

The Senior Marine Commanders

The three senior Marine commanders on Kyushu were seasoned combat veterans and well versed in combined operations—qualities that enhanced Marine Corps contributions to the complex occupation duties and relations with the U.S. Sixth Army.

Major General Harry Schmidt commanded V Amphibious Corps. Schmidt was 59, a native of Holdrege, Nebraska, and a graduate of Nebraska State Normal College. He was commissioned in 1909 and in 1911 reported to Marine Barracks, Guam. Following a series of short tours in the Philippines and at state-side posts, he spent most of World War I on board ship. Interwar assignments included Quantico, Nicaragua, Headquarters Marine Corps, and China, where he served as Chief of Staff of the 2d Marine Brigade. Returning to Headquarters in 1938, Schmidt first served with the Paymaster's Department and then as assistant to the Commandant. In 1943, he assumed command of the 4th Marine Division which he led during the Roi-Namur and Saipan Campaigns. Given the command of the V Amphibious Corps a year later, he led the unit during the assault and capture of Tinian and Iwo Jima. For his accomplishment during the campaigns, Schmidt received three Distinguished Service Medals. Ordered back to the United States following occupational duties in Japan, he assumed command of the Marine Training and Replacement Command, San Diego. General Schmidt died in 1968.

Major General LeRoy P. Hunt commanded the 2d Marine Division. Hunt was 53, a native of Newark, New Jersey, and a graduate of the University of California. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in 1917 and served with great distinction with the 5th

MajGen Harry Schmidt



MajGen Leroy P. Hunt

Marines during World War I, receiving the Navy Cross and Distinguished Service Cross for repeated acts of heroism. Postwar assignments were varied, ranging from sea duty to commanding officer of the Western Mail Guard Detachment and work with the Work Projects Administration's Matanuska Colonization venture in Alaska. Following a short tour in Iceland, he

MajGen Thomas E. Bourke



was given command of the 5th Marines which he led in the seizure and defense of Guadalcanal. As the 2d Marine Division's assistant division commander he participated in mopping-up operations on Saipan and Tinian and in the Okinawa Campaign. Appointed division commander, he led the division in the occupation of Japan and for a period was Commanding General, I Army Corps. Returning to the United States, Hunt assumed duties as Commanding General, Department of Pacific and then Commanding General, FMFLant. General Hunt died in 1968.

Major General Thomas E. Bourke commanded the 5th Marine Division. Bourke was 49, a native of Robinson, Maryland, and a graduate of St. Johns College. He was commissioned in 1917 after service in the Maryland National Guard along the Mexican border. While enroute to Santo Domingo for his first tour, he and 50 recruits were diverted to St. Croix, becoming the first U. S. troops to land on what had just become

the American Virgin Islands. Post-World War I tours included service at Quantico, Parris Island, San Diego, and Headquarters Marine Corps. He also served at Pearl Harbo; was commanding officer of the Legation Guard in Managua, Nicaragua; saw sea duty on board the battleship *West Virginia* (BB 48); and commanded the 10th Marines. Following the Guadalcanal and Tarawa campaigns, General Bourke was assigned as the V Amphibious Corps artillery officer for the invasion of Saipan. He next trained combined Army-Marine artillery units for the XXIV Army Corps, then preparing for the Leyte operation. With Leyte secured, he assumed command of the 5th Marine Division which was planning for the invasion of Japan. After the war's sudden end, the division landed at Sasebo, Kyushu, and assumed occupation duties. With disbandment of the 5th Marine Division, General Bourke became Deputy Commander and Inspector General of FMFPac. General Bourke died in 1978.

Okinawa, distributed to various Navy and Marine Corps activities in Japan, or shipped to Guam on the carrier *Point Cruz* (CVE 119). Prior to being hoisted on board, the planes made the shore to ship movement by Japanese barge equipped with a crane and operated by a Japanese crew. It was reported with amazement that "not a single plane was scratched." A small number of obsolete planes were stricken and their parts salvaged. On 20 June, the 737 remaining officers and men of MAG-31, led by Lieutenant Colonel John P. Condon, boarded the attack transport *San Saba* (APA-232) and sailed for San Diego. The departure of MAG-31 marked the end of Marine occupation activities in northern Japan.

Sasebo-Nagasaki Landings

In the period immediately following the conclusion of the Luzon Campaign, the U.S. Sixth Army, under the command of General Walter Krueger, was engaged in planning and preparing for the invasion of Kyushu, the southernmost Japanese home island. The operation envisioned an assault by three Army corps

and one Marine amphibious corps, totaling 11 Army and three Marine divisions, under the command of General Krueger. After more than three years, the major land, sea, and air components of the Central and Southwest Pacific forces were to merge in the initial ground assault against Japan itself.

In early August, with the destruction of Hiroshima and the Soviet Union's entry into the war, the possibility of an early surrender increased. Although planning for the invasion continued, General MacArthur directed Krueger to also plan and prepare for the occupation of Kyushu and western Honshu should the Japanese Government capitulate. General Krueger's initial plan for the occupation called for V Amphibious Corps, commanded by Major General Harry Schmidt, to land the 2d and 5th Marine Divisions in the Sasebo-Nagasaki area on 4 September. These landings were to be reinforced later by a 3d Marine Division seaborne or overland movement to the Fukuoka-Shimonoseki area. Major General Innis P. Swift's I Corps, consisting of the 25th, 33d, 98th, and 6th Infantry Divisions, was to

land three days later in the Wakayama area of western Honshu and establish control over the Osaka-Kyoto-Kobe area. The X Corps, composed of the 41st and 24th Infantry Divisions and commanded by Major General Franklin C. Sibert, was scheduled to land in the Kure-Hiroshima area of western Honshu and on the island of Shikoku on 3 October.

On 14 August, the Sixth Army assumed operational control of V Amphibious Corps. After receiving official word of Japanese acceptance of the surrender demands the following day, the Corps' three divisions were informed that they should be prepared for an occupational landing in early September, and that "all units were to be combat loaded and alerted to the possibility of appreciable resistance to the occupation." The Fifth Fleet, under Admiral Raymond A. Spruance, would be responsible for collecting, transporting, and landing V Corps and other scattered elements of Krueger's army. Because of the wide dispersion of assault shipping and the magnitude of the minesweeping problem, the fleet could not move major units to



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In a conference held on board the Mt. McKinley prior to the landing, BGen William W. Rogers, V Amphibious Corps Chief of Staff, left, stresses a point to his interpreter, Maj F. D. Wolf, as RAdm Keichi Ishii, Chief of Staff of Sasebo Naval Station and his vice chief locate a point under discussion.

their targets simultaneously and landing dates would therefore have to be postponed.

At the time of surrender there were an estimated 20,000 allied prisoners of war in Kyushu and western Honshu. Sixth Army planners contemplated that recovery teams composed of American, Australian, and Dutch representatives would accompany the occupational forces and immediately evacuate prisoners in their respective zones. Following the surrender, the Japanese virtually freed all Allied prisoners by turning the prison camps over to them and allowing them freedom of movement. Taking full advantage of the situation, many former prisoners roamed the countryside at will, creating a situation that called for an immediate change in plans.

With the landing of the first American forces in Japan at the end of August, it became apparent that the evacuation of all Allied prisoners of war "must receive first priority as many of them were

in poor physical condition." The revised Sixth Army plan allowed the Eighth Army to extend its evacuation program to the west and to evacuate prisoners through Osaka to Tokyo until relieved by Fifth Fleet and Sixth Army units. Prisoners on Shikoku were to be ferried across the Inland Sea to the mainland and then transported by rail through Osaka to Tokyo. The Fifth Fleet and Sixth Army immediately organized two evacuation forces consisting of suitable landing craft, hospital ships, transports, Army contact teams, truck companies, and Navy medical personnel. One force, under the command of Rear Admiral Ralph S. Riggs, landed at Wakayama on 11 September and by the 15th had completed the processing of all prisoners in western Honshu, a total of 2,575 men. The other force, commanded by Rear Admiral Frank G. Fahrion, landed at atom-bombed Nagasaki, after Fifth Fleet mine sweepers had cleared the way, and by 22

September had evacuated all 9,000 remaining prisoners on Kyushu.

Preliminary examination revealed that there were no serious epidemics in the camps except for a few cases of typhoid and dysentery. Malnutrition was common and the most serious cases of beriberi and tuberculosis required immediate hospitalization. The initial processing revealed many instances of brutality. However, as it was reported at the time, "close questioning often disclosed that the prisoners had been guilty of breaking some petty but strict prison rule. A considerable number of the older men stated that the camp treatment, although extremely rugged, was on the whole not too bad. They expected quick punishment when caught for infraction of rules and got it. All complained of the food, clothing, housing, and lack of heating facilities." Except for a few stragglers, the release, medical examination, delousing, processing, and screening of Allied prisoners of war in southern Japan was completed on 23 September.

