting circular powder envelopes of oiled blue paper. It also had the capability of firing armored-piercing, shrapnel and smoke rounds. The Model 92 entered service in 1932 and was in wide use by 1941 and proved a formidable weapon in the offensive, providing devastation fire at close range.

Type 41 75mm Mountain Guns: Four of these mountain guns were captured on Attu. The Japanese Army widely used the gun and usually employed it in a single gun direct fire role using open sights to assist the infantry. The Type 41 was based on the German Krupp M.08 mountain gun and was introduced into the inventory in 1908. Four were found on Attu, two on Moore Ridge overlooking Holtz Bay where their 7,022-mm (7.679 yard) range covered the East and West Arm beaches and two in Jarmin Pass. They were dug into the ground and covered with a plank and sod roof that provided overhead cover and concealment. Nine were found on Kiska. The approximately 1000-pound gun, mounted on wagon type spoke wheels, could be broken down into six parts for transport by six horses with a seventh horse carrying the ammunition. Since there were no horses on Attu, the Japanese had to use vehicles and manpower to get the guns into position. Four were normally assigned to each infantry regiment and required a crew of thirteen to man it. The gun fired various high explosive shells ranging from 9.9 pounds up to 13.24 pounds. It was also capable of firing armored piercing, shrapnel, hollow charge, smoke, illuminating, incendiary and gas shells.

The Alaska Aviation Heritage Museum has one on display, probably captured on Kiska. The Lewis Army Museum near Tacoma, WA, has another captured on Attu.

The Americans employed the M2A1 105mm Howitzer which was superior in firepower and range. It could be towed by truck or tracked vehicle. The M2A1 entered production in 1941 as a replacement for the World War II 75mm howitzer. It fired a 33-pound shell with a range of 12,000 yards and lob a shell behind a ridge or other natural feature at a high angle at a target five to seven miles away, landing them on reverse slopes of ridges and hills. It could also be used in the direct fire role. A shield protected the crew. The 5,000-pound field piece was manned by a crew of eight including loader, gunner, aimer and ammunition chief. It fired a variety of shells including high explosive, armor-piercing, starburst and phosphorous with a maximum rate of fire of 10 rounds per minute and a sustained rate of 3 rounds. Some 10,200 were produced and saw service through the Vietnam War.

Appendix G

Attu Memorials

Japanese

The Japanese placed four memorials on the crest of Engineer Hill after the war. The largest is the 18-foot, seven ton titanium star-shaped “Peace Memorial” on the crest of Engineer Hill fabricated by Sumitomo Metals Industry, Ltd. The memorial was part of a Japanese overall effort to honor all who lost their lives in the Pacific during World War II. The Alaska Air National Guard airlifted the components for assembly. American and Japanese representatives conducted a joint dedication ceremony July 1, 1987. The inscription reads:

In Memory of All Those Who Sacrificed
Their Lives in the Islands and
Seas of the North Pacific
And in Dedication to World Peace

Constructed by the Japanese Government of Japan
In Cooperation With
The Government of the United States
On 1 July 1987

A second memorial to Lieutenant Ohmura, a Japanese Army medical officer, assigned the 6th Independent Mountain Artillery Unit, was apparently placed nearby by family members. The memorial contains his photograph. Mayumi Ito, a volunteer with the Anchorage Museum, was able to translate his name and make out what appeared to be his biography and one or two poems from the hard-to-read photograph of the memorial.

The third memorial consists of a stone mounted on a concrete base a short distance from the “Peace Memorial.” Mayumi Ito translated the first line to read: “Memorial for Japanese People who died in the War.” The second line provides the date 1953. The third line translates Government of Japan.

The fourth memorial was placed near the others in July 1978. The inscription translated by Mayumi Ito reads, “The Response of Souls,” “The Governor of Hokkaido, Naochiro Dogakinai.” The small memorial consists of a bronze plaque covering a vault containing coins apparently left there over the years.

Colonel Yamazaki

In an acknowledgment of his bravery, the Americans erected two interpretive signs near where Colonel Yamazaki fell, one on Engineer Hill and the other on the lower slopes of Clevesy Pass where Colonel Yamazaki is reputed to have fallen, sword in hand. The Commander, 17th Naval District, apparently ordered the one at Clevesy Pass replaced with a bronze plaque mounted on a stone foundation in 1950. The inscription on plaque reads “Attu Island, World War II, 1943.” Yamazaki, a Colonel in the Japanese Army, was killed in action near this point. Colonel Yamazaki commanded all Japanese Troops on the Island. The plaque is located at Clevesy Pass, Engineer Hill. The rest is illegible, except for a few words and a set of coordinates (5861370 646580), due to defacement and wear. The words “Commander, 17th Naval District” can be faintly made out. Since the shape of the plaque and its concrete base are identical to the one at Chichagof Harbor, it was probably placed in 1950.

