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OPERATIONS OF THE 77TH INFANTRY DIVISION ON GUAM,
21 JULY - 10 AUGUST 1944
(WESTERN PACIFIC CAMPAIGN)

Type of operation described: INFANTRY DIVISION IN THE ATTACK

Major Arthur M. Shomion, Infantry
ADVANCED INFANTRY OFFICERS CLASS NO II

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OPERATIONS OF THE 77TH INFANTRY DIVISION ON GUAM,
21 JULY - 10 AUGUST 1944
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ORIENTATION

INTRODUCTION

This monograph covers the action of the 77th Infantry Division in the capture of the island of GUAM, the largest and most southern of the MARIANAS GROUP. It covers the entire action of this campaign from its beginning, 21 July 1944 to final victory on 10 August 1944.

The invasion of the southern MARIANAS in June and July of 1944 was part of a coordinated effort by UNITED STATES Forces to obtain bases within striking distance by air of the PHILIPPINES and JAPANESE home islands. At this time, enemy positions in the PACIFIC were undergoing strong Allied offensives and were weakening under these attacks. The attacks moved along two lines with the purpose of converging on the inner zone of the JAPANESE defenses. From AUSTRALIA, the Allied offensive had started from a point northwest along NEW GUINEA, and from the HAWAIIAN ISLANDS west through the MARSHALL ISLANDS. The success of this offensive action was dependent upon the conquest of enemy islands and was selected for the purpose of forming a line of supporting bases to neutralize enemy bases by air and sea attacks. (1)

The general picture of the Pacific war in the spring of 1944 was favorable to the UNITED STATES. Allied forces in the southwest PACIFIC had pushed their advance along the west coast

(1) A-1, p. 1

of NEW GUINEA and had reached BIAK ISLAND. The JAPANESE stronghold of TRUK, a reef encircled island with airfields and a harbor capable of holding a large fleet, had been hit by several carrier strikes of U. S. Naval units and had ceased to be a fleet anchorage of any importance to the JAPANESE. (2) By December 1943, rapid advances in the Central Pacific had gained control of the GILBERT ISLAND, MAKIN, and TARAWA.

KWAJALEIN, ENIWETOK, and the MARSHALL ISLANDS were taken during January and February 1944. (3)

During the following months air attacks against the CAROLINES and MARIANAS were carried out. On 30 March a naval task force, Task Force 58, under command of Vice Admiral Marc A. Mitscher hit bases in the WESTERN CAROLINES, destroying or damaging 46 JAPANESE ships, 216 planes, and inflicted heavy damage on enemy shore installations. On 11 June a task force struck at the SOUTHERN MARIANAS, and carrier planes attacked ROTA, TINIAN, SAIPAN, and GUAM. On the 13th, battleships and cruisers steamed in and shelled SAIPAN and TINIAN, and on 15 June 1944 a full scale invasion was made on SAIPAN. (4)

As this series of blows unfolded the plan of conquest in the CENTRAL PACIFIC became known. UNITED STATES Forces in possession of most of the GILBERTS and MARSHALLS, would by taking the MARIANAS, be able to have bases for operation against enemy sea-supply lines. From these bases the new B-29's could make long range air attacks against JAPAN itself. (5)

THE GENERAL SITUATION

For the invasion of the MARIANAS, the Commander-in-Chief
(2) A-2, p. 204
(3) A-1, p. 3
(4) A-1, p. 5
(5) A-3, p. 57

Pacific Ocean Areas, Admiral Chester W. Nimitz had under his command the Fifth Fleet. The Fifth Fleet was further broken down into two attack forces. The Northern Troops and Landing Force under command of Lt. General Holland M. Smith, USMC, consisting of the 2d Marine Division and the 4th Marine Division with the 27th Infantry Division in reserve; and the Southern Troops and Landing Force consisting of the 3d Marine Division and the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade with the 77th Infantry Division in reserve. The Southern Force was under the command of Major General Roy S. Geiger, USMC. These two echelons were known as the V Amphibious Corps and the III Amphibious Corps respectively. (6)

The combined forces, consisting of 500 vessels and 120,000 assault troops, were given the mission of invading the islands of SAIPAN, TINIAN, and GUAM. The V Amphibious Corps had as its mission the capture of SAIPAN and TINIAN, while the III Amphibious Corps, the recapture of GUAM.

D-day for the invasion of SAIPAN was set for 15 June 1944 and W-day for GUAM was tentatively set as 18 June 1944.

The attack on SAIPAN proceeded as planned; however, due to strong enemy resistance on SAIPAN and a powerful surface attack by the enemy it was necessary to use the fighting vessels of the Southern Attack Force thereby delaying the invasion of GUAM. The transports carrying the Southern Landing Force, which were at this time cruising east of the MARIANAS, were sent to ENIWETOK to await further instructions. (7)

Organized enemy resistance on SAIPAN was declared ended on 9 July 1944, and W-day for the recapture of GUAM was reset for 21 July.