While the Eighth Army extended its hold over northern Japan, and the two evacuation forces rounded up and processed Allied prisoners, preparations for the Sixth Army's occupation of western Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu continued. The occupation area contained 55 percent of the total Japanese population, including half of the Japanese Army garrisoning the homeland, three of Japan's four major naval bases, all but two of its principal ports, two-thirds of all Japanese cities with a population in excess of 100,000, and three of its four main transportation centers. The island of Kyushu, which was to be largely a Marine occupation responsibility, supported a population of 10,000,000 spread amongst its 15,000 square miles of

mountainous terrain. The southern and eastern parts of the island were chiefly agricultural areas, producing large quantities of exportable rice and sweet potatoes. The northwestern half of the island contained almost all of southwestern Japan's coal fields, the nation's greatest pig iron and steel district, and many important shipyards, in addition to a host of other smaller industries.

On 1 September, Major General Harry Schmidt opened his command post on board the *Mt. McKinley* (AGC 7), flagship of Amphibious Group 4, off Maui in the Hawaiian Islands and sailed to join the 5th Division convoy, already enroute to Saipan. The remainder of V Corps' troops, including several Army engineer augmentation units, with the exception of rear echelons, continued loading and, on 3 September,

Marines of the 8th Service Regiment crowd the rail of their transport as its ties up to the dock at Sasebo Naval Base.

National Archives Photo 127-N-136032



departed Hawaii for Saipan on board 17 LSTs. Schmidt's forces also carried more than 300 tons of "Military Government" or relief supplies consisting of rice, soy beans, fats and oils, salt, canned fish, and medical equipment.

During the voyage to Saipan planning for the occupation continued in light of changes to the original concept of operations allowed by favorable reports of Japanese compliance with surrender terms in northern Japan and alterations in the troop list. However, every effort was made to salvage as much as possible of the content of the Olympic plans for the assault landing. On 5 September, the 3d Marine Division was deleted from the Corps' occupation force and the 32d Infantry Division substituted. To guard against possible treachery on the part of thousands of Japanese troops on bypassed islands in the Central Pacific, the Navy tasked the 3d Division, then on Guam, with preparing for any such eventuality. Meanwhile, the 2d Marine Division and additional Corps units began loading in the Marianas. "Someone at higher headquarters apparently made a gross error," noted Lieutenant Colonel Jacob G. Goldberg, the division's logistics officer. "For the first time since the war began we were assigned enough shipping to lift the entire division, and by entire division I mean 100% personnel and equipment. VAC was very much surprised that we were able to do this, and I freely admit it was a hell of a nervous strain on me up until the last ship was loaded."

Early on the morning of 13 September, the various transport groups rendezvoused at Saipan. The 2d Marine Division almost was loaded and the 32d Infantry Division on Luzon was preparing to move to staging areas at

Lingayen for loading on turnaround shipping of the 5th Marine Division. Because of continuing indications that the landings would be unopposed, the number of air and fire support ships assigned to accompany the transport groups was reduced.

The following day, General Schmidt held a conference of his subordinate commanders on board the *Mt. McKinley* to clarify plans for the operation. He stressed "the importance of maintaining firm, just, and dignified relations with the Japanese . . . [and] responsibilities of commanders of all echelons in following the rules of land warfare and the directives of higher authority."

In view of the cooperative attitude of the Japanese thus far, permission was requested and granted to send advance parties to Nagasaki and Sasebo. Their missions were "to facilitate smooth and orderly entry of U. S. forces into the Corps zone of responsibility by making contact with key Japanese civil and military authorities; to execute advance spot checks on compliance with demilitarization orders; and to ascertain such facilities for reception of our forces as condition and suitability of docks and harbors; adequacy of sites selected by map-reconnaissance for Corps installations; condition of airfields, roads, and communications."

The first party, led by Colonel Walter W. Wensinger, VAC operations officer, and consisting of key Corps and 2d Division staff officers flew via Okinawa to Nagasaki, arriving on 16 September. A second party of similar composition, but with underwater demolition teams and 5th Division personnel attached, left for Sasebo by high speed transport on 15th. After meeting with local officials, spot checking coastal defenses, and arranging for suitable bar-



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) 140484

Marines move from the naval base into Sasebo. From Sasebo 5th Division would move out into the countryside to ensure Japanese compliance with the surrender terms.

racks, warehouse, and command post sites, Colonel Wensinger and his staff proceeded by destroyer to Sasebo where they made preliminary arrangements for the 5th Division's arrival. On 20 September, the second reconnaissance party arrived at Sasebo where it was met by Wensinger's party, and completed preparations for the landing.

At dusk on 16 September, Transport Squadron 22 bearing the Corps headquarters and 5th Marine Division slipped out of Tanapag Harbor bound for Sasebo. The landing ships carrying elements of the 2d Marine Division left Saipan for Nagasaki the next day. During the eventful voyages, Marines received refresher training in military discipline and courtesy and got their initial briefs on the Japanese people, customs, and geography.

Early on 22 September, the transport squadron carrying Major General Thomas E. Bourke's 5th Marine Division and corps headquarters troops arrived off Sasebo Harbor. They were met by Colonel Wensinger and members of the advance party together with

Japanese pilots who were to guide the ships into their assigned berthing and docking areas. The advance party representatives were transferred to their respective unit command ships where they made their reports which required changes in billeting plans, making it necessary that 3d Battalion, 26th Marines remain afloat. At 0859, after Japanese pilots had directed the transports to safe berths in Sasebo's inner harbor, the 26th Marines, less the 3d Battalion, landed on beaches at the naval air station. Advancing rapidly inland, the Marines moved to areas tentatively selected at Saipan from aerial photographs and verified by the advance party. Unarmed Japanese naval guards on base installations, arms, and stores were relieved and Japanese guides arranged for by the advance party directed the Marines to pre-selected billeting areas. Ships carrying other elements of the division then moved to the Sasebo docks to begin general unloading. The shore party, reinforced by the 2d Battalion, 28th Marines, was ashore by 1500 and began cargo unloading opera-

tions which continued throughout the night.

The remainder of the 28th Marines, in division reserve, remained on board ship. The 1st Battalion, 27th Marines landed on the docks in late afternoon and moved out to occupy the regiment's assigned zone of responsibility. During the afternoon, Generals Bourke, Schmidt, and Krueger inspected the occupation's progress with tours of the naval station, city of Sasebo, and naval air station. Before troop unloading was suspended at dusk, 1st and 2d Battalions, 13th Marines had landed on beaches in the aircraft factory area; 5th Tank Battalion had come ashore at the air station; and the assistant division commander and his staff had established an advanced division command post at the Sasebo Fortress. The main division command post remained afloat to control unloading better. All units ashore established guard posts and security patrols, but the division's first night in Japan was uneventful.

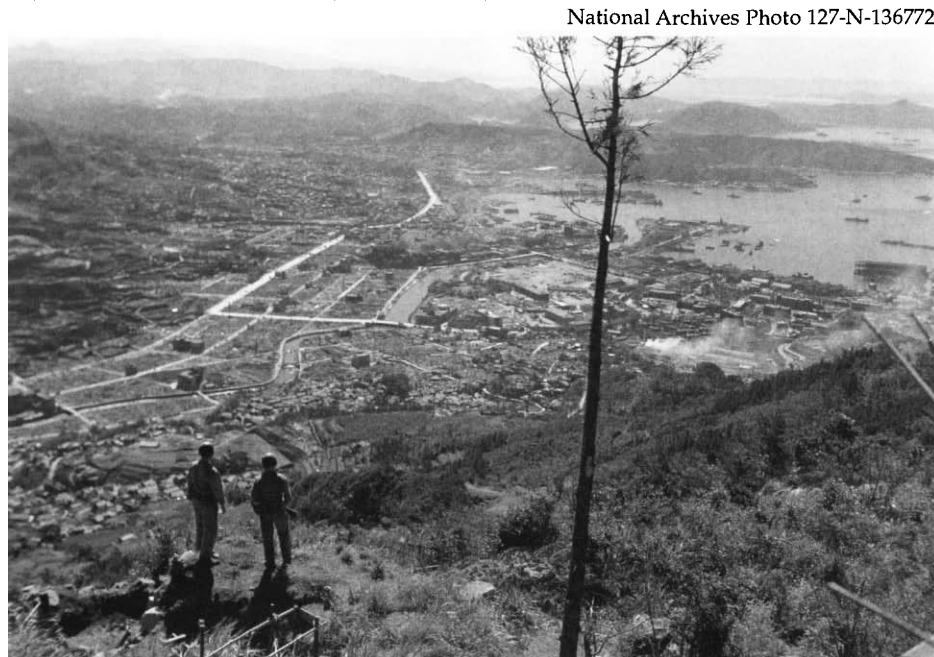
Sasebo, the home of the third largest naval base in Japan, was a city of more than 300,000 prior to 29 June 1945. That day, the city suffered its only B-29 raid of the war which destroyed a large portion of the city's shopping and business districts. The naval area was largely undamaged. More than 60,000 were made homeless and approximately 1,000 people were killed. The Marines saw very few of the remaining 166,000 inhabitants. "There wasn't a damn soul in town except those black coated policemen," General Ray A. Robinson later noted, "and there was one of those on every intersection. There wasn't another person in sight and it was very eerie." The few policemen and naval guards were described as being "acquiescent and docile

with little expression of emotion or show of interest."

