

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Tinian Landing Beaches, Ushi Point Field, and North Field, Tinian Island

and or common North Field Historic District

2. Location

street & number _____ not for publication

city, town Tinian Island _____ vicinity of

Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands state Mariana Islands code 75 county Mariana Islands code 010

3. Classification

Table with 5 columns: Category, Ownership, Status, Present Use, and Accessible. Includes checkboxes for district, building(s), structure, site, object, public, private, both, occupied, unoccupied, work in progress, agriculture, commercial, educational, entertainment, government, industrial, military, museum, park, private residence, religious, scientific, transportation, other, none.

4. Owner of Property

name Government of the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands

street & number _____

city, town Saipan _____ vicinity of Mariana Islands state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Government of the Northern Mariana Islands

street & number Lands and Survey Division

city, town Saipan _____ state Mariana Islands

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title North Field Historic District has this property been determined eligible? X yes _____ no

date August 23, 1982 X federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records National Register of Historic Places

city, town Washington _____ state D.C.

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The northern end of Tinian Island is relatively flat land having an elevation of about 75 feet above sea level. Before the 1944 battle this area, other than two airfields, was a checkerboard of sugar cane fields. Nearly all the coastline is sheer coral-limestone cliffs dropping into the ocean. On the northwest coast are three breaks in this cliff where small sandy beaches have formed. The most northerly of these, Unai Lamlam, has no historical significance. During the 1944 invasion of Tinian by U.S. Marines the two southern beaches were code-named Beaches White 1 and 2. They are about 1,000 yards apart. Beach White 1 (Unai Babui) is sixty yards wide. At either end of it are low coral ledges which are exceedingly sharp and uneven. Southwest is Beach White 2 (Unai Chulu) which is 120 yards in width. A small coral reef extends about 100 yards from the shore. At each end of the beach are coral ledges and perpendicular coral cliffs. Inland from Beach White 2 is a Japanese reinforced-concrete pillbox in fair condition. It is one of two that the Marines encountered when landing. Thick vegetation smothers the ground inland.

The Japanese constructed an excellent military airfield toward the northern end of Tinian, Ushi Point (Puntan Tahgong). Nothing remains of the runway or taxiways at Ushi Point Field; but a concrete aircraft service apron and four structures remain from the Japanese period. These features are north of the western end of the northernmost B-29 runway. The concrete apron measures 750 by 300 feet. Weeds grow in cracks, but the apron is relatively intact. North of the apron is the large, two-story, T-shaped air administration building. It suffered some damage during the battle, particularly a large bomb hole in the roof. The building is of standard Japanese design and is similar to structures on Peleliu Island and at Truk Atoll.² In addition to administrative offices and a power plant, the building contained the quarters of senior air officers on the second floor. The finely decorated stairway to this floor remains as do bath and toilet facilities. To the rear of the structure are three, large concrete cisterns.

At the southeast corner of the apron, the concrete air operations building, minus its control tower, is in good condition. Even the exterior steel rungs for access to the roof are in place. It is identical to operations buildings on Saipan and Roi islands. The Americans used it as their operations center after

1. By coincidence, the Japanese people on Tinian also called these popular swimming places the White Beaches before the war. Henry I. Shaw, Jr., Bernard C. Nalty, and Edwin T. Turnbladh, Central Pacific Drive, History of U.S. Marine Corps Operations In World War II, vol. 3 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1966), p. 358.

2. The writer has not seen the structure at Truk. The information is from D. Colt Denfeld, "Survey of Peleliu," draft, Historic Preservation Office, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Saipan.

8. Significance

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699 | <input type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> social/ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900– | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

Specific dates 1944-1945 Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The capture of Tinian in the summer of 1944 by U.S. Marines was significant for several reasons. By selecting almost impossibly small landing beaches, the Marines confused Japanese commanders and established a beachhead at little cost in lives. Despite the narrow beaches (a total of 180 yards in width), two Marine divisions succeeded brilliantly in a difficult amphibious operation. Lt. Gen. Holland M. Smith, USMC, called this "the perfect amphibious operation in the Pacific war."¹ In the first night of the battle, the Japanese employed their usual tactic of attempting to destroy the enemy on the beach. It was a fatal effort for it cost them up to 2,000 lives, including some of their best infantry troops. Future battles would see Japanese defenses arranged in depth, inflicting heavier casualties on the enemy.

Tinian's topography provided the U.S. Army Air Force with a superb platform for constructing two long-range B-29 bomber airfields, including North Field, the largest airfield in the Pacific and perhaps in the world during World War II. From Tinian's six runways, as well as from bases on Saipan and Guam, armadas of B-29s raided and destroyed Japanese cities and towns in the homeland, shipping in Japan's coastal waters, petroleum supplies, and industrial plants. Finally, B-29s Enola Gay and Boch's Car flew from Tinian's North Field to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, thus bringing a conclusion to World War II and changing forever the course of world events.

