

On the night of July 28, 1943, they hit us hard. They struck at several points on our perimeter- obviously to tie down any units that might be giving us support and any reserves (we had none.) Our perimeter was heavy only on the two places where the ridgeline entered and left our perimeter. As communications Sergeant, I was somewhere in the middle of the perimeter. I heard a very loud commotion going on at the left front of our position. and went forward with some extra grenades to check the situation. I encountered 4 men heading to the interior of our position. I attempted to stop them, but they claimed that one was wounded and they were taking him to the medic. Then I lost them in the dark. I went to where they came from and found 2 vacant positions on the left front. Worse. Down below their foxholes, it sounded like some large force on the terrain below, as well as a force coming up the steep sides, with the enemy using the slope shrubbery as handholds. The positions that were vacated were absolutely necessary to hold off an attack from that direction. Meanwhile, with these people down below was a Commander of some sort shouting orders in a very deep and loud voice. This was very alarming to me. I realized they were within minutes of breaking into our perimeter, which meant we would lose it, as well as the most valuable artillery OP in the entire area, and most likely suffer heavy casualties in our unit, or be wiped out completely. At this point, I discovered that one of the men who had abandoned one of the positions had left a loaded BAR with a clip in. I promptly took this weapon, walked to where I could fire it down into the Japs coming up the sides, and walked back and forth, firing into them until the clip emptied. I could find no more clips, so took my own submachine gun and fired the two clips I had into the Japs, then I gathered the grenades I had brought and the ones from the men who had abandoned their positions. The loud mouth down below was still obviously shouting orders and directions, so I tried throwing one grenade high in the air over where I thought he was, to try for an air burst. From the sounds he was making, he obviously was warning the others that this thing rattling through the tree limbs was a grenade and to take cover. So, I began pitching several more, covering the ground around where he had been shouting from, so that as one burst, they would not be able to hear the handle come off the next one. After I used up these grenades, maybe 8 total, he was silenced, and I could hear noises like the Japs were departing the area. But, about that time, one of them threw one of their sparkling grenades up at me. I dropped my weapon and dropped to the ground, and rolled to avoid the grenade. As the grenade exploded, I found that I had rolled feet first down into a small, steep ravine, with little shrubbery. right between two Japs that were crawling up the ravine. I promptly stuck one with the bayonet from my belt holster, and he fell screaming down the hill, and I hit the other in the face as hard as I could with my helmet, and he did likewise. I made it back on top, only to find that I was totally out of ammunition. I didn't know if there were more Japs coming, so I whirled my helmet around by the strap and threw it in their direction. By the sound it made, they probably thought it was a satchel charge, and they departed.

*W. H. D. O. 11th*