The city was described as unbearable due to the stench rising from refuse piled high throughout. But as Bourke's Marines began the arduous task of cleaning up, Sasebo and the attitude of its inhabitants changed, as Marine Lieutenant Edwin L. Neville, Jr., later recalled:

Gradually young children would appear as scouts to see what the American were up to. Tremendous propaganda by the Japanese government about the treacherous Americans who would kill, mutilate, torture and rape the Japanese population if they ever won the war had instilled fear in the Japanese, who were petrified. What happened blew away these fears. The Marines gave the kids candy, chewing gum, food, whatever they had instantly at hand. They showered them with love and attention. The kids went back and told their folks that these were the good guys. Gradually, the citizens of

Two Marines of the 2d Battalion, 27th Marines, view the ruins of Sasebo while standing guard on a hill overlooking the suburb of Tahjma.



National Archives Photo 127-N-135624

Elements of the 1st Battalion, 27th Marines check their amphibious trucks following the six-and-a-half hour trip from Sasebo to secure Omura airfield. Later occupied by MAG-22, the airfield would become the main air base for southern Japan.

Sasebo returned from the countryside or from behind the shutters of their houses that still stood. . . . Moreover, many Japanese were starving, and the Marines fed them and gave them food to prepare at home. The change in attitude in a short period of time was startling.

On 23 September, as most of the

remaining elements of the 5th Division landed and General Bourke set up his command post ashore, sanitary squads prepared billeting areas and patrols started probing the immediate countryside. Company C, 1st Battalion, 27th Marines, was sent by amphibian trucks to Omura, about 22 miles southeast of Sasebo, to establish a security guard over the aircraft assembly facilities and repair 2 training base "to prevent further looting by Japs." Omura's 5,000 by 4,000 foot, "cow-pasture variety" airfield had been selected as the base of Marine air operations in southern Japan.

A reconnaissance party, led by Colonel Daniel W. Torrey, commanding officer of Marine Aircraft Group 22 (MAG-22), had landed and inspected the field on 12 September, and the 600-man advance echelon had flown in from Chimu on Okinawa six days later. The echelon found a considerable number of enemy planes ranging from beaten up "Willows," the Japanese version of the Boeing-Stearman Kaydet trainer, to combat aircraft consist-



National Archives Photo 127-N-136276

Marines of the 2d Division watch as a bulldozer clears an area for an LST to pull into shore at Nagasaki on the second morning after the division arrived.

ing of "Jacks," "Georges," and "Zekes," all lacking just enough parts to be inoperable. Twenty-one Corsairs of Marine Fighter Squadron 113 reached Omura on the 23d, after a two-day stop-over at Kanoya airfield on Kyushu due to bad weather. The rest of the group's flight echelon, composed

of Marine Fighter Squadrons 314 and 422 and Marine Night Fighter Squadron 543, arrived before the month was over. Each squadron was assigned two hangars, one for storing and servicing its planes and the other for quartering enlisted men and messing facilities. MAG-22's primary mission was

similar to that of MAG-31 at Yokosuka—surveillance flights in support of occupation operations.

As MAG-22 began flight operations from Omura and the 5th Division consolidated its hold on Sasebo, the second major element of Schmidt's amphibious corps landed in Japan. The early arrival of the ships of Transport Squadron 12 at Saipan, coupled with efficient staging and loading, had enabled planners to move the 2d Marine Division's landing date forward three days. When reports were received that the approaches to the originally selected landing beaches were mined but that Nagasaki's harbor was clear, the decision was made to land directly into the harbor area. At 1300 on 23 September, the 2d and 6th Marines, in full combat kit with fixed bayonets and full magazines, landed simultaneously on the east and west sides of the harbor. Nagasaki, as one Marine observed, "can be described very easily: It is a filthy, stinking, wrecked hole, and the sooner we get out the better we'll all like it."

Fields of rubble greeted Marines as they made their way into central Nagasaki, site of the second atomic bomb dropped on

Japan. The Nagasaki Medical Center was the only building left standing near ground zero.

Norman T. Hatch Collection, MCHC





Norman T. Hatch Collection, MCHC

The 8th Marines, the last 2d Marine Division elements to land, passed through Nagasaki on 24 September and moved northeast to Isahaya. Having seized control of the area the Marines raise the Stars and Stripes.

Relieving the Marine detachments from the cruisers *Biloxi* (CL 80) and *Wichita* (CA 45), which had been serving as security guards for the prisoner of war evacuation operations, the two regiments moved out swiftly to occupy the city. Their second objective was to cordon off the area devastated by the atomic bomb. As Lieutenant Colonel George L. Cooper later recalled: "Ground zero appeared to have been a rather large sports stadium, and all of us were categorically ordered to stay out of any place within pistol shot of this area. The result of this order was that everybody and his brother headed directly for ground zero as soon as they could, and in no time at all had picked the area clean of all moveable objects." Later, ships were brought alongside wharfs and docks to facilitate cargo handling, and unloading operations were well under way by nightfall. A quiet calm ruled the city, auguring a peaceful occupation.

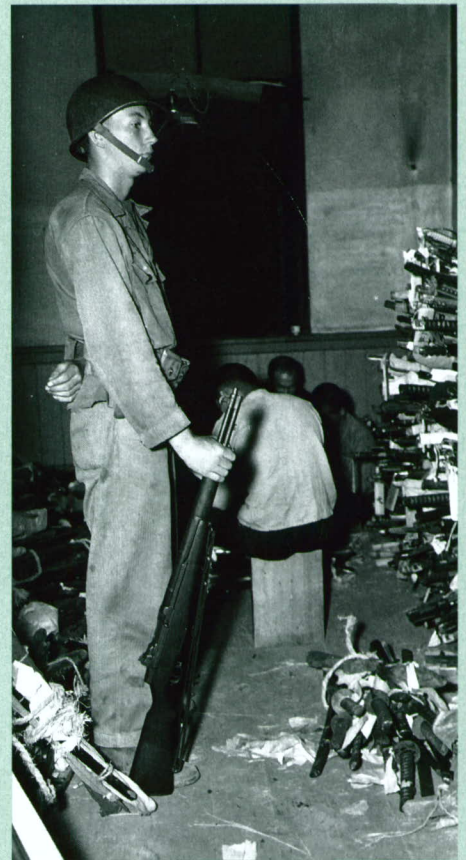
On 24 September, the rest of Major General LeRoy P. Hunt's 2d Division landed. The 8th and 10th

Marines, the last of the division's regiments to land, and Marine Observation Squadron (VMO) 2, passed through Nagasaki, moved northeast to Isahaya, and seized control of the area. Once it had completed its movement into Nagasaki and Isahaya, the 2d Marine Division dispatched reconnaissance patrols to check the road conditions from Isahaya through Omuta to Kumamoto. The same day, the corps commander arrived from Sasebo by destroyer to inspect the Nagasaki area. General Schmidt had established his command post ashore at Sasebo the previous day and taken command of the two Marine divisions. The only other major allied unit ashore on Kyushu, a reinforced Army task force that was occupying Kanoya airfield in the southernmost part of the island, was transferred to General Schmidt's command from the Far Eastern Air Force on 1 October. This force, built around the 32d Infantry Division's 1st Battalion, 127th Infantry, had flown into Kanoya on 3 September to secure an intermediate airstrip for stag-

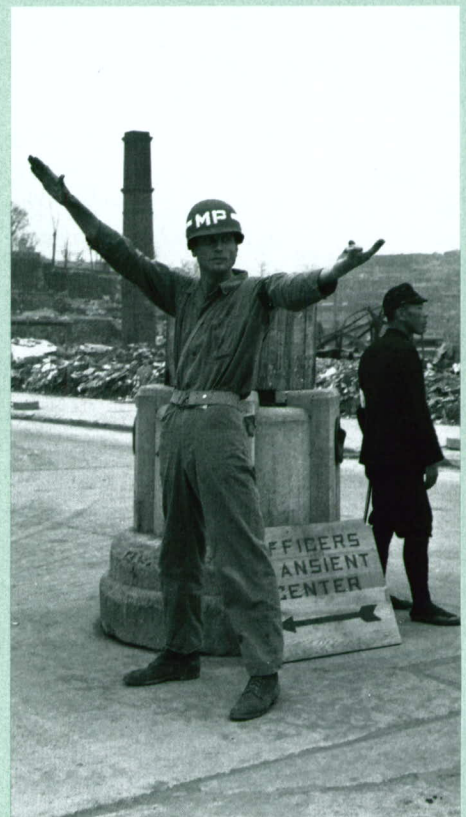
ing and refueling aircraft enroute from the Philippines and Okinawa to Tokyo.