Japanese Tinian

During the Spanish regime, Tinian Island was virtually depopulated through disease, rebellion, and forced removal of the Chamorros. After Germany purchased most of Micronesia from Spain in 1899, the island continued to be uninhabited. Japan's seizure of Micronesia in World War I brought a great change to Tinian as Japanese citizens arrived to develop a sugar industry. By World War II, Tinian had a civilian population of 15,000 Japanese and Koreans. Fifty-eight percent of the island's thirty-nine square miles was planted with sugar cane. Two sugar cane mills were in operation and an extensive system of narrow-gauge railroad covered the island. Early in 1944, as Allied pressure grew in the Pacific, the Japanese removed from 3,000 to 5,000 civilians to

1. Holland M. Smith and Percy Finch. Coral and Brass (Washington: Zenger, 1948, reprint 1979), p. 201.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 2,610 (approx.)

Quadrangle name Tinian

Quadrangle scale 1:25,000

UTM References

A

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| Zone | | | Easting | | | | | Northing | | | | | | |

B

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| Zone | | Easting | | | | | Northing | | | | | | | |

C

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| 5 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 8 | 0 |
| Zone | | | Easting | | | | | Northing | | | | | | |

D

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|---|---------|---|---|---|---|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 0 |
| Zone | | Easting | | | | | Northing | | | | | | | |

E

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| 5 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 0 |
| Zone | | | Easting | | | | | Northing | | | | | | |

F

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| Zone | | Easting | | | | | Northing | | | | | | | |

G

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| Zone | | Easting | | | | | Northing | | | | | | | |

H

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|------|--|---------|--|--|--|--|----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Zone | | Easting | | | | | Northing | | | | | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Erwin N. Thompson, Historian

organization National Park Service, Denver Service Center date June 12, 1984

street & number 755 Parfet Street telephone (303) 234-4509

city or town Denver state Colorado 80225

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

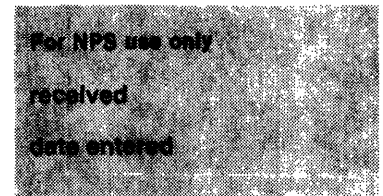
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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the capture of Tinian. Stretching along the west side of the apron are two standard-design air raid shelters, also in good condition. These features of the Japanese field are surrounded by a forest of tangantangan, isolating them from the later American field. (Another Japanese runway a short distance to the south was destroyed during construction of American North Field.)

Once the capture of Tinian was completed, U.S. Navy Seabees began the construction of North Field in this area. When completed, North Field was the largest airfield in the Pacific, perhaps in the world. Designed for a wing of B-29 bombers (Superforts), the four parallel runways stretch east and west for 8,500 feet. Around and between the runways are nearly eleven miles of taxiways. Hardstands were constructed for 265 bombers. Two large asphalt service aprons exist. The asphalt runways are in relatively good condition, the northernmost (Runway 1 or A) apparently being maintained for periodic training exercises that are conducted on northern Tinian by the U.S. Department of Defense. No American quonsets or other buildings remain in the area.

North of the northern runway and the Japanese structures is a special, asphalted service apron. Here, the two B-29 bombers, Enola Gay and Boch's Car, were loaded with the first atomic bombs to be used in warfare. Because the bombs were too large to be placed under the planes for loading, a special pit was built for each weapon. Once the bombs were in the pits, the bombers simply moved over them and the bombs were raised into the bays. Both pits have been filled with earth and landscaped. In front of each is a bronze historical plaque mounted on a concrete pedestal. The setting is simple, but awesome.

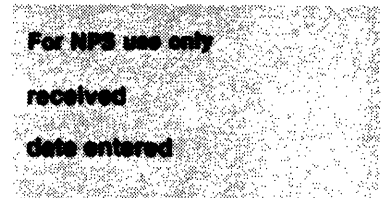
After the battle, Seabees developed a large port at Tinian Town (San Jose) in southwest Tinian Island. To speed the delivery of supplies and munitions to the airfields, the Seabees built two north-south highways, Eighth Avenue (2 lanes) and Broadway (4 lanes).³ At their northern terminuses, both roads ended in traffic circles. Both circles exist and the one at the end of Broadway contains a prewar Japanese memorial.

The historically significant area of northern Tinian contains the following historic features:

3. Because Tinian is shaped much like Manhattan, the Americans named their roads after New York City's streets: Riverside Drive, 72d Street, Wall Street, etc.

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Landing Beaches White 1 and 2
Japanese pillbox at Beach White 2
Japanese service apron, air administration building, air operations building, and two air raid shelters of former Ushi Point Field
North Field: four B-29 runways, taxiways, and two service aprons.

