

FOLSTER: Well, that was certainly a thorough job of demolition. In actual combat, are the Japs as tough as they are made out to be, Captain Bailey?

BAILEY: I think they are much tougher. You just can't realise the pains they take in preparing some of their positions. They chopped down almost half a cocconut grove to construct their pillboxes before Buna Village. After the village was taken we counted up, and there were six pillboxes, in depth.

BOTTCHER: Some of the boxes had three entrances. They were almost bomb-proof shelters, and the entrances had sacks hanging before the openings to stop hand grenades.

SCHWARTZ: We just had to crawl around them, sometimes through water, with only our heads sticking out. For example, <sup>Tank</sup> in one place it used ~~to take~~ us from seven o'clock in the morning until noon to go up through the swamp, and around the Jap machine gun positions.

FOLSTER: Now, Captain Bottcher, you were in Captain Bailey's company all that time weren't you? What about the attack you led as Company <sup>Platoon Leader</sup> Commander?

BOTTCHER: I was really a Sergeant and Platoon Leader ~~then~~, but because of my previous experience ... I fought in the Spanish Civil War ... ~~and because we had more men than a platoon should have had,~~ I led them in the attack. We cut the Japanese forces in half between Buna Village and Buna Mission on December 5th. When our attack started to slow down, I went back to Headquarters and said that I thought we could take the beach if we kept going. The Captain said to try ~~if all the boys were willing~~. I went back to the boys, and just said, "Let's go and take the beach, boys", and they said "Okay, let's go." ~~So off we went,~~ We met very little resistance, and it proved that that had been the exact moment to take the initiative. There were only 29 of us in the unit, and everybody was amazed how easy it was. But after we had established ourselves on the beach, all hell broke loose, when the Japs realised that we had broken through their communications and supply lines. A company of infantry came up in support and secured our flanks along the wedge. After we were established, I reported to General Eichelberger that we had accomplished