General Krueger, satisfied with the progress of the occupation on Kyushu, assumed command of all forces ashore at 1000 on 24 September. The following day, Headquarters I Corps and the 33d Infantry Division, the first major elements of Sixth Army's other corps, arrived and began landing operations at Wakayama. Headquarters Sixth Army landed with Major General Swift's troops and on the 27th opened at Kyoto. At Sasebo, Nagasaki, and Wakayama, there was ample evidence that the occupation of southern Japan would be bloodless.

Like the Marines and sailors of General Clement's command at Yokosuka, those under the command of General Schmidt expected the worse. The only experience most had was in battle, during which the Japanese often refused to surrender and were annihilated. But like Clement's, Schmidt's forces were amazed at what they encountered. "We couldn't believe the Japanese could previously



Occupation duties included countryside surveillance patrols, supervising the inventory and destruction of ammunition, weapons, and other war materiel, and keeping order, all to insure strict adherence to surrender terms.





When not on duty, Marines on Kyushu either "sacked out" in make-shift barracks, visited one of the many tea houses while on liberty in bombed-out Sasebo or Nagasaki, organized basketball games, or attended a local Japanese wrestling match.



fight so ferociously and then be so completely subservient, without a murmur," Brigadier General Joseph L. Stewart later recalled. "Not once did I see any Japanese who acted or looked with disrespect toward occupation forces . . . We were overwhelmingly surprised by the cooperative reception we had from the Japanese."

Kyushu Occupation

The V Amphibious Corps zone of occupation comprised the entire island of Kyushu and Yamaguchi Prefecture on the western tip of Honshu. After the 2d and 5th Marine Divisions had landed, General Schmidt's general plan was for Major General Hunt's 2d Marine Division to expand south of the city of Nagasaki and assume control of Nagasaki, Kumamoto, Miyazaki, and Kagoshima Prefectures. In the meantime, Major General Bourke's 5th Marine Division was to expand east to the prefectures of Saga, Fukuoka, Oita, and Yamaguchi. Bourke's troops were to be relieved in the Fukuoka, Oita, and Yamaguchi areas with the arrival of sufficient elements of Major General William H. Gill's veteran 32d Infantry Division.

Preliminary plans for the occupation of Japan had contemplated the establishment of a formal allied military government, similar to that in operation in Germany, coupled with the direct supervision of the disarmament and demobilization of the Japanese Armed Forces. However, during the course of discussions with enemy emissaries in Manila, radical modifications of these plans were made "based on the full cooperation of the Japanese and [including] measures designed to avoid incidents which might result in renewed conflict."

Instead of instituting direct mil-

itary rule, occupation force commanders were to supervise the execution of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers' directives to the Japanese government, keeping in mind MacArthur's policy of using, but not supporting, the government. Enemy military forces were to be disarmed and demobilized under their own supervision, and the progressive occupation of assigned areas by Allied troops was to be accomplished as Japanese demobilization was completed. The Japanese government and its armed forces were to shoulder the chief administrative and operational burden of disarmament and demobilization.

The infantry regiment, and division artillery operating as infantry, was to be "the chief instrument of demilitarization and control. The entire plan for the imposition of the terms of surrender was based upon the presence of infantry regiments in all the prefectures within the Japanese homeland." Within the Sixth Army zone, occupational duties were fairly standardized. The division of responsibilities was based upon the boundaries of the prefectures so that the existing Japanese governmental structure could be used. The Sixth Army assigned a number of prefectures to each corps proportionate to the number of troops available. The corps, in turn, assigned a specific number of prefectures to a division. Regiments, usually, were given responsibility for a single prefecture. In the 5th Marine Division zone of responsibility, however, the size of certain prefectures, the large civilian population, and the tactical necessities of troop deployment combined to force modifications of the general scheme of regimental responsibility for a single prefecture.

The regiment's method of car-

rying out its occupational mission varied little between zones and units whether Army or Marine. As a corps extended its zone of responsibility, advance parties, composed of specialized staff officers from higher headquarters and the unit involved, were sent into areas to be occupied. Liaison was established with local Japanese civil and military authorities who provided the parties with information on transportation and harbor facilities, inventories of arms and supplies, and the location of dumps and installations. With this information in hand, the regiment then moved into a bivouac area in or near its zone of responsibility. Reconnaissance patrols consisting of an officer and a rifle squad were sent out to verify the location of reported military installations and check inventories of war materiel and also to search for any unreported facilities and materiel caches. The regimental commander then divided his zone into battalion areas, and battalion commanders could, in turn, assign their companies specific sectors of responsibility. Sanitation details preceded the troops into the areas to oversee the preparation of barracks and messing facilities, since many of the installations to be occupied were in a deplorable condition and insect-ridden.

The infantry company or artillery battery thus became the working unit which actually accomplished the destruction or transfer of war materiel and the demobilization of Japanese Armed Forces. Company commanders were empowered to seize military installations within the company zone and, using Japanese military personnel not yet demobilized and laborers obtained through the local Japanese Home Ministry representative, either destroy or turn over to the Home Ministry all materiel within the installation.



National Archives Photo 127-N-137352

BGen Ray A. Robinson, center left, his staff and other Allied officers meet with local officials before assuming control of the Fukuoka zone of occupation. A geisha house was taken over to provide headquarters and billeting space for Robinson's troops.

All war materiel was divided into five categories and was to be disposed of according to SCAP Ordnance and Technical Division directives. The categories were: that to be destroyed or scrapped, such as explosives and armaments not needed for souvenirs or training purposes; that to be used for allied operations, such as telephones, radios, and vehicles; that to be returned to the Japanese Home Ministry, which encompassed food, fuel, clothing, lumber, and medical supplies; that to be issued as trophies; and that to be shipped to the United States as trophies or training gear.

The hazardous job of disposing of explosive ordnance was to be handled by the Japanese with a minimum of American supervision. Explosives were either burned in approved areas, sealed in place if stored in tunnels, or dumped at sea—the latter being the preferred method. Because of the large quantity of ammunition to be disposed of on Kyushu, both divisions would experience difficulties. Japanese shipping was not available in sufficient strength for

dumping the ammunition at sea and the large ammunition could not be blown up as there were no suitable areas in which to detonate it safely. Metal items declared surplus were to be rendered ineffective, by Japanese labor, and turned over to the Japanese as scrap for peacetime civilian uses. Food items and other nonmilitary stocks were to be returned to the Japanese for the relief of the local civilian population.

While local police were given the responsibility of maintaining law and order and enforcing SCAP democratization decrees, Allied forces were to maintain a constant surveillance over Japanese methods of government. Intelligence and military government personnel, working with the occupying troops, were tasked with stamping out any hint of a return to militarism, looking for evidence of evasion or avoidance of the surrender terms, and detecting and suppressing movements considered detrimental to the interests of allied forces. Known or suspected war criminals were to be apprehended and sent to

Tokyo for processing and possible arraignment before an allied tribunal.

In addition, occupation forces were responsible for insuring the smooth processing of hundreds of thousands of military personnel and civilians returning from Japan's now defunct Empire. Repatriation centers would be established at Kagoshima, Hario near Sasebo, and Hakata near Fukuoka. Each incoming soldier or sailor would be sprayed with DDT, examined and inoculated for typhus and smallpox, provided with food, and transported to his final destination in Japan. Both line and medical personnel were assigned to supervise the Japanese-run centers. At the same time thousands of Korean and Chinese prisoners and conscript laborers had to be collected and returned to their homelands. In the repatriation operations, Japanese vessels and crews would be used to the fullest extent possible to conserve Allied manpower and allow for an accelerated program of postwar demobilization.

This pattern of progressive

Oldest Marine on Kyushu

The strangest story to come out of the division's occupation of Northern Kyushu concerned a Marine, but not a member of the 5th Division. He was 82-year-old Edward Zillig, who served as a Marine at the turn of the century.

Born in Switzerland, Zillig immigrated to the United States when he was three years old. Having something of a wonderlust, he joined the Marine Corps in 1888 at Philadelphia. As a member of the Marine detachment on board Commodore George Dewey's flagship, the USFS *Olympia*, he headed the 12-man reconnaissance patrol which landed in Manila bearing the surrender terms. The group was fired upon, seven were killed, and Zillig with four others returned to the ship. For



bravery in battle in the Philippines, he was awarded the Manila Bay Medal, also known as the "Dewey Medal."

Out of the Marine Corps, he served briefly with the American Company of the Shanghai Volunteer Corps and then as a clerk with the Chinese revenue department. He moved to Japan in 1927, eventually settling in Nagasaki where he worked as a watchmaker. "For my own protection, or so they told me," he said, the Japanese moved him to a concentration camp near the city at the outbreak of the war.