West of the field is a small lake or pond. While it in itself is not historic, one of the two major Japanese counterattacks of the battle, attacks that cost the Japanese dearly, was mounted in its vicinity. Thus, this general area is also considered significant. Northern Tinian also contains the sites of former American anti-aircraft batteries and four administrative areas for American aircraft service groups on the west, north, and east sides. There are no known above-ground features at these sites. No known non-historic structures are within the recommended boundaries.

Northern Tinian is public domain owned by the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. It is leased to the U.S. Department of Defense and is administered by the U.S. Navy.

Tinian Place Names

1944

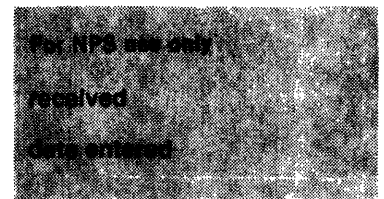
Asiga Bay
Beach White 1
Beach White 2
Fabius San Hilo Pt.
Gurgan Pt.
Lalo Pt.
Marpo Pt.
Masalog Pt.
Mt. Lasso
Mt. Maga
Southern ridge
Sunharon Harbor
Tinian Town
Ushi Pt.

Traditional Chamorro Place Names

Unai Asiga
Unai Babui
Unai Chulu
Puntan Lananibot Sankilo
Puntan Diapblo
Puntan Carolinas
Puntan Kastiyu
Puntan Masalok
Lasu
Maga
Carolinas and Kastiyu
Tinian Harbor
San Jose
Puntan Tahgong

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Japan² The rest, however, were caught up in the American invasion in July 1944.

By the summer of 1944, Tinian's naval and army garrisons amounted to 8,350 personnel. The principal defense unit was the 4,000-man 50th Infantry Regiment commanded by Col. Keishi Ogata. Naval air personnel amounted to 2,100. The 56th Naval Guard Force of 1,100 men manned coastal defense and anti-aircraft guns. Another 1,000 men composed the 233d Construction Battalion. Captain Goichi Oya commanded the naval forces, even though Vice Adm. Kakuji Kakuda,³ commander of the First Air Fleet, was the senior naval officer on the island.³ As in other Pacific areas, there was little cooperation between the army and navy commanders.

Colonel Ogata surmised that the Americans would attempt a landing either at the beaches at Tinian Town on the southwest coast or at Asiga Bay on the island's east coast. He established strong defenses at both. He did not entirely neglect the White Beaches in the northwest. The larger beach was mined and pillboxes could deliver a crossfire on the beach. The smaller White Beach had few defenses. Who would attempt a landing on a 60-yard-wide stretch of sand?

American Plans and People

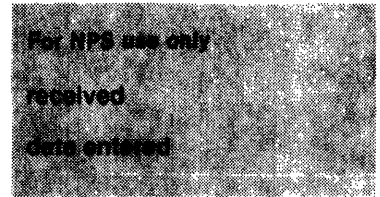
The U.S. Marines' assault on Tinian was considered to be Phase III of Operation FORAGER which began with the capture of Saipan (Phase I) and the battle for the liberation of Guam (Phase II) which was raging even as the Marines approached Tinian. Under the overall command of Adm. Chester W. Nimitz at Pearl Harbor, Adm. Raymond A. Spruance led the Fifth Fleet toward the Marianas. Vice Adm. Richmond K. Turner, as commander of the Joint Expeditionary Force, was responsible for both the Northern Attack Force (Task Force 52, Saipan and Tinian) and the Southern Attack Force (Task Force 53, Guam). He had relinquished direct control of the Northern Attack Force by the time of the Tinian invasion to Rear Adm. Harry W. Hill. Lt. Gen. Holland M. Smith, USMC (still in command of Expeditionary Troops), was off Guam with Admiral Turner. Maj. Gen. Harry Schmidt, USMC, had recently taken over the Fifth Amphibious Corps which consisted of his old command, the battle-hardened

2. The nearly 1,000 Chamorros on Tinian today moved there from Yap Island after World War II. They had migrated to Yap from Guam in the late 1800s where both Germans and Japanese employed them as copra traders and workers.

3. Admiral Kakuda led the air attack on Dutch Harbor and Fort Mears in the Aleutians in 1942. Apparently, he had a problem with alcohol by 1944. See Frank O. Hough, The Island War, The United States Marine Corps in the Pacific (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1947), pp. 254-255.

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Fourth Marine Division, now under Maj. Gen. Clifton B. Gates, and the experienced Second Marine Division, still commanded by Maj. Gen. Thomas E. Watson. Both divisions had fought throughout the Saipan campaign and had continued to mop up that island until their departure for Tinian. The invasion of Tinian, J-Day, was set for July 24, 1944.