(6) A-1, p. 6, 7
(7) A-1, p. 11

This long delay was very favorable to the III Amphibious Force as it made possible a period of heavy surface bombardment and air strikes on GUAM plus a thorough aerial reconnaissance of the island. This bombing destroyed practically all JAPANESE artillery and neutralized GUAM's principal airfield on OROTE PENINSULA. (8)

THE ISLAND

The island of GUAM, which had been a UNITED STATES possession prior to its capture by the JAPANESE on 12 December 1941, lies 3,320 air miles from PEARL HARBOR, 1,499 miles from MANILA, and 1,595 miles from TOKYO. TRUK in the CAROLINES is only 562 miles to the southeast. The island has an area of 228 square miles. It is 34.5 miles in length and 9 miles in width at its widest point. The southern and central portions are chiefly rolling hills, featured by a ridge of volcanic peaks rising to a height of 1000 feet. A few small villages and clearings are surrounded by dense woods and jungle. The northern portion of the island is formed by a broad limestone plateau, heavily wooded, sloping upward from an altitude of 100 feet to an elevation of 900 feet. The entire coastline is surrounded by an unbroken fringing reef. (9)

A hard-surfaced road runs from AGAT northward along the coast to MT. MACHANAO, with a section of it extending inland to BARRIGADA. To the south travel is dependent largely upon trails.

The average daily temperatures range from 79° to 83° F. July to October is the summer monsoon period and the wettest season of the year with an average of twenty rainy days per

(8) A-2, p. 216

(9) A-4, p. 140

month and the humidity near ninety percent. (10)

ENEMY FORCES

Enemy forces were estimated to be from 18,500 to 36,000 in strength. Air reconnaissance and intelligence reports gave their locations along the west side of the island where the coastal features presented the least formidable barrier to an invading force. The JAPANESE were believed to have their strongest positions in the TUMON BAY area, AGANA, and AGAT. It was also believed that the enemy had a large amount of mobile artillery and some tanks. (11)

PLAN OF ATTACK (See Map A)

The plan of attack developed by the III Amphibious Corps was to attack simultaneously on both flanks of the military strength of the island. One force would land to the north in the ASAN BEACH area, between APRA HARBOR and AGANA, with another force to land at AGAT BAY. After securing control of these beachheads, the force from the north was to drive south toward the base of OROTE PENINSULA and there meet the other force which would approach from the south. The combined forces would then isolate and attack the peninsula from the rear. They would then advance to the north, where the JAPANESE were expected to make their final stand. (12)

The 3d Marine Division was assigned the northern sector. The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade with the 305th Regimental Combat Team, 77th Infantry Division in support, was assigned the AGAT BAY sector. The remainder of the 77th Infantry Divi-

(10) A-1, p. 16
(11) A-1, p. 20
(12) A-6, p. 803

sion would be a floating reserve for the Corps. (13)

This combined force totaled 56,000 men, 37,000 Marines and 19,000 Army troops. The Marines had had combat experience in the Southwest Pacific while this would be the first action for the 77th Infantry Division. (14) W-day was set for 21 July, H-hour was 0830.

MOVEMENT TO THE ISLAND AND FINAL PREPARATIONS FOR THE ATTACK

The III Amphibious Corps which had been waiting at ENIWETOK sailed on 18 July 1944 and arrived off GUAM before daylight on the 21st. For security reasons, the personnel were not informed of their destination until the convoy was out of ENIWETOK. Enroute the troops were zeroed in on the plan of operation. Detailed map studies of the roads, towns, and enemy installations were made and test firing of weapons and issuance of ammunition was accomplished. (15)

NARRATION

THE LANDING AT AGAT BAY AND EXPANDING THE BEACHLINE

Starting at 0530, 21 July 1944, the bombardment of GUAM began. Six battleships, four heavy cruisers, five light cruisers, and seven destroyers opened fire on the island and continued firing for two hours. At the same time, carrier planes dropped depth charges and strafed the landing areas. (16)

At 0828, the 3d Marine Division hit the ASAN BEACH and three minutes later the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade landed

(13) A-3, p. 60
(14) A-2, p. 217
(15) A-5, p. 107
(16) A-2, p. 217

at AGAT. The heavy bombardment had virtually knocked out all of the enemy positions and the Marines had little opposition in the landing. By the evening of W-day, the Marines in the AGAT BAY sector had penetrated 2,000 yards inland on a 4,500 yard front. (17)

That afternoon the Brigade had ordered the 305th RCT of the 77th Division to land at AGAT to support the Brigade against an expected counterattack that night and to assist in the attack the next day.

At 1300 hours the 305th RCT debarked from the transports by battalions but due to the lack of sufficient landing boats the last elements of the regiment did not land until 0330 the 22d. The JAPANESE were fully occupied by the Marines and the landing was made with little or no enemy fire. (18)

On 22 July the 305th RCT was placed on the north flank of the 1st Brigade and given the mission of securing and holding against all enemy opposition the high ground overlooking OROTE PENINSULA. On the morning of the 23d the 305th RCT moved out, and operating against only scattered patrols, were on their objective by 1700. The 1st Brigade with the 305th RCT in support now had control of MT. ALIFAN and more than 3,000 yards of the final beachline. (19)

On 22 July the 77th Infantry Division was ordered by General Geiger to relieve the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade, to enable that unit to get into position for the attack on OROTE PENINSULA. The plan was for two RCT's of the 77th Division including the 305th RCT, which would revert to division control when the relief of the Brigade was effected, to take over the defense of the beachhead from INALAS southwest to the

(17) A-3, p. 63

(18) A-5, p. 111

(19) A-5, p. 112

coast to MAGPO. One RCT of the 77th was still to remain afloat in Corps reserve.