In the camp when the atomic bomb was dropped, he later gave this description of the city's ruin: "Greater destruction was never wrought by man. The example of human defeat by human initiative was never so forcibly expressed as at Nagasaki. It was horrible, it was bloody. Yet at the same time, it was good, it was magnificent. It was the magnificence of a nation, determined to remain free, no matter what the cost." With the city destroyed, Zillig was sent to the village of Ogi, near Saga, where a three-man intelligence patrol from the 2d Battalion, 27th Marines, found him in early October 1945.

Edward Zillig had two requests—that his \$60-a-month pension be restored and that he might again see a formal flag-raising and a full-dress Marine Corps parade. His wish for a parade was fulfilled when he stood beside Lieutenant Colonel John W. A. Antonelli, 2d Battalion's commanding officer, at a late morning flag-raising in Saga.

The former Marine's pension was restored as soon as the Veterans Administration received evidence of Zillig's existence, which Colonel Thomas A. Wornham, the commanding officer of the 27th Marines, personally delivered to Washington. Unfortunately, Zillig did not live long enough to see more than a few checks, for on 9 March 1946 he committed suicide.

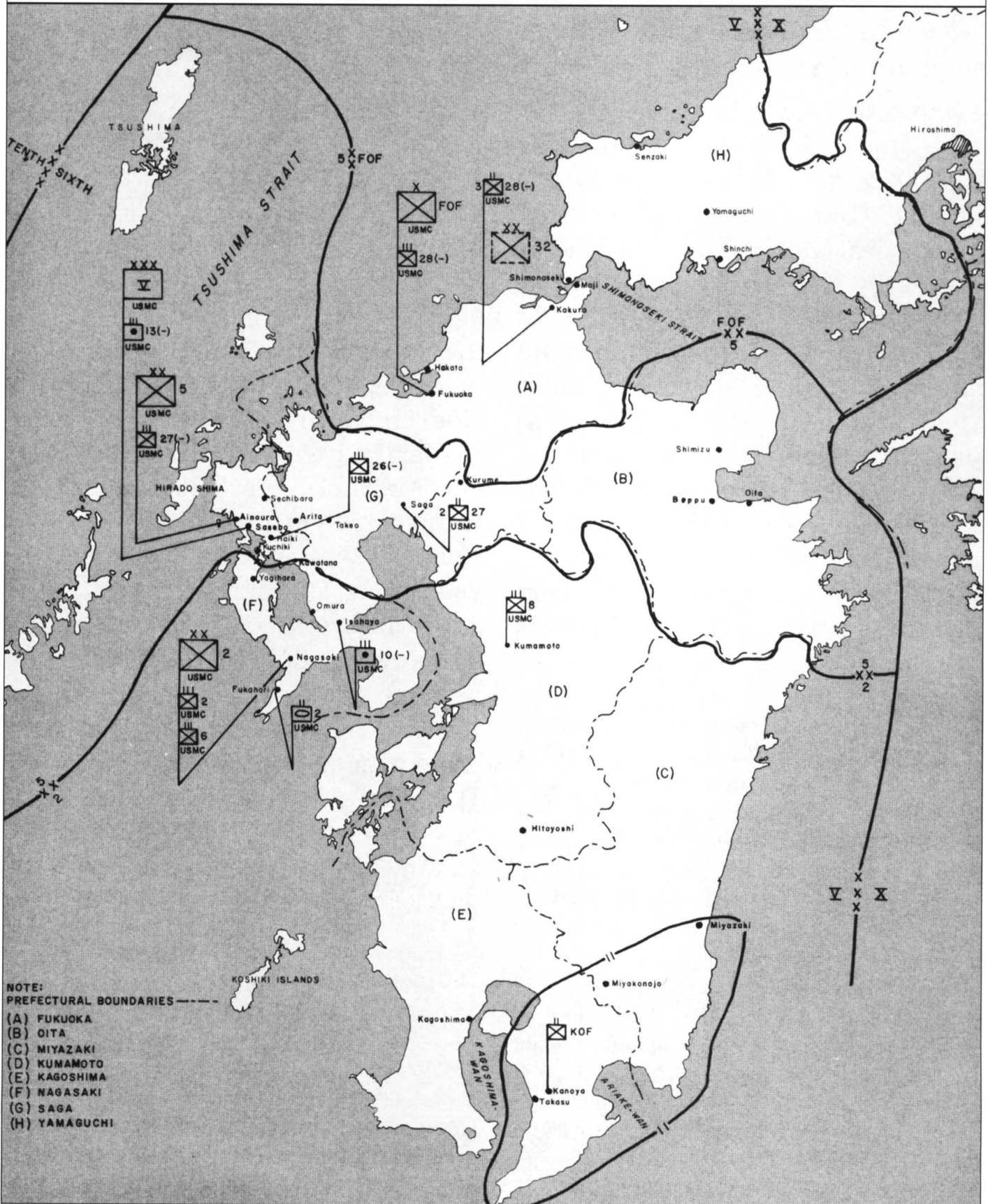
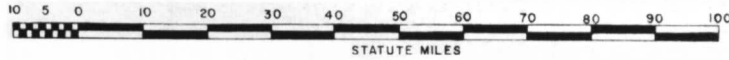
occupation was quickly established in V Amphibious Corps' zone of responsibility. During the last days of September, both of the Corps' divisions concentrated on unloading at Sasebo and Nagasaki, moving supplies into dumps, organizing billeting areas, securing local military installations, and preparing elements for the expansion eastward. In addition to normal occupation duties, both divisions became saddled with the job of unloading "a terrific amount of shipping." As

Lieutenant Colonel Jacob Goldberg wrote at the time: "we are building up a mountain of supplies consisting of items we will never be able to use and I can foresee the day when we just leave it all for the Japs . . . Everyone in the Pacific is apparently getting rid of their excess materiel by shipping it to Japan, regardless of whether anyone in Japan needs it. One word describes the situation: SNAFU." Confirming Goldberg's assessment, Major Norman Hatch later noted that the Marines, after

days on C- and K-rations were getting "fed up with this, and occasionally a big refrigerator ship would come in and everybody would say, . . . 'Now we'll get some fresh food,' but we'd find that the cold lockers were loaded with barbed wire, ping pong balls, things of that nature . . . What we would do with barbed wire in Japan nobody had the slightest idea."

On 25 September, two days after landing at Sasebo, General Bourke's division began expand-

Maximum Deployment of VAC on Kyushu as of 14 October 1945



- NOTE:
PREFECTURAL BOUNDARIES - - - - -
- (A) FUKUOKA
 - (B) OITA
 - (C) MIYAZAKI
 - (D) KUMAMOTO
 - (E) KAGOSHIMA
 - (F) NAGASAKI
 - (G) SAGA
 - (H) YAMAGUCHI



Units of the Army's 32d Infantry Division leave Sasebo for Fukuoka to relieve the Fukuoka Occupation Force in northwestern Kyushu.

ing its assigned zone of occupation and patrols were sent into outlying areas. The Marines found Japanese civilian and military personnel to be cooperative, but as they initially found in the city, most women and children in rural areas appeared frightened. As the Japanese grew accustomed to the Marine presence and more assured that they would not be harmed, their initial shyness and fear soon disappeared.

During the next few days, all main routes within the division's zone were covered even though most were in poor repair, "some not negotiable by anything but jeeps." As the expansion continued, Japanese guards were relieved at military installations and storage areas; the inventorying of Japanese equipment was begun; liaison was established with local military and civilian leaders; and Marine guards were stationed at post offices and city halls.

Within a week of landing, the division's zone of responsibility again was expanded to include Yagahara, Miyazaki, Arita, Takeo, Saishi, Sechihara, Imabuku, and a number of other towns to the

north and west of Sasebo. On 29 September, the division's zone was enlarged further to include Fukuoka, the largest city on Kyushu and administrative center of the northwestern coal and steel region. Since Fukuoka harbor was littered with pressure mines dropped by American Air Forces, movement to the city was made by rail and road instead of by ship from Sasebo. An advance billeting and reconnaissance party, headed by Colonel Walter Wensinger, reached Fukuoka on 27 September and held preliminary meetings with local civil and military officials. Brigadier General Ray A. Robinson, the division's assistant commander, was given command of the Fukuoka region occupation force which consisted of the 28th Marines reinforced with artillery and engineers and augmented by Army detachments. Lead elements of Robinson's force began arriving on the 30th, and by 5 October the force had completed the move from Sasebo. "All the way up [to Fukuoka]," as General Robinson recalled later, "when we stopped at a station, the equivalent of our Red Cross girls, these Japanese women, would come

down with tea and cakes. They'd been our enemies . . . so we thought they were going to poison us, so nobody took 'em!"

