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Allen sent to his parents from Guam 1946



Second Year of Liberation Today

Pre-Invasion Naval Barrage Vividly Described by Marine

This is an account of the initial landing on Guam as described by ex-Marine Captain James P. Hackett, now chief of Bureau of the Associated Press at Atlantic City, New Jersey. Captain Hackett was a member of the III Amphibious Corps Intelligence group attached to amphibious reconnaissance of the U. S. Marine Corps. This is his story:

This is my story of the invasion of Guam. It is being written just after midnight on the day that I am to leave the luxury of Admiral Donnelly's flagship for our command post ashore.

At no time since leaving our base for this operation did we have an opportunity to see the whole of the armada that struck at the Marianas. It's hugeness taxes the imagination. There were so many ships anchored at one rendezvous that the superstructures and masts of vessels on the horizon gave the impression of a large city, while the ships in the foreground were more than I ever saw in New York harbor at any time.

Those of us who were fortunate enough to be assigned to the flagship were given the thrill of our lives when we left the rendezvous

Three days before the landing, the "big show" began. We had become bored, really, with the bombardment up to then. We went on deck more for fresh air than to watch the shooting. Most of the West Coast of Guam had been flattened. There still were buildings standing here and there. We knew the Japanese underground fortifications still were operable and they were targets. There were still dumps of fuel, food and ammunition to be touched off.

Events Today

Liberation Day Festivities

0800 — Decoration of graves at the military cemetery by the Guam Citizens Committee and the American Legion.

1000 — Catholic Mass — Celebrated for the deceased heroes who gave their lives in the reconquest and occupation of Guam. It will take place at the Plaza de Espana with Father Calvo presiding. All members of the armed forces, civilians, Red Cross and any others who wish to attend are cordially invited.

1900 — A reception at George Washington High School in Saipan. Highlighting the occasion will be the cutting of the liberation cake by Governor and Mrs. Pownall, B. J. Bordallo, chairman of the House of Council and the principal of the George Washington High School, Mrs. Agunda J. Johnson. After the cutting the governor will give a brief address.

Once or twice we could see the ugly black puffs of bursting AA, especially over Orote peninsula and inland from Agana, where the enemy had built his airfields. Even to this moment no enemy aircraft had dared interfere with us. No Japanese plane had flown from

Third Marine Division Attacks To Liberate Guamanian People

By Col. George Van Orden, USMC

Two years ago today, the eve of the landings on Guam, found us of the 3rd Marine division, 3rd Marine Amphibious Corps, plunging through the seas in the mightiest array of amphibious power yet seen in the war with Japan, converging on the rendezvous from which we would launch the assault on the morrow.

My recollection of the temper of the troops on that day is that it was a mixture of relief and satisfaction as well as of the usual anxiety and tension that exists among men, before an amphibious assault. Relief, for we knew that Saipan was in the bag. Satisfaction because we knew that we were completely ready; we knew that the training had been thorough and complete and that every man knew not only his own but the next fellow's job; we knew that we had anticipated every contingency and rehearsed the answer to it—we knew we had what it takes to win.

At least on the Asan beach, as we landed in the face of silenced 150 and 240 millimeter seacoast guns and destroyed positions, we knew that the preparation could have been no more thorough. And as our assault troops poured across the reefs and beaches to overwhelm the few platoons and companies the Japanese arrayed a-

and I don't think 30 seconds elapsed that night that a mortar shell didn't burst over or short of that ravine.

By the night of the second day I'd gotten a glimpse of Agana and had been down as far as Piti. What did it look like? Well, it was a shambles. With the exception of the few scattered buildings you now see here and there there was not a building standing from Tumon bay to Fagpi point. You couldn't even walk through the streets of Agana for the rubble wreckage. The Japanese had mined all the bridges but we detected every mine and secured it before the bridges could be destroyed.

People have asked why it was necessary to so completely wreck Agana. I think the people of Guam themselves have the best knowledge of the answer to that; they will tell you of the days and weeks of training put in by the Japanese in putting Agana in shape for a house to house defense. Agana, as an infantry strong-hold, was the most