The Division Commander, Major General Andrew D. Bruce, designated the 306th RCT to take over the southern sector held by the Marine Brigade and at 0800 on 24 July the 306th RCT assumed responsibility for the sector. (20)

On 24 July the 307th RCT and division troops were brought ashore at AGAT and supplies were being built up on the beach.

The 1st Provisional Marine Brigade after being relieved by the 306th RCT had moved north along the west coast and by the evening of the 24th, had isolated OROTE PENINSULA by seizing its narrow neck.

During these first four days of action, the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was charged with supply responsibility for all the troops both Army and Marine in that area. Inasmuch as almost all Army and Marine Corps ammunition and supplies were identical this task was greatly simplified. (21)

Action during this period, as far as the elements of the 77th Infantry Division were concerned, consisted principally of skirmishing with enemy patrols and cleaning out enemy caves and dugouts within the sector. On the night of the 23d, the enemy attempted to infiltrate through the lines of the 305th RCT, and on the evening of 24 July through the lines of the 306th RCT. Both of these attempts were unsuccessful and no casualties resulted. (22)

ATTACK ON OROTE PENINSULA AND ESTABLISHMENT OF FINAL BEACHLINE

The 77th Division during the next three days improved

- (20) A-3, p. 69
- (21) A-3, p. 70
- (22) A-1, p. 40

their positions, consolidated its lines, and intensively patrolled the southern half of the island.

In the meantime, while the 77th Division, was thus engaged, the Marine units were given the mission of linking the northern and southern beachheads and capturing OROTE PENINSULA. The Third Marine Division was ordered to move southward and pinch off the area east of OROTE to the final beachline while the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade received the order to advance and capture the peninsula. For this advance the 77th Division Artillery consisting of the 305th, 306th and 902d Field Artillery Battalions supported the Marine Artillery in the attack of OROTE PENINSULA. The peninsula was completely taken at 1700 hours on 29 July. (23)

On 27 July the 77th Division was ordered to take part in the attack to link the beachheads. The plan of attack called for the 77th to advance two and one half miles northward and join with the 3d Marine Division. This new assignment involved occupying MT. TENJO.

For this attack the 305th RCT was assigned the right of the Division's zone and the 307th RCT the left. They were ordered to reconnoiter the approaches to MT. TENJO and if MT. TENJO was not occupied in strength, to push the attack and seize and hold the mountain. Orders were for one company of the 305th RCT to make the initial reconnaissance. Company A, 305th Regiment was selected for this assignment. (24)

A Company moved out at dawn on 28 July and meeting very little opposition reached the top of MT. TENJO by 0830 remaining on the summit until relieved by 2d Battalion, 307th Infantry

(23) A-1, p. 45

(24) A-3, p. 75

at 1500 hours the same afternoon.

While Company A was holding the hill, friendly planes appeared, mistook them for the enemy, and began to bomb and strafe the troops. Due to the quick action of one of the men, signal panels were displayed and the planes took off as soon as the pilots recognized the panels.

The Marines from the north had completed their mission by the 28th and contact was made with the 77th Division, thereby closing the gap. (See Map B) The entire beachline was now secured. (25) The next two days were spent in consolidating the position and extensive patrolling was initiated to the east and south.

SEARCHING OUT THE ENEMY

The mission of patrolling to the south and east was given to the 77th Division Reconnaissance Troop. At this time, the division was interested in knowing the enemy strength to the south and east because future plans called for the Division to swing east across the island, then along the east coast and attack to the north. This move would expose the right flank of the Division to any JAPANESE forces in the southern half of the island.

On 28 July patrolling was initiated and five patrols were sent out. Two patrols were sent across the island to the east, two to the southeast, and one down the southwest coast. (See Map C) Due to the lack of suitable roads and dense vegetation, all patrols moved on foot. (26)

One patrol to the east covered 24,000 yards to YLIG BAY in a three day period and reported that they had seen nothing

(25) A-1, p. 50

(26) A-7, p. 47

but enemy patrols in that area. The other patrol to the east reached PAGO BAY and from information gained from observation and friendly natives, learned that the JAPS had moved to the north. The three patrols to the south found little enemy activity and from all indications the JAPANESE had moved north. (27) This information enabled the Division Commander to shift the strength of the Division to the left and drive straight across the island to the east coast without too much concern about an exposed flank.

Aggressive patrolling was carried out throughout the rest of the campaign and this assisted greatly in the security of the Division. It also enabled the Division Commander to leave only a small security detachment to the rear instead of an entire regimental combat team as he had previously thought necessary.

