

CONFIDENTIAL
IWO JIMA CAPTURED

(First Pictures)

All Japanese resistance has ended on Iwo Jima. Eight hundred ships and hundreds of landing craft bore down on the tiny volcanic island in the Pacific, only ^{625 nautical} ~~seven~~ ~~hundred and fifty~~ miles from Tokyo. It had to be taken

by direct assault. There could be no by-passing of Iwo Jima. From distant aircraft-carriers hundreds of fighter-bombers had been pounding the island for two months. To attempt surprise would have been impossible.

For one reason

The Gibraltar of the Pacific was the last outer defence of Japan; for another, Jap fighter planes based on its airfield menaced the Super Flying Fortresses from the Marianas. The bombing was merciless and sustained.

Jap

~~human~~

(GV planes) Through curtains of ack-ack and swarms of fighters, battle-scarred planes fought their way back. Some of them crashed on the way.

Keeping afloat in the heavy sea this particular pilot was rescued. Hundreds had no such good fortune. All this time American bombers and Naval artillery ~~was~~ ^{were} softening up the island, doing all possible to smooth the way for the Marines when the time came to invade. All knew it was to be the most desperate venture in the Pacific war so far. For thirty years the Japs had fortified Iwo Jima and all experience teaches that ~~the~~ ~~main~~ ~~reason~~ ~~for~~ ~~the~~ ~~capture~~ ~~of~~ ~~small~~ ~~islands~~ ~~the~~ ~~invaders~~ must wade through their own blood.

At last it was H-hour. Forty thousand Marines, veterans in Pacific invasions, went ~~summa~~ under the guns of the fleet.

(36 GAV) Invasion barges carried the assault troops to the southern tip of Iwo Jima, under the precipitous slopes of Mount Surabachi and screened by smoke that the aircraft laid down.

(3 out)

(42 GV explosions) Suribachi rises almost sheer for six hundred feet, one reason why Iwo Jima is called the Gibraltar of the Pacific. Only by the bravest of the brave would such a fortress had been thought possible to storm.

(2 out)

(48 barges in) There was little protection for the men in the landing barges from the mortar fire that spat out at them from the hillside. Mount Surabachi is pitted with caves, in which the Japs had sheltered unharmed through 72 days of bombardment.

(one out)

~~A cameraman was among the dead when a shell hit a man~~
~~of war.~~ Iwo Jima is an extinct volcano no more than eight miles square, but large enough for two airfields and eminently fitted in every way to be a well-nigh impregnable fortress. Twenty two thousand Japs garrisoned the island. There were no spots on the landing beaches screened from their murderous fire. But the Marines went in. ~~More than a thousand died in the first~~
~~first hours taken by the invading force to reach the~~
~~reach the~~

Through tank observation slits cameramen filmed the advance as the Marines fought their way northwards.

~~The soft volcanic sand of the island made the going harder than ever. Liquid fire was the end of thousands of Japanese, burned alive in their pillboxes. . . . The camera catches a Jap dashing for cover.~~

Everything in the pillboxes, weapons included, was destroyed. It was now safe for the transport ships to come close inshore. There were very few prisoners. Many Japs would rather die than become captives, an aim in which the Allies don't discourage them. Twenty five days after the first landing - twenty five days of the costliest fighting in the Marine's history - all resistance ended on ~~Iwo Jima~~ ^{the island}. More than twenty-one thousand Japs were killed, ~~at the cost to the Americans of four thousand men. The power and skill of the tremendous assault saved thousands of American lives.~~ Iwo Jima, last big stepping stone to Japan, is in American hands.