Bombardment

The first fast carrier strike on the Marianas occurred on February 23, 1944, when the planes of six carriers under Rear Adm. Marc A. Mitscher bombed Saipan, Tinian, Rota, and Guam. From June 11 to 15, 1944, Mitscher returned to the attack with four fast carrier groups (15 carriers) accompanied by battleships, cruisers, and destroyers. This attack reduced Japanese air strength in the Marianas to near zero. By mid-July no fewer than fifteen battalions of field artillery under Brig. Gen. Arthur M. Harper, USA, on southern Saipan were sending thunder toward northern Tinian. Naval ships began bombarding Tinian as early as June 13. As the invasion date neared the Navy's fire intensified, virtually demolishing Tinian Town. The Army's P-47 fighters and B-24 bombers on Saipan joined the attack even before that island was subdued. These planes were the first in the war to experiment in combat with the new napalm fire bomb, burning out cane fields and underbrush on Tinian. On J-minus-one, July 23, army and carrier planes, field artillery, and naval gunfire blasted Tinian.

Invasion

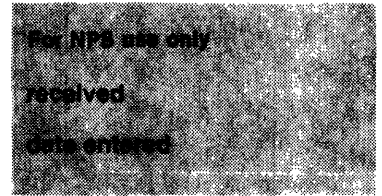
At daybreak, July 24, elements of the Second Marine Division, supported by aircraft and warships, carried out a deception off Tinian Town. Battleship Colorado supported the ruse with neutralizing fire. Suddenly, a concealed Japanese battery of three 6-inch guns opened fire and scored 22 direct hits on Colorado and destroyer Norman Scott. A total of 53 sailors and Marines were killed and 207 wounded.⁴ Meanwhile, the Fourth Marine Division made the real landing at Beaches White.

At 7:47 a.m., July 24, the first Marines of the 24th Regiment touched shore at Beach White 1. The regiment landed in a column of battalions with the 2d Battalion leading. A small force of Japanese opened fire and mortar and artillery fell on the beach area. The Marines pushed ahead and within an hour two battalions were abreast and moving rapidly. The 24th Regiment's right reached its first objective, the edge of the runway south of Ushi Point Field,

4. Colorado had been in drydock at Puget Sound when the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor. She survived this attack and was in Tokyo Bay for Japan's surrender. Mothballed in 1947, the ship was scrapped in 1959.

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1,400 yards inland, by 4:00 p.m. A stubborn group of Japanese halted the regiment's left flank 400 yards short of its objective.

Beach White 2 was more difficult. Because of mines in the sand, the first units of the 25th Regiment had to jump or climb from the craft to the ragged coral ledges at the ends of the beach. Japanese defenses were more extensive in this area, yet the Marines forged ahead, bypassing two pillboxes that commanded the beach. The 25th Marines halted short of their first objective in late afternoon and dug in for the anticipated Japanese counterattack. Division commander Cates ordered the 23d Marines ashore as a reserve. Also on shore was a battalion of the 8th Marines, Second Division, making a total of 15,600 combat Marines who had landed on two handfulls of sand in less than twelve hours.

Counterattack

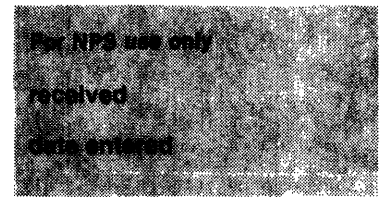
The Fourth Marine Division dug in along a 3,000-yard-wide beachhead, 24th Marines on the left (north), 25th Marines in the center, and 23d Marines on the right (south). Beginning at 2:00 a.m., July 25, Colonel Ogata's forces began a counterattack to drive the enemy into the sea. In the north some 600 naval troops from Ushi Point Field engaged in a firefight with the 24th Marines, striking hardest at the extreme left near the coastline. For three hours the Japanese attempted unsuccessfully to break through the invaders' lines. At dawn, the 24th Marines counted 476 enemy dead.

Ogata's crack infantry troops assaulted the center of Marine lines near the boundary of the 24th and 25th regiments. The first attack was thrown back, but the Japanese regrouped and pressed forward again. About 200 of them broke through the lines. Half of them headed toward the Marines' artillery positions near the beach. The artillerymen opened up their machine guns and, aided by a company from the 8th Marines, wiped out the attackers. The other group of Japanese infantrymen got behind the 25th Marines' positions where machine gun and mortar fire quickly eliminated them. This attack on the center cost the Japanese 500 lives.

The 23d Marines on the south faced an attack from a combined infantry-tank force. Five light tanks, nearly half of Ogata's armor strength, rumbled up the coastal road. All five were destroyed by Marine fire but not before three of them broke through the 23d's front. Japanese infantry continued to fight desperately but, by dawn, the attack exhausted itself. Marines counted 267 enemy dead. All told, the Japanese lost 15 percent of their personnel strength and 50 percent of their armor in this costly attempt to defeat the enemy on the

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beaches.⁵ Although more fighting lay ahead, General Gates concluded that his division had broken the enemy's back on its first night ashore on Tinian.⁶

Tinian Won

The Second Marine Division completed landing on Beaches White 1 and 2 on July 25 and 26, its 8th Marines taking over the extreme left (north) of the front. By the evening of the 25th, the Marines had advanced to Ushi Point Field in the north and had taken Mt. Maga in the south.