PURSUIT TO THE NORTH

From the information gained by the patrols, the decision was made to start the attack to the north. The plan was for the 77th Army Division to strike out to the east coast and cut the island in half. The entire III Amphibious Corps would then press north in a sweeping formation with the 77th Division on the right, 3d Marine Division in the center, and the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade on the left. (28)

On the morning of 31 July the 307th RCT with the 3d Battalion of the 305th attached moved out from MT. TENJO and led the advance east. For this advance the 3d Battalion, 305th was brought into line to the right of the 307th RCT. The ad-

(27) A-7, p. 48
(28) A-8, p. 140

vance moved rapidly over ground that was covered with a combination of steep ridges and thick jungle growth, captured the town of YONA, and reached the east coast late the same afternoon. (29) No serious resistance had been encountered during the advance except a small skirmish at YONA, which resulted in no casualties.

In the meantime, while the 77th Division had been moving to the east, the 3d Marine Division had moved to the north and had extended their lines east and made contact with the 77th Division. The island was now cut in half.

Information from patrols and natives indicated that the JAPANESE had grouped all their remaining forces in the north of the island. The situation now changed from an attack to a pursuit. To stop the enemy from organizing defensive positions, the pursuit was ordered for 2 August. Intelligence reports at this time estimated the enemy strength at less than 7,000 combat fit troops with not more than 50 JAPANESE soldiers in the south. (30)

On 2 August the Division received orders to continue the advance, capture the town of BARRIGADA, then proceed north to MT. BARRIGADA. The advance was made with two RCT's abreast on a front of two and one half miles. The 305th RCT on the right and the 307th on the left. The 307th was ordered to maintain contact on the left with the 3d Marine Division. (31)

The capture of BARRIGADA was most important as it would give the Division control of the road leading north to YIGO. This road would then give them a prepared main supply route for further advances.

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- (29) A-3, p. 84
(30) A-1, p. 75
(31) A-1, p. 77

On the morning of 2 August at 0700, the 305th and 307th RCT's moved north toward their objectives. When the advance party of the 307th RCT arrived to within 300 yards of the village strong enemy resistance was encountered and the advance elements were forced to withdraw. (32)

Meanwhile on the Division's right the 305th RCT had advanced and was on line with elements of the 307th.

At 1500 the same afternoon the Division was ordered to continue the attacks. Reconnaissance units reported that the main JAPANESE defenses were along the roads to the north and east of BARRIGADA. The plan was for the 305th to move forward and maintain contact with the 307th on their left. The 307th would make a frontal attack with two battalions while the 3d Battalion of the 307th would move up on the extreme left flank of the division and attack toward the east. To support the frontal attack, the 706th Tank Battalion was attached to units of the 305th and 307th RCT. (33)

The Division moved out but, due to dense woods and jungles, elements of the 307th were unable to maintain contact with adjacent units thereby the Division was unable to make use of artillery to support the attack as positions of front line units were unknown. (34)

The tanks helped the attack greatly; however, the infantry had no means of communication with the tank crews which made difficult the designation of targets to the tanks. (35)

Little headway had been gained during the day. A few JAP positions were cleared out, but the Division was unable to reach its objective. (See Map D)

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- (32) A-3, p. 93
(33) A-3, p. 96
(34) A-1, p. 92
(35) A-1, p. 95

At darkness, all along the line, units of the 305th and 307th reorganized and dug in for the night south of the town of BARRIGADA. This had been the first battle of any importance in which the Division had been engaged. The Division losses for the day were twenty-nine killed and ninety-eight wounded. (36)

At 0630 the next morning the attack continued and by 0930 the regiments had advanced through the town beyond the enemy positions of the previous day encountering only a few enemy snipers. The enemy had withdrawn during the night.

Continuing forward the Division now found itself confronted with brush and jungle so dense that paths had to be cut through the trees, vines, and roots. In addition the rainy season was at its peak and for four days and nights the rain continued. (37) Maps and photographs of the area were not accurate and units could not send back accurate information of their positions. Air and artillery support was limited due to this situation and many times misdirected artillery fire fell on their own troops causing casualties. (38) Only one mile was gained on 3 August and contact with the 3d Marines on the left was lost. 4 August found the going no better. Contact however was made with the 3d Marine Division on the left with unfortunate results. A section of tanks with infantry mistook a Marine position for that of the enemy and opened fire. Before identification could be made, five Marines had been wounded. (39) On the right the 305th RCT was involved in a series of small actions which caused some casualties. At 1800 the Division was well beyond MT. BARRIGADA and organized their night defensive positions. (40)

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- (36) A-1, p. 101
 - (37) A-3, p. 101
 - (38) A-1, p. 102
 - (39) A-1, p. 104
 - (40) A-1, p. 106

On 5 August the 306th RCT, which had been left back at AGAT to protect the southern beachhead, joined the Division and was ordered into position on the left of the Division's zone of advance. This was the first opportunity for the 306th RCT to join in the offensive action. (41)

In order to reach the line abreast of the 307th Infantry, the 306th was involved in the same difficulties the other organizations had met: dense jungles, poor trails, and inaccurate maps. Moderate enemy opposition was encountered and the regiment did not get into position until late in the evening of 6 August. (42)

