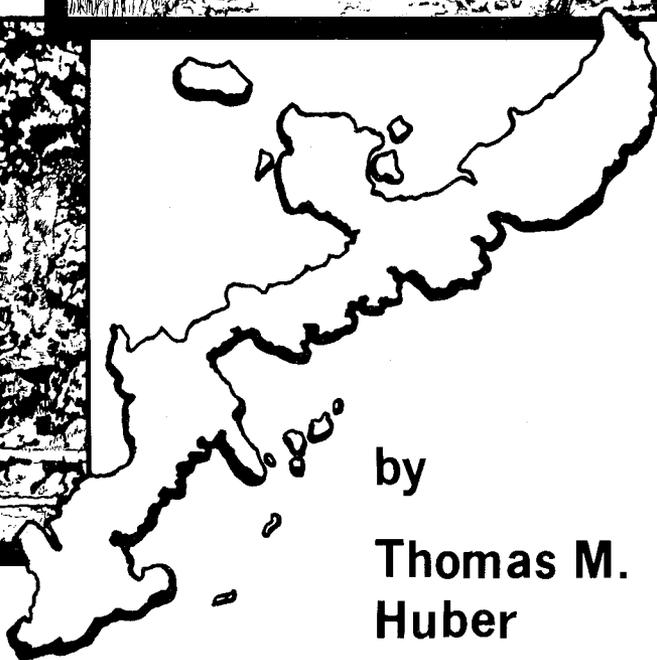
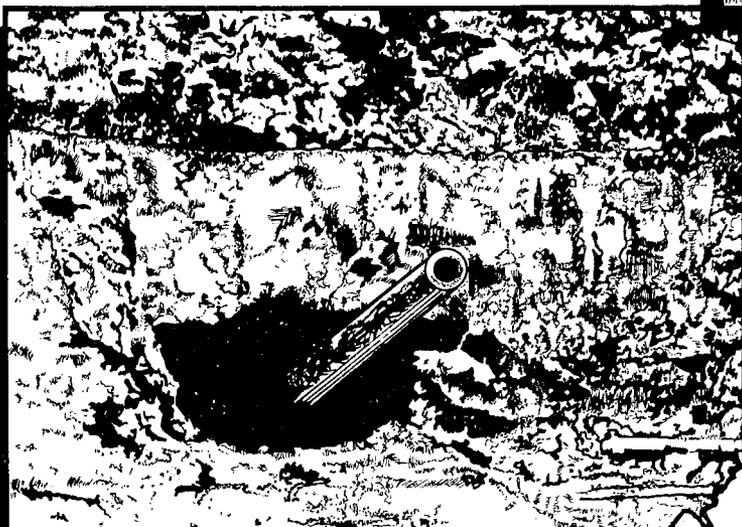


## **Japan's Battle of Okinawa, April-June 1945**



by  
**Thomas M.  
Huber**

## FOREWORD

In modern military literature, there is no more pernicious theme than that the day of the infantryman has passed us by, overwhelmed by increasingly lethal technology. *Japan's Battle of Okinawa*, the newest of the Leavenworth Papers series, takes us into the world of the modern infantryman and illustrates in vivid detail Clausewitz' dictum that combat is to war as cash payment is to commerce.

Dr. Thomas M. Huber's work is unique: for the first time in English, the Battle of Okinawa is analyzed from the vantage point of the Japanese defenders. Basing his work on extensive research in Japanese military archives, Dr. Huber affords the reader a view of the Okinawa battles literally from "the other side of the hill."

Okinawa was the most sanguinary of the Pacific island battles of World War II. Its occurrence came at a point in the war when both combatants had accumulated years of experience in planning and executing complex operations on island terrain and had developed an array of fearsomely lethal weapons whose doctrines of employment were in full bloom. This meant that the ground at Okinawa would be contested in ways that were reminiscent of the Western Front of World War I.

In this respect, Leavenworth Paper No. 18 may provide its most valuable service by depicting a part of World War II far removed from the plains of Europe that are so familiar to us today. For, although the tools of war employed in Europe were present on Okinawa, the shape, the tempo, and indeed the character of the operations on Okinawa were entirely different from those in Europe. Still, the Okinawa operations were every bit as testing of men and materiel as those in any venue of battle in the whole war.

Professional soldiers and students of modern war will be rewarded by reading this informative and insightful study, which is so suggestive of contemporary problems bearing upon the employment of infantry and other arms in high-intensity combined arms operations in inhospitable terrain against, it must be said, an implacable and skillful enemy.



