

Volume 18

Number 021

Two Flags Over Iwo Jima - II

Lead: The taking of Iwo Jima was a blood bath on both sides, but the US Marines were inspired to even greater sacrifice when, on the fourth day of fighting, the Stars and Stripes appeared, as if by a miracle, over Mt. Suribachi.

Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.

Content: It actually was two flags. At mid-morning February 23, 1945, 40 men from the 3rd Platoon, E Company, 2nd Battalion 28th Marine Regiment finished their long climb to the top of Mt. Suribachi, the extinct

volcano dominating the skyline of the Pacific island of Iwo Jima. They had negotiated cliffs, tunnels, mines, booby traps and ravines all occupied by an entrenched enemy. A small US flag was attached to a steel pole and hoisted, for the first time, over Japanese home territory. Ship's whistles sounded, Marines all over the island cheered and some shed tears in the midst of the enormous sacrifice required to take the island. Marine photographer Lou Lowery captured the event on film.

A few hours later a larger flag was secured and sent to the top to take the place of the first flag. The raising of that second flag, captured in an iconic picture by Associated Press

photographer Joe Rosenthal, reached US newspapers first and his portrait and the men who raised the flag became the subject of monuments and the stuff of legend. The two flag-raising became conflated in the public mind. If the first flag inspired the Marines on the island, the second flag inspired Americans on the home front who, after four years of conflict, were understandably war-weary. That picture was used to sell millions in war bonds and encourage the nation during the closing months of the war.

From Richmond, Virginia this is Dan Roberts.

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"Retired Local 292 Member Is Last Survivor Of 12 Marines Who Raised Flags on Iwo Jima."

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