During the night of 6 August, a JAP counterattack consisting of two tanks and one platoon of Infantry hit the right sector of the line defended by the 305th Infantry and inflicted severe casualties. Sixteen men were killed and thirty-two wounded. This was the only night attack of major success that the JAPS made during the entire GUAM Campaign. (43)

THE FINAL PUSH: VICTORY

The situation on 7 August found less than one-third of GUAM in the hands of the JAPANESE. Intelligence reports indicated that not over 2000 JAPANESE troops were left for the defense; however, the area offered suitable terrain for a strong defensive stand. (44)

The plan for continuing the attack called for the 77th Division, to make the main effort toward MOUNT SANTA ROSA. All elements of the III Amphibious Corps were to move forward in an attempt to destroy the enemy and capture the remainder

(41) A-3, p. 107
(42) A-1, p. 111
(43) A-5, p. 116
(44) A-3, p. 113

of the island.

On the morning of 7 August the Division was ordered to move out with three regiments abreast. The Division's plan called for the 306th RCT, on the left of the Division's sector to by-pass YIGO on the west then swing to the east and attack MOUNT SANTA ROSA from the north. The 305th RCT had as its objective, the southern slopes of the mountain. The 307th RCT was to take YIGO, then turn east and advance to the slopes of MOUNT SANTA ROSA. (45) (See Map E)

The three regiments of the Division moved out early on the morning of 7 August. By 0900 the 307th approached the village of YIGO and was met by heavy fire from the front and flanks. The regiment called for artillery support and the entire Division Artillery shelled the village for twenty minutes. The artillery fire completely routed the enemy and the regiment led by a battalion of tanks had little difficulty in taking the village. During the afternoon, the 307th moved into position at the base of MOUNT SANTA ROSA and dug in for the night.

The 306th and 305th had moved to their objectives against slight enemy opposition and organized for the night. (46)

MOUNT SANTA ROSA had, since 3 August, been shelled by warships lying off the coast and by bombers from SAIPAN. (47)

The attack was ordered continued at 0730 8 August. The 306th RCT on the left was given the mission of capturing LULOG just north of SANTA ROSA. The 307th in the center and the 305th on the right were to attack and capture MOUNT SANTA ROSA. (48) For one hour prior to the infantry attacks, battleships, cruisers, and destroyers lying offshore subjected MOUNT SANTA

(45) A-3, p. 115

(46) A-3, p. 118

(47) A-1, p. 117

(48) A-1, p. 127

ROSA to a heavy shelling. B-24's from SAIPAN blasted its slopes with 500 pound bombs. (49)

The 306th moved out for LULOG and quickly overwhelmed the remaining enemy in their area. The JAPANESE offered very little resistance and many of them killed themselves. (50)

The 305th and 307th captured MOUNT SANTA ROSA during the day killing thirty-five JAPANESE during the approach but no opposition was encountered on the slopes.

On the evening of 8 August, the 306th and 307th mistook each other for the JAPANESE and a brisk fight broke out causing a number of casualties. (51)

Due to the rapid advance of the Division, many small groups of enemy had been by-passed. On 9 and 10 August, the Division initiated a vigorous mopping up program which resulted in the killing of 300 more JAPANESE.

While the 77th Division was engaged in its mission of taking MOUNT SANTA ROSA, the Marines had been advancing on the left of the Division's Sector and had moved to the north and occupied all of the area north and west of MOUNT SANTA ROSA to the ocean.

At 1500 on 10 August the 77th Division Commander, Major General Andrew D. Bruce, received official notice from Headquarters, Southern Landing Force, that the occupation of GUAM was completed. (52)

To sum up this operation: The 77th Division, in its mission of assisting the Marines to secure GUAM, proved itself a highly trained and well led organization. Although the Marines

(49) A-8, p. 138
(50) A-3, p. 120
(51) A-1, p. 129
(52) A-3, p. 123

had taken the main burden of the operation, the 77th Division lost 248 killed and 663 wounded. Ammunition expended amounted to 4,825,000 rounds of small arms, 46,000 hand grenades, and 24,716 rounds of artillery ammunition. (53)

The recapture of GUAM provided a base for operations against enemy supply lines, a base for operations against JAPAN itself, and a refueling and supply point for American Forces.

ANALYSIS AND CRITICISM

1. AIR AND NAVAL SUPPORT

A large portion of the success of this operation is due to the splendid naval artillery and air bombing support received. Aerial bombardments and naval artillery destroyed the enemy's fixed positions and shore batteries, destroyed the enemy's aircraft on the ground, and rendered untenable his airfields on OROTE PENINSULA. This support drove off the enemy and demoralized enemy troops on both beachheads and at no time during the operation were JAPANESE aircraft in the area. This heavy bombardment enabled both landing forces to establish their beachheads with little enemy opposition. Again at MT. SANTA ROSA this support assisted greatly in the final drive so demoralizing the enemy that he put up little resistance.