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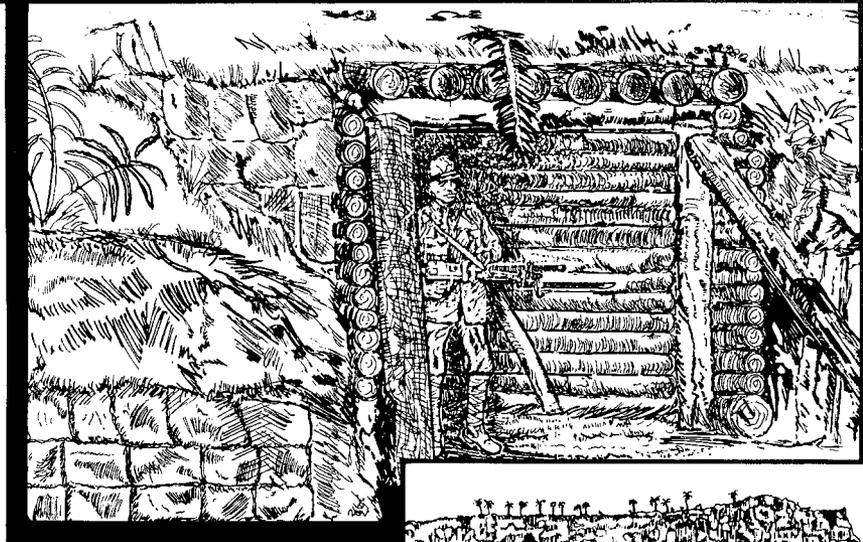
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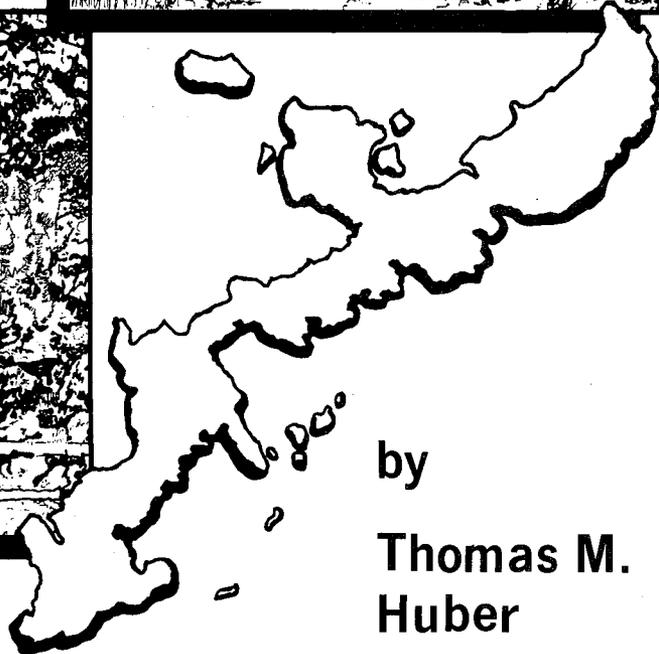
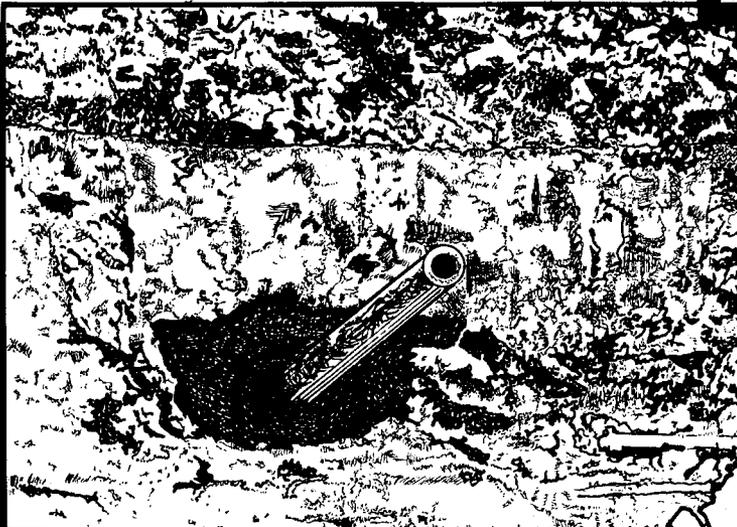
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# *Preface*

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During the Pacific war, from 1937 to 1945, the Japanese military grew to an end strength of 7 million men. Over the course of the war, this represented some 28 million man-years of uniformed service to the Japanese Empire. Imperial service spanned every conceivable environment, from sub-arctic in Manchuria to steaming rain forest in New Guinea, and every conceivable adversary, from a Soviet armored corps at Nomonhan in 1939 to isolated nationalist guerrillas in the Philippine archipelago. Moreover, there is an abundant literature in Japanese on these experiences in the form of official histories, unit histories, memoirs, biographies, and studies by scholars and journalists. There is a rich harvest of military lessons that can be reaped from these extensive resources. Even so, this material has been left largely untouched by U.S. military theorists in the past because of the obstacle presented by the Japanese language.

Fortunately, for a time in the 1980s, Fort Leavenworth's Combat Studies Institute was able to foster research in these materials, of which this volume represents one product. I feel especially fortunate to have been associated with this effort.

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