The Second Division swept to Tinian's east coast on July 26, then turned south. On the west, the Fourth Division captured Mt. Lasso, Tinian's highest point. Seabees began repairing the airfield for fighters.

Resistance remained light as the Marines advanced southward, indicating that the Japanese were withdrawing. On July 30, the 24th Marines entered the wrecked and deserted Tinian Town. Beyond the town, an oblong-shaped plateau, over 500 feet in elevation, formed the southern and southeastern end of Tinian. In the center a twisting road led to the top of the tree-covered plateau. A vertical cliff dropped into the sea on the eastern side. The slopes were more gentle at the southwest end of the plateau where they formed three distinct terraces. The Japanese prepared to make this high ground their last stand.

In the morning of July 31, an American naval and aerial bombardment blasted the plateau with 684 tons of explosives. A naval gunfire officer wrote, "Observers report that this was probably the most intense, and effectively controlled bombardment executed thus far in the Pacific." Following the bombardment, the Second Division moved forward on the left toward the base of the cliff, encountering sniper fire as it advanced. Large numbers of civilians began surrendering, interfering with the Marines' progress. In the afternoon elements of the 8th Marines reached the top of the plateau via the heavily defended road. During the night the Japanese attempted, in vain, to cut the

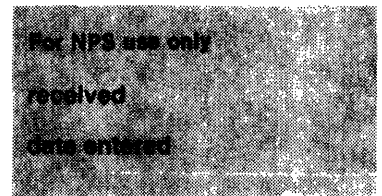
5. The official Marine Corps history states that 1,241 Japanese died in the counterattack. General H.M. Smith thought the number was closer to 2,000. Other accounts offer different figures.

6. G-3, Fourth Marine Division, Operations Report, Tinian, U.S. Marine Corps, World War II Records, Washington National Records Center, Suitland, MD, hereinafter cited as WNRC.

7. Lt. C.S. Corben to Commanding General, Northern Troops and Landing Force, August 12, 1944, U.S. Marine Corps Records, World War II, WNRC.

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road; and before dawn, August 1, 750 of them made a banzai attack on the Marines on the plateau. An hour-long firefight resulted in 74 casualties in the 8th Marines and 200 Japanese dead.

During July 31, the Fourth Division also succeeded in placing Marines on the plateau. Meanwhile, a wide gap had developed between the two divisions, a gap the Japanese were not able to exploit. The division expanded its hold on the plateau on the following day and reconnoitered the terraces on the ocean side. Progress was again slowed by crowds of Japanese and Korean civilians emerging from caves to surrender. Some, however, preferred suicide. That evening, General Schmidt announced that Tinian had been secured.

Fighting continued. The Japanese made several more banzai attacks for several days as Marines went about the dangerous task of mopping up Tinian. In a final accounting, the two divisions' casualties amounted to 355 killed, 1,550 wounded, and 27 missing in action. More than 5,500 Japanese troops lost their lives, while 404 were taken prisoner. More than 13,000 civilians, mostly Japanese, were interned on Tinian until the end of the war.

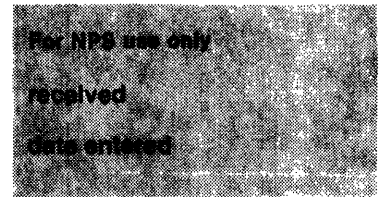
North Field

While fighting on Tinian continued, the Navy's Seabees began the repair and extension of the two Japanese runways in the north. Because of the relative flatness of the terrain, Tinian had already been selected as the site for an advanced air base to serve very-long-range B-29 bombers which required 8,500-foot-long runways. The north end of the island had a capacity for four of these runways as well as an extensive network of taxiways, service aprons, and hardstands (aircraft parking). Eventually, the 6th Naval Construction Brigade was formed on Tinian, and work proceeded at a feverish pace.

The Japanese runway at Ushi Point Field became the basis for runway 1, the most northerly of the four, which was completed and asphalted January 1, 1945. The Japanese runway south of Ushi Field was extended to become runway 3 and was completed two weeks later. Strip 2, between runways 1 and 3, was in operation on February 27; but runway 4 was not completed until May 5, 1945.

