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Authority NWMDM-0994017

Marine Observation Squadron 251

31 August, 1942.

confidential

From: The Commanding Officer.

To: (1) The Chief of Naval Operations. (Office of Naval
Records and Library.)

(2) The Commandant, U.S. Marine Corps.

(3) The Commanding General, 2nd Marine Air Wing.

(4) The Commander, Amphibious Force, Pacific.

(5) The Commander, Carriers, Pacific.

Subject: War Diary, continuance of, and submittance of.

Reference: (a.) 2nd Marine Air Wing General Order 16-42 dated
2nd June, 1942.

(b.) Pacific Fleet Letter. 11L-42 dated 11 March,
1942.

(c.) Op Nav Ltr file FF1/A12-1 (7) (291) A12-1
(420222) dated Feb. 1942.

1. In accordance with references (a), (b), and (c)
The War Diary of Marine Observation Squadron Two
Fifty One is submitted this date.
2. Copies of this diary dating from 1 August to 31
August are herewith submitted.

JOHN N. HART,
Lt. Col., USMC.

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

1 August, 1942.

Strength 29 Officers (6 detached duty) 212 Enlisted (7
detached duty). Planes assigned 18, planes in commission 15,
in transit 3. All equipment and planes not in use in process
of being transported to the docks. Working details established
both on dock and ship.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

2 August, 1942.

Strength 29 Officers (6 detached duty) 272 Enlisted (8
detached duty) All remaining camp and field facilities trans-
ported to the deck. Camp broken and policed. Loading of U.S.S.
Curtis continued until 1600. Three barges and 10 trucks of
squadron equipment and property were left behind due to the
shortage of time prior to sailing. Shipment of remainder to
be made later. Detail of 14 officers (pilots); 1 AP; 8 plane
crew members, and one radioman were left to ferry and service
squadron aircraft.

Musters held aboard Curtis. No absentees. Sailed from
Noumea, New Caledonia at 1610 conveyed by U.S.S. Maryland.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

3 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (6 detached duty) 269 Enlisted (7
detached duty). Normal sea routine. Information received
promoting Marine Gunner Pardee and Straine to Second Lieutenant,
also MTSgt. Witt and Gilmore to Marine Gunners, Quartermaster
Sergeant Muschia to Quartermaster Clerk as of July 7, 1942.
Detail of Officers and men left in New Caledonia and quartered
at the Fentouts Air Base.

CFW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

4 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (8 detached duty) 269 Enlisted (7
detached duty). 0915 two PBV's joined the convoy. 0945 two
destroyers joined the convoy. 1355 anchored in channel off
the island of Santos, New Hebrides.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

4 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (6 detached duty) 269 Enlisted (7
detached duty). 0915 two PBY's joined the convoy. 0945 two
destroyers joined the convoy. 1355 anchored in channel off
the island of Santos, New Hebrides.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

5 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (detached duty 6), 269 Enlisted (7
detached duty). Warehouse and Dock space obtained at Noumea.
At Santos unloading operations in force. Facilities in hand:
3 lighters (20 ton capacity) distance of 3 miles to landing
area. Working detail of 85 men sent ashore to build dock.
18 men detailed to camp site area to plan arrangement.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

6 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (6 detached duty), 269 Enlisted (7
detached duty). Continued unloading operations. Q.M. property,
ordnance equipment, engineering and parachute equipment sent
ashore. Dock completed at noon. Detail at Tontouts awaiting
orders.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

7 August, 1942.

Strength 38 Officers (6 detached duty) 269 Enlisted (7
detached duty). Squadron officially disembarked from the
U.S.S. Curtis.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

8 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (6 detached duty) 269 Enlisted (7
detached duty).

At Noumea; 1200, U.S.S. Aleyone arrived carrying squadron
material. Squadron Rad-ar equipment taken from the ship.
Remainder of squadron property being loaded.

At Santos: All equipment removed from the Curtis.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

8 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (6 detached duty) 269 Enlisted (7
detached duty).

At Noumea; 1200, U.S.S. Aleyone arrived carrying squadron
material. Squadron Rad-ar equipment taken from the ship.
Remainder of squadron property being loaded.