The Fukuoka Occupation Force, which was placed directly under General Schmidt's command, immediately began sending reconnaissance parties followed by company and battalion-sized forces into the major cities of northern Kyushu. But because of the limited number of troops available and the large area to be covered, Japanese guards were left in charge of most military installations, and effective control of the zone was maintained by motorized patrols.

To prevent possible outbreaks of mob violence, Marine guard detachments were set up to administer Chinese labor camps found in the area, and Japanese Army supplies were requisitioned to feed and clothe the former prisoners of war and laborers. Some of the supplies also were given to the thousands of Koreans who had gathered in temporary camps near the principal repatriation ports of Fukuoka and Sensaki in Yamaguchi Prefecture, where they waited for ships to carry them back to their homeland. The Marines, in addition to supervising the loading out of the Koreans, checked on the processing and discharge procedures used to handle Japanese troops returning with each incoming vessel. In addition, the branches of the Bank of Chosen were seized and closed in an effort to crush suspected illegal foreign exchange operations. Like their counterparts in other areas of Kyushu, Robinson's occupation force located and inventoried vast quantities of Japanese war materiel for later disposition by the 32d Infantry Division.

On 4 October, Robinson dispatched Company K, 3d Battalion, 28th Marines, across the Shim-

onoseki Straits into Yamaguchi Prefecture, further expanding the force's zone of control. Another reinforced company was sent two days later to occupy Moji and Yawata, on the Kyushu side of the straits. On the 11th, a detachment was sent from Shimonoseki to Yamaguchi; advance parties reached the city of Oita on the 12th; and on the 19th occupation forces were set up at Senzaki.

As General Robinson's force took control of Fukuoka and Yamaguchi Prefectures and penetrated Oita Prefecture, the 5th Marine Division expanded its hold on areas east and west of Sasebo. On 2 October, the division's reconnaissance company was dispatched to Hirado Island. Moving overland to Hainoura by DUKWs, the amphibian trucks were used to "swim" the narrow channel to Hirado. As elsewhere, they found the Japanese on the island in full "compliance with surrender terms." Other elements of the 5th Division followed, destroying defenses, collecting materiel, and reconnoitering the small islands of Gotto Retto, Kuro

Shima, Taka Shima, Tokoi Shima, and A Shima, west of Sasebo. On 5 October, the division's zone of responsibility was extended to include Saga Prefecture and the city of Kurume in the center of the island. On the 9th, the 2d Battalion, 27th Marines, operating as an independent occupation group, moved to Saga city. Two weeks later, the regiment, less the 1st Battalion, established its headquarters in Kurume and assumed responsibility for the central portion of the division zone, which now extended to the east to Oita Prefecture. For each of the division's movements, advance billeting and reconnaissance parties were sent to the areas to contact local authorities and arrange for the occupation. Since one of the greatest problems was sanitation, sanitation squads accompanied each party in order to prepare billeting areas. Wherever possible, Japanese labor was used to improve living conditions for the troops. In addition, the maintenance of roads and bridges was a constant problem since the island's inadequate road network

quickly disintegrated under military traffic. The situation was further aggravated by heavy rainfall and the lack of suitable repair materials. Although roads were passable only for jeeps, no attempt was made to use motor transport between major cities except for special patrols. Therefore, the major burden of supplying and transporting the scattered elements of the Marine amphibious corps fell to the Japanese rail system.

When it was decided to occupy Oita Prefecture, the entire 180-mile trip from Sasebo to Oita city was made by rail. The occupation group, Company A, 5th Tank Battalion, operating as infantry since tanks could not be used on the island's roads, set up in the city on 13 October and conducted a reconnaissance of the surrounding military installations using motorized patrols. The group's size severely limited its activities and therefore most inventory work had to be carried out by the Japanese under Marine supervision. From Oita, elements of the company moved northwest along the coast to Beppu, noted for its hot springs, beaches, and shore resorts. The tankers of Company A remained in the coastal prefecture until relieved by 32d Division troops in early November.

By mid-October, elements of the 5th Marine Division were dispersed so as to permit almost complete control of the key areas in the northern portion of the V Amphibious Corps zone. The 2d and 3d Battalions, 27th Marines controlled the cities of Saga and Kurume, the 26th Marines occupied Sasebo and the surrounding region, and the 28th Marines controlled the eastern prefectures of Fukuoka, Oita, and Yamaguchi. The 13th Marines, occupying the area to the south and east of Sasebo in Nagasaki and Saga

MajGen Schmidt greets Gen Walter Krueger, Commanding General, U.S. Sixth Army, during one of the latter's many visits to the Corps headquarters at Sasebo.





Department of Defense Photo (USMC) 138965

A Marine guards returning Japanese troops brought to Kajiki from Kita Daito Shima by hospital ship. Supervising the repatriation and demobilization of returning Japanese was a major task of the Marines on Kyushu.

Prefectures, supervised the processing of Japanese repatriates returning from China and Korea, and handled the disposition of the weapons, equipment, and ammunition stored in naval depots near Sasebo and Kawatana. The 1st Battalion, 27th Marines, detached from its regiment, was stationed in Sasebo under division control and furnished a portion of the city's garrison as well as detachments which searched the islands offshore. In addition to routine occupation duties, elements of the division conducted a number of coordinated surprise searches of schools, temples, and shrines. Only a small number of unreported swords, rifles, technical instruments, documents were seized in the raids.

On 13 October, the 26th Marines was alerted for transfer to the Palau Islands. While the regiment made preparations to move to Peleliu to supervise the repatriation of Japanese troops from the

Western Carolines, the first elements of the 32d Infantry Division began landing at Sasebo. The 128th Infantry, followed by the 126th Infantry and division troops, moved through the port and boarded trains for Fukuoka, Kokura, and Shimonoseki, where Robinson's occupation force assumed temporary command of the two Army units. The 127th Infantry, less the 1st Battalion at Kanoya airfield, landed on 18 October, passed to the control of the 5th Marine Division, and on the 19th relieved the 26th Marines of its occupation duties in Sasebo.

On 24 October, Major General Schmidt dissolved the Fukuoka Occupation Force and 32d Infantry Division, now commanded by Brigadier General Robert B. McBride, Jr., opened its command post in Fukuoka. A base command, composed of the service elements that had been assigned to General Robinson's force, was set up to support operations in

Northern Kyushu and continued to function until 25 November when it was disbanded and the 32d Division assumed its duties. The division's three regimental combat teams, comprising infantry, artillery, and attached service troops, relieved the 28th Marines and 5th Tank Battalion: the 128th Infantry with the 1st Battalion at Shimonoseki, the 2d Battalion at Bofu, and the remainder of the regiment at Yamaguchi, controlled Yamaguchi Prefecture; the 126th at Kokura patrolled east and south through Fukuoka and Oita Prefectures; and the 127th, after being relieved by the 28th Marines in the zone formerly occupied by the 26th Marines, occupied Fukuoka and the zone to the north.

The 26th Marines began boarding ship on 18 October and the following day was detached from the division and returned to FMFPac control. Before the transports departed on 21st, orders were

received from FMFPac designating the 2d Battalion for disbandment and the battalion returned to Ainoura, the 5th Division Headquarters' camp just outside of Sasebo. On 30 October, the 2d Battalion ended its Pacific service and passed out of existence, its men being transferred to other units.

As the Army's 32d Infantry Division entered Fukuoka and Oita Prefectures, Major General Hunt's 2d Marine Division gradually expanded its hold on southern Kyushu following an intensive reconnaissance effort. The 2d and 6th Marines had moved into billets in the vicinity of Nagasaki immediately after landing with the mission of surveillance and disposition of enemy military materiel in the immediate countryside and the many small nearby islands. The 8th and 10th Marines had gone directly from their transports to barracks at Isahaya and began patrols of the peninsula to the south and throughout the remainder of Nagasaki Prefecture in the 2d Division zone. Also construction began on an airstrip in the atomic-bombed-out area of Nagasaki, capable of handling the planes of Marine Observation Squadron 2. Within days, the squadron began air courier service from "Atomic Field."

On 4 October, V Amphibious Corps changed the occupational boundary between the two Marine divisions, shifting control of Omura to General Hunt's command. The 3d Battalion, 10th Marines, relieved the reinforced company from 1st Battalion, 27th Marines, as the security detachment for the Marine air base and the unit was returned to the 5th Marine Division. Shortly thereafter, the 10th Marines assumed control of the whole of the 8th Marines' area in Nagasaki Prefecture.

The corps expanded the 2d Division zone of occupation on 5 October to include the highly industrialized prefecture of Kumamoto in central Kyushu. An advance billeting, sanitation, and reconnaissance party travelled to Kumamoto city to contact Japanese authorities and pave the way for the 8th Marines' assumption of control. By 18 October, all units of the regiment were established in and around Kumamoto and began the process of inventorying and disposing of Japanese war material. Carrying out SCAP directives outlining measures to restore the civilian economy, the Marines, and accompanying military government teams, contacted local officials and assisted wherever possible in speeding the conversion of war industries to essential peacetime production.