While North Field was under construction, the XXI Bomber Command's first B-29 raid on Japan flew from Saipan on October 24, beginning three months of

8. The first B-29 landed on this runway on December 22, 1944.

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daylight, high-altitude, precision attacks from the Marianas.⁹ At the end of December 1944, the B-29s of the 313th Bombardment Wing (VH) began arriving at North Field (12,000 personnel, 180 aircraft). One month later, 122 of the big bombers had arrived. Meanwhile, the daylight precision raids on Japanese aircraft industries were proving disappointing. Relatively little damage was inflicted on the plants, and losses of the big, expensive planes were greater than expected. Maj. Gen. Curtis E. LeMay, who took command of XXI Bomber Command on January 20, decided to conduct a nighttime incendiary raid to test its effectiveness. On February 25, 231 Superforts lifted off at Saipan, Tinian, and the new North Field on Guam en route to Tokyo. The test proved most effective and almost 30,000 of Tokyo's buildings were destroyed. In March, the XXI Bomber Command began a series of incendiary attacks on a number of Japanese cities. Tinian's B-29s participated in all of them. The most terrible of these was an attack on Tokyo that burned 15.8 square miles of the city, killing almost 84,000 people and injuring¹⁰ 44,000 more in "perhaps the most scathing air attack of the whole war." By mid-June, Japan's six most important industrial cities lay in ruins. In seventeen major incendiary attacks, 6,960 B-29s dropped 41,592 tons of bombs with few losses to themselves.

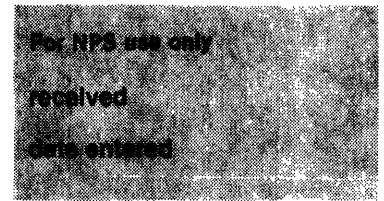
The 313th Wing at North Field received a special assignment in March 1945--aerial mining of Japanese waters. The bombers made their first attack between March 27 and April 1. Over 100 Superforts laid 1,500 mines in Shimonosaki Strait between Kyushu and Honshu islands. Japanese anti-aircraft fire destroyed three of the planes. By the end of April, 18 Japanese ships had been sunk and shipping in general was disrupted. Mines forced the great battleship Yamato, heading a task force during the battle for Okinawa, to put to sea via Bungo Strait, thus leading to her destruction. In May alone, mines sank 85 ships. U.S. submarines, aircraft, and the 313th Wing's mines combined to force Japan to close most of its ports to shipping by the end of July. Japan lost 478,000 tons of shipping in that month. In addition, the 313th Wing dropped millions of leaflets urging the Japanese people to surrender before starving.

9. The XX Bomber Command had already been established in India and, staging through China, was also bombing Japan. In 1945, both commands were disbanded and the XXI Bomber Command became the Twentieth Air Force, a component of U.S. Strategic Air Forces. Headquarters were on Guam, and five wings carried out raids from Guam, Tinian, and Saipan.

10. Wesley Frank Craven and James Lea Cate, eds., The Pacific: Matterhorn to Nagasaki, June 1944 to August 1945. The Army Air Forces In World War II, vol. 5 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), pp. 614-617.

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Atomic Bombs

On May 19, 1945, a new, secretive organization began arriving at North Field, the 1,767-man 509th Composite Group headed by Col. Paul W. Tibbets, Jr. Tight security was provided the group which occupied a former Seabee camp--to the discomfort of the navy men. Likewise, the group's stripped-down B-29s were closely guarded. Because the 509th Group did not take part in the raids on Japan, airmen of the 313th Wing ridiculed the newcomers, even to the extent of stoning the encampment. Meanwhile, the 509th pilots practiced special flying techniques (only Tibbets knew why), mostly over Japanese-held Rota Island and Truk Atoll. Beginning July 20, the group began flying over Japan to familiarize itself with targets and tactics. About that time, cruiser Indianapolis arrived at Tinian bearing uranium 235.

At 2:45 a.m., August 6, Enola Gay¹² left runway 1 at North Field on its historic mission. At 8:15 a.m. the plane dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Seconds later, 80,000 people were dead or mortally wounded; 62,000 buildings were destroyed. Enola Gay returned to Tinian at 2:58 p.m. The world would never be the same.

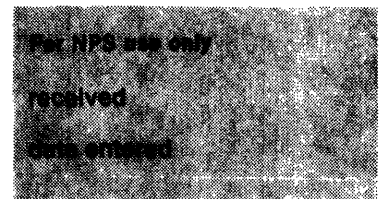
On August 9, Maj. Charles W. Sweeney, in Bock's Car, dropped a second bomb on Nagasaki, nasty weather having prevented his attacking the primary target, Kokura. Low on fuel, Sweeney was forced to land at the new American base on Okinawa. Before he was able to return to North Field, Tinian, President Harry S Truman announced Japan's unconditional surrender.

11. A Japanese submarine sank Indianapolis a few days later, with a fearsome loss of life.

12. Tibbets flew in the B-29 assigned to Capt. Robert Lewis who was present as copilot. Before takeoff, Tibbets had his mother's name, Enola Gay, painted on the aircraft, much to Lewis' annoyance.