Attu Village

Two memorials commemorate the former Attu Village site in Chichagof Harbor. In 1950, the Commander, 17th Naval District ordered the replacement of an interpretive sign with bronze plaque mounted on a concrete base identical to the one to Colonel Yamazaki. The inscription, the same as the one on the interpretive sign, reads:

In this village the Aleuts made their homes. It consisted of about nine buildings to house the population and Russian Orthodox Church. The village had a priest and a school teacher. The school teacher was also the village doctor. Erected by order of Commander, Seventh Naval District 1950.

The Aleut Corporation brought the second memorial honoring those who had suffered captivity in Japan to Coast Guard LORAN Station Attu for the June 1993 World War II remembrance ceremony. It consisted of a wooden base on which steel placards had been glued. The larger one consisted of an etched scene of Attu Village. Two panels on each side listed the names of the 22 Attu villagers who



Photo App-1: This photograph of veterans standing near the Japanese Peace Memorial atop Engineer Hill was taken during a June 1993 commemorative ceremony attended by Battle of Attu veterans, U.S Military representatives, delegations from the Aleut Corporation and Japanese Government. The latter included Colonel Yamazaki's son. (VFW Magazine)



Photo App-2: Memorial to Medical Officer Ohmura taken June 1993. The memorial had badly deteriorated due to snow melt when the author visited the site in 2013 and was missing during a subsequent visit in 2016. (VFW Magazine)



Photo App-3: Japanese stone memorial near "Peace Memorial" that commemorates the visit of a Japanese delegation in 1953 to supervise the cremation of the remains of Japanese soldiers recovered from Attu and reinterred in the Fort Richardson National Cemetery. (Photo by author)



Left: Photo App-4: The author took this photograph during a visit to Engineer Hill in June 2013. The vault held a letter dated September 9, 1991, with the typed names and addresses of archeologists from the Alaska regions of the National Park Service and Fish and Wildlife Services stating they had removed the contents for preservation with plans to return them in 1992. (Photo by author)



Photo App-5: The Yamazaki plaque is located at the foot of Clevesy Pass beside the road leading up to the top of Engineer Ridge. When the author first visited the site in 1986, there was no stanchion and chain surrounding it. Coast Guard personnel apparently installed them. The memorial was in a good state of repair at the time of a Valor Tours visit in June 2013. (Photo by author)

died during captivity and the 25 who survived. A fourth panel contained the following inscription:

On Sunday June 7, 1942, as the Attu villagers returned from church, the hills came alive with Japanese troops, sliding down the steep snow covered mountains, firing their weapons. The villagers gathered their families, barricading themselves in their homes. Foster Jones, the radio operator smashed the radio, and was later killed. His

school teacher wife, Etta Jones, and the remaining villagers were transported for internment to prisoner camp near Otaru, Hokkaido, Japan, in the hold of a freighter. Seventeen would die in captivity and none of the villagers would see Attu Village again, for upon repatriation, they were relocated to Atka.

Coast Guard personnel later took it to the village site and mounted it near the site of the school house. Aleutian weather took its toll and the



Photo App-6: Attu Village plaque, August 1986. (Photo by author)



Photo App-8: Memorial plaque for Attu village provided by the Alaska Veterans Museum. (Photo by author)

Photo App-7: Alice Petrivelli, President, Aleut Corporation, stands beside a Coast Guardsman holding the original Aleut Village memorial during the June 1993 remembrance ceremony. (VFV Magazine)



steel plate became badly worn and dropped off the wooden mount which had split. Colonel Suellyn W. Novak, USAF Retired, and director of the Alaska Veterans Museum in Anchorage, Alaska, visited the village in 2010 and decided that a replacement was needed. She arranged for funding and the fabrication of a new one consisting of cast bronze plaques bolted onto a treated yellow cedar board. The Coast Guard delivered the new memorial to Shemya Air Station in August 2012 aboard a C-130 where it was taken by a helicopter from the cutter *Munro* to the Attu Village site for reinstallation.

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