2. FLOATING RESERVE AND DOUBLE LANDING

The presence of a floating reserve ready to exploit success in any direction and the planning of more than one landing helped the III Amphibious Corps considerably in the successful operation of GUAM. The simultaneous landings at ASAN BEACH and

(53) A-3, p. 125

AGAT BAY threw the enemy off balance because he did not know which was the main effort thereby having to split his forces and defend both areas.

If either landing force ran into difficulty a floating reserve was immediately available to assist the attack.

3. COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

The credit for the capture of GUAM should be shared by all branches of the participating services; Navy, Marine, Army and Air. All services worked together in a superior manner. Close coordination and cooperation was achieved at all times. Unity of command was commendable and at no time during the entire operation was there any question as to command or orders. Harmony existed between the ground troops both Army and Marine from the top down to the front line soldier.

During the first four days of the operation the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was responsible for all supplies for both Army and Marine troops and at no time during this period was any partiality shown.

4. TANK-INFANTRY COORDINATION

The Tank-Infantry Team was not new to the Division; however, the results of this operation indicate that more training would have been desirable. This was especially true in the attack on BARRIGADA by the 305th and 307th RCT's supported by a battalion of tanks. This tank support was not entirely satisfactory due to the inability of the Infantrymen to designate targets to the tank crew.

5. RECONNAISSANCE

The reconnaissance of southern GUAM by the 77th Reconnaissance Troop indicated that the majority of the enemy troops had moved north and enemy strength to the south was not a serious threat to the Division. The thoroughness of this reconnaissance enabled the Division to employ an additional regimental combat team in the attack on MT. SANTA ROSA instead of using this unit to protect the rear of the Division.

6. THE FAILURE TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH ADJACENT UNITS

In planning the advance proper, attention was not given to difficulties in maintaining contact with adjacent units. The failure of units to maintain contact with each other resulted in troops mistaking each other for the enemy and thereby causing a number of casualties among themselves. This condition denied the use of artillery to support the 307th RCT in the attack on BARRIGADA inasmuch as elements of the Division did not maintain contact and positions of adjacent units were unknown. It is difficult to see what could have been done to correct this situation due to the dense jungle terrain that the units were operating over. However, the advance might have been halted until contact was regained.

Troops should have been indoctrinated in the use of coordinated signals for friendly identification.

LESSONS

1. In order to make a successful amphibious assault, naval artillery and air bombardment is necessary to destroy the enemy's fixed defenses prior to the landing.

2. A double landing throws the enemy off balance because he does not know which is the main effort.

3. Unity of command is necessary for a successful joint operation.

4. Tank-Infantry communications must be improved.

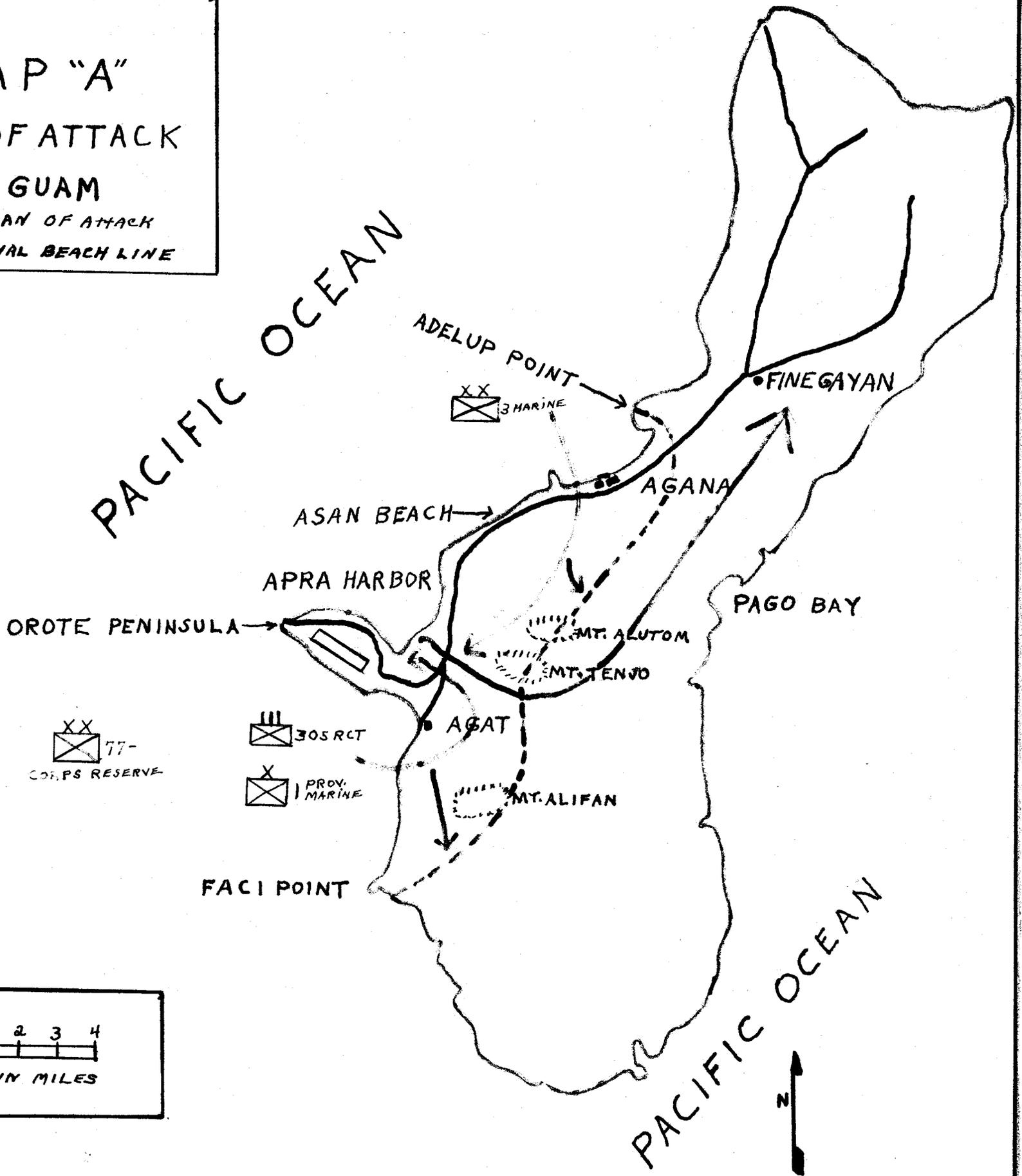
5. Reconnaissance is essential to locate the enemy before a successful attack can be made and must be thorough.