The 2d Division gradually took control of the unoccupied portion of southern Kyushu during the next month. Advance parties headed by senior field commanders contacted civil and military officials in Kagoshima and Miyazaki Prefectures to insure compliance with surrender terms and adequate preparations for the *Interrogating former Japanese pilots was a task assigned to MAG-22 in addition to routine surveillance and courier flights.*



reception of division troops. Miyazaki Prefecture and the remaining portion of Kagoshima east of Kagoshima Wan were assigned to the 2d Marines. The remaining half of Kagoshima Prefecture was added to the 8th Marines' zone; later, the regiment was also given responsibility for the Osumi and Koshiki Island groups, which lay to the south and southwest of Kyushu.

On 29 October, the 1st Battalion, 8th Marines, the first major element of the division to move to southernmost Kyushu, departed Kumamoto for Kagoshima city by truck convoy. The 3d Battalion followed several days later, occupying the inland city of Hitoyoshi. Once in place, the battalions began the now all-too-familiar routine of reconnaissance, inspection, inventory, and disposition. The 2d Battalion, 2d Marines, assigned to the eastern half of Kagoshima, found much of the preliminary occupation work completed. The 1st Battalion, 127th Infantry, which had maintained a refueling and resupply point at Kanoya, had been actively patrolling the area since its arrival in early September. When 2d Battalion, loaded in four landing ships, arrived from Nagasaki on 27 October, it was relatively easy to effect the relief. The Marines landed at Takasu, port for Kanoya, and moved by rail and road to the airfield. Three days later, the Marine battalion assumed operational control of the Army Air Force detachment manning the emergency field, and the Army detachment returned to Sasebo to rejoin its parent command.

In early November, the 2d Marines' remaining two battalions also moved by sea from Sasebo to Takasu and thence by rail to Miyazaki Prefecture. The regimental headquarters and the 3d Battalion arrived at Kanoya on the



A contingent of V Amphibious Corps troops loads on board a "Magic Carpet" at Sasebo for the trip home.

5th and moved to Miyakonojo, where they established the command post and base of operations. The 1st Battalion sailed from Nagasaki on the 9th, arrived at Kanoya the following day, and then boarded trains for Miyazaki city on the east coast of Kyushu. By mid-November, with the occupation of Miyazaki, General Schmidt's command had established effective control over its assigned zone of responsibility.

By the end of November, V Amphibious Corps reported substantial progress in its major occupation tasks. More than 700,000 Japanese military and civilians returning from Korea and the South Pacific had been processed through the Corps' authorized

ports and separation centers at Sasebo, Kagoshima-Kajiki, Fukuoka, Shimonoseki, and Sensaki. Local commanders had shouldered the main burden of setting up the organization and machinery necessary to supervise the orderly, rapid, and sanitary processing for further movement by ship and rail of the incoming Japanese repatriates. In addition, more than 273,000 Koreans, Chinese, Okinawans, and other displaced persons had been sent back to their homelands. While the incoming Japanese presented little problem, the outgoing Chinese, Koreans, and Formosans did. Eager for freedom and naturally resentful of their virtual enslavement under the Japanese,

they caused frequent disturbances and riots which had to be quelled by corps troops. In addition, their previous "animal-like living conditions made them a sanitary menace wherever assembled."

Only about 20,000 Japanese Army and Navy personnel remained on duty, all employed in demobilization, repatriation, minesweeping, and similar supervised occupational activities. While initial feelings were mixed, a good rapport soon developed between the Marines and their Japanese counterparts. "We were operating off LSTs [in the Tsushima Islands] during the day and blowing up guns and destroying ammunition, and I particularly remember the Japanese who did

the job," Lieutenant Edwin Neville later recalled. "After one spectacular blow-up, they pulled out bottles of potato whiskey. That is all the booze they had, but they shared them with the Americans. They did not have much to look forward to except mustering out, but that was okay, and we were okay." On 1 December, in accordance with SCAP directives, the remaining Japanese military forces were transferred to civilian status under newly created government ministries and bureaus.

The need for large numbers of combat troops in Japan steadily lessened as the occupation wore on, and it became increasingly obvious that the Japanese intended to offer no resistance. The first major Marine unit to fulfill its mission in southern Japan and return to the United States was MAG-22.

On 14 October, Admiral Spruance, acting for CinCPac, queried the Fifth Fighter Command as to whether the Marine aircraft group was still needed to support the Sasebo area occupation forces. On the 26th, the Army replied that MAG-22 was no longer needed, and it was returned to operational control of the Navy. The group's service squadron and heavy equipment which had just arrived from Okinawa were kept on board ship, and on 2 November, AirFMFPac directed that the unit return to the United States. The group's 72 Corsairs were flown to the naval aircraft replacement pool on Okinawa, the pilots returning to Kyushu by transport plane. On 10 November, a majority of the group's personnel boarded the SS *Sea Sturgeon* at anchor in Sasebo Harbor. Included were 485 low-point officers and enlisted men being transferred to MAG-31 at Yokosuka as replacements for those eligible for rotation or discharge. The transport weighed

anchor on the 12th and sailed for Yokosuka, skirting the southern tip of the island instead of heading through Shimonoseki Straits which was still heavily mined. Upon arrival, the group spent the next several days at anchor in Tokyo Bay taking on fuel and provisions. "The one bright spot was a liberty party to the Tokyo area on 17 November," reported Colonel Elliott E. Bard, the group's new commanding officer. "At 0800 approximately 450 of the Group's personnel went over the side and down the ladder into a waiting LSM for the two-hour trip to Tokyo. Time there was passed sightseeing, buying souvenirs, lunching at the Imperial Hotel, and visiting the non-restricted section of the Imperial grounds surrounding Hirohito's palace. All agreed that the day was well spent." On 20 November, after picking up MAG-31's 598 returnees at Yokosuka and more than 800 Army troops at Yokohama, MAG-22 sailed for the United States. The Marine Air Base at Omura remained in operation, but its aircraft strength consisted mainly of Marine Obser-

What most Marines looked forward to after more than three years at war.



vation Squadron 2's light liaison and observation planes which flew courier, reconnaissance, medical evacuation, and, more importantly, daily mail flights. Although a third Marine air base was planned at Iwakuni to support operations in the Iwakuni-Hiroshima-Kure area, it was not established and the transport squadrons of MAG-21 slated to occupy the base were reassigned to Guam and Yokosuka.

The redeployment of MAG-22 began the gradual drawdown of excess occupation forces on Kyushu. On 12 November, Sixth Army was informed by V Amphibious Corps that the 5th Marine Division would be released from its duties and returned to the United States in December. By early 1946, the 2d Marine Division would be the only major Marine unit remaining on occupation duty in southern Japan.

Marine Withdrawal

By late November, only about 10 percent of the Marines in General Schmidt's command had been returned to the United States, although more than 15,000 men were eligible for discharge or rotation. The divisions were under orders to maintain their strength at 90 percent of personnel allowances, which severely curtailed the number of men who could be released. Replacements were almost nonexistent. The 2d Division, for example, had received only 45 officers and 130 men during the first two months of the occupation as replacements for the approximately 8,000 officers and men who were entitled to be released from active duty. To solve this problem, V Amphibious Corps ordered an interchange of personnel between the 2d and 5th Marine Divisions. The exchange

was to be carried out by battalions, beginning with the separate battalions, followed by battalions within regiments, and concluding with clerical personnel in the division headquarters.

Those men of the 2d Division eligible for discharge under current directives and those having 24 or more months overseas would be transferred to units of the 5th Division, while men not yet eligible for discharge or rotation would move from the 5th to the 2d Division and Corps troops. Almost half of the 2d Division and 80 percent of the 5th Division, in all about 18,000 Marines and corpsmen, were slated for transfer. At the same time the personnel exchanges were taking place, elements of the 2d and 32d Divisions would occupy the 5th Division zone of responsibility so that the occupation missions of surveillance, disposition of materiel, and repatriation could continue without interruption.

On 24 November, control of Saga and Fukuoka Prefectures passed to the 2d and 32d Divisions, respectively. In the first of a series of troop movements, the 2d Battalion, 6th Marines boarded trains for Saga to take over the duties and exchange personnel with the 2d Battalion, 27th Marines. The 6th and 10th Marines occupied other areas of the 5th Division zone, relieving units of the 13th, 27th, and 28th Marines and effecting the necessary personnel transfers. The 2d and 8th Marines sent their returnees to Sasebo, the 5th Division's port of embarkation, and joined new men from the 5th's infantry regiments, as did the separate battalions and division troops.

The 5th Division began loading out as soon as ships became available at Sasebo, and on 5 December, the first transports, carrying men

of the 27th Marines, departed for the United States. The division gradually reduced its zone of responsibility and on 8 December, the 2d Division relieved the 5th of all its remaining occupation duties. Eleven days later, seven landing ships with the last elements of the 5th Division on board departed Sasebo.