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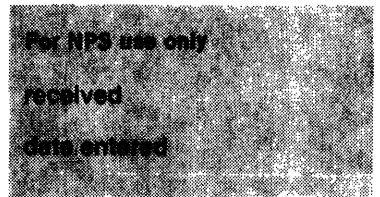
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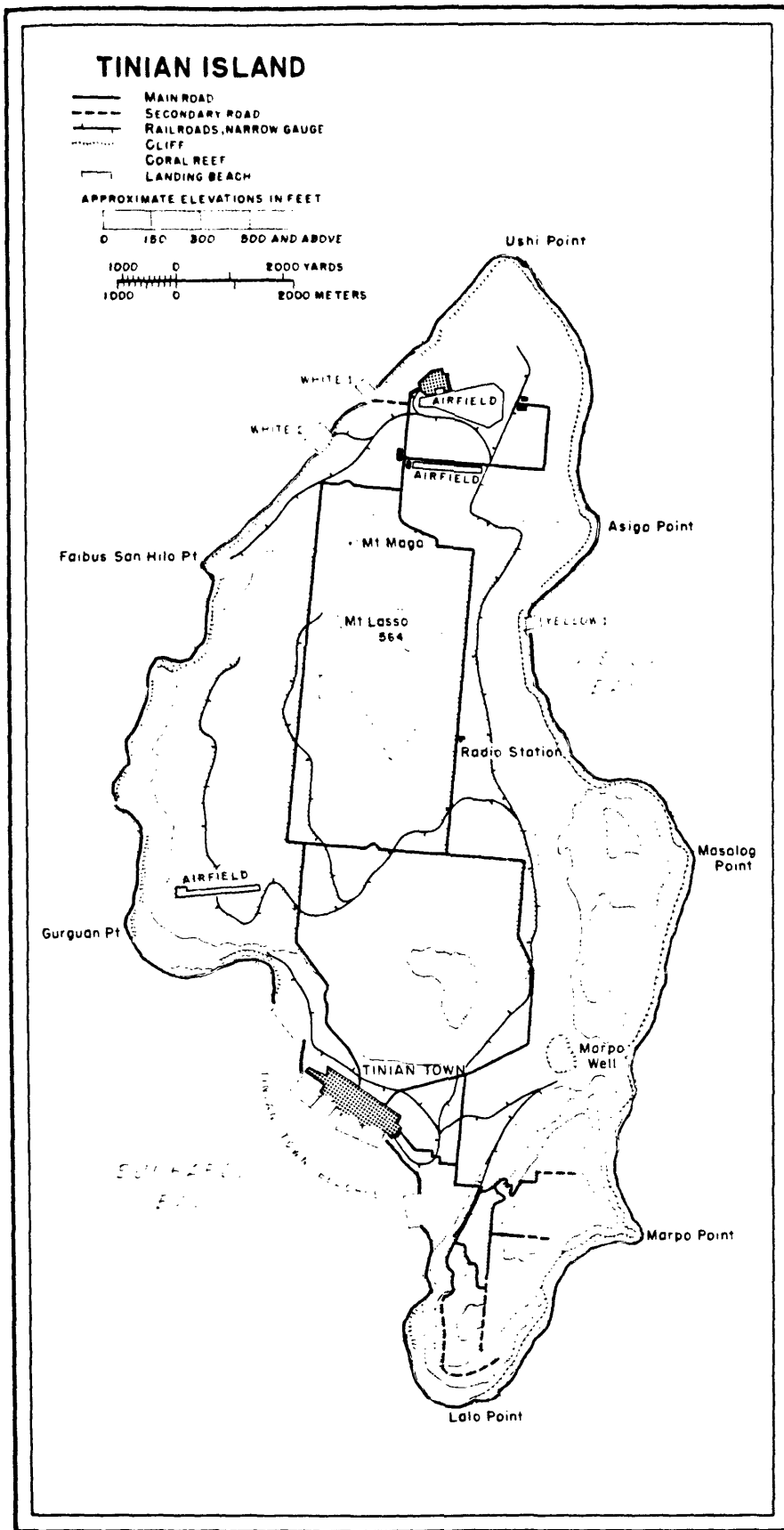
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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Starting at a point on the northwest coast of Tinian 800 feet northeast of Unai Lamlam, then following the coast in a southwesterly direction to a point 1,600 feet southwest of the south end of the reef at Unai Chulu. Then east, southeast in a straight line to the westernmost point of the traffic circle at the head of 8th Avenue. Then following the exterior (northern) perimeter of the traffic circle to its east side where it joins a narrow road. Then east along the northern boundary of the road to a junction marked BM 10.6. Then south and southeasterly along the inner boundary (eastern and northern) of a narrow road to the traffic circle at the north end of Broadway. Then along the outside (northern) perimeter of the traffic circle to its junction with a narrow road running north, then following along the inner (western) boundary of the road as it curves to the east, northeast, and continuing along the inner (northern) boundary of the narrow road to a point where it curves to the north. Then with the inner (western) boundary of the narrow road north 6,800 feet, then southwest with the inner boundary of the narrow road 1000 feet, then northwest with the inner boundary of the narrow road 2000 feet, then northwest with the inner boundary of the road 2000 feet, and then west, northwest 3,600 feet to the point of beginning.