6. The responsibility of maintaining contact between units must be delegated prior to the attack and troops should be indoctrinated in a set of prearranged signals for friendly identification.

MAP "A"

PLAN OF ATTACK ON GUAM

→ PLAN OF ATTACK
- - - FINAL BEACH LINE



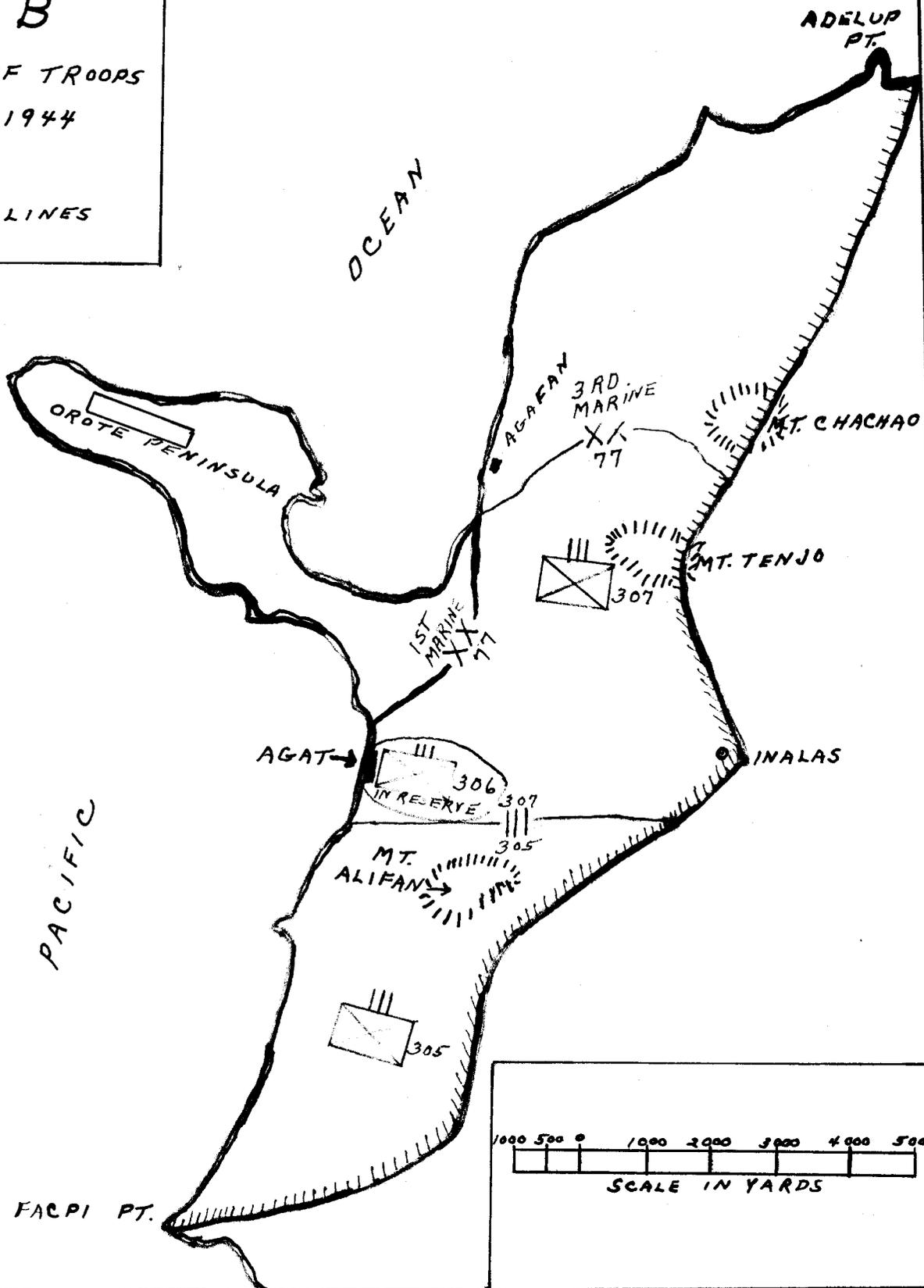
0 1 2 3 4
SCALE IN MILES

