

**MEMORIES OF 50 YEARS AGO**  
by E. A. (Sonny) Carr, Jr.

The Third Marine Division ended its mop-up of the Japanese that were on Guam on October 31, 1944. After two days rest for the Ninth Marine Regiment of the Third Marine Division of which I was a part, the regiment embarked on a new training schedule on November 3. No jungle fighting this time; we trained to fight on Japanese territory. We trained thirty-eight hours a week plus four hours of night exercises along with the twelfth Regiment of Artillery of the Third Division.

In January we started intensive training exercises with conditioning hikes of 19 miles in two days through the hilly part of Guam. Our last training program was an amphibious exercise staged for Admiral Chester Nimitz who had moved his headquarters from Pearl Harbor to Guam.

On February 8, 1945, my battalion, the First of the Ninth Combat Team, started loading on our transport vessel, the USS Fayette, and continued loading until February 10. We arrived at our destination, the reserve area off the southeast corner of the Japanese Island of Iwo Jima on February 19. We could see and hear the battle that had started by the landing of the Fourth and Fifth Marine Divisions. We were told that we would not land unless the fighting got really bad, and there were a lot of casualties. Some one figured the causality rate the first three days to be three marines every minute.

The beaches in the southern half of Iwo Jima were wide and suitable enough for landing, so this was where the Fourth and Fifth Divisions has landed. Iwo Jima is shaped like a ham of meat or some said an ice cream cone.

The noise was indescribable. All the bombardment was from all types of weapons: guns (small and large), tanks, rockets, and air planes bombing. We had five battleships,

the New York, the Arkansas, the Texas, the Nevada, and the Tennessee which were continuously firing on the island.

One of the most exciting things I remember was getting to see the American flag go up on Mount Suribachi. Associated Press photographer, Joe Rosenthal, took the picture that has become one of the great photographs of World War II.

The next day after the flag raising, our Ninth Marines landed behind the fighting, and we were given the center of the line between the Fourth and Fifth Marine Divisions. We lost our first man before we moved into the line. The next morning we started the attack at 7:10 a.m. after our tanks had shelled in front of us until all the tanks were knocked out. We crossed Motoyama Air Field No. 2 and advanced only approximately 150 yards that day. The attack was halted about 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

It was late afternoon, we had had many casualties that day. I helped move them back across the Japanese airfield that was under Japanese fire because they were on higher ground than the airfield. It was dark when I got back to our line. My foxhole buddy had gone to carry some more casualties we had while I was back at the aid station. I was digging in deeper for the night when the Japanese artillery began heavy fire in our area. I felt a sharp pain in my jaw and shoulder and realized that I had been hit and was bleeding. I was hit with shrapnel.

As I raised up, I realized that every time my heart beat, blood was shooting out of my right jaw. As I was trying to stop the bleeding, I called out for the corpman; but someone crawled up to me, said he would stop the bleeding, and he did. He told me to get back to the aid station. This was the only time I saw him.

When I got back to our aid station, there were twelve more wounded ready to go back to the Field Hospital. They said a weasel (amphibious Jeep) was coming up across the air field to pick up the wounded now that it was dark. I said to another wounded friend that could walk, "Let's walk. That weasel makes so much noise, and there are too many on it." He knew what I was saying, so we let the weasel get halfway across the

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airfield before we started across. At that very moment the Japanese made a direct hit on the weasel, and they all burned up!

We waited until the fire was out; then carefully made our way to the Field Hospital. A doctor looked at me and said he was going to move me to the Hospital Ship off shore. They had me on the Hospital Ship within an hour.

The doctor who saw me had been at work 72 hours, but he examined my wounds and x-rayed my jaw. He said the aid people did a good job on me. He told me that if he took out the pieces of shrapnel in my jaw, it would leave a scar and that most of the little pieces of shrapnel would work their way out. They took me to the Navy Hospital on Guam, and they agreed that everything was healing well. In four weeks I was back on Guam with my outfit.

I have always thought that it was an "angel unaware" (Hebrews 13:2) who helped me when I was first wounded.