At Santos: All equipment removed from the Curtis.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

9 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (8 detached duty) 269 Enlisted (7
detached duty).

At Noumea: Loading completed at 0200. Ship sailed at
1000. At 1100 Lt. Col. Hart received orders from Com Air So
Pac via Col. Rich to lead flight echelon to New Base as soon
as weather permits.

At Santos: Telephone communication in operation. Field
installation spotted and tentage erected. Parts of transportation
and ordnance section servicing Army B-17's. Captain Welch flown
to Northern part of island in J2F to look for possible Red-ar
site.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

10 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (6 detached duty) 269 Enlisted (7
detached duty).

At Tontouta: 1130, 11 planes took off for P.D.Q. Landed
1200. Remaining 4 planes took off at 1500. Landed at 1600.

At Santos: Tents and activities moved to a new centralized
location. Air raid alarm in operation.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

11 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (6 detached duty) 268 Enlisted (7
detached duty).

At P.D.Q. 15 planes took off for Roses at 0715 escorted by
B-26 and Lockheed Hudson with crew members. Landed at Roses
at 0900. At 1330, 13 planes took off for Buttons. Landed at
1430 at Santos. Captain Welch returned from stranded trip to
northern Santos.

U.S.S. Aloyone anchored in channel with remainder of
squadron property and equipment. 2nd Lt. Pardee, TSgt. Farmer,
SSgt. Anderson, Corp Robinson, and Pfc Thomson aboard.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

12 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (five detached duty) 268 Enlisted (three
detached duty). Planes assigned 18; planes in commission 14;
planes in transit 3. (aboard U.S.S. Aloyone). Lt. Yunck arrived
from Roses at 1700. Pilots assigned to patrols.

[Handwritten signature]

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

13 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached duty) 268 Enlisted (three
detached duty). Captain Campbell, Lt. Spurlock, Lt. Whitten
returned from STAD with task force in offensive against Solomon
Islands. Lt. Schuessler and Lt. Kirby, unreported. Major Hayes,
Lt. Rutledge on STAD with task forces. Lt. Col. Hart placed in
command of interceptor and fighter forces at Santos. U.S.S.
Alcyone unloading operations begun. Sea and land patrols in
force.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

14 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached duty) 268 Enlisted (three
detached duty). Planes assigned 18, planes in commission 13.
One SNJ-3 towed from dock to field. Lt. Kobler ground looped
plane bureau No. 1894; Squadron No. 4. Damaged right wing. Minor
repairs only to restore to flight status. No injury to personnel.
Two plane sections, patrols at dawn, 0545 0715; noon, (two shifts)
1030 1200 and 1145 1315; dusk, 0430 0600.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

15 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached duty) 268 Enlisted
(three detached duty). Planes assigned 19, planes in commission,
14. All transportation units moved from ship. Unloading details
sent aboard ship. Sea and land patrols in force.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

16 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers, (four detached duty) 267 Enlisted,
(two detached). Continued normal sea and land patrols.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

17 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached duty), 267 Enlisted
(two detached). Continued unloading operations. Air raid
alarm sounded at 1410. Enemy aircraft sighted 200 miles from
base headed our way. All planes at the proper times, took off
in divisions and patrolled areas close to the field. Secure
sounded at 1705, with no contact. Pvt. Baird transferred to
the U.S.S. Solace as of 9 August, 1942.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

18 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached) 267 Enlisted. (two
detached). Continued loading operation. Radar equipment,
Radar personnel of Captain Welch, and seven men, Sgt Cosner,
four ground defense members, one cook, one messman and one
corpsman assembled and prepared for movement to Radar location
on North point of Santos, 52 miles distant. Field electric
lighting system erected on field. Transportation returned duty
of fueling B-17's to Army. Gunnery practice held by pilots.
Daily report of bomb expenditures - 0.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

19 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached), 267 Enlisted (two
detached). Planes assigned, 19; planes in commission, 15.
Moved SNJ-3 wings to field. Captain Welch and Rad-ar complement
embarked for Rad-ar site. Lt. Livingston arrived with plane
in commission from Roses. Normal land and sea patrols. Gunnery
routine for pilots.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

20 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers, (four detached), 267 Enlisted, (two
detached). Normal land and sea patrols and gunnery practice
for pilots was day's routine.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under Second
Marine Aircraft Wing P.M.F.