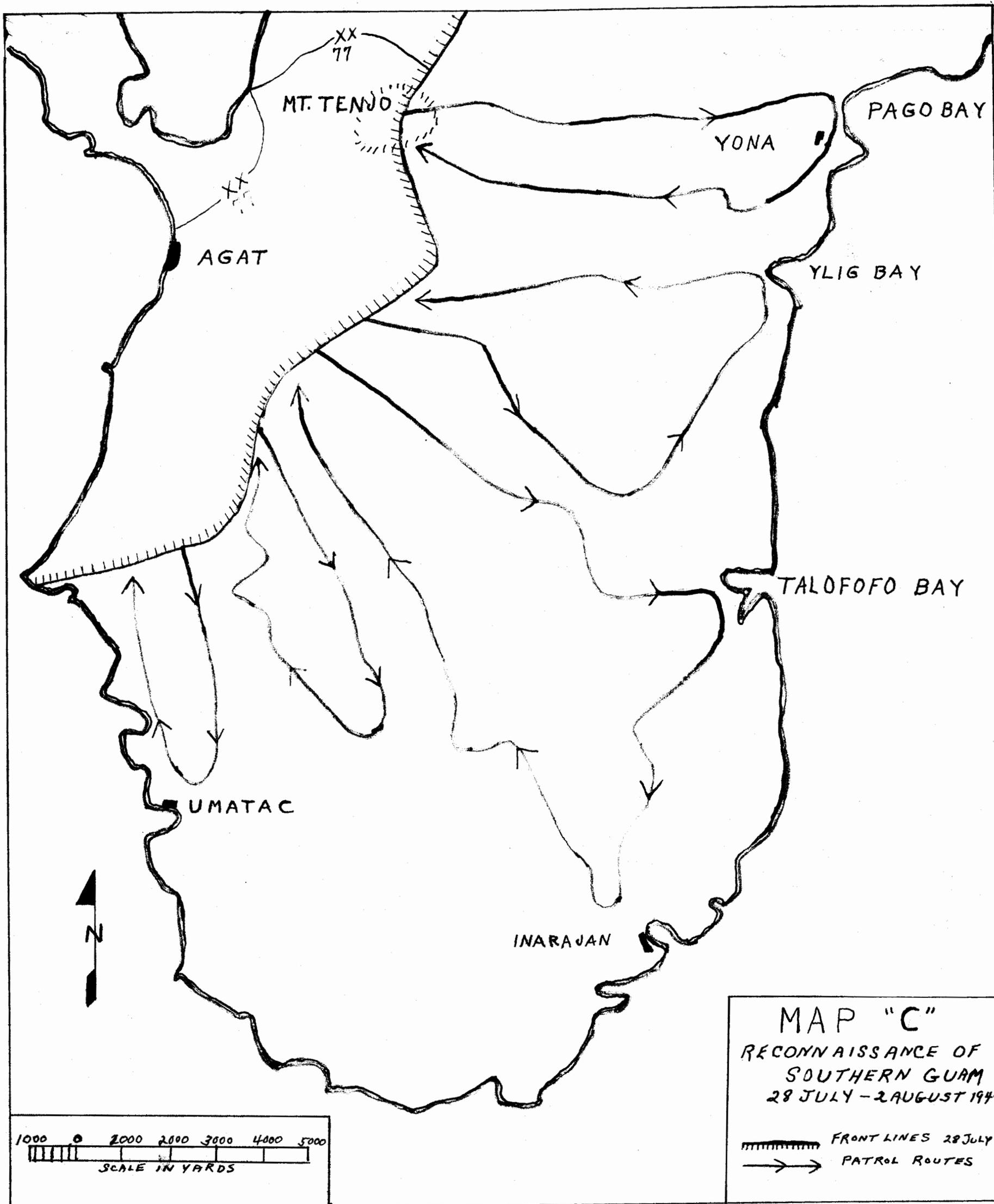
MAP "B"

DISPOSITION OF TROOPS

29 JULY 1944

 FRONT LINES





XX
77
MT. TENJO

PAGO BAY

YONA

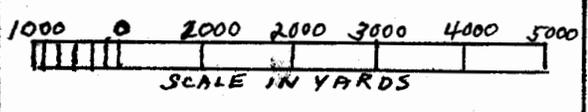
AGAT

YLIG BAY

TALOFOFO BAY

UMATAC

INARAJAN



MAP "C"
 RECONNAISSANCE OF
 SOUTHERN GUAM
 28 JULY - 2 AUGUST 1944
 ■■■■■ FRONT LINES 28 JULY
 → PATROL ROUTES

