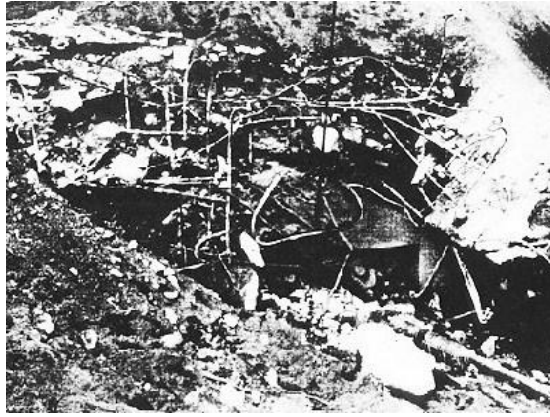




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Japanese pillbox, on the island of Iwo Jima, with machine gun (at lower right of photo). US Navy Photo
It was the job of the 28th Marines to capture Iwo Jima's Mt. Suribachi. It mattered little that most of the men had no rest, let alone sleep, on D-Day evening. The next morning, at 8:30, they commenced their assault.

A dug-in 81mm mortar crew and extremely accurate 37mm guns, aimed at the north face of the dormant volcano, helped the 28th Marines move forward. But progress was extremely slow - and deadly.

Hidden Japanese pillboxes were too close to the Marine front lines to be destroyed by support guns. They - and the men inside them - had to be taken out by Marines on the ground using, among other things, flamethrowers, explosives (like TNT) and the "Ronson" (one of eight M4A3 Sherman tanks equipped with a Navy Mark 1 flame-thrower).

By 5 p.m., when the attack ended for the day ("D Plus 1"), the Marines had moved forward 200 yards.

Before fighting resumed the next morning (February 21st, or "D Plus 2"), forty planes delivered their ordnance within one hundred yards of Marine front lines. The flight teams paid particular attention to Japanese positions which had greatly hampered attacking troops the previous day.

By the 22nd of February, the Marines were closer to claiming Suribachi. But as they reached the mountain's base, the attackers saw more problems. Nearly every way up the volcano had been obliterated by pre-landing bombardment.

Although heavily supported by weapons like the water-cooled, .30-caliber Browning machine gun, the Marines would have to pick their way to the summit along the north face of Suribachi.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/INCHING-TOWARD-SURIBACHI-Flags-Of-Our-Fathers>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

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Media Stream



81mm Mortar Crew in Iwo Jima

U.S. Marine Corps photo, maintained by the U.S. National Archive.

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/81mm-Mortar-Crew-in-Iwo-Jima>



Marines Aiming for Attack at the North Face of Mount Suribachi

Image online, courtesy the [ibiblio.org](http://www.ibiblio.org) website.

View this asset at:

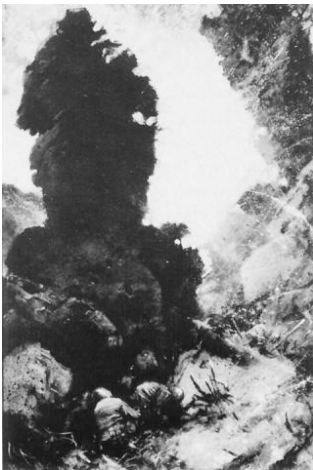
<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Marines-Aiming-for-Attack-at-the-North-Face-of-Mount-Suribachi>



Inside the Waterhouse - a Difficult Target

Image online, courtesy the [ibiblio.org](http://www.ibiblio.org) website.

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Marines Taking Out the Enemy Inside the Waterhouse

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Flamethrowers Used by Marines

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