21 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers, (four detached), 267 Enlisted (two
detached). Promoted six staff Sergeants, 13 Corporals, 13
Sergeants, of 8 August, 1942. Also 1PHM 2/c and 1PHM 3/c as
of 1 August. Normal land and sea patrols. Gunnery routine
for pilots. Stf. Sgt. Kelly, Corporal Lipmore, New Zealand
Army temporarily attached for camouflage duty.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

22 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers, (four detached) 267 Enlisted (two
detached). 2nd. Lt. Pardee, and TSgt. Farmer, SSgt. Anderson,
Corp. Robinson, Pfc. Thompson, officially released from
temporary aviation duty. Pvt. Pendergast tried by Deck Court,
(Captain W. R. Campbell) for disobedience of orders.

An All-Nav #210354 from Comairwingspac stated that this
squadron initially assigned to Marine Wing 2 is reassigned to
Marine Wing 1.

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WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

23 August, 1942.

Strength, 32 Officers (four detached) 267 Enlisted (two
detached). Planes assigned 19, Planes in commission 15. Normal
land and sea patrols. Gunnery routine for pilots.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

24 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached), 267 Enlisted, (two
detached). Lt. Livingston crashed F4F-3 on landing. Minor
damage to plane. Slight cut on head of pilot. Six photo
personnel on photographic mission with B-17's. On return
from mission, one B-17 crashed at 2215 as a result of heavy
rain, ceiling zero, visibility zero. Six crew members killed,
four injured. Two photographic personnel returned from mission.
Normal land and sea patrols.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

25 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers, (four detached duty), 267 Enlisted (two
detached duty). Four photo personnel returned from photographic
mission after remaining at Roses over-night. Plane damaged by
Lt. Livingston repaired and in flight.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

26 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached), 267 Enlisted (two
detached). Planes assigned 19, planes in commission, 16.
Normal land and sea patrols.

EW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

27 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached), Enlisted 267 (two
detached). Planes assignment, 20; planes in commission, 16.
Plane F4F-7, bureau No. 5265 assigned by authority of Com Car
Pac secret dispatch number 212159. Normal land and sea patrols.
Major Campbell and Lt. Col. Hayes received confirmation of pro-
motion to next higher rank.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

28 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached); Enlisted 267 (two
detached). Planes assigned 20; planes in commission 16.
Gunnery routine.

CPW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

29 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached), Enlisted 267 (two
detached). Planes assigned 24, planes in transit 1; planes in
commission 19. Planes F4F-4, Bureau No's 02071, 02079, 02082
received from E'fate by authority of ComCarPac. secret dispatch
140417. Two squadrons (VMF 224 and VMSB 231) arrived from
Roses under Col. Wallace. Messed and quartered with squadron.
Normal land and sea patrols. Gunnery practice for pilots.

OW

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Authority NIWMDM-0994017

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

30 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached), 267 Enlisted (two
detached). Planes assigned, 24; planes in commission, 19;
planes in transit, 1. One SNJ-3 temporarily assigned from
Roses. Two visiting squadrons took-off for Cactus. Arrange-
ments made with 2nd Marine paymaster for pay purposes. Black-
out was executed tonight after unidentified submarine was heard.

DMW

WAR DIARY

CONFIDENTIAL

Marine Observation Squadron 251, operating under First
Marine Aircraft Wing F.M.F.

31 August, 1942.

Strength 32 Officers (four detached duty, one temporarily assigned), Enlisted 267 (two detached). Plane F4F-4 Bureau Number 02085 flown from Roses. Lt. Kirk and Captain Yeaman flew SNJ-3 to Roses for ferry trip. Lt. Kahn (USN) temporarily attached for intelligence duty. Two squadrons, one torpedo, and one dive bomber (Navy), arrived at Buttons. Normal land and sea patrols. Gunnery routine for pilots.

CW