The Marines of the 5th Division had accomplished much during their few months of occupation duty. Within the division's zone, the remaining Japanese armed forces were almost completely demobilized; a majority of the military facilities razed; a large percentage of ordnance, aircraft, and weapons destroyed; and war materiel and equipment in useable condition turned over to the Japanese Home Ministry for conversion to peacetime use. In addition, the Marines had begun the task of reconstruction by clearing debris, reinforcing roads and bridges, and establishing rudimentary clean water, sewage, and communications systems. Although most enjoyed their stay and left with a greater appreciation of Japanese customs and culture, all looked forward to their return home.

Beginning on 20 December, with the arrival at San Diego of the first troopships carrying the 27th Marines, a steady stream of division officers and men passed through reassignment and discharge centers at Camp Pendleton. Those men to be shipped elsewhere for discharge were put on their way as rapidly as possible, and those to be reassigned quickly moved out to their new jobs or to furloughs. Those to be discharged were assigned to the separation battalion—which had a highly streamlined discharge process:

He hears lectures on the favorable aspects and the pitfalls of civilian life, has his

uniform pressed and all decorations and insignia added. A physical examination is taken and he has an opportunity to file a disability claim with the Veterans Administration with the help of Red Cross field assistants. The U.S. Employment Service also informs him of the prospects of a job. In the meantime, his records are being examined, completed and closed out. At the end of five days, he and his records meet for the final pay-off and he receives his discharge.

The process returned more than 200 Marines per day to civilian life. During January, most of the component elements of the division were skeletonized and then disbanded. On 5 February 1946, the Headquarters Battalion followed suit, and the 5th Marine Division, after two years of service, passed into history.

On the same date that the 2d Marine Division took over the duties of the 5th, V Amphibious Corps received a dispatch directive from Sixth Army stating that the corps would be relieved of all occupation duties and missions when the Eighth Army relieved the Sixth on 31 December. With reorganization of U.S. Army Forces, Pacific, and subsequent plans to reduce American military strength to only those units considered essential to a peacetime establishment, Eighth Army was designated to assume command of all allied occupation troops in Japan. I Corps, headquartered initially at Osaka and then at Kyoto, would take over V Amphibious Corps' area and troops.

Major General Schmidt's command spent most of its remaining time in Japan conducting routine reconnaissance and surveillance patrols, disposing of an increasing amount of war materiel, supervis-

ing the transfer of low-point men to 2d Division units, and preparing to turn over its area to I Corps. On 31 December, I Corps relieved V Amphibious Corps of all occupational operations in Japan, and corps troops began loading out the following day, some units for return to the United States and others for duty with Marine supply activities on Guam. On 8 January, the last elements of the Marine amphibious corps, including General Schmidt's headquarters, left Sasebo for San Diego. On 15 February 1946, the V Amphibious Corps was disbanded.

With the departure of V Amphibious Corps, the 2d Marine Division became responsible for the whole of what had been the corps zone and moved its headquarters from the Nagasaki area to Sasebo. In addition to the Sixth Army, the 32d Infantry Division, a former Michigan Wisconsin National Guard unit, also was slated for deactivation early in 1946. In preparation for taking over the 32d Division duties in Yamaguchi, Fukuoka, and Oita Prefectures, the 2d Division moved the 6th Marines north into the Army zone and increased the size of the areas assigned to its other regiments. On 31 January, when Major General Hunt's division formally relieved the 32d Division, the zones of responsibility assigned to each of the division's regiments were: 2d Marines, headquartered at Miyazaki, Oita and Miyazaki Prefectures; 6th Marines, at Fukuoka, Yamaguchi, Fukuoka, and Oita Prefectures; 8th Marines, whose command post was at Kumamoto, Kumamoto and Kagoshima Prefectures; 10th Marines, Nagasaki Prefecture. Areas that had been covered by battalions were now assigned to companies and detachments.

In early February, when Major General Roscoe B. Woodruff,

Commanding General, I Corps, returned to the United States on temporary assignment, Major General Hunt, as the region's senior division commander, assumed command of the Corps, a position he held until General Woodruff's return on 5 April. The corps zone of responsibility underwent one more change during this period. On 4 February, advance elements of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force began moving into Hiroshima Prefecture and formally took control from the 24th Infantry Division on 7 March. Later in March, the British force relieved the 6th Marines in Yamaguchi Prefecture, therefore reducing the 2d Marine Division zone to the island of Kyushu.

Except for the movement of the 2d Marines' command post from Miyazaki to Oita, the constant shifting of units was largely over and the division could concentrate on routine occupation missions and on reinstating regular training schedules. In late February, in order to reduce the division to peacetime strength, infantry regiments were instructed to relieve respective third battalions, and the artillery regiment the last lettered battery of each battalion, of occupation duties. The battalions and batteries were assembled at Ainoura, moved to Sasebo and boarded transports for the United States where the units would be disbanded. The remaining units were assembled in battalion-sized camps which served as centers for the daily reconnaissance, surveillance, and intelligence patrols. As occupational duties permitted, training in basic military subjects, firing of individual and crew-served weapons, and exercises in combat tactics filled increasing amounts of the Marines' time. An extensive air courier service, operating from Omura, linked the scat-

tered battalions and enabled the division and regimental commanders to maintain effective control of their units. Other than fielding special unarmed election patrols during national elections in April, most of the disposition work had been completed and the flow of Japanese repatriates had slowed, and the Marines settled into a weekly routine of patrols, training, and liberty.

Soon after General Hunt returned from Kyoto, word was received from Eighth Army that the 2d Division would be returned to the United States and the 24th Infantry Division would move to Kyushu and take over the Marine zone. Preparations for the movement got underway before the end of April, as reconnaissance parties of the relieving Army regiments arrived to check their future billeting areas. General Hunt planned to relieve the outlying units first and then gradually draw them into Sasebo until the last unit had departed. On 24 May, the 19th Infantry Regiment, under operational control of the 2d Division, relieved the 2d Marines and assumed responsibility for Oita and Miyazaki Prefectures. The regiment left Sasebo on 13 June bound for Norfolk; the 8th Marines was relieved by the 21st Infantry and followed two days later; and the 10th Marines departed on the 23d. On 15 June, as all scheduled courier flights ended and Marine Air Base, Omura, was secured, Major General Hunt turned over responsibility for the island of Kyushu to the 24th Division and the 19th and 21st Infantry Regiments reverted to control of 24th Division. General Hunt and the Division headquarters boarded the *Rutland* (APA 192) and departed Sasebo on the 24th. Before leaving, however, the division transferred more than 2,300 men to the "China Draft" as



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) 139991

Japan's air might is finally destroyed. More than 200 planes, including bombers and Zeros, are set afire at Omura Air Base.

replacements for the 1st Marine Division. The 6th Marines, slated to sail for the West Coast, and service troops and unit rear echelons needed to load out heavy equipment, remained behind. By mid-August, the 2d Marine Division had completed its move from Japan and settled in at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. How well the division had done its job was attested to by I Corps' commanding general, Major General Woodruff: "Today the 2d Marine Division comes to the end of its long trail from Guadalcanal to Japan. Its achievement in battle and in occupation: 'Well done.' The cooperation and assistance of your splendid Division will be greatly missed."

The first Marines to set foot in Japan after the war landed at Yokosuka expecting to meet the same implacable foe they had encountered in years of bitter fighting across the Pacific. Instead they were confronted by a docile people anxious to cooperate. As a

result of their acceptance of defeat, General MacArthur found it unnecessary to institute complete military rule. His program of demilitarization and democratization was implemented through the Emperor and the machinery of the Japanese Government, which disarmed and demobilized the country's military forces and reformed and modernized the political and economic structure without incident.

While the Marines on Kyushu stood by as observers and policemen during many phases of the occupation, they were direct participants in others. They supervised the repatriation of thousands of foreign civilians and prisoners of war and handled the flood of returning Japanese. Using local labor, they collected, inventoried, and disposed of the vast amounts of munitions and other war materiel that had been stockpiled on Kyushu in anticipation of the Allied invasion. In addition, they used their own men

and equipment to repair war damage and to assist in reestablishment the Japanese economy.

Within three months after landing on Kyushu, V Amphibious Corps had established effective control over the entire island and its ten million people. By the beginning of 1946, the tasks of repatriation and disposition had progressed to such an extent that responsibility for the whole island could be assumed by one division. The occupation not only exposed the Marines to a different culture and its customs, but also provided them experience not gained from their normal peacetime routine of training and guard duty. Faced by heavy responsibilities, Marines at all levels quickly learned to be kind but firm in handling the extremely delicate political, cultural, and economic problems which confronted them daily. "Their general conduct," as General MacArthur recalled, "was beyond criticism...They were truly ambassadors of good will."

Sources

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