These boundaries include all the significant historical features in the nomination: Landing Beaches White 1 and 2; U.S. Marines' beachhead; Japanese counterattacks of July 25, 1944; Japanese structures at Ushi Point Field; and North Field.



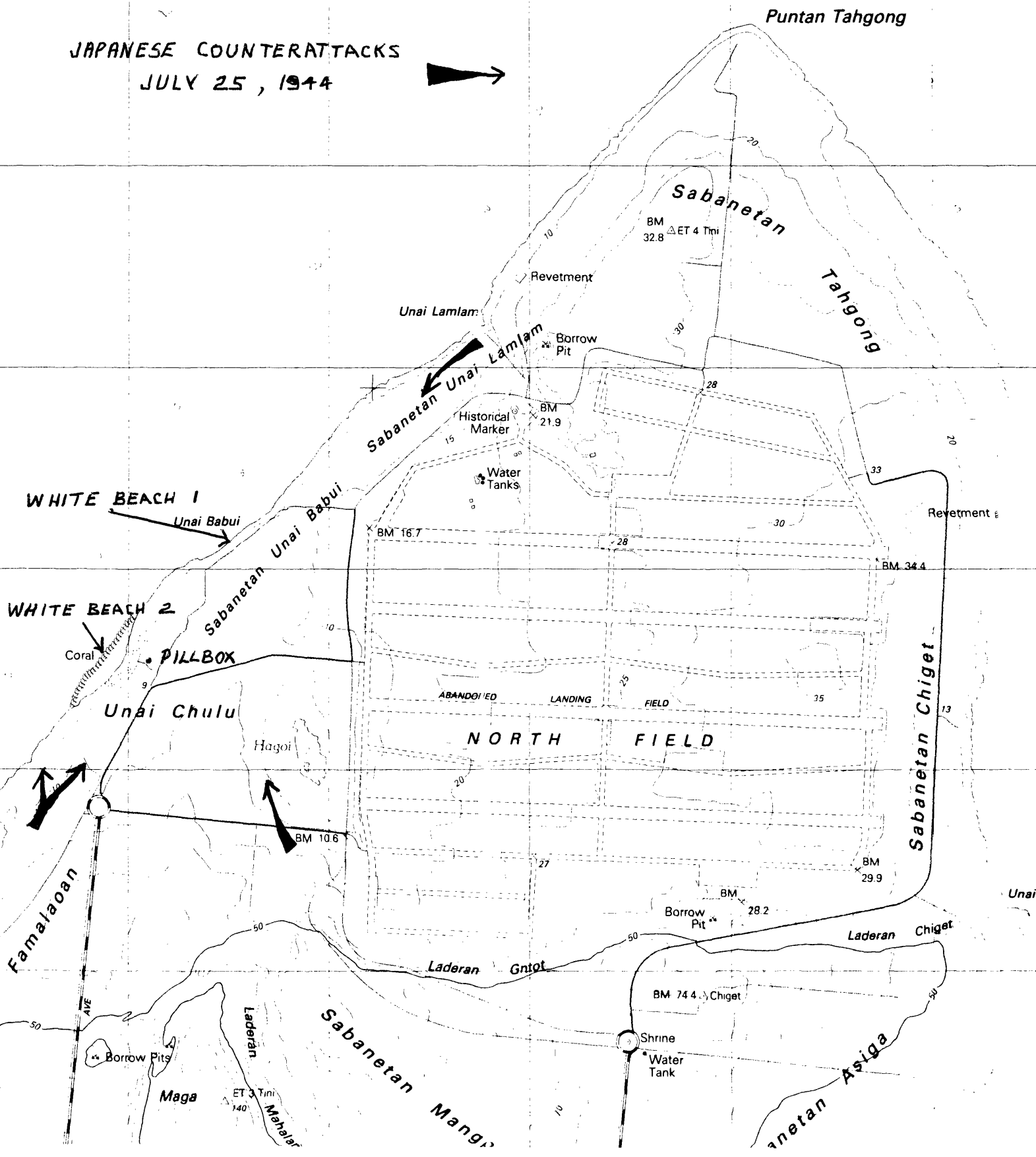
D. Holmes, Jr.

Printed by the U. S. Army Topographic Command

MAP V

FROM PHILIP A. CROWL, CAMPAIGN IN THE MARIANAS

JAPANESE COUNTERATTACKS
JULY 25, 1944



**NORTH FIELD, TINIAN
1944-1945**

ANTI AIRCRAFT GUNS

**Puntan Tahgong
(USHI POINT)**

ATOMIC BOMB PITS

JAPANESE STRUCTURES

ANTI AIRCRAFT GUNS

ANTI AIRCRAFT GUNS

